



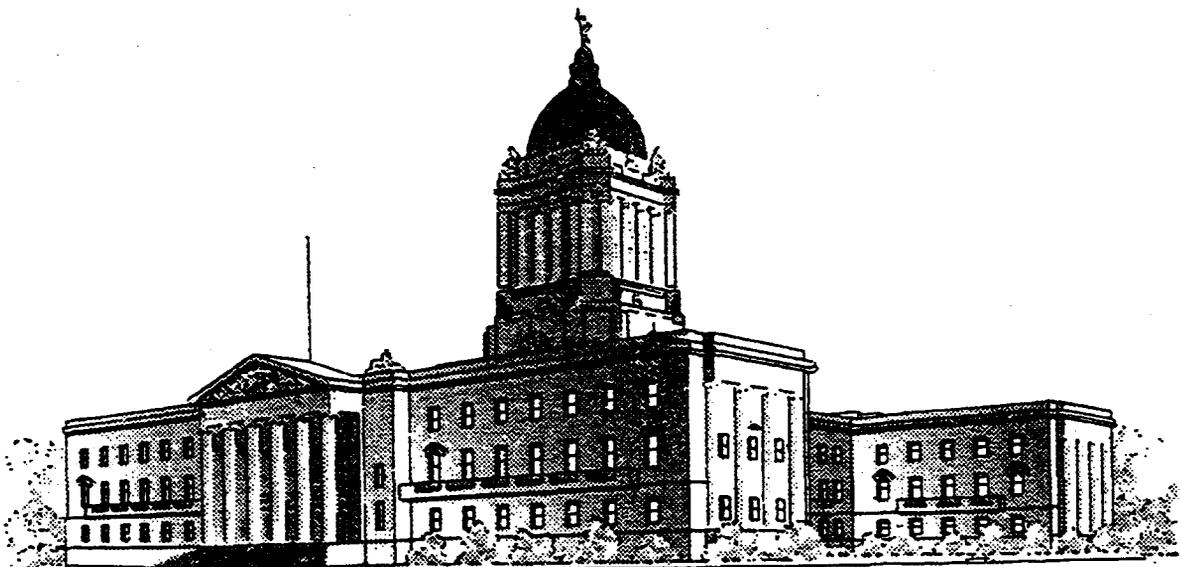
First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
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PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
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REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
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ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
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SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 13, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Committee of Supply

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery, where we have twenty Grade 5 students from Garden Grove School under the direction of Mrs. Susan Chernetz. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

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

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Winnipeg Arena
Cost Overruns**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, we have just received copies of the agreement that should have been tabled in this Legislature here

yesterday. It is a sad commentary on this government's openness that they cannot provide to the shareholders of this province a document that obviously they have been part of.

I would like to ask the—[interjection] Maybe the member should be reading the agreement himself and asking some questions in his caucus, instead of just heckling in the Chamber, Madam Speaker.

The government has indicated that in exchange for their \$111-million investment in the new facility, one of the small mercies they may have is the fact that we will have a fixed price and that the private sector will cover any so-called cost overruns of the new facility.

Madam Speaker, at City Hall yesterday, Mr. Anderson indicated that there is a fixed date for this fixed cost of sometime in mid-June. I would like to ask the acting Premier or the minister responsible for this state of affairs, is there a fixed date, and what protection do the taxpayers have in the form of private-sector money in a contingency plan to deal with cost overruns?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, no, I am not aware of a fixed date, although time is certainly a factor, as we have said consistently in this House on many occasions.

Discussions are ongoing with the contractor for the proposed facility, Dominion Hunt, and, again, as I have indicated consistently in this House and as Mr. Anderson himself confirmed, if there are any cost overruns over and above the \$111 million to build a facility here in Winnipeg, those would be the responsibility of the private sector, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Doer: A week ago Monday, the minister indicated in Estimates of the Department of Finance that he had not yet read the agreement dealing with the fixed price with the private sector, the tendering agreement that was reached by the private sector, and he said clearly that he had not read it; he had not reviewed it.

Today, he says he is not aware of whether there is or is not a fixed date, and he is not aware of the actual contingency plan the private sector has.

Does the minister not think it is appropriate for him to now read the agreement, so that he will be aware of whether there is a fixed date or not, and will the minister table today the contingency plan that the private sector has arrived at to deal with the cost overruns in the form of money?

They are already \$20 million short on the ownership issue. Can he tell us what the contingency plan is to protect the taxpayers, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, as I think the Leader of the Opposition knows full well, there is no formal agreement. No agreement has been entered into with Dominion Hunt.

There is a draft agreement. We will be reviewing that draft agreement, Madam Speaker, but as I have indicated consistently, all of the discussions over the course of several weeks have been on the basis that the private sector is responsible for any cost overruns.

They are well aware of that issue and will take the necessary steps to deal with it.

Winnipeg Jets Public Shares

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): In these draft agreements, our shares have gone from 36 percent to 18 percent to 36 percent to 24 percent. Every time the draft changes, Madam Speaker, every time something becomes public, the shares change. The public is paying more and getting less information from this government.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, in light of the fact that Mr. Osler has indicated that our shares some day may be worth nothing and, Madam Speaker, yesterday in the House, the minister indicated that we would not get a 50-50 disposition unless there was a profit in the hockey team, what will our shares be worth if there is no profit in the hockey team in terms of the disposition of those shares?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I am not sure the Leader of the Opposition understood my comments correctly.

If there are profits in the combined entity of the hockey team and the operation of the facility, if that organization generates a profit at any point in time, those profits will be split 50-50. Fifty percent of those profits will come to the public sector, the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba, and 50 percent will go to the private sector entity that will be created. It is now currently being called the Spirit of Manitoba.

If at some particular point in time the franchise has to be sold, for whatever reason, because the endowment fund is depleted and the team cannot be sustained in Manitoba, 50 percent of those proceeds, Madam Speaker, would come back to the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba because we have put up dollar for dollar.

Governments have put up money to build a facility. The private investors here in Manitoba have put up money to retain the hockey club here in Manitoba and to take over the operating losses of the Winnipeg Jets, Madam Speaker.

Winnipeg Jets Public Shares

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, on initial review of these documents, I find nothing of the material that the Finance minister just referred to.

Madam Speaker, the Finance minister has several times said that the shares owned by the public sector would be treated in exactly the same way as the shares owned by the private sector, that there would be only one class of shares. In the documentation which we have received today, there are clearly two classes of shares.

In a letter dated June 8, the author from Thompson Dorfman Sweatman writes the following words: The deferred interest will be offered to the public sector in exchange for the interest in the Winnipeg Jets held by the Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation. Under this

proposed revised arrangement, the vendors and the public sector will not have any rights to votes or allocation of income or losses, except that if at some future date there is a sale, the deferred interest would carry a right to some part of the sale proceeds.

Can the minister confirm that there are several classes of shares now, at least two, and that the public-sector shares apparently carry no voting rights?

* (1340)

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): No, Madam Speaker, I will not confirm that whatsoever.

Firstly, as I pointed out for the member yesterday, if he would listen or take the time to read Hansard, there will be a lease agreement. There will be a lease agreement between the entity that owns the new facility, an entity that is owned 50-50 by the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba, and the operation of the hockey club and the facility. Under that lease agreement is where it will be spelled out that if the franchise is sold, 50 percent of proceeds will come back to the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. I said that yesterday. That is the basis and has always been the basis of discussions and tentative agreements with the private sector.

When it comes to votes, Madam Speaker, the member for Crescentwood is referring to a letter that talks about votes as it relates to unit holders under a limited partnership, but under the total organization, the Spirit of Manitoba organization, the board of directors, all of the decision making, we will have votes. The new private investors will have votes, and the existing owners will have votes, and everybody will vote on an equitable basis.

I assure him of that. Again, that has always been the basis of all discussions around this issue, Madam Speaker, that we will have full voting rights along with everybody else.

Obviously, a deal of this magnitude requires some various structural formats in terms of limited partnership, endowment funds and so on. There are some technical issues in terms of the kinds of

organization, but in terms of voting rights, we will have full voting rights.

Donations—Tax Deductibility

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): My supplementary question to the same minister is, could the minister indicate in clear terms what the public and private sectors together intend to do to reach—I think this is a quote—a favourable tax condition; in other words, tax status as of a charity for the endowment fund? How is this intended to be achieved?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, nothing has changed on that issue. I think the member thinks if he asks the question a different way, he will get a different answer.

We have said consistently, Revenue Canada will be dealing with those issues. The private sector is making representation to Revenue Canada on issues of the endowment fund, whether or not contributions will be tax deductible. That is an issue being dealt with between the private sector, the new investors and Revenue Canada, and we will await the decision of Revenue Canada, Madam Speaker.

Tabling Request—Third Agreement

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, will the minister now table what obviously must be the third of these agreements? The agreement to which I am referring is the cash deal, the unit deal to Mr. Shenkarow and partners.

There must also be a unit deal to the province. We have the two. Would you table the third one?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I am glad the member pointed that out, because the agreements they are referring to today are agreements that are between the Spirit of Manitoba and the current owners of the Winnipeg Jets, not between the City of Winnipeg, not between the Province of Manitoba.

He is finally correct that there will be a separate agreement between the new organization and Winnipeg

Enterprises, City of Winnipeg, and the Province of Manitoba, which currently own 36 percent of the hockey club.

We will be going through that agreement, and at an appropriate time, we will be tabling it, Madam Speaker.

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Meeting Request

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Speaker, yesterday in the House, I directed three questions to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) regarding the health of aboriginal people, specifically children.

These questions were in regard to his government's commitment to both the well-being of the aboriginal people of Manitoba and to a process of government-to-government co-operation to achieve aboriginal self-government in this province. The minister responded by stating his hope is to attempt to achieve partnership.

Given this commitment to a tripartite approach to address the issues affecting aboriginal people, I would like to ask the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), what is his feeling today about contacting the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and also the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okemakanak to request a meeting with his cabinet on issues affecting aboriginal people in this province?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Madam Speaker, I can tell the honourable member for The Pas that a week or so ago a representative of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs visited with me, and we discussed having a joint meeting between the executive of the AMC and cabinet, and we are currently working on the arrangements to have such a meeting.

* (1345)

Aboriginal Self-Government Government Strategy

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Again, I would like to ask the Deputy Premier, Madam Speaker, what is the overall strategy of this government to deal with the inevitable evolution of aboriginal self-government in

this province? What is the approach? What are the plans? What is the strategy?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, I will try and be brief.

The member should know, being a former chief of a band for which he saw very progressive action taken as it related to the development of a nurses' program in his community, to the signing of the first gaming agreement in Manitoba, to putting in place tax programs which, in fact, allow the bands to collect taxes from their people. I would say very progressive action has been taken by this government, and the record speaks for itself.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Government Strategy

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): One of the things that could be done immediately by this government, Madam Speaker, is to implement—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Will the honourable member please pose his question now.

Mr. Lathlin: My last question, Madam Speaker, is, will the Deputy Premier release today a detailed listing of this government's intentions in regard to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry as a sign of good faith on the part of his government in dealing with aboriginal people in a partnership way?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, let me say that this government, as far as the AJI is concerned, completed the work that was prepared and started under a previous administration.

Under the former Attorney General, when the release came forward, there was an approach taken by this government that we believe was very reasonable. Other actions have been put in place. There is an annual budgeted amount of money which is put in place to carry out recommendations of the AJI program.

Specific details of that activity can be further asked in the Estimates process.

Family Violence Court Expansion

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

In August of 1991, the Pedlar report on domestic violence in Manitoba recommended that the Family Violence Court be expanded to centres outside of Winnipeg.

This past winter, the NDP caucus task force on violence against women at its hearings heard repeatedly from women outside Winnipeg that they are still waiting for specialized, prioritized court services.

My question for the Minister is, would she tell Manitobans now, four years after the Pedlar recommendations, what initiatives have been taken to expand the Family Violence Court?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, just in thinking of the Pedlar report to begin with, we certainly have taken the issues that were raised within the Pedlar report very seriously, and we are looking at implementation of a number of those recommendations. However, one of the major issues was the development of a Family Violence Court. We are very pleased that it is operating here in the city of Winnipeg. I will just remind the member, take a moment to say, that it is certainly a model across this country. We do have people from all across Canada coming to look at the operations of our Family Violence Court.

In terms of its expansion, Madam Speaker, as the member knows, we would have to look at expansion certainly with the members of the judiciary and also the whole system within Justice, and we certainly are still looking at that issue.

* (1350)

Brandon, Manitoba

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Well, would the minister now explain the astounding proclamation in

her '92-93 departmental report, tabled two years later by the way, which states that a Family Violence Court has been established in Brandon?

Given that the concerned women of Brandon know nothing of this court, the Women's Advocacy Program will not say, and as of yesterday, the court told me there was no such court, and apparently from the minister's first answer she does not know of such a court, is it a phantom violence court, Madam Speaker?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): As the member knows, we certainly make every effort to hear the cases brought around this province by people who have received some training, and we have made an effort across the whole Department of Justice to see that members within the Department of Justice are, in fact, sensitized to the issues of family violence.

The member also references the Women's Advocacy Program, and I will take the opportunity to say again that the expansion of that program into Brandon and two other centres was an initiative of this government last year to make sure that there was support to women and to victims across this province.

We are undertaking now, Madam Speaker, a global strategy to deal with victims around this province—all victims.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, would the minister familiarize herself with her department and tell Manitobans, particularly the people of Westman and Brandon, is there a Family Violence Court in Brandon or not? There appears not to be. If not, why is that announcement in her annual report? Is it like another boot camp? Is it just some fluff, Madam Speaker?

Mrs. Vodrey: As the member knows, cases that deal with issues of family violence are heard in various places across this province and are dealt with.

Madam Speaker, just let me take a moment to speak about boot camp, as well. The member seems to have some misapprehension about the operation of this major initiative which is operating. We have two

centres operating in the province of Manitoba, and we also have one work camp, but the member was totally nonsupportive of the initiative from the very beginning and continues to be.

Education Facilities

Satellite Community Police Project

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): My question today is for the Minister of Justice.

A satellite Community Police Project involving the Winnipeg police and several Winnipeg high schools has been labelled a success. The program involved having police officers in schools for various amounts of time, between two and three hours a week, meeting with students, staff and the community.

Their presence had a positive impact. In one document, one report from one high school that I have, there was a 75 percent reduction in the number of violent incidents, fights in the school, and an 80 percent reduction in the number of calls for police assistance. However, the project was not continued. The province has offered the city \$2 million—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I wonder if I could ask the honourable member to please pose her question now.

Ms. Mihychuk: To the Justice minister: Will the province offer guarantees to the city that there will be ongoing funding of the \$2 million that they are presenting, so that the 40 additional police officers can be kept on in the future?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, as the member knows, the day this announcement was made, the grant was to be a recurring grant. We have met with the City of Winnipeg, the chief of police. We have asked for the details of how they will implement the 40 officers.

We have asked for a plan into the future, and we are looking forward to receiving that. I believe the chief of police has promised I will see that this week.

Ms. Mihychuk: Would the minister suggest to the city that the money be used to continue the Community Police Project in schools, since it was a wonderful success, to combat violence and deal proactively with youth criminal activity in the community?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to hear that members on the other side are in support of this initiative, of 40 new police officers, which this government put forward.

As I have stated before in this House, as I have stated publicly, as we stated the day of the announcement, we made our point that we would be very pleased to see that these officers are used in areas which deal with youth crime and also auto theft and auto vandalism. However, the member knows, I am sure, that it is the chief of police who will decide on the deployment of officers within the Winnipeg Police Services.

Ms. Mihychuk: Will this minister make a firm commitment to provide the funding to continue the Community Police Project in schools, no matter what the city does?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, members on the other side have frequently decided that they will reach in, and they will determine for the city, now for the Winnipeg Police Services, exactly how they will run their business. Perhaps the member would also like the same thing to happen to school divisions, as well.

So, Madam Speaker, let me take the member back again, provide her with the information that this government has made the commitment to further police officers on the street, 40 new police officers on the street.

The grant is \$2 million, but the member knows that it is the chief of police who is the one who really has the overall view of how police will be deployed and what they will be deployed to.

Though this government has made it clear that we are particularly interested in matters relating to youth crime, auto theft and auto vandalism, it will really be up to the chief of police to determine if those programs are continued.

**Education System
Physical Education Curriculum**

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, yesterday in the Fitness Directorate Estimates, the minister insisted that he had consulted with the Manitoba Physical Education Teachers' Association, as well as the Phys Ed Supervisors association, regarding necessary changes in the physical education curriculum and classes to ensure more student graduates are going to be participating in fitness activities.

I want to ask the minister today to clarify his statements, to tell the House whom he consulted with and the results of those consultations with respect to new curriculum for physical education.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): Madam Speaker, I indicated to the member last night during the Estimates process that surrounding the issue of mandatory physical education in schools that arose prior to the election, that I had met with people from the Physical Education Supervisors association, as well as the Physical Education Teachers' Association. I do not have the names of all of the individuals, but I am certain I could put that together for the member if she wishes.

Ms. Cerilli: Madam Speaker, given that I have a memo from both of those organizations, specifying that they do not want to see any curriculum changes that would result in a loss of activity time from those classes, I want to ask the minister if he will acknowledge that these fitness professionals do not want to see a loss of activity time, and will he support that position as the minister for fitness for the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, they have not provided me with a memo to that effect. I am not sure if my colleague the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) has received one, as well.

Certainly, in this process of trying to determine a new curriculum for the physical education process and the goal that has been attempted to be established in terms of trying to instill into the students of our province a lifelong interest in physical activity, Madam

Speaker, if they want to provide a memo, if they want to have a meeting, if they want to discuss the issue, I am more than willing to meet with them and discuss those issues at any length they wish to do so.

Ms. Cerilli: I would ask the minister if he would not agree that the best way to ensure good fitness habits are developed among young people is to ensure that they have the maximum time during their school life to participate in physical activity during their school time, and they should not see a reduction in that school time, Madam Speaker, given that this was the government that was going to eliminate physical education from high schools.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, the ultimate goal, I think, of all of us collectively is to instill in the minds of our school children through the physical education process that they need to have and maintain a lifelong interest in physical activity.

The healthier their bodies are throughout their lives, the better off they are going to be, both physically, mentally, and the better off the taxpayer will ultimately be through reduced costs within the medicare system.

But, Madam Speaker, how we reach that goal I am not prepared to debate at this point with the member for Radisson because, quite frankly, neither of us is an expert in this field, and we need to talk with those people who are in the educational process to determine the best method of reaching that particular goal.

* (1400)

**Youth Works Program
Status Report**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Part of Gary Filmon's plan for the province of Manitoba bears a youth—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Inkster that all members are referred to as honourable members in this Chamber, and perhaps he would like to rephrase his question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Under the Honourable Gary Filmon's plan for Manitoba, Madam Speaker, you will find that he made a commitment to a Youth Works program. It was indicated that this particular program will provide training opportunities for information in technology and computer-related jobs for our young people. Two weeks away from summer vacation for many of our high school students, Madam Speaker, there is definitely a lack of detailed information with respect to this particular campaign commitment.

My question to the Minister of Education is, will she indicate today the status of this program, and when can we receive the details, so that young people throughout the province are going to be able to access this campaign promise.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Inkster for that question, because it does enable me to provide to the House information about the wide variety of student programs that are available for summer employment. I think the member may be familiar with many of them, and they have done a tremendously good job of providing opportunities during the summertime for students at university or at high school.

We have CareerStart. We have Partners with Youth. We have the urban Green Team. We have the REDI Green Team. We have Manitoba Youth Job Centres. We have volunteers in public service. We have special government initiatives. We have a wide variety of things that are going on that are government initiated and sponsored.

But more importantly, Madam Speaker, for the long-term health of the economy of Manitoba, we have more businesses doing better in terms of their financial situation, in terms of the growth of their businesses, and they are able to create jobs that employ students, and that is a good signal for all of Manitoba, not just for young people seeking summer employment but for all people seeking employment.

Our statistics are extremely good. We are very proud of them, and I thank the member for the opportunity to put that on the record.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister of Education can then indicate to the House whether or not this government is backtracking on a commitment that it made to Manitobans to provide 300 jobs for young people in high-tech, career-oriented positions.

Has this government already backtracked on a campaign promise?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, the short answer, of course, is no, and the comment in relation to the breaking of promises would be that it is surprising that someone who supports and adheres to the red book, where we have a promise that the GST would be gone, where we have a promise that a number of other things would happen, stands up and speaks to another party about breaking promises, when we have not.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the Minister of Education then indicate to the House, when will we see this particular program if she is not planning on breaking this promise, given that there is virtually no details about this program, and school is going to be breaking in two weeks?

Mrs. McIntosh: The member is making an erroneous assumption which perhaps is not the first time an erroneous assumption has been made on behalf of questioners in this House, but I would invite the member, if he has time, to drop by the Estimates of Expenditure which are ongoing at the present time. The Department of Education is meeting in Room 255 and will be going into session immediately following Question Period.

He is most welcome to come, and we will be pleased to delve into any kinds of specific details on any of the programs available for employment and training for young people and students in Manitoba in the appropriate place, where we have time for that kind of in-depth exploration.

Dangerous Goods Transportation

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

One very serious concern shared by all Manitobans is the safe transport of dangerous goods within the province of Manitoba. Accidents involving spills of these dangerous goods increased by almost 22 percent between 1992 and 1993.

Can the Minister of Environment explain to the House why we are seeing this disturbing trend in the hazardous goods and toxic waste transport?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, I believe his question was not if we are seeing an increase in the transport of this material, but if we are seeing an increase in potential hazardous situations.

I can certainly assure you and the honourable member that this is one of the priorities that the Department of Environment has taken on over the last number of years to make sure that we have an increasing capability of enforcement and handling responsibilities further enforced in terms of handling these materials.

I would be interested if he would share the material that he is referring to, because I would like to check his figures.

Mr. Dewar: That is found on page 163 of the State of the Environment—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Dewar: Madam Speaker, what specific action is this minister prepared to take to prove the safe handling and transport of dangerous goods within this province?

Mr. Cummings: I would certainly endorse his resource material, Madam Speaker. The fact is, as we see an increased amount of handling of this material, it does become an increasing concern for not only this jurisdiction but a number of others.

I would suggest that one of things that is the most encouraging about the handling and transportation of hazardous materials is that we have seen, despite very grossly increased volumes, an increasingly safe system put in place, and the number of operators who are

operating in violation of the law has been greatly reduced.

But he raises a legitimate question in terms of enforcement to make sure that we do not allow those numbers to grow.

Federal Registry

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, I have a final question for the same minister.

Will the minister work to protect the lives of firefighters, police, emergency response personnel, by working with the federal government and other provinces to implement a computer-based registry for the transport of dangerous goods?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Well, Madam Speaker, we already have a system in place in the city of Winnipeg whereby we have a much-improved ability to communicate what firemen may expect when they attend certain fires in locations where there may be hazardous goods stored.

But, Madam Speaker, I think in the implementation of any future program such as the member refers to, we have to make sure of the efficacy of being able to keep it up to date, so there is not a false sense of security that is created by information being somewhat delayed in terms of what is put forward, as opposed to actually being able to check the information that is filed at the scene when firemen are called to the site of a fire or any other potential disaster.

So let me say that while the idea is commendable, I cannot assure him that this is yet the most practical application.

Franchise Disputes Third-Party Adjudication

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

As the minister will recall, former minister Ed Connery proposed a third-party adjudicator for

franchise disputes, but this idea was rejected by the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

Now, given the community outrage in rural Manitoba over the attempts of General Motors to shut down smaller dealerships in favour of large dealerships, is this government now prepared to support third-party adjudicators for franchise disputes?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, the whole question of business arrangements between franchisers and franchisees has become a very large business across North America in the last 30 or 40 years.

The question of franchise legislation to regulate that activity has been implemented, I believe, in one province, Alberta, where there is mandatory disclosure, but it does not contemplate, Madam Speaker, any control further than full disclosure of arrangements between franchisers and franchisees, so that if someone wants to enter into an agreement, they are fully aware of what they are getting into.

* (1410)

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, the minister did not answer the question. The question was would he attempt to set up a third-party adjudicator for franchise disputes.

We are not talking about legislation in this question. We are asking for him to set up an adjudication process. Will he do it?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, I am not privy to all of the circumstances surrounding one particular dealership and their arrangements with their parent company, and I am not about to jump off the deep end, as the member for Elmwood frequently does in terms of demanding government action on this and demanding government action on that without knowing about which he speaks.

So, Madam Speaker, if issues are raised with respect to that issue, we will certainly take a look at it.

Mr. Maloway: My final question to the same minister is, why has this government sat on this issue for so

long, and why is it not prepared to support the efforts of small, independent dealers in this province and business in rural communities?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, I do not know where the member for Elmwood has been. He has been resident in this House for the last four years.

When you look at the introduction of the kinds of programs that have taken place under Rural Development—REDI programs, Grow Bond programs, decentralization—this government has done major, major things to try and preserve small business and to try and preserve the communities of rural Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

The member is false in terms of the statement he just made. [interjection] Madam Speaker, if that is an unparliamentary word, I withdraw that.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable minister.

Fire-Fighting Resources—Camperville Capital Funding

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, the community council of Camperville is a community concerned about fire protection, and they have applied for funding for several years now under the Capital project under Northern Affairs. They have been supported by the communities, and their project has passed the budget review process.

I want to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs why, if they had already passed a community budget review process, he pulled their project from the list, since I understand it was on the final list for approval.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Northern Affairs): Madam Speaker, the member's information is incorrect.

Ms. Wowchuk: I want to ask the minister, since he is overruling the community budget review process and is taking projects out, is he saying that the community budget review process is not a good process? Is he planning to remove that process and make all the decisions himself on these projects?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, as I have said to the member before, her information is incorrect.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, since the community of Camperville was budgeting for this fire truck for several years, I want to ask the minister why he did not tell them on his many visits to Camperville that he did not approve of this project. Why did he wait until after the election to cut their project from the approval list?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, for the third time, because the member does not appear to listen to the answer, her information, her premises on which she makes her statements are incorrect.

Madam Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon Mr. Leonard Domino who was the member for St. Matthews from 1977 to 1981.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call Bill 7 for second reading?

SECOND READINGS

Bill 7—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), that (Bill 7) The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reimer: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce for second reading Bill 7 to amend The City of Winnipeg Act.

The main component of this bill is new legislation which will permit Winnipeg City Council to have a program for issuing tax credits and rebates to any person who makes a contribution to a candidate running for council. As well, this bill proposes to strengthen the existing penalty provisions for violations of the election expenses and contributions legislation.

I will now describe each of the changes in turn.

The tax credits and rebates for election contributions: Winnipeg City Council has requested legislation which will enable them to give tax credits or rebates to persons who make election contributions to a candidate running for council. The amendments in Bill 7 enable council to pass a by-law to determine the amount of the credit or rebate and the maximum tax credit or rebate which any person can receive for all their contributions. Any person who is eligible to make a contribution under The City of Winnipeg Act will be entitled to a credit or a rebate, not just property owners.

* (1420)

The legislation also contains a provision enabling the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to pass regulations regarding a tax credit and rebate program.

A city by-law would have to be consistent with such a regulation. The purpose of a regulation would be to set some broad parameters on tax credit and rebate limits. Consultation with the city will take place to determine the need for a regulation, its scope and the amount of maximum credits and rebates, strengthening elections expenses and contribution penalties.

The City of Winnipeg Act currently imposes a fine of up to \$1,000 for any violations to the elections expenses and contribution legislation. To create a greater deterrent for violators, this bill proposes to increase the maximum fine to \$5,000.

Another way in which this bill will strengthen the penalty provisions addresses the treatment of defeated

candidates who fail to file their audited statements of election expenses and contributions. Up to now, a candidate who is defeated in an election is prohibited from running as a candidate in any future election until he or she files an audited statement of election expenses and contributions. This permits candidates to file their statement up to the nomination day for the next election and still be eligible to run.

City councillors have pointed out that this does not provide much of an incentive for a defeated candidate to honour the deadline in the act for filing audited statements. By contrast, candidates who are elected and who fail to file their audited statement by the deadline are not only prohibited from sitting in Council but eventually lose their seat, and they are not entitled to run in a by-election to fill the seat. To make the penalty for elected and defeated candidates more equitable, this bill proposes that defeated candidates who do not file their audited statements by the deadline will be ineligible to run in the next civic election.

Additionally, Bill 7 strengthens the penalty provisions by eliminating any ambiguity which may have existed about who is ultimately responsible for carrying out various duties under the election expenses and contribution provisions. Ambiguity in responsibility and accountability make it much more difficult to administer penalties.

Two incidents which require clarification have been addressed in this bill. The first is to clarify that a candidate's official agent is responsible for ensuring all contributions are deposited in a special bank account. The second is to clarify that the official agent is responsible for ensuring that if a candidate receives an anonymous contribution, the amount will be turned over to the city.

In conclusion, I have described for members of the House the main features of Bill 7. Essentially, the bill provides the City of Winnipeg with legislation it has requested for credits and rebates for civic election contributions and enhances local government accountability in administering election expenses and contribution legislation. In conclusion, I would recommend Bill 7 to the honourable members of the Legislature for their consideration and adaptation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today and put a few brief comments on the record regarding Bill 7, the amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act.

On this side of the House we concur heartily with the new changes in The City of Winnipeg Act when it comes to the clarification of some of the penalties and responsibilities as far as reporting the election returns for City Council and mayoralty candidates and the responsibilities that various participants in those processes must undertake. They are excellent clarifications and I think will go a long way towards making the system more responsive and more accountable.

As the minister has stated, the main element of Bill 7 that will have an impact on the City of Winnipeg and the elections coming up this fall and in future years is the institution of the ability of the City of Winnipeg to put in place tax credits or rebates for contributions to mayoralty candidates and City Council candidates. We, as well, applaud these changes to The City of Winnipeg Act.

My recollection is that the tax credit, tax rebate process, was first implemented in The Elections Finances Act by a New Democratic government for the province. We approve of the changes that have been made to allow individuals to gain a tax credit or rebate for donations to political candidates in the City of Winnipeg elections.

My only concern, Madam Speaker, is it does not deal specifically with Bill 7, although it flows out of the process that was undertaken in the actions leading up to Bill 7. I think the government, frankly, has responded very quickly and quite concisely and probably very completely with concerns and questions and issues raised by the City of Winnipeg in dealing with the City of Winnipeg election process. I just wish that the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer) and his other cabinet colleagues would deal as quickly and as efficaciously with other concerns raised by the City of Winnipeg and other municipalities in the province around planning issues, development issues and

resource issues. I look forward to not only the Minister of Urban Affairs but perhaps the Minister of Housing (Mr. Reimer) and the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) coming forward very shortly—and the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh)—with responses to major concerns in other areas that the City of Winnipeg has that they must ask for leadership from the province, leadership which, with the exception of Bill 7, has been sadly lacking by this government.

With those few comments to put on the record, we are pleased to pass, through to the committee hearings, Bill 7.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I have a number of things I would like to put on the record prior to Bill 7 going into the committee stage. Suffice to say that we do believe, ultimately, a move in this direction is very positive. We applaud the government on taking some actions in terms of trying to make it that much easier for individuals of all income levels to be able to participate in a significant way, significant being defined as to participate as candidates in elections. We have done this for years now at the national level and the provincial level, where rebates are put into place.

But there is a lot more to it than just having a rebate per se. There is the whole question in terms of entitlements, what sort of percentage of a vote a candidate requires in order to qualify for a rebate, the different types of campaign expenditures that are out there. A lot of these questions really and truly need to be answered. The legislation as it is being proposed is leaving a lot of these questions to be answered in the form of by-laws in the City of Winnipeg in terms of determining what they feel is most appropriate.

I do believe that City Hall will look favourably on the legislation as a whole, but there are some areas in which I believe maybe we could have had a bit more of a debate. Hopefully, we will see some questions arising through the committee stage that will somewhat expand on what the intent actually is.

The tax credits and rebates, the percentage of how much of a rebate or a tax credit one is going to be entitled to, as I have indicated, depending on what

percentage of a vote that a candidate will have to garner in order to qualify for that, spending limits, it is far easier for some to raise money than it is for others.

There is a whole question in terms of just how much money. In fact, earlier this afternoon I had a class tour. When I asked them if they had any questions, one person asked, how much does it cost to run for office? Madam Speaker, you will know whenever the election returns come out from the province that the cost really varies in terms of one's ability to be able to raise or to garner sufficient funds. Some will say, anywhere from \$35,000, let us say.

I can recall the former member for Assiniboia, Mr. Mandrake, who had spent something like \$3,500 or something of that nature in Assiniboia. Equally, you can get candidates who will spend a great deal of money, somewhere in and around that \$30,000-plus, and not be as successful.

Madam Speaker, the amounts of money and the availability of candidates to raise money is a very important aspect in any given election. When we look at Bill 7, we do see it as a positive thing in the sense that it will be that much easier for individuals to be able to raise dollars to put forward credible campaigns, and by credible campaigns we are referring to paying for literature and signage and phones and so forth.

It was interesting. A couple of weeks back I believe I had heard one of the city councillors comment that even if we pass the legislation that he was not sure if in fact we would be able to put it into place prior to the civic election. The minister nods his head in confirming that remark. It was reported and it is a real concern that we have. We are attempting to expedite this piece of legislation with the belief that City Hall is going to in fact be able to take advantage of this legislation.

I think that the minister, through committee or later in third reading, quite possibly should try to assure the House that there is a very significant commitment or a principle, agreement, if you will, amongst different councillors or whatever that they would do what they can—or the mayor—to ensure that if in fact we do expedite this legislation that it will be enacted prior to

or the by-laws and the city's aspect will in fact be acted upon prior to the civic election getting underway.

For many candidates or potential candidates that are out there, they would be following this legislation in anticipation that if it passes it will allow them to raise money in a different fashion.

So there are many things that I could comment on with respect. The minister makes reference to the violation fine increases, to the inability of someone to run again if in fact they do not file by the deadline. There are some very positive aspects to this legislation and I will defer detailed comments until we get into committee or possibly into third reading, at which point in time we will, hopefully, even get more of a commitment from the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer) as to the time frame and when he anticipates that this is all going to be put into place, in particular what sort of commitments he has received from City Hall.

With those remarks, Madam Speaker, we are prepared in the Liberal Party to see it go to committee.

* (1430)

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 7, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mrs. Vodrey), that Madam 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 La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) in the Chair for the

departments of Fitness and Sport, and Family Services; the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

FITNESS AND SPORT

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 254, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Fitness and Sport.

When the committee last sat, they had been considering item 1.(b)(l) on page 69 of the Estimates book and on page 15 of the yellow supplement book.

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): I would be absolutely totally remiss if, as the MLA for Dauphin, I did not bring up a couple of recreation issues that are local to the Dauphin area, the first one being the Dauphin Joint Recreation Commission and its pursuit of the construction of a recreation complex in our Parkland area.

I realize that through the infrastructure program, the Dauphin Joint Recreation Commission has obtained \$600,000 to be used towards the complex.

My questions have to do with this particular department and whether there are any other forms of funding that I can be helping the commission in obtaining.

* (1440)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Chairman, we have no direct facilities funding programs contained within our budget.

There is the Manitoba Sports Federation Rural Facilities Program which I believe they have already

applied to, if I am not mistaken. What the disposition of the last round of that is has not yet been determined.

There is an independent committee that reviews all of these applications in the context of their appropriate application to the technical aspects of sport development, and then based on those criteria, they decide whether or not a project is worthwhile and whether they will make a contribution toward it. They have had at least one round, if not two rounds, of that already.

Some facilities who had received awards in the past have decided now, for one thing or another, not to proceed, so as a result, some additional funds become available and so they will reallocate those. That process is ongoing at the moment, but in terms of directly in this budget, no, there is no facilities money.

Mr. Struthers: I would be interested in knowing some of the criteria about that facilities program. Is that something that the minister could tell me today?

Mr. Ernst: Well, it is not my program. It is a program set up initially with a \$5-million fund from the Manitoba Sports Federation, which was, in fact, certain surplus monies that government had insisted that they dispose of rather than keep them in a trust account somewhere. We suggested to them this would be a good idea, so that has gone ahead. It was originally funded at \$5 million, and they have done a number of projects over the last two or three years that the program has been around.

The general criteria, as far as I am aware, is based on the technical contribution to sport, like will it enhance sport of one kind or another within the region where it is located? Will it become a central training facility? Will it provide opportunities for one form of sport or another to enhance that particular sport in those regions?

Those are the general criteria. If you want more, I suggest you contact Mr. Mike Moore, who is the chairman at the Manitoba Sports Federation.

Mr. Struthers: One of the reasons why I bring this to the attention of the minister and quite frankly to the

attention of as many people as I can, is that the original scheme for the Parklands recreational complex was all in one phase, and because of funding problems that they encountered, mostly through a lack of commitment from federal and provincial sources through the national infrastructure program, they have been forced to break the project into two phases.

They are going ahead with the leisure pool concept, a unique type of structure for the province of Manitoba. It has been based on some models from Saskatchewan, but it is unique to Manitoba, and one of the reasons why I wanted to bring this up is that they are starting with the leisure pool and the curling rink facilities. The hockey rink facilities are going to be put off to Phase II.

I am worried that it is going to end up costing everybody involved a lot more money to wait for Phase II, so what I have been trying to do is get people to commit money now so that it does not cost us more in the long run.

I certainly appreciate the information that the minister has given me in terms of another avenue for the Dauphin Joint Recreation Commission to go. Does the minister have any idea how much money is available through that program that he was describing to me?

Mr. Ernst: Overall, I think what is left is somewhere in the area of a million, a million and a half dollars, but the maximum contribution for any one project is \$250,000 on a matching basis, so Dauphin would have to provide 250 for the 250 that would be provided by the program.

They may well have applied to this program, I do not know. I mean, they have been pretty tenacious, shall we say, in terms of looking and seeking out funding arrangements.

I can remember one of the former mayors of Dauphin coming to see me, back when this program was first being floated at somewhere between \$6 million and \$9 million for a project, suggesting that because I was the Minister of Lotteries at the time, that we ought to provide them with a casino and let them keep all the proceeds—you know, ingenious suggestion. It did not,

obviously, go very far, but nonetheless, you have to keep trying and looking for every means of funding that is available in order to accomplish these objectives.

Mr. Struthers: So it was those of us in Dauphin who first started the idea of twinning casinos with hockey rinks then.

I want to ask a question about another problem, not just within the area of the Parkland and Dauphin, but one that I suspect is on the minds of rural people throughout rural Manitoba. I want to pinpoint as an example the R.M. of Lawrence and recreation. When I lived in the R.M., we used to try to provide for young children and students throughout the summertime, and we ended up doing a lot of the fundraising on our own and matching that with grants coming from—I believe this time I am in the right department, and you are shaking your head again.

Anyway, what we tried to do was get enough money to put together programs for the summer. One of the things that we realized was that when it came to recreation, in little towns, there is a shortage of recreation directors, and you end up with R.M.s combining together and sharing a recreation director. Sometimes it creates problems in terms of scheduling of the recreation director into little communities and probably having the recreation director running around in all kinds of different directions trying to put some programs together.

I am going to ask the question, and I am probably going to get told, looking at the reaction, that I am asking the wrong person, but the funding that goes towards these clusters of R.M.s, does the minister see that as being at a level that is acceptable, or should there be consideration of providing more funding, so that the recreation directors would not need to be shared in as broad a way as they are today.

Mr. Ernst: That is quite a legitimate question by the member for Dauphin, and he is a newly elected member. He will not necessarily know that there is a split jurisdiction here with respect to these issues.

I deal with fitness and amateur sport. The Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship deals

with the question of recreation in rural Manitoba. They provide funding sources, and they do the liaison work with the municipalities and so on in terms of the direct recreation component, so that question would more appropriately be put to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) when his Estimates come forward.

While I have the mike, Mr. Chairman, I can point out that, actually, the Dauphin Recreation Commission did get \$250,000 in funding from the Manitoba Sports Federation Rural Facilities Program in round two which was approved in June of 1994, I believe. They did apply and they did get it.

They are not going to get another one, so there is no point in running off and phoning Dauphin to say I found another funding source, but they did get a \$250,000 grant.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1.(b) Sport Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Chairperson, there are a number of issues that I want to discuss in the area of sport policy, and hopefully we can move through this quite quickly this afternoon.

I would like for the minister to tell the committee the amount of money that is being allocated for some of the games programs undertaken by the Sport Directorate. The Manitoba Games, how much will that be allocated for this year?

Mr. Ernst: \$279,900.

Ms. Cerilli: The amount that is going to the sport bodies?

Mr. Ernst: The \$279,000 is for the program. The Manitoba Games Council run the program, so it is their operating expenses. The allocations for the next hosting community, which is Morden, for the summer 1996 games, I believe, is \$150,000.

That may or may not be paid out in this fiscal year, depending upon—they have 75 for capital and 75 for operating, so whatever, however, the Manitoba Games

Council ultimately decides its allocation. It may come out of this year's budget or next year's budget, as the case may be.

Ms. Cerilli: I am wondering if I could ask the indulgence of the committee to pause for a minute so I can ensure I have the same Estimates material as is in the book. As I was saying yesterday, I have just been working from the Supplementary Information, so I do not know if the Chairperson could endeavour to get me a copy of that page.

Mr. Ernst: That information, that is, the \$279,000, is not included in the Estimates book.

* (1450)

Ms. Cerilli: I am just wanting to clarify, I am wanting just to get a more detailed outline of the budget line items for this division. If the minister has something that he can provide for me so it would facilitate the questions that I have, I would appreciate that.

I am wondering if that would include items—no, I am sure it would not. One of the things that I want to discuss is the agreement with the Sports Federation for the rent that they pay. I am sure that that is not part of what the Sport Directorate budget would be, would include. Is there any direct money that goes from the Sport Directorate for the rent at the Manitoba Sports Federation building?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Chairman, to be perfectly clear, there are \$7.687-million transfers from the Sport Directorate budget to the Manitoba Sports Federation for their operations by way of an agreement, funding agreement, and from that money, they operate. So presumably, technically, rent is paid from that particular fund. We do not pay the rent directly. The Manitoba Sports Federation entered into an agreement. They actually tendered five, six, seven years ago for that particular building, or they tendered for a premise. That particular one was the one they chose, and they entered into a long-term lease, ten years, I believe, for that space. So from their operating funds that we pay them monthly, aggregating \$7,687,000, they pay their rent, they pay all their operating costs, including grants to sports, and the whole nine yards.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister aware of the amount that is paid from the monthly amount that goes to the Sports Federation, the amount that is paid for rent from the Sports Federation, as well as a figure of the accumulated addition that the sport bodies have to contribute?

Mr. Ernst: The overall rent, I am advised, is \$1.5 million annually. What the internal breakdown is between the Sports Federation and their subtenants, I do not know.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister tell me what the terms are of the lease for the building on Main Street, the length of the lease? As I understand it, there are agreed-upon increases in the lease that are stipulated in the lease, so I am wondering if the minister can clarify that?

Mr. Ernst: No, I cannot. That lease agreement is between the Manitoba Sports Federation and the building owners.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister tell me how much the rent has changed for the Manitoba Sports Federation over the last 10 years?

Mr. Ernst: That question would best be directed to the Manitoba Sports Federation to ask them what it was. They were at the end of a long-term lease agreement in the Cunningham Building on the corner of Ellice and Century, and when they put out for tender their requirements, oh, six, seven years ago, Cunningham's bid was higher than this one, where they are presently.

So, I do not know what the number was in those days. I do recollect that the Cunningham bid was higher than this one. This one, I was told, and I did see the numbers at the time, was the best arrangement for what they were asking for. Now, what they were asking for was considerably more than what they had previously. They had outdoor parking previously. They have indoor parking here. They have considerably more space here than they had previously in the other premises.

The sport director is not directly involved. The Manitoba Sports Federation gets a grant pursuant to

their funding agreement, but we have no restrictions within that funding agreement as to how the money is spent, other than a maximum of 15 percent can be spent on administration.

Beyond that, the expenditure of the money is the purview of the Manitoba Sports Federation pursuant to a historical agreement dating back to 1983 or before.

Ms. Cerilli: That was one of the other questions that I was wanting to ask, if there are any conditions or restrictions put on the money—what was it this year?

Mr. Ernst: \$7.6 million.

Ms. Cerilli: The \$7.6 million this year that went to the Sports Federation. Now you have said that there is a 15 percent limit on administrative costs. What does that include?

Mr. Ernst: Well, I say there is a funding agreement that details many things, but there is a 15 percent cap on the direct administrative costs and expenses of the Manitoba Sports Federation Inc. That is not to say that they provide salary grants and so on to individual sports. Those are not included in the 15 percent. Only the direct administrative costs of the Sports Federation are included in the 15 percent.

Ms. Cerilli: So back to the questions I was asking earlier about the increases in the costs for overhead to the Sports Federation and the different sports governing bodies—the current lease, as I understand it, includes a number of years, and as I understand it, there would be a cost to any sports or the Sports Federation if they wanted to terminate that lease, and I am wondering if that is something that the minister is aware of.

Is he aware that this is something that is a concern for some of the sports and for some members of the Sports Federation?

* (1500)

Mr. Ernst: Well, first of all, I am not purview to what arrangements the Sports Federation makes with its members to occupy space in the building. That is their business and I do not know what it is.

I do not know the details of their lease either, their head lease, that is, for the whole space. In most cases, commercial lease arrangements include penalties for early termination, and I assume that would be part of their lease agreement, but I do not know for sure because I have not seen their lease.

Ms. Cerilli: I find it odd that the minister takes that attitude, that there is not more responsibility for accountability for the Sports Federation's use of money. I mean, it is an arm's-length organization, but it still has a line in the Estimates book. It is accountable to the public of Manitoba. It is using Lotteries funds and public dollars.

So I am wondering if the minister would consider that this is an area where perhaps he should be paying some more attention. As I said, I am hearing that there are concerns about the lease, the terms of the lease, and the increases in costs that are part of the lease that the different groups are tied into through the Sports Federation.

Mr. Ernst: The member may well be correct. This method of arrangement of funding the Manitoba Sports Federation provided for absolute autonomy to the sports. That is what they wanted.

That is what they demanded, and that is what former Sport minister, Larry Desjardins, gave them when this arrangement started back in, I think, 1983 or thereabouts. This matter has been ongoing for some time. That is, quite frankly, one of the reasons why we are looking at Sport Manitoba and how can we address the issue of more accountability, more effectiveness with respect to the funding of sport in the province of Manitoba. That process is ongoing.

Ms. Cerilli: I think the minister is mixing apples and oranges here. I am talking about the minister seeing the lease, knowing what is going on at the Sports Federation. I am not referencing the need for changes in the autonomy of the Sports Federation.

I think there is the provision for accountability, especially through a format like the Estimates process where they are being held accountable, but that is only to the extent that the minister is willing to answer

questions and deal with the matters in the Sports Federation. The minister is responsible for the Sports Federation and—

Mr. Ernst: No, I am not. I am not responsible for the Sports Federation. Mr. Chairman, I beg to differ with the member for Radisson. The Minister of Sport is not responsible for the Manitoba Sports Federation. They are a duly incorporated corporation. They have a board of directors. They have members, and they run their own affairs. The government of Manitoba is not responsible for it.

The government of Manitoba, through a funding agreement, provides funding to them on an annual basis on an agreed-upon amount. There are, within the funding agreement, criteria that they have to meet in order to qualify for the funding. If they do that they get the money, but how individually they spend the money is up to the Manitoba Sports Federation. They have their own processes. They have decision-making plans within their own body as to how the money is spent. I am not responsible for it. I provide them with a grant every year. We do work together on a variety of issues.

Notwithstanding that, even if I was interested in reviewing their lease document, over which I have no control, I could not do anything about it in any event. They entered into a lease with a commercial enterprise to occupy that building. If they choose to enter into an agreement that calls for escalations in rent or otherwise that is their prerogative. They are responsible to their members for the expenditure of the money. If the members do not like it then they ought to take it up with the Manitoba Sports Federation board of directors not the government, because we do not control what they do there. That is purely and simply the purview of the Manitoba Sports Federation.

The one thing we could do if we saw or thought that—and, in fact, was done three or four years ago. It was determined that they had somewhere in the area of \$13 million in surplus revenues sitting in accounts controlled by the Manitoba Sports Federation Inc. We said, this is inappropriate; you ought not to be holding all this money. We are providing funding to the Manitoba Sports Federation, but we are not providing funding to create surpluses. We are providing funding

to have the money spent for the purposes for which it was intended, basically sport.

We said to them, look, we are not going to give you an annual grant this year; you can take that money out of your surplus. They did, and they still had \$5 million left over. We said, you are going to take that \$5 million and you are going to spend it in a rural facilities program, which they also did, or are in the process of doing, finally.

Ultimately, if we are still not satisfied with the way things are operating I can simply cancel their agreement on six months notice and they will not get any money.

Ms. Cerilli: I was just going to say that the minister has highlighted himself a double standard that is being applied here, when on the one hand the minister did enter into the financial business of the Sports Federation and decide that they were not properly using the funds when they were creating a fund, which I understood is a facilities fund. It is unfortunate that they did not take the proper steps to protect that fund as a secured separate facilities fund as I think now Sport Canada—the federal sport bodies are doing. There is a similar situation.

I am just raising this as one of the issues that has been brought to my attention. I can always get more information before I bring it back to the minister's attention. I would just suggest that there is a double standard here. When we are dealing with public funds, and obviously there are some conditions if there is a 15 percent limit on administration, I am wondering why there is not similar attention given to operating costs. I know with the various grants that are given by different departments to agencies such as this that there are a variety of those kinds of conditions put on them. At the same time, the Sport Directorate is also involved in developing policy which is done, as I understand it, in consultation and co-operation with the Sports Federation, but that becomes policy that the Sports are expected to implement.

There was a lot of attention a number of years ago to developing a sport policy for Manitoba, and that is a policy that is a government policy. That is then

something that the Sports in Manitoba comply with, or we hope that they follow through and comply with.

I guess I am questioning the minister when he is on the one hand saying it is not his responsibility and it is not his business and it is hands off and then on the other hand there are other examples where there is direct involvement and co-operation.

* (1510)

Mr. Ernst: I think the member is somewhat confused. She mentioned firstly something about a \$5-million fund not being protected. I know not to what she refers. I can tell her that the \$5-million allocation toward a rural facilities program is very much protected. That money cannot be spent for any other purpose but that rural facilities program.

Ms. Cerilli: A point of clarification for the minister. The fund and the money that I was referring to was what the minister calls surplus that the Sports Federation had accumulated over a number of years, they, as an independent organization, would undertake in their own budgeting and had made those decisions.

I am suggesting they had not protected that money as a separate fund that could not be spent. If they would have done that, I think the Sports Federation would have been in an entirely different situation when the minister stepped in and looked at their books and informed them they had to spend that money back a few years ago rather than getting a grant that year. That is just to clarify the fund that I was referring to.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Chairman, I thank the member for that clarification, because it was important to know exactly what fund she was referring to.

I might tell the member that during the negotiations for the renewal of their funding agreement at that particular time, from which this expenditure of money from their surplus account was taken, had the opportunity to put that into a facilities fund and chose not to do so. That was the decision of the Manitoba Sports Federation not to do that. We offered them the opportunity. I presented it to them in terms of the

funding agreement. They thought they new better and in fact decided not to do that.

Subsequent to that, just at that particular time during the final part of the negotiations, with respect to the agreement, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) chose to have a cabinet shuffle and Minister Stefanson replaced me as the Minister of Sport at that time. Following Minister Stefanson taking over, a number of other issues arose. After the dust cleared that money was required by the Sports Federation to provide for their annual operating costs because the grant for that year was withheld. They had the opportunity and they blew it.

Ms. Cerilli: Given the minister's comments I will move on to another area with respect to the Sport Directorate and its role, vis-à-vis the Sports Federation and the sport bodies.

Back in '94 at the annual meeting there was a lot of concern about the changes in the sport profiles and the formula that was used. There was a lot of criticism that it was not fair, that it was giving huge cuts to some sports and not for others. I am wondering if the minister could clarify how this issue has been resolved with the Sports Federation and the formula for funding. Has the sport profile been amended, and can he clarify the amendments in the profile and funding policy?

Mr. Ernst: I should point out, Mr. Chairman, that is entirely within the purview of the Manitoba Sports Federation. The Manitoba Sports Federation decides how they want to allocate the money and what methodology they want to use to allocate it.

We do not have a direct involvement. That is the grants committee of the Manitoba Sports Federation that decides that. They decide what criteria they want to judge their members by, upon which they will allocate whatever funding is available for that activity. It has nothing to do with us.

We understand that they have made some modifications to it, but that is anecdotal evidence on our part. Just by our association, we understand some of these things occur, but we do not control it, and we do not have any involvement directly in it at all.

Ms. Cerilli: So the Sport Directorate has no involvement in developing the sport profiles, the formula for the sport profiles or the format for the sport profiles.

Mr. Ernst: That is correct.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there similar formulas or profiles that perhaps are being confused then with what the Sport Directorate does in terms of funding allocation, its carding? I guess they just deal with the carding.

Mr. Ernst: The federal government provides funding to elite athletes based upon a number of criteria. If they are an A-carded athlete, I think it is—I know they just changed the amounts—but I believe the last I heard was \$600 a month for an A-carded athlete, which generally means you have a potential to place very high in international events. B-carded athletes get \$400, and C-carded athletes \$300. C-carded athletes, by and large, are considered to be developmental athletes. They are not yet ready, but they have a potential of getting to the higher plane, given additional training and practice and so on, but the federal government funds through Sport Canada the funding.

In addition to the monthly stipend, they also get tuition and a few other things. I think it has just recently been increased, those amounts, but I am not sure what they are. My staff advise me that just this morning, we received a letter indicating that apparently it is a 25 percent increase for carded athletes. Interestingly enough, they are also looking at cutting off funding to large portions of the sport community, about 40 percent, so that they are giving with one hand and taking away with the other.

Ms. Cerilli: That was another issue that I wanted to deal with, is the federal cuts, but I think I am going to move on and talk a little bit more about the amalgamation and the plans from the task force that were done. The task force was initiated in '91, and it has gone through an extensive consultation and resulted in a report that was made to the Sports Federation.

I am wanting for the minister to clarify for me the process. As I understand it, cabinet has approved that an amalgamation will go ahead, and I am wondering if

that is correct, and that over the summer, there will be consultations with sport groups, and that will lead into a sport congress in the fall ending up in March of '96 with a new organization and incorporated body. Is that an accurate time line?

Mr. Ernst: The time line is very accurate, but I caution the member in saying that it is simply an amalgamation. An amalgamation connotes two groups simply merging, doing all the same things the way they were doing them before.

That is not what is contemplated in Sport Manitoba. Sport Manitoba is a new organization, a new concept, a new way of looking at things, if you will, new partnerships or bringing within the fold people who were previously on the outside, and, ultimately, there may well be different funding arrangements. That will be up to the new Sport Manitoba board to decide.

First of all, the current system is simply based on membership. We need to get to a needs-based system where the money goes to the athletes and not to some of the areas where it is going at the present time.

There is a finite amount of money. You only have a huge resource in terms of people involved in the sports system, but we have a limited amount of resources to apply to it. Based on that, we need to be the most effective and efficient kind of organization we can be in order to provide the money to the athlete, for that is why you do it. By athlete, I am saying athletes, coaches, officials and those directly involved with the field of play. That is where the money needs to go.

So I caution the member that it is not simply just an amalgamation of two groups doing what they were doing before; it is a different concept.

Ms. Cerilli: But the time line is accurate. I hear what the minister is saying with respect to changes that are to be made, and it is not just two groups coming together and continuing functioning as they have been.

One of the questions I want to ask the minister is, with respect to what cabinet approved, did they approve the task force report that was issued February '94? I understand there were some amendments made

to this following the annual meeting last year, or the meeting when this was presented. I am wondering though if all the recommendations and the framework that were outlined in this report are what have been approved for implementation by cabinet.

Mr. Ernst: No.

* (1520)

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister then outline what has been approved by cabinet?

Mr. Ernst: We presented a lot of information to cabinet with respect to these issues and so on, and what cabinet gave me authority to do was to go forward to develop a final concept for Sport Manitoba. They accept the principle, the principle being a non-government organization whose aims and objectives are to provide needs-based resources to the sport community through a partnership of all of the people who collectively are involved in sport in the province.

So I have the authority to go forward to consult with the sport community and to develop over the next period of time a final plan and a framework and a business plan and an organizational structure which will be presented hopefully to the sport congress in the fall.

Ms. Cerilli: Why did the cabinet not accept this format, this framework? It was done by a task force of the Sports Federation. I have listed here the members who were involved in it. It was chaired by Al Macatavish and it outlines specifically a formula for the board of directors. It talks about how there would be some of the changes in both Sport Directorate and the Sports Federation, so I am curious to know why the cabinet did not approve this particular approach.

Mr. Ernst: I can advise the member that cabinet secrecy prevents me from providing reasons for that purpose, but I can tell the member that I have a great deal of respect for the individual sports who are not necessarily part of that process.

Before we get to any final plan or arrangement—let me back up a step. You have the task force under

Chairman Al Macatavish bring forward a recommendation. In fact, they had several options. Then the Manitoba Sports Federation decided they would have their own task force to review that and come up with their own proposal which was also taken into consideration. The MSF board had approved that.

There are some good things associated with both of those proposals, and there are others that I do not agree with, so I am going through a consultation process with Sports over the summer. Following that we will have the sport congress. In the interim period of time I am also going to have a business plan developed, organizational chart and a strategic framework for the operation of Sport Manitoba in the future which I will then present to the Sports. We will fine tune that and from there we will try and implement it by April 1.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I am concerned that, although the minister says that he respects the work and the input of the Sports Federation and the member groups, we have had a task force which was comprised of a member from the hockey association, Special Olympics, staff from the Sport Directorate, Sports Federation president, as well as the former president and the executive director. They undertook since '91 extensive work that was in consultation with their member groups in the community, and it resulted in a report. That began in '91 and it completed in '94.

Now the minister is undertaking to do that same process. In some cases you could say he has rejected the work of that committee, and he is going to cram that same amount of work into a short period of time, and he is proposing to consult with member groups over the summer when it is going to be very difficult to find those people.

So I am very concerned that this is becoming a process that is no longer driven from the bottom up, that is no longer community driven, but is being driven from the minister's staff or the minister's office. I am concerned, as well, that the minister is going to consult with individual sport organizations, and I am wondering if he will make a commitment now that he will consult with the Sports Federation that is a duly elected group to represent those sports. I am wondering if he will not only meet with the member

groups which also elect their own boards, but if he will also meet with the Sports Federation.

Mr. Ernst: I meet with the Sports Federation quite regularly. In fact, we had a meeting last week. I met with the executive committee of the board to discuss this very issue.

The Sports Federation is the sum of its membership. That is their view. They have always held that view as long as I have been directly involved, and because someone is elected to the board of directors does not mean they necessarily represent the voice of any one particular sport.

Whether the Macatavish task force consulted with every sport or not, I do not know. It is my intention to try and consult with every sport to determine their views of how the system should work, how it is working presently, which changes do they think are necessary and the reception, I am told, from—I spoke to the annual meeting of the Sports Federation on Friday evening last week, and from what I hear, and I have not done any extensive consultation to try and find out, but from what I hear, anecdotally, is that most of the sports were quite pleased that we are prepared to consult with them on an individual basis.

There is a certain dynamic in the Sports Federation that sometimes sees the sports in an adversarial role to their own organization. I want to hear from the individual sports as to how they see their role and what is happening in the future and so on, and then we will make a final decision.

Ms. Cerilli: I am not suggesting for a minute that the minister should not consult with the member groups. I am just wanting him to also consult with the Sports Federation.

I am wondering if he could detail the process that he is going to use for these consultations. He sounds like he has some hesitation that the previous task force actually got out there and met with the member groups in a way that he thinks they should have. So I am wondering if the minister can clarify how he is going to consult the consultations, particularly, as I said, over the summer to report in the fall, which is a time when

a lot of sports are either very busy or like a lot of volunteer organizations, a lot of the business will be on a recess.

Mr. Ernst: Well, first, let me say, I do not think any sports take recesses any more. They are operating all year-round. If you are not in your active participation season, you are in your planning phase, your budgeting phase, your development phase, whatever.

They run all year-round. Nobody takes six months off any more. If you run a winter sport, you take the rest of the year off, it just does not happen.

* (1530)

So we will be consulting with the Manitoba Sports Federation on a regular basis as we proceed through this effort.

(Mr. Frank Pitura, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

In terms of how we are going to do that, we are going to do it in two ways; one, to try and bring a number of the sports together into focus groups, if you will, because a lot of them are small, and we think we can have an effective discussion with them in those kinds of groups, and then for the larger sports, we will do it on a one-on-one.

We may do it two or three, depending on the synergies between them and so on, but the expectation is—and I have held out the offer to any sport to say, look, if you want to meet individually, large or small, it does not matter. I am quite prepared to do that.

There are optimistic time lines associated with this, yes, but at the same time, this matter has been hanging around for awhile, too, and I think it is only fair that we try and get on with the process.

I am trying to do that, and from what I understand, at least, it seemed to be reasonably well received by the Sports Federation on Friday evening, so we are in the process of setting that up at the moment.

Ms. Cerilli: From an outside onlooker's point of view, it looks suspicious, I guess. I will put it that way. It

looks like we have had a group that has done a report, and now the minister and his staff are coming in and sort of taking over the process and taking over the task. Do not forget that the Sports Federation is one of the bodies that is being amalgamated, or whatever word the minister wants to use. I just would like some further clarification with respect to the consultation of who else besides the individual sport groups is going to be consulted? Has the minister prepared that list, and is he willing to share it with me?

Mr. Ernst: Not intended to be exhaustive, but there are a number of other stakeholders besides the individual sport groups, universities, outside of the PSOs, if you will, multisport organizations, handicraft sport organizations, regional sport organizations, sport medicine council, universities, and, say not meant to be exhaustive but I do not have a list in front of me. Those are some of the people we will be consulting with.

Ms. Cerilli: Has the minister received any letters or correspondence requesting that the minister clarify which portions of this report that it accepts especially looking at the appendices where there is a lot of detail outlining some of the strengths and the weaknesses of the model that is proposed? Has he had any request to get clarification of what has been accepted?

Mr. Ernst: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Who is actually going to organize the consultation and the sport congress?

Mr. Ernst: I am.

Ms. Cerilli: You personally are going to do the legwork?

Mr. Ernst: I, my staff and the Sport Directorate.

Ms. Cerilli: Will there be any involvement of Sport Federation staff or staff or volunteers from any of the other groups that the minister has mentioned involved in that?

Mr. Ernst: As far as the organization of it is concerned, logistics, shall we say, no. With respect to

participants in the sport congress, it is my anticipation everyone will be involved.

Ms. Cerilli: So just to clarify then, does the minister have some preconceived ideas of where he is headed with this, or is he starting just from a plain clean slate when he is approaching this joint effort, Sport Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: Let me say that I have preconceived notions with respect to what ultimately I would like to see. I would like to see a Sport Manitoba organization that has Manitoba sport policy as its basic guideline; that it is needs-based; that it provides funding to where it ought to go, that is to the athlete in the field of play. In terms of actual structure methodology surrounding operations and things of that nature, I have some ideas. I do not have any preconceived notions.

I will be making it clear to all the individual sports that the question of being needs-based, the question of following the Manitoba sport policy, those are not negotiable. This will be what they do. How it is done, ways of doing it, structure, governance, all different kinds of things are still going to be part of that consultative process and, ultimately, the consultant's report with respect to the business plan and so on, and we will fine tune that through the Sport conference later in the fall.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there any anticipated outcomes that the minister has with respect to cost savings in the area of sport dollars for the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: My expectation is that we will spend the same amount of money. This is not an exercise in attempting to reduce the amount of money available to sport. This is an exercise to spend it smarter, to spend it better and to get it to where it belongs, that is, the athlete, the coach and the official.

This has never been approached on the basis that it was going to be—you know, we are spending \$13.4 million this year in this department and the expectation is we will spend \$13.4 or more next year, subject to general budgetary requirements and so on. This is not an exercise in trying to reduce the amount of spending. This is trying to get it to the place it belongs.

Ms. Cerilli: So in what areas does the minister think this cost shifting will occur? Where do the efficiencies come from?

Mr. Ernst: I have some ideas but in large part it will be based on the results of my consultation with the individual sport groups and other groups as we go through the process over the summer.

I do not want to preclude anything, so I am not about to say anything with respect to those ideas until we have had that opportunity. I will be floating those ideas amongst the groups as we consult with them, Mr. Chairman, for reaction and so on, because sometimes it is easier to get participation from reaction than it is to simply blue-sky it.

My own experience in just discussing with groups sometimes is if you give them something to react to it is easier to get them involved in discussing it and bringing forward what problems they have and so on than it is to simply say, well, what are your problems and how do you think you should solve them. Sometimes you just cannot do that.

These people are, by and large, volunteers. Some of them are intimidated by processes. Some of them are not terribly confident in terms of public speaking and things like that. So I want to try and make it a very good consultation process with lots of discussion and try and get our heads around some of the issues that are facing sports.

Ms. Cerilli: Will the minister be preparing a consultation document that will include some of the ideas he has for changes with respect to a more efficient system? Will he be preparing that kind of a document?

Mr. Ernst: We will have some areas of discussion which we will want to float with people as we meet with them over the summer.

Ms. Cerilli: So there will be something prepared that people can respond to and be able to understand some of the ideas the minister has, and they can expect to get that, when?

* (1540)

Mr. Ernst: Well, if the member is of the view that I am going to float a white paper or something like that with respect to these issues, she is wrong. We will be discussing issues and concerns, things that have come to our attention, concerns that we have and to solicit the concerns that they have with respect to the whole mechanism for the funding of sport in the province.

It is intended to be a very informal process, and I do not intend to float any documents in advance that would preclude any kind of discussion.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, the minister has just said that he has some definite ideas. He, obviously, has some ideas if he is taking on this process himself with his own staff. I just ask that he be up front with the community and put that on paper so that everyone will have equal opportunity to respond and to have their views made known to the minister.

I know certain members of the sport community that I have talked to are concerned about very informal, as the minister has called them, consultations. They are concerned to know who is actually going to be talked to and they just want to have equal opportunity to make their case. I would hope the minister would ensure that is going to happen.

I would encourage him to undertake to put his thoughts in writing and to have that distributed in a very equitable fashion so he can, as he said, float his ideas out and have them responded to.

Ms. Ernst: I thank the member for her views.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister going to endeavour to put forward his ideas then to the community in writing?

Mr. Ernst: I will take the views of the member into consideration.

Ms. Cerilli: Considering this minister, I will take that as progress.

Mr. Ernst: I did not insult you.

Ms. Cerilli: I am not insulting you. I am saying, I rarely get yes or no answers.

Mr. Ernst: Then ask yes or no questions.

Ms. Cerilli: With respect to board composition, does the minister have a preset idea or some notion of how he wants the board of this new Sport Manitoba organization to be composed?

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Ernst: I think it is important that the board of any new organization be composed of the partners in sport, all of the partners, not just PSO's. So, I think athletes need to have a voice. They have not had one before. I think the regions ought to have a voice. That is the grassroots of sport in this province and heretofore they have not had a voice. I think, school sports, where large amounts of our program are actually delivered, should have a voice. So there are a number of areas that need to be represented in the overall composition of board, and certainly that would be my hope that we would be able to include as many, if not all, of those groups without making the thing so unwieldy that it will not be able to function, but at the same time, to have those representations involved.

Ms. Cerilli: Will the new board be elected?

Mr. Ernst: I guess that will be up to the individual organizations. Who is going to elect them if they are in fact elected? What organizations? Will they appoint people or will they elect them? I do not know at this point. I guess ultimately, if you go to the Sport Medicine Council and say, we would like a representative from you, for instance, on the board of sport Manitoba, they may collectively themselves decide. The executives of the Sport Medicine Council may appoint somebody to sit as their representative. They may elect them from their membership at large. I have not really thought that one all the way through yet as to how that is going to occur.

Ms. Cerilli: Currently this organization does serve as a model, where it is one of the most grassroots community kind of organizations, in terms of the way that it elects its representatives. I know the minister is

concerned about, and I think there are other people too, there are many people concerned about the bureaucratic nature in the sport world.

I would advocate that there should be an element of people being elected to the board. If that would come from the sport or different groups that would have representation on the board, that would add to the sense that this is a democratic organization. I am familiar with other organizations like that that have worked well for government. Some of those this government has seen fit to do away with, and I am concerned and I think other members in the community are concerned that we are going to see the loss of a real community-driven kind of effort.

I think this new sport organization could be a really good model. I hope the minister is not thinking that I am opposed to a new sport Manitoba group. I am concerned that this government has in other cases moved to political appointments and moved away from organizations democratically electing their representatives to these kinds of advisory and management boards especially when there are grants involved.

So I would just want the minister to clarify then if there would be political appointments, government appointments made to the new Sport Manitoba Board.

Mr. Ernst: Yes.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister assure us that the government members appointed will not hold the balance of power?

Mr. Ernst: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I have a few yes and no answers out of the minister. It is interesting. So he obviously has some very clear distinctive ideas of where he wants to take this organization and he is going to see fit through the composition of the board that his wishes would be carried out.

I am wondering if the minister also has some anticipated results in terms of staff positions, changes

in staff positions in the organizations we are talking about.

Mr. Ernst: I should point out to the member her admonishing me for not giving her yes and no answers. Her question was, can you assure us that this will not occur or this will occur, and, I said, no, I could not assure her, or yes, I could assure her, depending upon the question. The finalized structure of participation numbers and everything else that goes on is not finalized. That process will not come to fruition until after all of the consultations have taken place and discussions have taken place.

The same occurs with respect to organization. That is why I want to hire a consultant to work with me and the department over the summer to prepare a preliminary organizational chart and a business plan so that we will have some idea, when we go the sport congress in the fall, as to how it would function, what types of positions would be there, where they would fit into the structure and so on, given the whole question of flatter administrative structures and leaner operating situations and, in fact, putting more money to the sport as opposed to the bureaucracy.

* (1550)

Ms. Cerilli: The minister has referenced a couple of the other questions that I had when he mentioned that he will be hiring a consultant that will be undertaking the work that he has talked about doing. I thought he was going to do that with his staff. Is the consultant simply going to write the business plan, or are they also going to be working with the minister on meeting with the groups? Has he identified a consultant to do that?

Mr. Ernst: Firstly, let me say that the consultations will be undertaken by myself and my staff. The consultant will not generally be involved, although he may wish to contact some sports during his process, but his job is going to be preparation of a business plan, preparation of an organizational chart, and he will, by necessity, require to be in touch with the Sports Federation and others, I am sure, during his process. His basic job is to prepare the organizational plan and the business plan for a sport in Manitoba.

Ms. Cerilli: I do not want to spend too much longer on this area. I am just reviewing my notes to see if there is anything that I have missed. Does the minister anticipate, with this new Sport Manitoba organization, that there would be a new formula for funding criteria? We have just seen the federal government introduce massive cuts to Sport Canada, and I am wondering if the minister is anticipating a similar shift in the formula for funding.

Mr. Ernst: Ultimately, with the finite amount of resources, Sport Manitoba will have to determine its priorities in terms of what it is going to do. Its priority may be all things to all people, basically, the Sports Federation model. However many people they have, that is how much money they get to go with it.

It may be that there will be categorizations of sport. It may be that there will be selected sport. I do not know what will occur, but there is a finite resource, and how do you get the best bang for your buck is what the board of Sport Manitoba is going to have decide as its mandate, bearing in mind, again, following the principles of the Manitoba sport policy.

I would hope, and we might have to come to some agreement on that somewhere down the line, that they are not going to do things like the federal government did. I mean, quite frankly, they cut off a sport like ringette, which is wildly popular with huge numbers of participants, but because it did not meet their international sport funding criteria, they got cut off. It is in the lower 40 percent. There is any number, and yet, there are some that are pretty—everybody has their favourite sport, but some are a little iffy that made it into the top 60 percent.

At the risk of—and I do not want to get involved in any individual sport, saying it is more or less valuable than any other but, at some point, the Sport Manitoba board is going to have to decide on what it wants in terms of its long-range objectives and its priorities. It may well be that they may make decisions different than what the Manitoba Sports Federation made with respect to funding.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister seems to be indicating that the Sports Federation of Manitoba, he has used the

term, has tried to be all things to all people and has given money no matter how many individuals they had participating whereas Sport Canada has gone, perhaps, to the other extreme, and they have only recognized sports that have an international competitive program. I am wondering if he could outline his ideas for a criteria, again, to use the minister's words, that would address need and would put the money, as he said, to the athletes and the coaches and the field, the officials.

Mr. Ernst: If I answered all of the member's questions about my ideas about this and my ideas about that, why in heaven's name would I ever want to consult with anybody, because then she will run around and tell everybody that my mind is made up because I said all these things. That is one of the reasons why we want to consult with the sports, is to find out what their ideas are in terms of how it should be changed. Should it be changed? Should the current system be left in place?

The current system is based on a sport profile, as the member has talked about earlier. It is simply based on that sport profile, and there are a lot of anomalies in there, but what it does is try and squeeze everybody into the middle, and I do not think that is necessarily the right way to go, but, ultimately, once we have had the opportunity for consultation and so on, then we will have to look further into that whole question.

Ms. Cerilli: The issue of need I think is really important to address, and I am wanting just to ask the minister to clarify what he means by need. I mean, how are we going to determine that? How are we going to—I think it is one of the things outlined in the sport policy—try to have a balance between developmental programs and elite programs. I mean, that is the ongoing debate, the ongoing issue. Maybe the minister could correct me if he disagrees with me on that.

Mr. Ernst: We need to, Mr. Chairman, provide for the entire continuum of sport from the lowest grassroots-level entry, developmental, participatory organizations through to the elite, but they are not all the same in every sport.

There is a huge grassroots participation—ringette is a good example—in ringette, but there is very limited in

terms of elite programs. Alternatively, you have other sports where there is a very large component of elite programming. So, as I say, we are going to go through the consultation process and discuss with individual sports their ideas with respect to maybe one formula.

Maybe you cannot shove everybody or every round peg into a square hole. Maybe you have to try and tailor some of the organization so that it meets the needs of individual sports as much as it meets the needs of an overall organization. I mean, to some degree, that is what happens at the Sports Federation. It has to meet the Sports Federation's requirement, not the individual sport requirement, and that is something that has caused a lot of heartburn over time. Hopefully, there may be a solution to that, and we will seek it out.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister looking at any models that he is bringing from other jurisdictions, perhaps other countries, that he could share with me or share with the committee?

Currently, now, we look at giving points based on development for coaches' programs, participation, high performance centres. Is there a model, though, that the minister is partial to?

Mr. Ernst: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Okay. I will ask the minister then if he can tell me, based on the budget from Sport Canada which dropped from \$64 million to \$48 million, eliminating funding for sports like archery, broomball, cricket, bowling, football, karate, lacrosse, luge, golf, modern pentathlon, nordic skiing, orienteering, racketball, rhythmic gymnastics, ringette, ski jumping, squash, team handball and weightlifting—can the minister tell me what kind of correspondence he or his department has had with respect to the impact in Manitoba of this, and can he tell the committee what the impact has been on Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: To the best of my knowledge, I have not received any communication with respect to the impact in Manitoba of these individual decisions, and it may be that it is too soon to tell, or it may be that some of these organizations will be able to readjust what they do to compensate ultimately.

I do not really know at this point, but I am no doubt going to hear as we go through the consultation process, because we will be meeting with all of those sports.

* (1600)

Ms. Cerilli: Has the minister or his department initiated any communication so far then with sports in Manitoba to see how they have been affected, and do we know what kinds of things they are doing to try and juggle their budgets to accommodate this cut?

Mr. Ernst: We are in touch, of course, with most, if not all of those sport bodies on a regular basis. We provide some funding directly through the department with respect to coaching and things of that nature, developmental activities. We have not really received very much feedback. We have been trying to make them aware that this is happening, but a lot of that funding will affect the national sport governing body more so maybe than even the individual provinces.

The national offices of some of these organizations and some of the national programs perhaps that they run will be affected, but that may not filter all the way down to individual sports in Manitoba. I do not know for sure, but we have not had a lot of reaction from it anyway.

Ms. Cerilli: Have there been any funding cuts for the Canada Games from that budget reduction?

Mr. Ernst: No. I answered that question last night.

Ms. Cerilli: Pardon?

Mr. Ernst: You asked me that last night.

Ms. Cerilli: Did I?

I want to ask some questions with respect to allocation of bingos. This has been the long-standing practice in discussions with people out there in the community. There have been a lot of changes.

Is there a line item in the Estimates that indicates how much the sport groups get from bingos?

Mr. Ernst: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister then tell me how much flows from the bingos that the individual groups have volunteers participate in to run, how much they end up getting back for their activities?

Mr. Ernst: I am not sure, because that is allocated by the Sports Federation, not by us, but I think it is around \$2 million.

Ms. Cerilli: My understanding is, with the changes, with large bingo establishments like Club Regent and the McPhillips Street Station that now have more electronic games, that there may be a loss in the requirement for volunteer resources to help run the bingos. Is this something that is anticipated for sport?

Mr. Ernst: I would suggest she address that question to the Minister responsible for Lotteries.

Ms. Cerilli: Does the minister know the answer?

Mr. Ernst: The volunteer base, when I left the job as Minister responsible for Lotteries, was the same as it has always been.

Ms. Cerilli: Could the group access to money change if there was, in fact, a reduction of the number of people required to run a bingo from the sport community?

Mr. Ernst: Could the member clarify what she means by that?

Ms. Cerilli: If there is more automation and fewer things that require volunteers or maybe there will be more staff used in the bingo halls, could this be reflected in the ability of sport groups in accessing funds through bingos?

Mr. Ernst: As far as I am aware, the amount of money that is allocated from certain—I am just trying to remember now, but there are three types of bingos. I do not remember what their names are.

First of all, the only bingos that we are talking about are held in McPhillips Street Station and Club Regent,

and there are three kinds of bingos, depending upon the time of day that they are run. The prime-time one—I do not remember what the name is, if I ever did know it actually—provides I think a \$3,000 return, and then there is another one that provides \$1,800, I believe, and another one that provides \$1,500 or \$1,200.

I am not exactly sure of the amounts, but those amounts are not contingent upon—they are not penalized for having less than the number of volunteers, nor are they bonused for having more. What Lotteries might ultimately decide to do is up to Lotteries, not up to the Sport Directorate.

Ms. Cerilli: Has there been a change in the amount of money over the last few years going to the sport groups from bingos? In '94, there was a dramatic drop in the revenue—with the introduction, I guess, of the VLTs—from bingos. Has this been reflected with funding changes, funding cuts?

Mr. Ernst: I do not really know. There are specific numbers of bingos allocated to the Manitoba Sports Federation. Whatever those bingos generate is their money to spend. Now, they may allocate, instead of providing direct revenue service, I think they do allocate a certain number of bingos to certain sports so that, maybe hockey gets 20 evening bingos, or something like that, and whatever the revenue is from that is what they keep, or they may take a rake off the top, I really do not know. It is their choice.

They were allocated, in the funding arrangements, a number of bingos. I think roughly half of all the bingos go to sport, if I am not mistaken, and then the Manitoba Sports Federation doles them out as they see fit under whatever circumstances they wish.

Ms. Cerilli: I think that, if I remember correctly, that is something that has changed, that now the sports are guaranteed a certain amount depending on which time of day they work the bingo at, and that is something that has changed certainly from back in the days when I used to go to smoky bingo halls to earn money for sport.

* (1610)

Mr. Ernst: I would say that, yes, something has changed, and that is the question of the guaranteed amount. What was happening, because of the wild fluctuation in bingos—and this is not necessarily anything directly to do with those facilities, but has to do with bingo in general—is you could have 15 people show up and earn \$300 or \$400 in an evening bingo. They may have driven from Morden to do it, and people were saying, what am I doing volunteering to make \$300 or \$400. The next group in may have come from around the corner, maybe from Transcona, and going to Club Regent, and earn \$8,000.

So what happened was the Lotteries Corporation decided to try and even that off so that organizations are providing volunteer effort, and whose cause is as legitimate as the next, were not subject to the wild fluctuations in the amount. What they did is they took the total amount, evened it off in terms of numbers of bingos and which category of bingos, because some produced more than others. I mean, the five o'clock in the afternoon bingo, I guess, produces less than the eight o'clock at night one. So they categorized them, evened out the amounts, and from all reports, everybody is very happy with that system.

They now know what they are going to get when they go there. They can tell their volunteers, look, for our sport, or our club, or our team, whatever, we are going to get \$3,000 for showing up there. So everybody knows that, and it has not really affected the work ethic associated with it originally where the more bingo papers sold, the more money you made, kind of thing. It seems to work well. People are quite happy to do it, and everybody seems to be reasonably satisfied with it.

Ms. Cerilli: I want to move to ask you some questions about the Pan Am Games. First of all, there had been some concerns for the minister with regard to the cost for tickets. I am wondering if he could tell me if there has been some changes made to the cost for tickets at the various events, and what the costs for tickets are now projected to be?

Mr. Ernst: The member is obviously referring to my discussion about the price of tickets in Victoria, which, I thought, quite frankly, were untoward. As far as Pan

Am is concerned, they are not even close to looking at a ticketing policy yet. Their business plan is not finalized yet, and probably will not be until the fall.

Ms. Cerilli: I understand we can anticipate the business plan being done in October. However, I am aware that there was to be an agreement signed with a television network in the United States for rights to covering the games. I am wondering if that agreement has been signed and some details about the agreement.

Mr. Ernst: As far as I am aware, there is no agreement.

Ms. Cerilli: So was an offer turned down? I understand there was an offer with Fox Network.

Mr. Ernst: I know that officials of the Pan Am Host Society were meeting with Fox, but, to date, I do not have any knowledge of any agreement or even a letter of understanding or anything else. Now, what happened with that I do not know.

I am not, obviously, in the day-to-day operations of the Pan Am Games. They have an extensive volunteer board network and committees. They have their own staff and fast approaching more resources than the Sport Directorate.

Ms. Cerilli: Why did they choose the site of the School for the Deaf for housing the operations? Well, I will let you answer that first. Why did they choose that site?

Mr. Ernst: I was not aware that they had chosen that site specifically, and I have no idea. That is something we could inquire about if the member likes.

Oh, I am sorry, back up. I am thinking of the one on Pembina Highway. The member is obviously asking about the School for the Deaf in Tuxedo, why was that chosen as a site for the Pan Am Games staffing office centre, if you will?

It has historically been in most major games the most ideal kind of facility for them as a school. It provides lots of space and provides some open-area training facilities in terms of a gymnasium for their

volunteers. It provides classroom space for training purposes for people who are required during the games. It provides meeting rooms and a lot of space that is storage, a host of other things associated with major games, so that it turns out either it is a warehouse where they reconstruct everything inside, or they use a school where they can make use of classrooms, gymnasium space and so on.

We were looking at the question of the School for the Deaf and as to what to do with that facility where there are a nominal number of students there now with a very large facility. We have the Pan Am Games looking for space, parking, outdoor grounds to create a variety of other activities that they will need when they get closer to the games in terms of the training of volunteers and so on.

It seemed ideal. Members were looking around, and we suggested that was one of them because the plan was to move the School for the Deaf into more appropriate, more modern facilities that were accessible to the physically handicapped, which the current facility is not. It was more appropriate, less expensive, to move them to Alexander Ross School, which would have freed this facility for use by the Pan Am Games, so Pan Am was excited. They thought it was absolutely perfect. It is, well, not central, it is—

Ms. Cerilli: It is not central.

Mr. Ernst: No, but it is not on the Perimeter Highway either. But it is somewhat centralized in terms of the Winnipeg Arena and Winnipeg Stadium, the airport, university, where a lot of the facilities are located on the western side of the Red River, so from that perspective, they thought it was great, so that is where they are or will be.

Ms. Cerilli: I am wondering if there are renovations associated with it and if the cost will come from the money allocated from the provincial government, about \$23 million, if that is part of the donation from the province or if they are using part of the money from the province to renovate that building.

Mr. Ernst: I do not think there are extensive renovations required in there, but there may be some.

In fact, I am sure there will be. I mean, you just do not walk into a facility and find everything perfect, so I am sure there will be some, but they will have to pay for their own renovations out of the money that is allocated.

Ms. Cerilli: With respect to the budget, I understand that there is \$37 million being granted from the federal government, \$23.5 million from the provincial government and \$10 million from the City of Winnipeg.

Has that changed at all, and can the minister clarify then the amount of money coming from the private sector and other sources to round out the total, which I understand is closer to about \$200 million for the games?

Mr. Ernst: I think the budget is \$119 million. There is a question of a \$5 million contribution out of the Pan Am Games funds to go to a new entertainment complex, potentially. The federal government agreement, I believe \$30 million is the amount, not \$37 million, although there is \$7 million allocated for in-kind services from the federal government, a substantial portion of which is RCMP security, royal visit, those kinds of things, immigration.

The intent is to try and fly the athletes, through a series of charters, from areas in South America and southern U.S. and Caribbean, to fly them directly by charter flight into Winnipeg. In that process they hope to, on the aircraft, pass them all through immigration, customs, do all of that stuff so when they walk off the plane they do not have to stand in line to search out your bags, they do not have to go through all that kind of hassle that you normally have to go through when you come to another country, and accredit them also on the aircraft.

So when they walk off they can go into a bus out to the village; they are settled. But there will be some cost associated with doing that, so maybe some additional expense there as well from the federal government's perspective because they will have to put immigration and customs officers on those flights.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister raised the issue of the \$5 million advance from the federal contribution for the arena. I wonder if the minister can clarify for me when that decision occurred, when the decision to advance that money from the Pan Am Games fund occurred?

Mr. Ernst: The Pan American Games Host Society budgeted certain monies for upgrades in the existing Winnipeg Arena for sound systems and some other things and for a larger facility at the University of Manitoba for volleyball and basketball. If there is a new state-of-the-art entertainment complex built in downtown Winnipeg, they do not have to spend that money on those other facilities. So they would allocate the \$5 million that they would not have to spend on the other facilities toward the cost of the new entertainment complex.

For them it is a wash. If there is no new entertainment complex they will spend it somewhere else and if there is, they will throw that in as their contribution.

Similarly, I had a request from St. John's College at the University who were looking at building a new residence. They said, rather than go out and rent ATCO trailers to supplement the rooms in the university residence for the athlete's village, why do you not give us the money that you would normally spend on ATCO trailers and we will give you our existing hundred rooms in our existing residence plus the rooms in the new residence which we would construct in the intervening period. It makes sense to me. You get kind of two bangs for your buck, so to speak, and the fact that St. John's College benefits. The only people who do not benefit is ATCO Trailers. But you get a greater legacy out of that than you would simply renting the trailers, so I sent them off to talk to the Pan Am people and said, sounds great to me, I concur and go for it.

The whole idea behind these things, apart from the economic impact and the sporting aspects and the prestige and all the other things that go with it, is obviously a major legacy. Legacies for facilities—well, the Pan Am Pool is the most classic example I could think of in terms of a legacy from the 1967 Games. That and the university stadium. If you can create

peripheral legacies like the residence at St. John's College, terrific, that is what we should be doing. If part of that legacy turns out to be a new entertainment complex in downtown Winnipeg, great.

Ms. Cerilli: My questions are specifically to do right now with the decision to advance the money. I want the minister to clarify for me who made that decision and, as I asked, when it was made.

Mr. Ernst: I am not sure any decision is made. Unless something has changed since before Question Period, I am not sure we are even building a new entertainment complex and I am not sure if we even have an agreement with respect to maintaining the Jets here in Winnipeg. If none of that occurs, none of the other will occur. I mean, we are all talking supposition at this point.

Ms. Cerilli: Will the minister tell me if he is aware that that matter was discussed at the board for the Pan Am Games society incorporated? Was it discussed with the finance committee for the games?

Mr. Ernst: I do not know.

Ms. Cerilli: I want to ask a few questions with respect to the Sport for Life campaign that was done. Again, this was an undertaking, perhaps, of the Sports Federation. Was there any involvement of the staff through the Sport Directorate?

Mr. Ernst: Apart from the Premier (Mr. Filmon) appearing in it, no.

Ms. Cerilli: I understand that the staff who were conducting that campaign at the Sports Federation are no longer with the Sports Federation and that they have indeed formed their own company, and they are doing sport-marketing consultation work on their own now.

I am wondering if the minister is aware of that, first of all.

Mr. Ernst: I read it in the paper.

Ms. Cerilli: Does the minister have any more information than what was in the paper?

Mr. Ernst: You would have to ask the Sports Federation. It is their staff, their people. There is rumour and conjecture, and I am not about to foster it. Rather than do that, I suggest, if you want the information, you contact the president or the executive director of the Sports Federation and ask them.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there any results that the minister has had the chance to look at from the research that the study group did after the campaign? I understand that they did some research to look at the impact of the Sport for Life campaign. Does the minister have that feedback?

Mr. Ernst: No, I do not.

Ms. Cerilli: I am sorry. I did not hear the minister's answer. I was consulting with my colleague.

Mr. Ernst: No, I do not.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister interested in looking at that study and information? Will he do that to make sure that—again, this is a fairly substantial undertaking that was conducted through the Sports Federation, and it would relate, I think, to a lot of the policies and responsibilities that the Sport Directorate has. Does the minister plan to look at the results of that campaign?

Mr. Ernst: Well, they did not consult me before they embarked upon the campaign, and so far, they have not consulted me with any results from the campaign. It might be a little academic if, in fact, we are going into a new mechanism anyway, but if they provide me with the information, certainly we will have a look at it, and I think some of the sports are asking the same questions. In fact, a lot of the sports are asking the same questions.

Ms. Cerilli: I would think that this whole area, though, is something that the minister could follow up on. Would the minister undertake to follow up on that, especially given the kind of discussions we were having yesterday with respect to promotion of fitness and healthy lifestyles.

Mr. Ernst: Perhaps the member could repeat the question. I did not hear it.

Ms. Cerilli: If the minister does not consider that this has some relevance, especially to the discussion we were having yesterday, would he not be interested in seeing the results to look at how that kind of a promotional campaign is going to affect attitudes and the propensity to participate in sport and fitness activities?

Mr. Ernst: Well, certainly. We are interested in as many aspects of sport as we can get at. Obviously, if there is a major promotional program that goes on, we are interested in what kind of results come from it. So far, they have not seen fit to provide us with that yet.

* (1630)

Ms. Cerilli: Did the minister support the endeavour in principle?

Mr. Ernst: Well, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) appeared in their television commercial. I think it is a pretty good indication the government supported the principle of Sport for Life.

Ms. Cerilli: Going back, as well, to the discussions we were having about the new Sport Manitoba group, would that group look at doing this kind of large-scale \$100,000 Sport for Life campaign, this added promotion campaign?

Mr. Ernst: I really cannot answer the question, but, ultimately, the board of Sport Manitoba will have to decide what it wants to do in terms of promoting the value of sport, which is one of the basic principles of the Sport policy. How they want to do that will be their choice in the future, perhaps in consultation with the government, perhaps not, but it is one of the—there are many issues that will ultimately come up with respect to those kinds of things in the future, and that process will unfold as it will.

Ms. Cerilli: Maybe the minister would have been a bit more enthusiastic about this undertaking if they had consulted with him in his division in the Sport Directorate before beginning the project.

Mr. Ernst: This really revs me up.

Ms. Cerilli: Does the minister support this kind of approach, in complying with the principles and the Sport policy? Does he support this kind of endeavour?

Mr. Ernst: The promotion of sport and the intrinsic value of sport is very important. Whether that is the exact vehicle I would have used or not is another matter, but the fact of the matter is that a promotional program of the value of sport is important and leads you back to, again, that mystical goal, if you will, that we are trying to achieve, where everyone holds that lifelong interest in sport, physical activity and so on.

Programs will change from time to time too, depending upon what someone thinks is going to be the best vehicle for reaching the most number of people.

Ms. Cerilli: Were the staff that were conducting this Sport for Life campaign hired specifically to do this campaign?

Mr. Ernst: You would have to ask the Sports Federation.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister aware if the staff that were involved in this campaign had their own company prior to being relieved or prior to their termination of working with the Sports Federation?

Mr. Ernst: There are lots of rumours and innuendo and other things floating around, and rather than me speculate, I think your best bet is to go and ask the Sports Federation directly those kinds of questions, because I do not want to foster any rumours that may or may not be true.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Could the minister then tell us what the relationship is between the Sports Federation and his department?

Mr. Ernst: Ostensibly it is an organization that receives granting money from the department. That is the direct relationship. We do some things in concert. We do deal with a number of their members on a regular basis in terms of delivery of sport in the province of Manitoba, but the formal relationship between the department or between the government

and the Sports Federation is that of an umbrella, funded agency.

Mr. Maloway: Well, does it have a government-appointed board?

Mr. Ernst: No, it does not. There is no government representation on the board.

Mr. Maloway: So I would like to ask the minister then how the board is chosen, or how does it operate?

Mr. Ernst: They are elected from the membership. I should clarify. It is not all of the members. It is from the PSOs, provincial sport governing bodies.

Mr. Maloway: What percentage of the Sports Federation's revenues come from the provincial government?

Mr. Ernst: I do not know the exact number, but it is most of it.

Mr. Maloway: So to clarify my thinking, what we have here is a body that is autonomous from the minister, run by a board elected from its membership in which the minister and his department, the people of the province, fund almost to 100 percent, and the minister is telling us that he cannot investigate complaints of wrongdoing in the Sports Federation. Is he saying that?

Mr. Ernst: No, I am not saying that. You are correct in saying that we do not have any direct jurisdiction. It is a funded agency. I do not know that there is any wrongdoing. That is anecdotal at best, or rumour, if you will.

But if you want answers to those questions, go and ask them if there was wrongdoing. I am not aware of any charges, I am not aware of any formal wrongdoing, nor have I been apprised of anything directly from the Sports Federation. As far as I know, they simply shut down their marketing division, and those people who were employed there are no longer employed there. But in terms of anything else, go and ask them about the question. I do not know what the response is.

In terms of our participation, we have no membership on the board of directors. It is an umbrella funded agency under an agreement between the government of Manitoba and the Sports Federation, which agreement, quite frankly, was entered into by former minister Larry Desjardins in 1983, I believe.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, then is there a method by which they can be requested to appear before some sort of a legislative committee to answer questions that my colleague might have, and what committee would that be?

Mr. Ernst: I am not aware of one.

Mr. Maloway: So is the minister telling me then that if there is a problem in the Sports Federation, and I do not know whether there is or there is not, right, I am just helping my colleague out here to get through this. If there is a problem in the Sports Federation, then the minister is telling my colleague that she has to make an appointment with the director of the Sports Federation and go down and ask this person about the questions that she wants answered.

Mr. Ernst: As far as I am aware, it is a staffing issue with respect to the Manitoba Sports Federation, albeit there are lots of rumours around. If that is the case, and she wants information as to the staffing issues of the Sports Federation, I cannot answer that because I am not responsible for the staffing of the Manitoba Sports Federation. They are. Their board is. They have senior staff there that can be contacted to deal with those issues, and I suggest if she wants to know that information, she should contact either the executive director Mr. Kilfoyle or the president Mr. Davis.

* (1640)

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, if there is not a method for us to question the people of the Sports Federation, then there should be. There should be a legislative committee that we can refer this matter to, such as we have committees where we hear from the MPIC people and from the Hydro people and so on where we can question them directly about these matters. I am certain that there is a method.

The Premier is here, perhaps he can enlighten me. When he was in opposition, certainly he made use of certain committees to get at problems that were there, and like I said, I do not know whether there is a problem there or not. I am just saying that the process has got to be such that we can ask questions about this particular area. Maybe the Premier could answer that.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I would say that I am sympathetic towards what the members are asking, but I think that we have quite a few organizations that are almost wholly funded by either the Lotteries or the taxpayers who do not ever come before a committee of the Legislature, like Manitoba Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, the Community Services Council that distributes \$6 million or \$7 million a year of Lotteries funds to various charitable organizations, nonprofit organizations, and they do not come before committees of the Legislature.

It is not as though they are the only ones, and I guess it is just a matter of whether or not we regard them to be sort of direct servants of the taxpayer or whether or not they have their own—and they are a publicly elected entity. I mean, you can go, become a member and run for office and be a part of their board, any one of us could, and that makes them sort of their own entity, whereas you cannot do that, say, for Manitoba Hydro. You have to be appointed by the government to sit on Manitoba Hydro Board.

So I think there is a difference. We do not make the University of Manitoba, despite the fact that it gets almost all of its funding from government, come here and answer. So, I am not making an excuse about it, but I think that it is the sort of thing that any member can go and ask for information and if they feel that it is being unreasonably withheld then I guess your only recourse is to hold the minister responsible and ask those questions of the minister and have him bring the information back to you.

Mr. Ernst: Well, Mr. Chairman, that is not what the member asked. The member asked if I knew if there were problems or what problems there were and so on related to the staffing issue in the Manitoba Sports Federation. I said, no, I do not, that those issues were in the purview of the Manitoba Sports Federation, and

as far as I knew there was a staffing issue where they took their marketing department and closed it and decided to lay off the staff.

Now, whether there are problems associated with that or not, I suggested, if they wanted the information, they should go and ask them. If they do not give you an answer then I would like to know, because I think it is important that you should be given an answer.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, the minister alluded to rumours that are circulating and so on. Can he give us a rough time frame as to when he became aware of some problem there, because, you know, we got calls during the election campaign? That is when they normally surface, these people surface. They do not give you their name, they do not give you their phone number, and so, you know, we have got half a story.

Mr. Ernst: The same guy that phoned you phoned me.

Mr. Maloway: Right, and what did you do?

Mr. Ernst: At that point it had already been public in the newspaper and the action had already occurred. Now, that particular person, I believe his wife was employed there or a friend of his wife was employed there, whatever. I am just trying to go from memory now and so on. The indications were that simply they closed the operation and he made some pretty wild accusations which I did not, could not entirely buy.

Mr. Maloway: Yes, but the accusation was basically that an employee of the Sports Federation was using the facilities of the Sports Federation to fund and run his private company that he had on the side. So he was using the Xerox machines and stuff like that to do his own work. In the meantime he had this little company that he was operating on the side. Now, that is the gist I gather.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Chairman, this is all anecdotal and rumour and I do not want to foster any rumour with respect to what some employee might or might not have been doing in another company. You know, if you have a difficulty, I suggest you approach them, and if you are not satisfied with the answer then come back to me and I will be happy to carry it further.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Chairperson, I would just ask the minister if rather than relying on the opposition to do that kind of investigation and discussions with the Sports Federation, if he would undertake to follow this up. I do not think we want to have anything that could paint sport in Manitoba in a bad light. I think that it is in the interest of the minister to follow this up.

Mr. Ernst: I will make an inquiry.

Ms. Cerilli: Just to conclude, then, I want to sort of take this back to where we spent a lot of our discussion over the last couple of days, especially today, with respect to the new Sport Manitoba organization that we are going to have. I am wondering if the new organization then would be entirely accountable to this Estimates committee, given that they will likely have appointed government board members?

Mr. Ernst: The intent is to create an independent corporation, nongovernment organization, arm's length from the government. So the answer to that, by virtue of that structure, would be no.

Ms. Cerilli: Could the minister, following the discussion we just had about the Sports Federation, give some other examples of current organizations at arm's length from the government that receive government funding that it would be similar to?

Mr. Ernst: Not knowing the final structure and so on of the organization, it is tough to make a comparison to anything else. That question might be better put after the final structure has been put into place.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister is raising new concerns with me, or the minister's comments, I guess, are raising new concerns with me with respect to the new Sport Manitoba organization. Am I correct in saying it would still be entirely funded through Lotteries revenue? Would the staff there be considered, as they are now, with the Sport Directorate staff, the provincial government, or would the staff there be considered, as with the Sports Federation, independent from the provincial government?

Mr. Ernst: If it is an independent organization, a private company, or a nonprofit corporation, which is

the likely structure it would be, then they would be employees of the nonprofit corporation, not of the government.

Ms. Cerilli: I just find this kind of odd. On the one hand, the minister has talked about wanting to create a new body that is more in line with what the minister has in mind. It is like, on the one hand, he is wanting to have more influence on what happens in the group that does the work of what a sports federation would do, but on the other hand, it is not going to be more accountable to the public of Manitoba. So I am kind of concerned about what the real intention is then of the minister wanting to have influence, especially through, you know, having government appointments to a board, if that is not going to, in turn, mean that there is more public accountability. That is one of the advantages when we have organizations like Crown corporations is that then the public has an opportunity to see some accountability for public funds that are invested there. I am wondering if the minister could clarify that for me.

Mr. Ernst: Since 1979, I believe, the Manitoba Sports Federation has been receiving government money, certainly since 1983, prior to that, I am not sure—since 1983 when they entered into an agreement with the then New Democratic Party government. There was an agreement, a funding agreement, that provided a percentage, now, it was not even a fixed amount, it was a percentage. Whatever the pot was, and it grew like Topsy in those days, but whatever the pot was, they got their 25 percent or whatever it was with a requirement, I think, to provide an annual financial statement at the end of the year. No government representation, no control, no direct involvement really of any kind other than by the whim of the Manitoba Sports Federation.

That, from some perspectives at least, has not worked as well as one might have thought. So you look for a different model, one that involves more of the partners in sport than currently are involved, one that involves government representation. These models all have recommended government representation because government is the primary funder, and if you are the primary funder, then you want to say, or have some say, at least, of where the funding goes, and if it is not going in the place you thought it should go, then you should have some opportunity to influence that.

But what will ultimately arise out of Sport Manitoba, whatever the terms and conditions of a funding agreement will be when dealing with that, remains to be seen. There is a lot of work yet to do in this area of developing the final model, and the kind of information that is required with respect to what, ultimately, will be, but accountability mechanisms will be there.

* (1650)

Ms. Cerilli: I guess I just find it somewhat ironic, in closing, that this is the government that always is critical of us of being big government and the big hand of government swooping in. What we do not want to see eliminated with organizations like the Sport Federation is the volunteer and community activism and participation. I think that one of the big concerns is people really only participate when they feel that they are really going to have an influence in decisions, and they are going to be true partners, and they are going to not just be there to sort of do the menial work and then not be able to have any real influence, and I hope that is not what is going to happen.

I think that sport has tremendous volunteer participation, and I think that we can have the system work better, but I hope that we are not going to dampen the motivation for a lot of volunteers because they are going to feel that the decisions are being made outside of their sphere of influence. We do not want to, I think, have government making decisions rather than setting up a mechanism so that the public is going to have some accountability for public funds.

That is one of the things that I enjoy about the Estimates process, and I enjoy about the opportunity to have organizations like the Hazardous Waste Corporation which is one arm's length Crown corporation that I have participated in the annual review of. I think that that can be a very effective way of ensuring that there is going to be accountability without having the ongoing influence of government in a way that is going to limit a community-driven organization.

So with those comments, I am willing to move on, unless the minister wants to make some response to let me know if he agrees that we want to have some

balance that is not going to create a situation where volunteers are made to feel that their participation really is not making a difference in the direction of the organization.

Mr. Ernst: I could not agree more with the member for Radisson. Were it not for volunteers, we would not have an organization in Manitoba. We would not have sport, we would not have a whole lot of community-driven organizations in this province. That is the biggest single legacy of any sport activity is the human resource legacy that is left to the community, so I concur. Our challenge is to ensure that we do get as much participation as possible. That was one of the goals highlighted in my speech the other night to the Manitoba Sports Federation is the fact that we have to maximize that use.

But I might say to the member too that the volunteer component in sport is contained in the individual sports. It is not contained in the Manitoba Sports Federation.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: 1. Fitness and Sport (b) Sport Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$435,000—pass; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$292,600—pass; 1.(b)(3) Grants \$1,810,900—pass.

Ms. Cerilli: Have we passed the section dealing with the Boxing and Wrestling Commission? That is something that I forgot to get into.

Mr. Ernst: The answer is yes, but if you have a quick question, I will answer it.

Ms. Cerilli: I just want to ask if the minister will describe how the problem with the boxing commission has been dealt with where the required health studies and forms and follow-through were not being conducted for the boxers. How has that been resolved?

Mr. Ernst: What has happened is that there was a new act passed in 1993. New regulations have been and are being developed during the last couple of years, as a matter of fact, to try and reach a more appropriate modern version of what originally had been passed in 1960-sometime. The old regs and legislation was, of course, enforced until this new one is put into place.

The old ones are still in force because we cannot get agreement amongst the medical people as to what is required, and that has been a major problem is trying to put three neurosurgeons together to get what is an appropriate method of dealing with somebody who is going to go in and get their block knocked off in a boxing ring, and what should be done. Well, they cannot agree, and we are having a great deal of difficulty. Even the cardiologist cannot agree whether someone should have an EKG more than once a year or not.

There is a variety of opinion in the medical community, and we are trying to get some consensus as to what is required. Somebody that we turned down to fight here has in fact been approved in Alberta and B.C., because the doctor out there said he is okay and the doctor here said he was not.

I do not know how medical practitioners' professional liability insurance works, but it sure looks to me like there might be a hell of an opportunity here to find out, if one doctor says he is okay and one doctor says he is not, so we are trying to resolve that problem, but it is a struggle at the moment to try to come to some kind of consensus.

I suggested to the commission, go to the College of Physicians and Surgeons, tell them to strike a committee, or ask them to strike, you cannot tell them, ask them to strike a committee of competent physicians, in their view, and tell them that their job is to come up with a consensus so we can put it into the legislative process and make sure that people are adequately protected, according to the best body of knowledge with respect to the medical community.

Ms. Cerilli: There seem to be two different issues here. There is a problem that the minister has described of agreeing on a standard and what the requirements should be in terms of health security for boxers.

The second problem is making sure that the system that is in place is enforced so that there are no holes that allow these people to circumvent following through on making sure they have done the test to reach the standards. I am wondering what we can

expect to have in place so that that system will be strengthened.

* (1700)

Mr. Ernst: We are trying to come up with an appropriate system for the 1990s, that is one issue. The current regulations and legislation dates back to the 60s and we are dealing with that at the moment. What you saw in the newspaper some months ago was in fact, to some degree, falsification of documents, where the fighter is obliged to indicate has he had these tests. He signed, yes I have, when in fact he had not. That is fraud.

My recommendation to the commission was to suspend all of them. But the commission is the commission and they chose not to suspend, for one reason or another. There was some blame on the commission in terms that they did not do everything they should have done either.

Hopefully that is behind us and the commission will do the things that are necessary within the scope of what they have at the moment while they are working on new applications. That hopefully will be resolved in the next few weeks and we can get on with finalizing that.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1. Fitness and Sport (b) Sport Directorate (4) Best Ever Program - Grant Assistance \$300,000-pass; (5) Major Sport Initiatives \$650,000-pass; (6) 1999 Pan American Games - Capital \$2 million-pass.

Item 1.(c) Manitoba Sports Federation \$7,687,500-pass.

Resolution 28.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$13,460,600 for Fitness and Sport, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1996.

This completes the Estimates of the Department of Fitness and Sport. The next set of Estimates that will be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply are the Estimates of the Department of Family Services.

Shall we briefly recess to allow the minister and the critics opportunity to prepare for the commencement of the next set of Estimates? [agreed]

FAMILY SERVICES

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Family Services. Does the honourable Minister of Family Services have an opening statement?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Yes, I do have an opening statement, and I have a copy for my honourable friend, the critic from the New Democratic Party, and one for a member of the Liberal Party, if appropriate or needed.

Mr. Chairperson, I am pleased to present to this committee the 1995-96 spending Estimates for the Department of Family Services. I look forward to a meaningful discussion and positive recommendations during this Estimates session.

Manitoba, like all governments across Canada, has been facing a difficult financial situation. However, in Manitoba, we are beginning to reap the benefits of our approach to deficit reduction. Our government was among the first in Canada to recognize the need to control spending and attack the deficit. The often difficult decisions that we made have put us on the path for the balanced budget that we see here today. Balanced budget means a lot to departments that deal with human services. A balanced budget improves our prospects for prosperity in Manitoba, and that, combined with a plan to repay our debt, will ultimately be the best social program that we can devise for Manitobans. A balanced budget is the best guarantee of health care, education and social services, both for today and into the future.

We are meeting the challenge of keeping government spending under control, and unlike the federal government, which has dramatically reduced its commitment to human services, our government has consistently made health, education and family services a priority. More than 90 cents of every new program

dollar has gone to these three departments. In our current budget, over 72 cents of every program dollar is devoted to Health, Education and Family Services. It is becoming increasingly clear that none of these departments can operate in isolation. It is imperative that we integrate our policy, program and service approaches in all areas of human services.

That is one reason why we recently established the Children and Youth Secretariat to provide a coordinated, integrated approach to services to children in our province. Since our government took office, funding for the Department of Family Services has increased by 60 percent.

As we go through the Estimates you will see that this year the Department of Family Services received a net increase of \$7.5 million. The main areas of increased spending are Making Welfare Work, increased by \$1.6 million to \$3.6 million for 1995-96. Child and family support has increased by \$6.1 million, primarily for maintenance of children in care. Community Living and Vocational Rehabilitation has increased by almost \$2 million.

As we go through the spending Estimates, it will be very obvious that our spending choices clearly reflect our priorities. After years of increasing caseloads, it appears that a growing economy, enhanced measures to ensure that benefits go to those who really need them and renewed efforts to help social assistance recipients back to work will help stem the growth in social assistance costs.

Within our department we are actively implementing new approaches to ensure welfare recipients are provided with the needed basic support. At the same time, we must be working to ensure every effort is made toward moving to independence. Over the past year a number of initiatives have been introduced or implemented to create less dependency on government programming and to provide employment opportunities for social assistance recipients.

One of the Making Welfare Work projects is: Taking Charge! This five-year federal-provincial pilot will provide services to help 4,000 sole-support parents on social assistance to find and retain work. The

community-based board for Taking Charge! has been appointed and is currently working on its plan to open its storefront operation. Sole-support parents on welfare represent 47 percent of our welfare cases. It is a known fact that a large percentage of children raised on welfare end up continuing the welfare cycle. We must help these children and their families to become independent.

Taking Charge! will provide a storefront approach to co-ordinating the various government, community and private-sector resources and provide training, work experience, employment referral and child care options for single parents.

We have also provided \$750,000 to the City of Winnipeg to assist the city in expanding its community service worker and community home services programs that put municipal assistance recipients back to work. As well, we are continuing to provide funding for the Rural Jobs Project. This initiative provides wage assistance for the employment of municipal assistance clients in rural Manitoba. This work experience can provide Manitobans on assistance with badly needed experience to move on to other jobs and stay off welfare.

* (1710)

Eligible projects are reviewed by a committee that includes representation from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities. Within our existing programs we have also taken steps to better facilitate the transition to work through internal efforts and in partnership with other departments, other levels of government, nonprofit agencies and private sector employers. It is my expectation that as our economy continues to grow and we find more effective ways to link welfare recipients with work, we will see reductions in the number of individuals dependent on social assistance and in the dollars spent in these areas.

In this budget, we have also provided for almost a \$2-million increase in the area of rehabilitation and community living for the creation of community residences and supports for adults and children with disabilities. We will continue to provide supports to

physically or mentally disabled Manitobans and their families to support community living, greater control by the consumer over support services and greater access to generic rather than specialized services.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

As well, we will soon be proclaiming a very significant piece of legislation to establish and implement procedures to administer The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability and Consequential Amendments Act. This legislation is on the leading edge of legislation in North America dealing with mentally disabled individuals.

Our government is very proud of our ongoing commitment to child care. Since we took office, we have increased funding by \$20 million, or 73 percent, to over \$47 million, expanded licensed spaces by 17 percent, to \$18,846, and increased the allocation for subsidized children by 84 percent to \$9,900.

At the same time, we are concerned about the mixed messages we are receiving from the federal government on their commitment to expand child care spaces. My federal counterpart has indicated that there is money for child care that is rolled into a new fund called the Human Resources Investment Fund.

He says this fund combines child care, strategic initiatives and all of our training programs. At the same time, he is reducing funding to this pot of money by \$600 million in this fiscal year and \$1.1 billion next fiscal year. Yet he says there is more money for child care. On behalf of all provincial social services ministers, I have written to the federal minister asking for an explanation, and I am quite anxious to hear the details on how he will accomplish all his ambitious plans with significantly less money.

The area of Child and Family Services continues to be a high priority. We are committed to placing greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention with community-based support to assist families to resolve their problems. Under the Family Support Innovations Fund, a number of projects have been approved throughout the province. These projects emphasize early intervention that prevents children from coming

into care and targeted efforts to help children in care return to their families.

Adoption has also been a high priority for me. In November, I announced a strategy which is directed towards providing many of the more than 2,000 children who are over a year old and who are permanent wards in our system with the opportunity to be placed with a permanent adoptive family. I have said many times that all children deserve a permanent home. This initiative will bring the community, potential adoptive families and agencies together to help realize that goal.

In the area of family dispute, we are continuing our strong commitment to services for abused women and their children. Since our government took office, we have increased funding to this area by 151 percent. Most recently, we developed a new funding model for second-stage programs designed to meet the range of needs of women and their children who have left abusive relationships.

I would also like to make special mention of a pilot project in our family conciliation area. This fall, we will implement a parent education program to provide separating and divorcing parents with training on the needs of children during and after the separation or divorce of their parents. This initiative was developed jointly with representatives of the justice system.

As we proceed through this year's Estimates, you will note that we have made responsible choices in these times of challenge and change. One of the major challenges that we will face in the coming year is the continued federal offloading of funding and responsibility for individuals and families most in need.

We support the need to reform the social security net in the context of fiscal realities. Our focus, as we proceed through talks and negotiations around federal social security reform, will be insuring fairness in that the unique circumstances of Manitobans are understood.

Manitoba has a particular concern with the special needs and requirements of aboriginal people and with the federal government's constitutional responsibility to

these Canadians, who are clearly among the most vulnerable. Manitoba taxpayers have already had to cover \$70 million in costs resulting from the federal government's offloading of its child welfare and social assistance responsibilities for Status Indians off reserve. Today, about half of Manitoba's social assistance caseload and about two-thirds of children in care are aboriginal. We believe the federal government should honour its constitutional and fiduciary responsibilities to Manitoba's aboriginal peoples and provide fair compensation to the province for the programs and services provided.

However, the federal government is continuing to step away from its traditional responsibilities, threatening to cut off social assistance to treaty Indians and their families in South Indian Lake and Granville Lake. In both cases these people have, for decades, been treated as members of their bands and, as such, have received their rights and benefits as band members. I have written repeatedly to the federal ministers to urge the federal government not to abandon people with whom it has a special responsibility. I have not yet received a satisfactory response.

All provincial jurisdictions across the country are also feeling the strain and the uncertainty of social security reform. What began as a promise for fundamental reform has now clearly become mainly another federal exercise in offloading. A year ago the federal government spoke of issuing an action plan on social security reform with preferred options. By last fall, there was no longer a federal action plan, only a generally worded discussion paper that presented some options to the public. However, this paper has also threatened to offload significant cost to provinces. The federal budget in February made it abundantly clear that social security reform is now little more than a unilateral federal fiscal exercise designed to cut billions of dollars in services to people.

While it has become generally accepted to speak of cuts in federal transfer payments to provinces, we must not lose sight of the reality that these transfers help pay for essential services to our most vulnerable citizens, social assistance, child welfare, care for the mentally disabled and training for social assistance

recipients. These are the services at the heart of Canada's social safety net, and they are the ones that the federal government is withdrawing from. However, obtaining detailed information is very frustrating. We know that the federal funding will be combined, reconfigured and reduced. We also know that all of the provinces are in the same position of having to work within a fiscal framework of drastically reduced federal support.

We have very few details on the Canada Health and social services transfer or the Human Resources Investment Fund. We do not know what the provincial allocations under the new super block are after 1996-97, and we do not know what federal programs and services will be cut to Manitobans. Federal offloading onto the provinces has been a common practice in the past. The government of Manitoba understands the need to contain costs. However, this cannot be done at the expense of the provinces. We must work together to ensure that fair and stable funding levels for social programs are maintained. We want to ensure that social security reform does not become an exercise in continued federal offloading onto the provinces.

As a lead jurisdiction for ministers of social services for the past year, Manitoba has taken a leadership role in bringing the provinces together around these important issues. In January we hosted a meeting between the western provincial and territorial ministers responsible for social services and ministers responsible for aboriginal affairs. At that meeting we discussed a number of important issues related to aboriginal social services. Other jurisdictions agreed with Manitoba that the federal government needs to honour its long-standing special responsibility for aboriginal Canadians.

Later this month we will be hosting the annual meeting of provincial and territorial ministers for social services. Federal social security reform and the impact of the 1995 federal budget are matters of concern to all jurisdictions and will form a major part of the discussions at this meeting.

In my closing remarks, I would like to emphasize that we have consistently maintained essential social services to meet the needs of Manitobans. Our

government is continuing to pursue practical approaches that support self-reliance for social assistance recipients.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

We will assist persons with a disability to live as independently as they can in their communities, and we will continue to build our child and family services system around the themes of family support and family preservation. I look forward to comments and questions and dialogue around all of the issues that deal with the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

* (1720)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the Minister of Family Services for those comments. Does the official opposition critic, the honourable member for Burrows have any opening comments?

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): I want to begin with a compliment for the minister and then critique her government's policies.

This minister is to be commended for being co-operative with me as a critic. She has, on occasions, given me rides to and from events to which we were both invited. She has shared information with me in the Chamber and in her office and these briefings have been very helpful. I think her co-operative nature is best reflected in the Estimates hours which, for this department, fell by half the first year she was the minister.

I could go on, Mr. Chairperson, but I do not want to be too effusive. After all, if I was too generous in my comments, this could end up as an endorsement in her election campaign literature, and I would not want that to happen.

I began on a personal note because I want to clearly distinguish between the minister, whom I can get along with, and her government's policies in a collective sense, which I believe in many areas are punitive, misleading, misguided and, in the case of The Vulnerable Persons Act, extremely tardy.

Let me begin with the misleading. This government has repeatedly stated over the last five years that in spite of budget cuts they will protect the key areas of health care, education and family services. Then they brought in budget reductions which affected all three departments. In Family Services the cuts were not apparent because, in fact, the budget for the department as a whole was rising so they could always point to this and say, see, we are giving more money to vital social programs. But it was a lie. The main reason that this department's budget rose every year was the increase—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I am told that it is unparliamentary to use the word "lie." Would the member for Burrows withdraw that word, please?

Mr. Martindale: I will withdraw and consult Beauchesne at a later date.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The member for Burrows withdraws the word "lie." Does the member for Burrows withdraw the word?

Mr. Martindale: I withdraw.

The main reason that this department's budget rose every year was the increase in social assistance caseload as the result of the recession and this government's failure to do anything about it.

So in spite of overall increases the axe began to fall. The cuts were numerous and many were severe. Many were accompanied by phoney rationales. There was the elimination of funding to 56 organizations, including 14 friendship centres. The rationale was that all these organizations were advocacy organizations. In fact, a very small proportion of what friendship centres do is advocacy. They can best be described as a service organization providing services to their members, such as housing, counselling, referrals, recreation activities, support groups, et cetera.

Just to give further examples, and these are only from the year 1993, there were significant reductions in health benefits to social assistance recipients; for example, the elimination of coverage for restorative dental work, the limiting of the number of over-counter drugs covered, limiting of coverage of prescription

drugs to the lowest-cost generic product, a six-month waiting period for dental and optical benefits for employable adult recipients, a three-month waiting period for dental and optical benefits for all new or re-enrolled recipients.

There was a 10-percent reduction to most other government-funded groups in addition to the 56 who lost all of their funding. There was the elimination of the student social assistance program, probably the worst decision of this government in the area of social assistance in the last five years. It meant that students who otherwise would be going to school were probably forced to drop out.

There was a reduction of basic rates for foster care by two dollars a day in addition to the total withdrawal of grants to the Family Foster Care Association. There was a 2 percent reduction in per diem rates for child and family services and rehabilitation and community living agencies for residential care.

In the area of child care there was a capping of subsidized childcare spaces, actually cases, at 9,600. There was a freezing of licensing of new spaces. There was a required extra \$1.40 a day from parents on subsidy. The operating grants were reduced for licensed care by 4 percent. Operating grants for licensed nurseries were reduced by 50 percent, and the job search time was reduced from eight weeks to two weeks.

Municipalities received a 2-percent reduction in grants, and there were also cuts as a result of the standardization of welfare rates to standardization for municipalities. That one decision alone probably saved the government \$4 million at the expense of single, employable, childless welfare recipients. There was a \$30 decrease, or rather the elimination of a \$30 increase given to recipients after six months of payments. The monthly rental allowance was cut from \$285 to \$271. These cuts affected about 14,000 of the 49,000 individuals and families on welfare in Manitoba and lowered their maximum monthly rate of payment from \$536 to \$492.

The result of these cuts are that Manitoba is once again the child poverty capital of Canada, leading the

country in child poverty. In Manitoba there was a poverty rate of 76.3 percent or 25,000 children in families with a single-parent mother compared to 15.9 percent in families with two parents under the age of 65. The average income of poor families headed by single-parent mothers was \$8,566 below the poverty line.

That is from an article in the Winnipeg Free Press of April 6, 1995.

The result of this government's punitive policies are that we have not only the highest rate of child poverty in Canada per capita, we have the highest rate of adolescent and youth runaways. We have an above-average rate of pregnancy. We have a high high-school dropout rate, higher than the national average, and the highest rate of children in care of any province per capita in Canada.

We know that there are numerous effects of these policies, and one of the major effects is on the health, particularly, of children. This was pointed out in a study commissioned by the Department of Health of your government and made public. It included 115 recommendations. It pointed out that poor children in Manitoba are up to 10 times more likely to be admitted into hospital.

The recommendations deal with such things as the high incidents of asthma, tonsillitis, sudden infant death syndrome, teen pregnancy, low birth rate and fetal alcohol syndrome, all of which have costs to our health care system.

Noting that Manitoba has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Canada it said, nothing impacts more on the health of individuals than poverty.

* (1730)

So we know that what the government does in this department, by way of trying to reduce expenditures, has an impact in the Department of Health in terms of increasing their costs. This minister talks about co-operation and talks about interdepartmental co-operation, and this is one area where many more things need to be done in terms of co-operation.

Perhaps the Youth Secretariat is one way of accomplishing some of this co-operation. In fact, the Health minister said that the study by Dr. Brian Postl, head of pediatrics, would be referred to the Youth Secretariat for assessment and to make recommendations on policy. So at a later point in these Estimates, I will be asking the minister what recommendations have been put into effect that affect her department.

Since this government's policies affect not only the budget of her department and organizations, but many individuals, I would like to read into the record how some of these individuals feel about her government's policies.

I actually have two letters that I am going to read into the record, and both of these people, these individuals, corresponded with the minister and sent me copies.

The first one is dated May 28, 1995.

"Dear Ms. Mitchelson,

"As a social assistance recipient, I would like to know how much our" social assistance "payments will be reduced.

"I am 57 years old and due to circumstances re: your government have had to resort to Social Assistance.

"I have been employed since I was 16 years old and struggled to bring up three children on my own. They are now 36, 33 & 30 years old and by the way all University Grads who have had to exit Manitoba to Vancouver in order to get employment for them and their families.

"I would just love to be back in the workforce instead of 'existing' on \$458.18 a month. This includes my rent, and you have the gall to say we are overpaid. I want a job. Can you guarantee me one? I don't think so because with the cuts, I have been unable to take a Computer Course that used to be given to Social Assistance recipients. I don't have the means to go to night school, and please don't tell me about Student Loans, etc. It would only waste your money, because I'd probably die before I could pay it back.

"I would like you to live on what I get for 6 months and struggle to buy fresh fruit and vegetables, because your budget will not cover them, \$2.99 for a head of lettuce and you get \$5.00 a day for food. That doesn't even cover hamburger, macaroni, milk and bread. You, dear lady, would not make it.

"You sure didn't see anything wrong with giving yourselves healthy raises. How about you give me the \$15,000 and I'll gladly go off Social Assistance. I could manage very well on that. You see I'm not greedy, just needy.

"I would be long gone from Manitoba, but I have an 88 year old mother with Alzheimer's and no Home Care and a 2 - 2 1/2 year waiting list for a Nursing Home. Thanks to Mr. Orchard, oops, forgot, no more apples & oranges.

"Manitoba has been my home for 57 years but I'm sad to say I do not know it any more. 'JETS' over poverty what a shame. Hungry children. Shame. Food Banks & Soup Kitchens.

"I must also say, I am not Aboriginal, not a racist, am not" a drug or alcohol user "and that's saying a lot more than some of your people in your Caucus.

"Well, thanks for nothing except 'Cuts', 'Cuts' and more 'Cuts.'

Sincerely, I think."

I would have to comment on that letter and say that I do not agree with some of the personalized jabs in that letter. I only read it into the record because of the comments that the individual made about how difficult it is to live on \$458 a month.

We need to ask ourselves why we have such poverty in Manitoba. Recently, I came across a news release, and I could hardly believe my eyes. It is dated November 26, 1990, and the headline says: Social Allowances Benefits Increase by 4.5 Percent.

I am sorry I did not have the opportunity to look up what the consumer price index was at that time, but those were the good old days when this department

gave increases in social allowances rates that were commensurate with the cost of living.

Why do we have so much more poverty today? Well, there are many reasons. One is that this government has not increased social assistance rates for two and a half years. The result is that people have less purchasing power now than they did two and a half years ago because of increases in inflation or the consumer price index. This government has only raised minimum wage once in the last four and a half years. There are many people, whom we call the working poor, who are working for minimum wage. At one time, the minimum wage for a single person was about 110 percent of the poverty line. Today, it is about 40 percent because it has not kept up with increases in the cost of living.

We have very high unemployment in Manitoba. We have had cuts to ACCESS programs which would have allowed some people to get into the paid labour market. We have had offloading by the federal government that this minister has talked about and I will talk about, as well, and we have a lack of training programs to get individuals off social assistance and into paid employment.

This government has done something that I think is unconscionable, and that is to have a concerted attack on the poor. They have imported a very American, Republican, right-wing idea, which has helped to turn the middle class against the poor, and probably the best example of that is the welfare fraud line.

Now, we in the New Democratic Party do not support or countenance fraud in any way, shape or form, and this department has always had the ability to investigate welfare fraud, demand repayment when overpayments were made and, where necessary, to lay charges in court, but that was not good enough for a Tory government which was desperate to get re-elected. Their idea was to target the poor and get the middle-class taxpayer to hate the poor and vote Conservative because they are perceived to be tough on cheaters.

The result, as we all know, was the welfare fraud line and billboards around the city advertising the snitch-

line phone number. But that was not the only result. The result for numerous individuals was an investigation which basically considered them guilty until proven innocent. It allowed former spouses with an axe to grind or motives of revenge to harass an ex-spouse without any fear of reprisal. It allowed neighbours to squeal on neighbours. We used to associate this kind of surveillance with the Stasi police in East Germany, but now we have it in Manitoba.

Several individuals have contacted me, and my colleagues have been contacted, as well, by their constituents, saying that they were cut off social assistance while under investigation, something this government denies. Many more individuals were told that they would not get their cheque until information was provided. One individual, a single parent, was forced to drop out of high school due to an investigation. She lost her benefits during the investigation and therefore no longer had bus fare to attend school.

The stupidity of this is unbelievable, and the propaganda that accompanied the fraud line was fraudulent, as well. The government bragged that the money saved by the fraud line would be targeted to those most in need. I believe that not one cent of the savings ended up in the hands of welfare recipients. The savings were just that, savings in expenditure which reduced expenses in this government's department.

I would like to read into the record another letter that was sent to this minister with a copy to me, and I will leave out the individual's name: I am a single mother of two boys. Over three years ago, my husband walked out on us. Two years ago, my husband stopped making maintenance payments because our case had not gone through the court and because he said he could not claim the payments on his income tax. Because I was unable to find full-time employment and because of no maintenance, I had no other choice but to apply for provincial social assistance. During the last two years, there have been two allegations made to social assistance through the welfare hot line that (1) I was living common law with my boyfriend. He lives and works out of the city, and I live in the city. He visits on weekends. He has his own family that he has to

support and take care of. (2) Because of my father's death, I supposedly received a car and a very large inheritance. My father did pass away on November 11, 1994, but his entire estate went to my mother.

These allegations have caused a lot of unnecessary duress and emotional stress to my children and I. We have already suffered so much during the last three years.

Each time one of these complaints went in, my caseworker—we will call him Mr. K—would have to investigate them. He would have to talk to me about each complaint. Both of the complaints were proven false and cleared up. I was very lucky that I did not lose my social assistance allowance. My caseworker, as well as my lawyer, realized that whoever put the allegation in, did it out of spite. There are only two people who could and would do such a terrible and spiteful thing, my ex-husband and my boyfriend's ex-wife. My ex-husband has told me on several occasions that he was going to make my life as miserable as his was. Because I have a restraining order against him, he is using other methods to harass me. My boyfriend's ex-wife is a very mentally sick woman who has been charged in the past with uttering threats to her husband and children. My caseworker, Mr. K, is a very kind and understanding man. Because I was open and honest with him, he is being very open and honest with me. He has always laid things on the line. I have nothing but the utmost respect and admiration for this man.

* (1740)

I realize that there are a lot of people abusing the welfare system, but what about all those who are not? The allegations can be, and are, very devastating to those who receive the false allegations. The onus is on us to prove to our caseworkers that the complaints are false. I am very lucky to have such a great caseworker. Not everyone on social assistance is as lucky. Now that the welfare hot line is becoming permanent, there are still a lot of bugs to be worked out to protect those people on social assistance who are not abusing the system. I will never know who put those false complaints in. All I know is how upset I was about it

and the stress I went through. The not knowing who did it was the worse. To think that someone out there hates you enough to do something so spiteful and so terrible makes you doubt everyone, even close friends and neighbours. Sincerely yours.

I spoke to this individual on the phone, and she said that she no longer lets her children play at the neighbours. We are not talking about an inner-city resident or a constituent of Burrows. We are talking about somebody who lives in a so-called nice area, who was victimized by your welfare fraud line.

The minister has announced that she is negotiating with the City of Winnipeg to take over city welfare. Well, on the surface it seems like a good idea, especially if there are efficiencies which result. There are numerous questions that need to be asked, which, of course, I will be asking later, and if taking over city welfare means lowering the food allowance for children and therefore contributing further to the problem of child poverty, then it will not have our support.

The City of Winnipeg has numerous training programs. Will the province take over and run all of these? The City hires bachelor of social work graduates. Will the province take on all these staff? Will the province continue the policy of hiring social work graduates? Why is this government wanting to take over social assistance from the City of Winnipeg? Is it because you are planning to reduce social assistance rates, and the best way to do this is to have total control of welfare in the province of Manitoba?

The province has promised that the takeover will be revenue neutral. I think what is meant is expense neutral. Since the city funds 20 percent of its welfare expense, will the city taxpayers be spared the expense of \$16.85 million, which is the current cost in 1995? Very few provinces have a municipal welfare system, so few cities share this burden with municipal property taxpayers.

Will the Province of Manitoba now lift this burden off property taxpayers in Winnipeg, as they should, or instead, will they reduce the provincial grant to the city by an equal amount?

In July 1993, the Legislature passed the vulnerable persons bill. It is still not proclaimed, in spite of the fact that it is a progressive piece of legislation. However, it will have no effect until it is proclaimed. What is the delay? Why has it taken two years to educate the staff and the department? Why has it taken two years to educate people in the community? Why has it taken two years to produce educational brochures? Why has it taken two years to interview and hire a vulnerable persons commissioner?

I would like to change now to talking about the federal government and their offloading on the Province of Manitoba. It is good to see that the minister and I share at least one common concern.

As we all know, in the past social programs were funded 50-50 under the Canada Assistance Plan. This funding was very significant to Manitoba. For example, in the 1994-95 fiscal year, the cost of social programs amounted to \$660.2 million, and I want to thank the minister for providing all these facts and figures.

The amount recovered from the federal government was \$284.2 million, which is actually only 43 percent. Another \$2.8 million was recovered under the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons provisions.

As we know, the major change is that the Canada Assistance Plan is being eliminated, and funding will be through the New Canada Health and Social Transfer Act. The conditions for funding under CAP are being scrapped, particularly the right to appeal and the right to have basic needs met without conditions. This opens the door for workfare, as we have seen in the Ontario election campaign, or compulsory work for welfare or compulsory education, or compulsory training for welfare.

Also, another cost-shared program that is important to Manitoba is child care. We know this is going to pose a major dilemma for the province of Manitoba. You are going to have to make tough decisions as to what programs you are going to maintain. Since the money for social programs is going to be lumped in with health and post-secondary education, I am very

concerned there is going to be a different set of priorities because of the changes at the federal level.

We are also disappointed—I think probably the minister shares my disappointment that the federal government promised 150,000 new child care spaces but this would seem to be another broken promise from the Liberals' red book. I do not think anybody believes that the money for these spaces is there, except maybe the federal minister, Mr. Axworthy. There is a small amount of money in the Human Resources Investment Fund, but it is, at this point, I think everyone is unsure as to how this money is going to be accessed and whether it will be really there and how many spaces it will fund.

These are all major policy changes by the federal government and they will have a large and, I believe, negative impact on the province of Manitoba. The reason is that this government is committed to balanced budget legislation but they are going to have less money from the federal government to fund existing programs or even increased cost.

In the past, we had a set of national standards. We had cost-sharing with the federal government, and this was called a safety net. In many ways it was a guaranteed safety net. In the future we are going to have no national standards, a patchwork quilt of programs across the country and a very different kind of social service look to our country in the future. In the 1995 federal budget there were no measures to reduce child poverty such as improvements to the child tax benefit.

The Liberal government put most of their social welfare legislation in place. I should say, the Liberal party put most of Canada's social welfare legislation in place beginning with the old age security legislation, unemployment insurance and the Canada Assistance Plan, and now it is being dismantled.

For this reason, I think it was Jeffrey Simpson in *The Globe and Mail*, called the federal Liberal government Conservatives in a hurry. They are only continuing what their Mulroney Conservative predecessors began. Although I think an exception to this is the new Conservative government in Ontario.

I think there are many disappointments in the social security review process. There were many ideas in the papers that were released for public discussion and then many of them were dismissed without any rationale or reason, for example, a guaranteed annual income which, I believe, was not seriously examined. We were told by the federal minister, Mr. Axworthy, that the social policy review was not about hacking and slashing. I think events, particularly the federal budget have proved him wrong and even some of his own colleagues, for example, Warren Allmand, have been so disappointed that they voted against the Canada Health and Social Transfer Act.

If the former minister was here he certainly would have said, how are we going to pay for these programs? How are we going to pay for social programs? I would like to give some examples. In 1992, there were 93,000 profitable corporations in Canada that paid no tax at all. In 1992, the Royal Bank made a profit of over \$83 million—I think that should be \$63 million—and paid no money in taxes. A Royal Bank teller in British Columbia making \$25,000 paid \$5,732 in federal and provincial taxes.

* (1750)

Here are some examples of corporations that made huge profits and paid no tax, for example, INCO made \$22 million, paid no taxes; Coca-Cola made \$24 million, paid no taxes; the Royal Bank made \$63 million, paid no taxes; Hollinger Incorporated made \$94 million, paid no taxes; Brascan, \$197 million, no taxes.

These are just five of the 93,000 corporate tax evaders for 1992. There have been some minor changes in the federal budget, for example, a one-time only tax on federal chartered banks to raise a small amount of revenue.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, I believe this government does have choices. I think they have made the wrong choices. At the same time I would recognize there have been severe limitations placed on the choices this government faces because of the federal government's offloading. It is only going to get worse in future years.

I am very concerned about how this is going to affect programs and services provided by this department, especially since we know there is going to be less revenue next year and the year after, but we do not know what kind of choices this government is going to make as a result of having less money from the federal government and balanced budget legislation which is certainly going to restrict this government in its ability to make its own choices. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the critic from the official opposition for those remarks.

Under Manitoba practice, debate of the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of the department. Accordingly, we shall defer consideration of this item and now proceed with consideration of the next line.

At this time, we invite the minister's staff to join us at the table, and we ask the minister to introduce her staff.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I would like to introduce the deputy minister for Family Services, Roxy Freedman; executive director of Finance, Wes Henderson; and acting director of Policy & Planning, Drew Perry.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$481,600 on page 56 of the Estimates book and on page 24 of the old supplement book.

Is it the will of committee to call it six o'clock? [agreed]

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

* (1450)

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson (Gerry McAlpine): Order, please. 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 met, it had been considering item 2. School Programs (d) Native Education

Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits on page 39 of the Estimates book.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Chair, at the end of the last time we met, we were looking at the impact of the move to regional services on aboriginal curriculum and the preparation of aboriginal materials, and my concern was for how materials developed in one region of the province were able to be translated, shared and used by other regions, and my understanding of the response I got was, yes, that is possible. But I am looking for evidence of where and when it has happened.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Chairman, we have regional sharing sessions where programs are shared or program ideas and information are shared. That could involve units. It could involve teaching practices or both.

Regarding the unit development, our curriculum director, through the Department of Education and Training, collects those, so we are aware of what is developed and how it is used. One has to remember, though, that certain times there will be things prepared that are unique to a particular setting, so we may have some components that are specifically geared to a particular area that, while the information is all shared, there may be things that are not going to be utilized in every instance in every particular setting. That is just the one little caution I put out when I say that we have these sharing mechanisms.

Materials are developed in the various regions. Besides being shared at regional sharing sessions, they are also shared by subject area consultants through workshops and those types of gatherings by regional managers at superintendent meetings. When teachers call in and request such units, program development facilities, they facilitate the marking of the request by linking the caller with the developing division or by forwarding the unit to the caller.

For example, the Cree legends, human rights, that is at Senior 2 and Grade 7 under the native area. Those types of things can be shared using those various mechanisms and those various contacts as co-ordinating type people or groups.

Ms. Friesen: What are the other responsibilities of the people in the regions, those that the minister indicated have gone to Westman and the North and South Central?

Mrs. McIntosh: The regional teams unit administers and monitors categorical grants, provides information and assistance to divisions and schools regarding departmental policies and guidelines and collaborates with divisions to develop regional initiatives to support implementation of priority areas.

Ms. Friesen: Apart from the Winnipeg region, could the minister indicate what native curriculum materials have been produced in the other regions?

Mrs. McIntosh: Are you talking about the types of things that were done in Winnipeg No. 1, those types of materials?

Ms. Friesen: Yes, what curriculum materials have been produced in the other regions? I read into the record the list of items that had been produced in Winnipeg in the past year since the change. I am looking for what items have been produced elsewhere in the province in the past year.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, in terms of materials that have been prepared through unit development, I mentioned one just a few moments ago, Cree legends, that is through the Frontier School Division. They have also done native literature in that division, and those were developed using this process of unit development.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, is that it? Is that all the native curriculum material that has been produced outside of Winnipeg?

Mrs. McIntosh: Those were two examples. Staff does not have a complete listing of what Frontier has developed at this time. Those two examples are known from memory without having to go and check with the division.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I am assuming that the minister—what I am looking for is, for example, what is the work of that one northern regional person who has

been dispersed through this regional process? The Frontier School Division has been very active in producing native curriculum material for many, many years now. What has been enhanced, accelerated, produced by the redistribution of staff? Is the minister suggesting that Cree legends, for example, at the senior high level has been developed by this additional person?

Mrs. McIntosh: I would just like to indicate that Frontier School Division hired a person which we funded, and it was local development for those particular ones. We have worked with the northern superintendents to, with them, identify priorities for service.

Unit development, I have mentioned, is one way in which we help service areas that are developing programs. It is, of course, not the only way that native students are served. I think that while it is good that we do this unit development, and it is a very important facet of the work of those regional outreach initiatives, it is not the only way. We should not be limiting ourselves to thinking that the only way we can serve the students is by the development of particular types of work. But that one position, as soon as it is filled of course, that is the one we are still looking for a person for.

In the meantime, we have people from the department working closely as well. We always have a staffperson from the department involved with this type of local development. So in terms of those particular ones we fund, the staffperson is hired and we have a staffperson from the department working with them helping the superintendents identify their priorities.

We have a lot of requests for services and materials in the area of native languages, and some school divisions in other jurisdictions are developing curricula materials in this area, but no inventory of existing materials exists right now. This is the first time that all the jurisdictions have sat down together to examine the issue. When I say sat down together, I am including in terms of the group, the Winnipeg School Division No. 1, the Manitoba Association for Native Languages, the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Assembly of

Manitoba Chiefs. It is a body of people that are known for their keen interest in the development of students of aboriginal descent, and we feel that their contributions are valuable and valid.

That group that I just mentioned is another project direction provided by the native languages project subcommittee. We have initiated through the department the collaboration of educational partners to participate in a project to inventory and revise and identify materials for further development as they are developed and as they become required in the province.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, it seems to me that three years ago we had 13 people in the Native Education Directorate who were producing wall charts, who were producing booklets for parents, at least two versions of one of them, who were working in co-operation with the Department of Indian Affairs to produce a curriculum guide to aboriginal materials. I am just going from memory on the items that I have seen myself in the last few years.

The government then, in the last year, moves to a regional process. Staff are taken from this department and sent to regions where their responsibilities become much broader for the implementation of a wide range of government programs.

What I am seeing being lost is the co-ordinating role and also the actual development of curriculum units. I am not convinced of the fact that the Winnipeg units, for example, do seem to be a very productive unit. It seems to me that a teacher would have to know that those elements existed in order to phone and ask for them.

* (1500)

There are many local curriculum, whether it is dealing with Metis, whether it is dealing with a particular community, which can be widely used across the province. I am concerned that the production of units and materials has declined in the last two years and also the means for communication are not there and the dedicated staff—and I mean dedicated, not in the sense of emotional dedication—who are dedicated to the task of producing a wide variety of curriculum

materials for aboriginal schools and classrooms and for nonaboriginal people. That is no longer there. I have very great concerns about that I think for two reasons.

One is the students themselves, a very large portion of our population, a very youthful population and one that is growing at a rapid rate and which I think there is a real, almost an emergency, need for these kinds of materials to be widely and easily available through our schools and libraries.

My second reason for concern is that I think here is an area where Manitoba can and has excelled. I see that opportunity of the native teachers that we have produced, of the native curriculum and resource materials that we were on track to developing. I see those opportunities slipping away.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I am a little perplexed at the member's anxiety in this regard, because we have, as I just indicated, ongoing communication with all of these various areas we have now in terms of ability to have curricula developed that is truly applicable, enhanced, in my opinion, because it is not just the native branch any more that is now working for the success of aboriginal students it is the whole department. Communication and co-ordination with schools and divisions as well as agencies and organizations has increased with this regional approach, increased not decreased.

I just gave, a few moments ago, an example of the kind of co-ordination that we are discussing in terms of ensuring that the many requests for services and materials are responded to with some kind of collaborative response and approach. I have indicated the number of groups that are involved in the native languages project subcommittee.

The Winnipeg School Division has developed a fair amount of expertise just because of the numbers of inner-city aboriginal students with whom it deals. The Manitoba Association of Native Languages is very interested in aboriginal education, and the Manitoba Metis Federation and Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs cannot be questioned in terms of their commitment to their peoples. To have those working together to examine these kinds of issues in a co-ordinated fashion

put together by the Department of Education and Training, as I indicated before, it is the first time that all of these jurisdictions have sat down together to examine the issue. I think those are improvements that were very much needed, particularly as we enter an era of really trying to respond to some of the very dramatic needs that have been identified in the aboriginal community.

The native advisory committee to the assistant deputy minister made recommendations to the department. We are in the progress right now of about some 90 percent of their recommendations. So in terms of the synopsis of recommendations, they were in the following areas in terms of the learning environment, teacher training, parent and community roles, special education, career guidance and counselling, curriculum, native studies, native languages, implementation. As I say, that is just a brief synopsis of the recommendations.

There were some 36 in all, and we have about 90 percent of them in progress. That is, I think, a pretty good record and one which should give cause for optimism and hope rather than concern and anxiety. Any time, of course, you move to a change, a reorganization or a restructure, there are those who resist change or who prefer the status quo because it is comfortable, it is familiar, it is nonthreatening.

But I think I said before, and I will say again, that we do not believe in change just for the sake of change. We believe in change if we can make meaningful and significant improvements and that we reiterate that change can be exciting. Change can be stimulating. Change can be creative and change can be good, and we do not wish to move towards making changes unless we feel they fit into those categories.

I appreciate the caution and the points the member has raised because in her job as critic it is important that we look for every concern that can be imagined to be brought up and explored. That is also a very useful part of the process of growing and developing.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, my concerns are for curriculum material development, and I gave an indication of what I thought had been developed in the

years of the late '80s and early '90s. I see a change in organization and a reduction in the number of people who are dealing with the development of curriculum material in the department. Winnipeg No. 1 and Frontier School Division both continue to do curriculum material development but the people we had in the department who were doing that do not seem to be doing it any more for a variety of reasons.

So my concerns are Manitoba has an opportunity here to co-ordinate, to extend, to develop a wide range of curriculum materials from multimedia to simpler video productions to distance education programs in aboriginal materials. We have a focus of expertise. All the organizations that the minister has mentioned.

What I am looking for is evidence of curriculum material production. The minister has talked about committees, talked about communication, talked about the people that the department is bringing together to sit down. I am looking at material production.

I read list of the Winnipeg No. 1, and the minister has similar ones from Frontier School Division, always a long-term interest there. Yes, we do have that focus in the North and in the city that we can build on, but where is the multimedia production? Where is the video production? Where are the curriculum guides? Where are the products?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I think I have explained a couple of times in examples of this sort that we are looking at integrating into all subject areas, into all curriculum, the aboriginal components. We feel that we can reach a wider range of students in this way, nonaboriginal as well as aboriginal, by crossing over the curricula span and addressing those areas of our life as a society, particularly as it pertains to aboriginal people in an integrated way into all curriculum.

Now, I know there are some who are philosophically opposed to doing it that way, but we honestly feel that to just have a course prepared on an aboriginal component for aboriginal students only is to narrow the focus down and not to broaden it for that wider knowledge that all students should have, and to see it as part of the whole spectrum. That type of integration into all curricula, I believe, is good, not bad.

* (1510)

I need to indicate, as well, that we have three staff people from what we used to call the former Native Education branch housed in the Program Development branch. They, along with staff from the Program Implementation branch and the Native Education Directorate, which is that new group of three, will continue to support divisions in the development and the widespread use of divisional units with an aboriginal focus.

Those development units will have an aboriginal focus and they will be widespread, not narrow, not limited. They will also assist in the development and the use of native studies curricula and the inclusion of aboriginals' perspectives in all curricula from kindergarten right through to Senior 4. They are going to be approving and recommending learning resources. They have approved and already recommended learning resources which are inclusive of aboriginal perspectives for focus in the aboriginal voice.

One concrete example of the department's specific involvement in unit material production is the involvement of the Program Development staff in the production of a Senior 2 unit on human rights with a strong aboriginal focus for use again in all Senior 2 English language arts, again, crossing into an integrated way other areas. It will be for use in all English language arts classrooms in Winnipeg No. 1 and for sharing across Manitoba. This unit was completed in '94-95 with involvement of our staff.

We also arranged to include learning resources from that specific unit in the Manitoba Textbook Bureau catalogue. So that makes it available for selection by anybody who has an availability to use that Manitoba Textbook Bureau catalogue and that would include a tremendous number of people who are involved with the education of young people in this province.

I maintain again that it is not a decrease. It is not falling away from a particular mandate. It is rather an increase, a refocusing. We have, as I indicated, incorporated 90 percent of the recommendations into progress and that native advisory committee that reported last year, 90 percent of their

recommendations—and they had some 36 recommendations—are already in progress.

So I think that the speed with which we are moving is a very satisfactory rate of speed. It is not something that is being done with such unseemly haste that there is not time to do it properly, but it is moving along at a fairly steady clip because this is a recent initiative and already a tremendous amount has been accomplished that will better education for aboriginal students and for people who live in a society with aboriginal people.

Ms. Friesen: Well, the example of Senior 2 human rights English language arts being produced in Winnipeg No. 1 and then being listed in the Manitoba Textbook catalogue, fine, absolutely. But where is the rest of the material? What are the people who have gone out from the division into the regional programs, what are they producing that similarly will be included in that?

I do not want to particularly argue the issue of integrated curriculum or specialized curriculum for native studies. It does not seem to me to be an either/or argument. Both are necessary, both should be continuing; but if you are integrating curriculum, you have to have something to integrate. Presumably, the issue is that the materials are not there now and so if the minister is saying that divisions themselves are going to be responsible for integrating new material, you have to give them something to integrate. Where is that material coming from? If it is not coming from the regional specialist, apart from Winnipeg No. 1 and Frontier which has always done this, where is it going to come from? The department did fulfill that role until about two years and that is what I see at the moment, a decline in the production of materials that can be integrated or can be added to a native studies curriculum.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I indicated before that there are materials already in existence in some divisions that are shareable type materials. Where there are shareable materials—and we indicated before how we will have the regional meetings and so on and so forth—we will do the linking to link divisions up so that they can use these shareable materials. It is a very valuable role, because these may not be brand new

materials but they are applicable materials and appropriate materials that through linking divisions together can be shared. So the shareable material, we do the linking for it, we do the co-ordinating.

In terms of new materials, province-wide, we do some of the listing of new materials. We keep it as an inventory, have it available by category when divisions are identifying areas that they are looking for information on for students—medicine wheel for example. Staff will know exactly where to find that information and deploy it to the divisions for their use.

That is a service that I also think is a fairly good service that being able to co-ordinate, being able to share existing material, being able to facilitate that sharing and being able to categorize new material on a province-wide basis so that it is easily accessible by any number of divisions, any number of schools and any number of educators who wish to utilize it for their students. That role I think is one that is of great use to those involved again with aboriginal education.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I agree, not an inconsiderable role, but essentially a role of reference and library work.

Does it overlap, for example? What the departmental library does has always been a resource collection, as the department argues that it is moving to resource-based materials, surely there are going to be broader functions within the department which are going to look after that. If this section of the department has simply become a reference service, or if that has become its major role it does not seem to me to be perhaps the best use of resources. This used to be a unit that produced, that produced new materials in a field where there is a great need for new materials.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Again, I simply express my regret of lost opportunities, both in a national sense and from the perspective of what we could be doing as a unique contribution, I think, to education in Canada.

Mrs. McIntosh: Well, I too regret the member's belief, which I do not share as a fundamental belief,

that somehow our aboriginal education has dwindled down to being a nonentity. I reject that belief. I have seen these people working. I know their dedication. I like the focus of an integrated approach. I refuse to believe that a department or a branch or a directorate can only be servicing students accurately if they adhere to what the member believes is a mandate of her desires.

* (1520)

I would submit that if all the directorate did was develop curricula, which is what I sense she is saying that she feels should be their main reason for existence, that if all they do is develop curricula, then I would be regretting opportunities missed to do something good for aboriginal students.

I indicated to the member all of the things that have been done: new directions, more outreach, more collaboration. I think those are good things. I regret that she feels that the directorate's sole reason for being should be to develop curricula because I then think that we will have lost opportunity in other areas.

I should indicate that some divisions will adapt material, but they do not actually produce units. Now, I guess because it is not new curricula that is probably also bad, but Winnipeg No. 1 and Frontier are the two divisions more active in this area, and I think they are divisions for whom the member has some regard.

I say again, the purpose of the directorate is not just to do one task. I would hope that I would get support for doing more than simply developing curricula because there is so much more that needs to be done. That kind of approach also ignores the fact that there does exist good material at the moment, and good material that exists is being shared.

We have a western approach, and that western approach through the Western Canadian Protocol consortium has a number of goals. Those goals include collaborating on initiatives—and I have said this before. These are identified goals through the West, identified that there will be collaboration on initiatives including exchange of materials and resources, including that sharing that I mentioned earlier, including joint

curriculum development and aboriginal teacher education.

The current status of that is that they have had an initial meeting now and that was co-ordinated by Manitoba, an initial meeting of native education directors for the West, co-ordinated by this province, held last year for an initial sharing of information, materials and resources. They are scheduled to meet again very shortly, co-ordinated by British Columbia, an NDP province that shares our vision on this. In their future plans they intend to do future collaborative efforts, which could include an electronic network in curriculum development, initiatives in aboriginal teacher education.

(Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Those other western provinces see the whole aboriginal education component as being more than simply the development of curricula. I keep coming back to that because we are looking at, as the member knows, a climate which is fostering self-determination in education, and we are looking at a people that are looking at self-determination.

I am saying that we are in the initial stages of change, of increased opportunity. Change does not occur overnight. While the member may wish that we had a full set of curricula developed right now that we could lay in front of her, produced in a matter of under a year, collaborating with all of the appropriate players in Manitoba and all of the western provinces, a fully developed set of curricula for her perusal, I am sorry it is too rapid a thing that she is asking. I come back again to I am sorry that the member would have us lose opportunities to do other things besides simply develop curricula.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I find that an odd argument for a department which is going to develop a whole range of curricula within a two-month period, a very compressed work schedule for the development of curriculum.

I was not, by the way, asking for a whole year's work on curriculum. What I was asking for was evidence of continuing curriculum development by the department,

material production for curriculum, including multimedia, including videos, including the kinds of things like wall charts that the department has been involved in in the past and which I do not see happening anymore, and I am expressing my concerns about that.

I am certainly glad to see that British Columbia is involved with this. British Columbia, I know, for example, produces a regular newsletter for native teachers. It has a regular summer institute which links aboriginal students who are moving into colleges and universities and does that on a regular basis on the UBC campus. British Columbia has done an enormous amount of work in native languages, not just in the Education department but linking the Education department with communities, with elders and with the museum. British Columbia has a wide range of native languages, far more than Manitoba has, for example. I welcome the participation of British Columbia, because over the last few years they have had a very active Native Education branch reaching out to students and to teachers and to many parts of the educational community.

I also welcome some of the participation of the Yukon. Under the NDP government the Yukon produced a very good textbook at the Grade 11 level for aboriginal and nonaboriginal students. If we could produce something even close to that I think we would have made enormous strides. I am thinking of the book *Part of the Land, Part of the Water*. Those are the things which I would like to see our department moving to doing.

What I am not seeing—I know we are in a transition period—but I do not see evidence of that happening. What I see is that what used to be a unit which co-ordinated and developed curriculum material—and this is in the context of a department which is moving to resource-based curriculum practice. I do not see a tendency, and that is what I was looking for, for production of new materials and the incorporation of new ideas and new research into the elementary and junior high and high school levels. It has been happening slowly across Canada, more slowly in some provinces than others, and I am looking to Manitoba to be a leader in this area.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I wish to correct the member. It is almost alarming at the misinterpretation of something that was said. I am concerned that the member does not understand that what is being developed in two months is the outcome, not the curricula. I really feel we have not done a very good of explaining to her if she thinks that we are going to have curricula developed in two months when what we are talking about having developed in two months are outcomes.

Maybe it would be helpful if we could explain the difference between outcomes and curricula. I think we have done that. Perhaps we did not explain it well enough that she was not able to understand that we are talking about the difference between what an outcome is and what curricula is, because there is a difference. I will be pleased to go back and explain that to her again after I have answered her question.

I just want to relate for the record that an outcome and a curricula are not synonymous. They are not one and the same thing. Given that, I will come back and explain it to her again later after I answer this question.

* (1530)

The member persists in trying to leave on the record her flawed interpretation of what we are doing as if it were fact. I think it is important that we point out that those things the member says are happening or have been lost or are not good are the member's perspective and the member's interpretation of what she wants the record to show as opposed to what we know is really happening here, and there is a difference. I say we know what is really happening because—let me read for the member the synopsis of recommendations of the native education advisory committee. Let me read what they have had to say about the learning environment. I think I related to her who was on that committee.

Maybe she does not think they are a very good authority. Maybe she does not think they are a very good source. Maybe she does not think we should be listening to them. Maybe she does not feel we should be working on the recommendations of the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

and the Winnipeg No. 1 School Division and those other people. Maybe she does not think they are a good source for us to be consulting with and listening to.

The learning environment, the recommendation there, that there be a mandated development of school plans which address the education of aboriginal students in a holistic, culturally supportive way. And when we talk about the integration across all curricula, that is what we are talking about when they talk about parent and community role. Again the native education advisory committee recommends that Manitoba Education and Training place emphasis on school and community connections by promoting mentorships, peer tutoring and volunteer placements in the community, and we are doing those things. They asked for, and our renewal document addresses, all of these. This is the work of the whole department.

So we have about 60 days of committee work spread over 10 months or so, and that is a very strong indication of the depth to which we are exploring these things. As part of our educational renewal initiative we are committed to the integration of aboriginal content, of respect in all newly developed and revised curricula at all grade levels. We have goals for aboriginal perspectives for aboriginal students, goals for aboriginal perspectives for nonaboriginal students, and goals of aboriginal perspectives for all students. Those are goals, they are outcomes that we will be seeking and believe that the method that we are going to be using is one that will bring us to these conclusions and see these outcomes realized.

Ms. Friesen: Well, the minister began by suggesting I was not paying attention to the MMF or to the AMC or any of the other organizations, and then she offered as examples of what they had recommended, school plans for holistic curriculum approach and an emphasis on school and community and on mentorship and goals for a variety of different kinds of students. And none of that is inconsistent with what I am suggesting. In fact, it melds very well together. In order to have mentorship, in order to have school-community links, in order to have school plans for holistic curriculum development, all of those aspects would be very much enhanced by additional curriculum production, whether

it is multimedia, whether it is wall charts, whether it is guidelines for parents, some of the things which the department has done in the past.

These are all elements which I do not see as continuing except in Frontier Division and Winnipeg No. 1, and that is my concern. And it seems to me that the minister does not have any evidence of curriculum material production in the regions, other than Frontier School Division. We are in a transition period. I would welcome any indication that this would continue in the coming year. If there are to be three people in Dauphin, are they going to be developing extra curriculum materials that can be used across the province?

If there are going to be two people in the South Central Region, what are they going to be producing, dealing with the southern Ojibwa? I am looking for any indication of increased activity in this area or even maintenance of existing activity that we used to have in the department. This is material production that I am talking about.

Teachers whom I have talked to time and time again, and it is not just in the last five years, they are longing, demanding to have new materials, additional materials to work with in the classroom at all grade levels in the aboriginal area. Not just for aboriginal students but for students in many different kinds of programs. What you hear time and time again is that the materials are not there for them to work with.

Mrs. McIntosh: I cannot believe that the member cannot understand what I am saying. I know her to be a reasonably intelligent person, and I cannot believe that she is making the assumption that no materials are going to be developed in the future in terms of curricula that is appropriate and meaningful for aboriginal students.

Specific materials will be developed, purchased, or shared for aboriginal students. What I keep telling her and I will say it again, we are developing curricula right across the curricula spectrum for students in Manitoba that will incorporate a perspective that will help aboriginal students develop a positive self-identity and participate in a learning environment that will

equip them with knowledge, skills, and behaviour needed to participate more fully in the unique civic and culture realities of their communities. At the same time, we will have built into all curricula, which is currently being worked upon as the member knows through the western consortia, through any number of vehicles and approaches—with the nonaboriginal students we will also have this developing of an understanding and respect for the history, culture, heritage and contemporary cultures of aboriginal peoples.

It is not ready yet. The member is saying that she is demanding that we put it on the table right now, this completed curriculum which is not completed because we are just beginning the work. Now, I really do not know how else to explain it. I will try a different way.

We have pledged ourselves to integrating curricula content into all curricula so that the aboriginal perspective is not in a little book that you give students to say, now you are an aboriginal student, here is a piece of material you should read. That is an isolationist way of doing things. It is not a bad way of doing things. It is just we want more, we want better.

So curricula is being developed, aboriginal content will permeate all curricula. That is being prepared. It is not ready yet. I cannot put it on the table in front of you. You are demanding that you see it right now and, in the absence of seeing that right now, everything is going to the bad place in a handbasket because you do not have immediate results for what you see.

You indicate that we are going to have all our other curricula ready in two months which is an erroneous assumption. It is not correct. It is a misinterpretation in a very gross way of what we were saying.

If I could snap my hands and have all of this material that is going to be very carefully developed with input from the groups that I have mentioned, with input from other provinces, if I could snap my fingers and have it ready tomorrow, then I could place it in front of the member and then maybe she could stop running around and saying that we are going to not have curricula or that somehow we have lost this wonderful opportunity that the old ways provided, that the new ways

obviously, in her opinion, will never provide because the new ways, in her opinion, will never be as good as the old ways because she is stuck in old- think, stuck in the past. We are moving forward, and we are moving forward with her support or without her support. We are moving forward with the support of the people we are servicing. We will develop all of these materials in a sequential way. It will be fully integrated.

We have told you that our representation on the curriculum development teams will be including aboriginal representatives, and it will be across all core subjects. I do not know how else to say it.

* (1540)

I mean, you could ask it again, and you can tell me once again the typical doom and gloom that I hear so consistently, the negative, negative, negative approach. I mean, it is one thing to be critical, and it is good to be critical, but there is a way of being constructively critical, and there is a way of being the opposite of constructive. I do not want to say the word because I do not like to even have a word of such negative connotations appearing at this table.

Does the member believe that it is good to take the time to work in collaboration to have the curricula developed in an integrated way, and does she believe that it is maybe worth taking the time to do that properly?

Ms. Friesen: I think all along what I have spoken of is opportunity for Manitobans, so I do not know what the minister is talking about negativity. I have spoken of opportunity and the leadership role that we could and have in some areas developed over the past, particularly in native education. My concern in this area has been that there were 13 people who were devoted to developing native education in a variety of ways. When those people were dispersed to the regions, the minister tried to say in the first instance that they would continue to develop curriculum materials. So far, apart from Winnipeg 1, which has always done this, and Frontier Division, which has done this for a much longer period of time, I have not yet seen any evidence of material production for curriculum additions from those people.

Now what I hear from the minister is that the curriculum developments that she laid out earlier, the process involving the western consortium and the various teams and committees are the ones who will be developing curriculum. So my concern was—I assumed that was happening. The minister has already described that.

I assumed that in the area of native education where there are specific and additional needs in Manitoba that we had had an additional 13 people who were devoted to that and that I see that has been an area of loss, and it gives me concern. That is all I have said, and it has been expressed in the context of an opportunity for Manitobans.

Mrs. McIntosh: The member is a marvel in the terms of the use of her language. It is just amazing. It is just totally, absolutely amazing. The member feels—and it is awesome, yes awesome is the correct word—how wonderful if this could be used to help and support. The member feels that because she has not seen specific material from members of the directorate that they have no interest in or work involved with curricula development.

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: On a point of order, I never indicated any aspect of interest by the members of the department. The issue is policy—

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts. The honourable minister to finish with her response.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: Let me rephrase that. The member feels that because she has not seen a curricula laid in front of her from the directorate that the directorate is having no involvement in or impact on the development of curricula. The member again makes an erroneous assumption, for whatever purpose, I cannot determine, but the member makes an erroneous assumption and lays it forward as a concern that reflects fact, and it does not.

Rather than having 13 staff responsible for the development of aboriginal materials and listing of inclusive resources and inclusion of aboriginal perspectives, rather than having only those 13 staff being responsible for that and being responsible for supporting the unique learning requirements of aboriginal students, rather than having only those 13 staff, all staff have responsibilities related to these areas as they apply to their work.

I guess it is a lot easier to have a little group of people be the only people involved because then you can point to the little group of people and say, ha-ha, have they done this, ha-ha have they done that? But when it is spread across a whole department and spread across four provinces and then a couple of territories and spread across a whole wide ranging of groups, such as the aboriginal groups that I named earlier, then it is a little harder for the member to understand the full integration of these materials.

I am not quite sure how to assure the member that when she says, we used to have 13 people who did curricula development for natives and they did a really good job, and because they are doing it differently now and they have reorganized and they are spread across the department, and because I have not seen any curricula in front of me with their name at the bottom as a co-author in a little less than the year that they have been together, therefore the whole world is going to wrack and ruin and nothing ever good will be done for aboriginal students in our province because obviously this government does not care.

That is just a very strange conclusion to draw, but I can understand why she draws it, because I understand the perspective, I think, that she is putting forward and it is a negative one.

It is a reluctance to want to acknowledge that there may be some merit in what we are doing and there may be some dedicated people who are going to come out in the end with material for schools, curricula developed and ready for use for Manitoba schools in which aboriginal and nonaboriginal students can participate and gain a better and more full understanding of where they are and how they fit into the world around them

and how they fit into the world in which they both exist.

In terms of the types of functions of the directorate, the member seems to feel that the directorate should exist for the purpose of developing curricula. I am saying that is one area that is deemed as something that they should be doing, but it is not the only area that they should be doing. We see them involved in a whole range of functions. They are going to be on the Manitoba education and training task team on First Nations self-government and education, a very important topic.

It may not have a piece of curricula with their name at the bottom as authors that we could put in front of the member—does it mean that they are not doing good things for aboriginal students in Manitoba? The member probably thinks it would. I do not think that that is what it means. They will be involved in the native languages project. Again, there may be no curricula coming out of that authored by the directorate that I can put in front of the member to allay her anxiety that we do not care about aboriginal students. They will be participating in cultural awareness and antiracist education.

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: The minister does persist in putting on the record words, ideas and perceptions which I never had. We agreed that this is one area of the department's activity—[interjection]

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would just remind the honourable member that you do not have a point of order, it is a dispute over the facts.

I would remind the honourable members that they should be discussing the line, and I realize that you are on topic, both, but I would remind you that there appears to be some provoking of debate, and I think that we should try to stay to the line of questioning rather than provoking of debate. So the honourable minister to finish her response.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Just for clarification, am I allowed to respond to the statement put in question to this line?

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: There is no point of order so I would just ask you to respond to the question.

Mrs. McIntosh: In answer to the question or the statement that was put forward by the member when she said that we are missing a great opportunity, that the ability to reach our aboriginal students, and here I am paraphrasing as I am not sure if "reach our aboriginal students" were her exact words, but that we have lost an opportunity, and it causes her great and grievous concern to do something in terms of aboriginal education because there has been no curricula developed by the directorate.

* (1550)

Let me indicate, for the record, that they will be doing the things I started to indicate in terms of the task force on First Nations, in terms of the native languages project, in terms of the antiracist cultural awareness, in terms of liaising with government departments, native agencies, educational institutions, community and parent groups. They will be participating in the Western Canadian Protocol and ensuring aboriginal content in all grade levels of core curriculum to ensure that aboriginal education and priorities are integrated into programs and activities.

That is the area the member says we are losing our great opportunity on because she does not have anything in front of her co-authored by the members of the directorate.

I am saying that is not an opportunity lost. That is a mistaken interpretation of what we are doing. That is a lack of understanding of our initiative, and that initiative of ours is one that is supported by many more people than the number of opposition members here at this table represents.

They will also be, that directorate—I do not want to say the number of opposition members who are here at this table, because we are not supposed to refer to that,

you know, who is here, who is not here, but the number of people at the table here today are fewer in number than the number of people with whom the department has been consulting to develop these goals and objectives.

You know, I think when you go and consult with the people who will be directly affected and they tell you something, the department is not wrong to have listened to them and to have acted upon what they have said.

They will also be participating with the University of Manitoba and with the aboriginal teachers circle to hold the Native Education Summer Institute, and they will be working on a native peoples' bibliography revision. I do not know if you would consider that curricula or not. It is not strictly curricula in the sense that I think of curricula development, but it will have their name at the bottom as co-authors, so maybe it would satisfy. They will be updating that resource for administrators, for teachers, librarians, for students and members of the public.

They will be working with the Education as Healing Practice conference, and I think that is a wonderful, wonderful topic, a very exciting topic. The first annual aboriginal education conference will be held in collaboration—and we do like that word even if it does mean that we cannot have a piece of curricula in front of the member as fast as she would like it co-authored by the directorate. We do like the word collaboration, and that aboriginal education conference will be held in collaboration with the aboriginal teachers circle, Red River Community College and the University of Manitoba.

So of those things I have listed, only one of those components, and I have listed around about 10 components, of those eight to 10 components, one talks about curriculum development, and it talks about developing it in an integrated way across all curricula. I explained to the member earlier that it will also be in collaboration with other jurisdictions who have this same interest that we have, who have the same thrust that we have, including British Columbia, including Saskatchewan. I think it is the right way to go. I make no apologies for it, and I make no apologies, although

I am sort of being given the impression that somehow I should be apologizing, for the fact that there is no curricula laid today in front of the member.

I cannot table a curricula co-authored by the members of the directorate to show proof that they are doing their job. They are doing their job, and I am sorry I cannot provide the kind of proof she is looking for, but I think if you talk to some of the people with whom they are working you might find that they are, in fact, doing their job.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, my request was not for curriculum to be placed in front of me, it was for evidence that curriculum material development was proceeding, and I have asked that on a number of occasions.

Mrs. McIntosh: How would you get the evidence if I do not present it?

Ms. Friesen: Well, the minister asks how I would get the evidence. Well one, for example, that she just mentioned in the last minute is the updating of the bibliography. Useful, and I think that is important, and that is the kind of thing that I was looking for and looking for similar kinds of activities, ongoing, as part of this department's and this section of the department's responsibility, which is all I have been asking for all the time. This is one part of the department's responsibility, and where was the evidence that this aspect of it was progressing?

Mrs. McIntosh: For clarification, and I am really getting very exasperated, I have to indicate again that the directorate is not in this all by itself. I am telling the member that we have dispersed those people throughout the department, so the directorate could be a co-ordinating body for some of these functions, but that function is now throughout the department. We no longer have it as a little category by itself. It is throughout the department, and we believe that is the way it should be.

Now I do not know, maybe if you want us to go back and have it just be a little group of 13 working on their own, but we would prefer to see it dispersed throughout the department, with a little group of three to help co-

ordinate it and so on. But please understand that this mandate, given the importance of this issue, has now become a focus of the entire department in a way that it never was before.

For the reasons that she knows and I know and everybody in this building knows, we have a massive need to reach, particularly if we can, children of aboriginal descent who are now subject through the development of their lives to all kinds of societal events that are overtaking them in terms of diabetes, for example, in terms of the suicide rate, in terms of all of the ills that have befallen them, all of the challenges that they face to try to overcome the statistical evidence of the quality of their lives, and it has to begin with education.

It cannot be just isolated now to a few people. It has to be department-wide, and it has to be inter-jurisdictional. It has to cross provincial boundaries, and so it is a very, very, very important area, and we do not want to play games with it, and maybe that is part of my frustration here in terms of the questioning. I mean I have answered the question so often that I am getting frustrated. Am I not explaining it well? Is it not clear what we are trying to do here? It is too important to play games with, this subject.

Ms. Friesen: From the perspective of the classroom teacher in Manitoba, what materials, in a process which is becoming a resource-based curriculum, do the classroom teachers of Manitoba have available to them as a result of the work of this section of the department, the Native Education Directorate, and including the people that they have dispersed to the regions? What do they have to work with that they did not have a year and a half ago or two years ago, since the changes took place?

Mrs. McIntosh: Staff is looking up that information, but while we are waiting for it to come to me, I should say for starters what they have got now are some very committed people who are helping them and advising them and providing them with direction, who are working with them in terms of co-ordinating the sharing of existing material. I do not know specifically what material has already been shared. I do not know if we have got a listing of resource person A went to

community B to share material that they had received from a regional meeting with community E, because I mean we could spend all day doing that.

And the net result of that would be that those folks would be here at this table giving you information instead of out there helping the people, because that could be very, very time consuming, and I do not think that is what you want. That is not what I want. I prefer to free them to do their work.

They are going to have native studies in the fall. They will have a native studies for kindergarten to Grade 4, Grade 5 to Grade 8, Senior 1 to Senior 4. Those will be support documents and resource listings. I do not have the titles. The bibliography will be ready this summer. The ISPITMP courses for distance delivery for inclusion of aboriginal content—

* (1600)

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: It is not really a point of order, but for the record, could the minister list what those initials are for?

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: She is asking for clarification. I am pleased she asked, because all of these initials, as we were saying, they drive us all crazy. That is the Independent Study Program for the Teacher Mediated Program. That is for distance delivery, and that will have the inclusion of aboriginal content. I do not have a specific date for that. Those are three examples.

Ms. Friesen: Just to respond to the minister's introduction to this, no one has ever doubted, and nothing I have ever said should lead the minister to interpret that there have never been dedicated people working with and from the department. [interjection] Well, the minister said it was not clear.

I would be very interested when the record appears in print for the minister to find anything in anything I have ever said that dealt with the individuals in the department or their dedication to their job. My concern is for government policy, for the minister's policy. What I understand from what she has just said is that in the fall—the bibliography will be ready in the summer. There will be new—and that is my question—support documents for the K to—was it junior high level—for the native studies curriculum produced by the department. Are those the new materials that will be the product, I guess, in part of the line that we are looking at?

Mrs. McIntosh: I just want to indicate I am pleased that the member clarified, because from the way the questioning was going—and I am going to be paraphrasing because I do not have the exact quotes here—but from the way in which the questioning was going which is, well, you say that you are going to do this, but what has staff done?

I am sorry, I hear that as a criticism that staff has not done what the minister wants. I do not know how else you could interpret it. The minister says she wants this and why has staff not got it ready for you to see. I cannot interpret that any other way but that you think that staff is not doing what the minister wants. I felt it very important to indicate the staff was doing their job, and I am glad you did not mean it that way, but that is how I interpreted it, and I think if you read Hansard you will understand why it could be interpreted the way I interpreted it.

I should also indicate the staff has been not only working very hard on these initiatives, but they have also been extremely supportive and proactive on these initiatives. I am grateful to them for that, and not only for that, but for the help they are giving me here as a new minister in providing me with information that I do not have at my fingertips.

I will just put that on the record. I interpreted what you said the way I interpreted it, because many people could interpret it that way, and I think the member will agree with me when she reads how the questioning went. I am glad it has been clarified. I appreciate that.

In terms of the kindergarten to Grade 4, Grade 5 to Grade 8, and Senior 1 to Senior 4, these were piloted earlier, and the finalized native support documents and resource lists are also ready for the fall.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Item 2.(d) Native Education Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$160,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$57,600—pass.

2.(e) Program Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,452,900.

Ms. Friesen: We are looking here at a section of the department whose work, I assume, is going to be very much parallel with the new procedures for curriculum development. So I wonder if the minister could tell us, we are looking here at 14 staff years, not a great change from last time, but how does this particular aspect of the department fit with the new curriculum? Is this where most of those staff years are contained?

Mrs. McIntosh: That is correct.

Ms. Friesen: How many additional staff years are involved in the new program developments? There are 14 here. How many others should we be looking at in other parts of the department? Does the minister have a ballpark figure for that?

Mrs. McIntosh: Fifteen.

Ms. Friesen: Much of this deals with—or at least one of the activities identified here is the production of resource-based learning. I wonder if the minister could give us an account of what has been taking place in the past year in resource-based learning material production.

Mrs. McIntosh: A number of key initiatives have been completed to provide direction for school libraries into the future, and the resource-based learning model has been distributed to schools and regional Training for Trainers workshops. We use that term, and I think it has been used enough that it is clear what we mean by that in terms of Training for Trainers, those workshops have been held throughout the province involving some 370 teachers-librarians.

Guidelines for designing school library facilities have been presented to the Public Schools Finance Board to assist in the future design of school libraries, and the independent learning skills outcomes are complete and will be integrated into all curricula.

Manitoba, I believe, is fortunate to have a fairly extensive group of well-trained teacher-librarians in many parts of the province who can, hopefully, be called upon to assist school divisions in the ongoing development of their school libraries.

Ms. Friesen: That is one element I wanted to discuss. Does the minister have any idea, or any way of finding out how many teacher-librarians there are in the province?

One of the changes that I understand is happening, particularly in Winnipeg, and I do not mean just Winnipeg No. 1, but some of the city schools, is that there are very few teacher-librarians left in the schools and they are increasingly using library technicians from the Red River College training program. While the people who have graduated from that program have nothing but praise for it, they do emphasize that they are not teachers and that they are not prepared to be teachers. This particular aspect of the program, not just of this year, but the coming years of the new program development, is going to depend quite heavily upon resource-based learning. How many teacher-librarians, I am looking proportionately, do we have across the province who are going to be able to—who will be the trained leaders, I guess, in this area?

Mrs. McIntosh: In terms of the listing that you are requesting, we can get that for you. We do not have it here. We can get it out of our MIS area and bring that information to you.

* (1610)

In a generic sense, when we are looking at, again, students who are going to become practised in using multimedia, maybe multimedia is not quite the right word, but the wide variety of materials that are now available for storing information and cataloguing information and so on. Of course, every teacher in the school who teaches a child is responsible for the

inclusion of resource-based learning and independent learning skills and incorporating them into the instruction. We have the kind of supports that should be going to schools and to resource teachers in terms of meeting the needs of students who are experiencing learning difficulties or retrieval of information. That is a high priority with us, and it is something we are working to ensure that all teachers become and develop expertise in as part of their function because so much of all subject areas now are going to be utilizing, particularly, electronic access to information. So we see that development of computer literacy is starting at a very early age and going right up through to Senior 2 and Senior 3 and Senior 4, and you will see students utilizing electronic technology to access material.

Ms. Friesen: The minister referred to the training of trainers. Was this the training of librarians, teacher-librarians, or was this the training of the teachers who are to incorporate resource-based learning into their daily classroom activities? Or are the teacher-librarians then to do the training?

Mrs. McIntosh: I have been advised that we have some 370 teacher-librarians and teachers trained in resource-based learning and information and literacy skills, so some 370 at this point.

Ms. Friesen: I was not quite sure of that. Are there 370 teacher-librarians in Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is a combination of librarians and teachers who have had that training.

Ms. Friesen: I understand it is relatively easy for the minister to get, through MIS, the listing of teacher-librarians. I would appreciate it if we could have the number of teacher-librarians since it seems to be a professional area that is changing and obviously an area that is of great concern for the future.

Mrs. McIntosh: We can do that. We would be pleased to do that.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask about the writing of courses for distance education delivery. I understand from the Estimates book that 15 courses will be added to distance education delivery this year, this coming

year, and that 13 will be piloted. Does the minister have a listing of those courses that could be tabled either today or tomorrow? What I am also interested in, is this the section of the department that will continue to develop distance education courses. When we have talked about MERLIN—before we have talked about MERLIN simply as a facilitator, as a co-ordinator of a variety of partners from production to delivery, but the actual writing of courses, is that to remain in this department, and what are the other years of the multiyear plan?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Program Development area will do that, yes. We can give you a list of the courses. They range from, without going through all of them, they range from accounting principles to Spanish. I mean, they are history of western civilization, skills for independent living, English language arts, German, keyboarding, physics, biology, anthropology, American history, Canadian history, social studies, you name it, it is in there. We will get that list for you for tomorrow.

Ms. Friesen: Are all these at the post Grade 7 level, or are some being developed for elementary schools?

Mrs. McIntosh: I know calculus is in there as well. We are focusing at the present time on Grade 7 to Senior 4.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I read an evaluation of one of the department's distance education courses in one of the reports of the Brandon Rural Research Institute, and I wondered if the minister's staff had read that and whether they were going to be responding to it. It dealt with fine art delivered in high school at a distance by distance education, and it was an interesting evaluation, I thought. I would be interested in how the department responded to it.

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, staff have just passed me a note indicating that they have not seen the article.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, it was published about six months ago I think, and it is one of the regular reports from Dr. Rounds institute at Brandon. It was making the point, essentially, that fine art at first glance looks like the kind of thing that you could not teach by distance education. There were some elements of it

which, obviously, lent itself well to that. The crucial thing, as I interpreted the report, is the teacher, is the actual person on the site, not necessarily a fine arts teacher, but the person who was there in the classroom is the crucial element. I think it had some implications. I was interested in it from the perspective of the general teaching of distance education, not just this particular course.

Mrs. McIntosh: We will see if we can dig that up and read it because it does sound interesting, and it sounds like it is making some good observations. I thank you for alerting us to its existence.

Ms. Friesen: I wonder, following on from that, what kind of evaluation the department does of its distance education courses. You have a pilot year. What is the evaluation at the end of that, and then what kind of continuing evaluation is there, if any?

Mrs. McIntosh: I will just indicate, before we get to the specific response to that question, just as a follow-up, that the distance education task force in its work has reinforced the notion and the value of the importance of on-site teachers. So that would seem to fit with the contents of the article. It may be that staff who are not here have read that. As you see, we have only the four here today, so it may be that others have gone through it.

In answer to your question, basically with those courses we have piloted them, and then after the pilot we have revised them, and then after they have been revised, then they have been finalized. So they will go through those sort of three basic stages of evolution.

* (1620)

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us where the uptake is for distance education? Who are the clients, and are they beginning to cluster in certain regions of the province. What is the cost at the moment to a school division or an individual school for the use of one of the department's courses?

Mrs. McIntosh: Just a brief addition to the previous answer in that we get feedback on those in terms of those three stages of evolution. We get feedback from

teachers and schools and students and teacher markers, administrators, departmental staff, those kinds of people involved in the pilot.

We will be looking at clustering as an ultimate formation on the information highway. We will have the clusters of users around a central hub. Right now we have, for students, students registered for some 6,387 courses for this fall, that is '94, for last fall rather, that is '94-95, the year we are in right now, 6,387 registrations. That would not be that many courses; it is the number registered.

The member was well advised to look surprised on that, because it is not that many courses, it is that many registered in courses. The students can register for as many courses as they want, so it may well be that we have six-thousand-some-odd registrations. It may not be that many students or that many courses. We can get, if you desire, we do not have here but we can obtain a regional breakdown on that as to where are these students, in which parts of the province are they mainly located, and we can obtain that information if you would like it and return with it.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I would be interested in that. One of the interesting elements of distance education at the college and university level is the proximity of so many registrants to Winnipeg. I think it has been a surprise to all the institutions. My guess is that it is not the case here, but it would be interesting to know what is happening in distance education and how people are using something which was originally developed for distance but in fact is being used to control time rather than distance.

What is the cost to school divisions and to schools now, and how is that cost allocated? Does it go to the individual school or does it go to the division for a registrant in distance education?

Mrs. McIntosh: We have a registration fee, and that registration fee can be paid in a couple of ways. One, if it is an adult, or it does not necessarily have to be an adult, but if it is a student taking a course for interest, the student may be asked to pay the registration fee himself or herself. If it is a course that is being taken by the student because the school division is not able to

provide it, then the school division may pay the registration fee on behalf of the student, accepting responsibility for provision of the course through the paying of the registration fee.

The courses are about \$75 to \$80 a course, but a student may find it may cost a bit more if it is a science course, for example, and there is lab equipment or materials that need to be purchased to accompany that course. For the basic teaching of it, it is about \$75 to \$80 that it will come in at.

Ms. Friesen: How is that price arrived at? How does the department determine that price? What is that based upon?

Mrs. McIntosh: It does not include the development costs of the material, but it does include the printing costs, the mailing costs, anything that has to be sent along with the course, you know, some backup material that may be required to accompany a particular course. It would be those types of things that add up to that \$75 or \$80 fee.

Ms. Friesen: Would that include the marking and monitoring of these 6,000 students?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: How much of the staff time is devoted to that, to the monitoring and marking, et cetera—the examining of those students.

Mrs. McIntosh: The distance delivery unit, another title we will throw into the mix here, co-ordinates the delivery of courses for distance delivery. They do the marking, they do the support to students. They are located in Winkler. They are the ones who would be the trained markers that we use.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: What is the will of the committee for a 10-minute break? [agreed]

We will resume at 4:40 p.m.

The committee recessed at 4:29 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:42 p.m.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Will the committee of Education and Training please come to order.

Item 2. School Programs (e) Program Development
(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,452,900—pass;
(2) Other Expenditures \$951,300—pass.

Item 2.(f) Program Implementation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,774,500.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask about the provision of training and development for principals for the school advisory councils. This is one of the issues that, I think, has been raised a number of times with the department, certainly at some of the meetings that I have been at.

It has been an issue that principals and school divisions have raised, that if school advisory councils are to be successful in areas where they have not had school advisory councils, that it will take time and training for principals who have not been involved with that before and who, under the minister's guidelines, are going to be responsible for elections, for franchise, for a wide variety of issues.

Mrs. McIntosh: A trainer of trainers workshop was held in March of this year to train 14 parents who were selected by the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils, the former Home and School, five principals selected by the Manitoba Association of Principals and six departmental staff to facilitate parental involvement workshops throughout Manitoba.

Nine regional parental involvement workshops are being held, or have been held, most of them have taken place already between March and June of this year in Brandon, Cranberry-Portage, Dauphin, Gimli, Morris, Portage la Prairie, Thompson, Winkler, Winnipeg. Those resource people partner with trained principals and parents and they work in school teams in developing school plans that focus on increasing the communication between parents and schools and

implementing parental involvement activities in their respective schools.

We have additional departmental support as well, and presentations are available to parents, parent organizations, schools and others, as requested, on the implementation of guidelines, and that is the book, it is a title here now, *Guidelines: Advisory Councils for School Leadership*. The department is purchasing a selection of individual videos and is developing a bibliography of parental involvement videos.

We have identified a half-time staffperson to provide a focus, or we have taken half a staff year. It may not be a half-time person, it may be a full-time person who devotes half of their duties to this enterprise to provide a focus in the required departmental expertise for this kind of parental involvement. That is planned to take effect in the fall term.

Six regional consultants have expertise to deliver parental involvement workshops, and they will be available as well to assist school teams in the development of school plans to increase parental involvement. We as well have an advisory council for school leadership tool kit developed to facilitate the implementation of advisory councils within the schools, and that tool kit will include the following materials. It will include getting started, the proposed constitution, sample agendas, managing conflict, promoting, publicizing, advertising, communicating, whatever the terminology you wish to use to get the word out to inform people, training, professional development, budgeting and financing. That is all set to go for the '95-96 year.

Ms. Friesen: Will there be any financial support for schools who are beginning this process?

Mrs. McIntosh: The school advisory finance committee has been asked to give some advice on that first part of your question, will the department be making any finances available. I should indicate that the Association for Parent Councils have indicated that they would like to see this be a low-cost exercise and voluntary, not that the members would not be getting stipends or honorariums. They would like to see it be voluntary, they would like to see the cost be kept low

and do not envision many more costs than they currently utilize where they have parent councils or home and school associations or parent-teacher associations in existence right now. There might be a cost, perhaps in advertising, to ensure that people are aware that there is an election coming up and that type of thing. It should be a relatively small cost, I would imagine, but I will be receiving some advice from that from the financial advisory committee.

Ms. Friesen: Some of the literature that I have seen on this suggests that one of the really crucial elements in having a good link between parents and the school is actually a good newsletter. It is a relatively simple area, but it is a costly one to write, to have it attractively laid out, to ensure the distribution, that it does not end up at the bottom of the school bag, as it so often does. That is one of the crucial elements in maintaining the link, in maintaining a very active parent council, as well. I know that principals—and this was a meeting of principals in the rural area—were very concerned about the cost of that.

Does the minister have any plans to seek advice particularly on those kinds of costs?

* (1650)

Mrs. McIntosh: I quite agree. A newsletter is an excellent vehicle for communicating to parents and to the community. It is a really good vehicle that is employed in many schools right now, and making sure that children get it home and it does not get washed in the blue jeans pocket is very important.

In terms of those cost items, some are the kinds of activities that some parent councils currently find themselves engaged in, but I am waiting to see what the advisory council might say on the topic. And I concur, as I indicated, that the newsletter is a very good vehicle for communication, and improving the delivery of information is very important. It is important that that letter does get to the people for whom it is intended.

Ms. Friesen: There is a reduction in the number of staff in this area, and we are actually down. In 1993 there were, I believe, 60 staff years, 60.3 staff years. In '94-95 it was 58.3 staff years, and in '95-96 it is 52.3

staff years. I am looking specifically at the professional technical level, although I notice that the staff support is also down proportionately.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Could the minister indicate what changes have occurred in this division that would lead to that drop in staff?

Mrs. McIntosh: As the member is aware, we have had a reorganization and a reconciliation from '94 to the '95-96 year. Three staff members went to MERLIN, the Manitoba Educational Research and Learning Information Network, and so you will see them included as a reduction here, but they are picked up in the MERLIN line.

Ms. Friesen: What accounted for the previous year's loss from 60.3 to 55? I am on page 55 of the expanded Estimates which estimated for '93-94, 60.3 on this line.

(Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, staff has indicated that to draw out the specifics they would have to go back into some documents that we do not have here. They are operating, at the present time, under the understanding that with the reorganization there was a certain amount of reconciliation, there were some redeployments, but they would have to go back into the records to pull out the exact shift of people and do not have that here right now.

Ms. Friesen: If the minister could bring that, then we could look at it next time.

Mrs. McIntosh: It is the '93-94 period that you are referencing, right?

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I am looking at the 60.3 staff years in '93-94 which went to an estimated 55, sorry, 58 in '94-95, so there is a loss of two positions there, and then a loss of three positions this year or a transfer of three positions. I am particularly interested in, I know an issue that has been brought to the minister's attention as well as mine, and that is the loss of a library specialist in the department. There is a general belief

both in the city and in the rural areas that the loss of a library specialist in the department is a serious one for teachers who relied upon the newsletter and who relied upon the specialist services offered by the library specialist and the department. I do not know if this is the line at which that loss or transfer has occurred, but in any case maybe we could discuss that issue here. If it is not the line, then the minister could tell us for the record which line it is.

Mrs. McIntosh: I would just indicate to the member, that staff year is designed for pulling people in, in particular areas of expertise, to utilize their abilities. So it was a seconded position. We had a librarian seconded to the department for a three-year period. That was the length of her secondment. The secondment was up. The time for which she had been contracted completed itself, and we then moved on to another area and seconded a teacher to fill that year who will be working on resource, who will be working on parental involvement. It was a seconded position; it was never a permanent position.

There seems to be some impression by people that that was a permanent position. It was not. It was a three-year secondment, and that SY is one that is still being used for a seconded expertise. The area of expertise that is currently being utilized or that will be utilized come September '95, when the new staffperson for that position is seconded, will be the whole area of parental involvement, school plans and resource teachers, as I indicated earlier. So the library expertise that we desired for that three-year period was provided, and we are very grateful to have had that three-year secondment for that specific task. During the time that person was with us, that person fulfilled a mandate that she had been given and that upon completion enabled her to be returned to her home division.

* (1700)

For the rest of the time now, the teacher-librarians will sit on all curriculum committees. So we will get a teacher-librarian influence and impact by having them sit on curriculum committees and steering committees in order to implement the work completed by the seconded teacher-librarian that we had the privilege of having for the last three years. The work that she

completed will be utilized by teacher-librarians who will sit on steering committees and curriculum committees, and the seconded position will now be filled by another area that we need to develop some—that we need to involve experts from the field in.

The department will continue to utilize seconded experts in this way in order to provide specialized services to schools and divisions, and it will be accomplished on a rotation basis to make the best use of available resources from the field.

The library resource-based learning area has now had the services of a designated consultant for ten years. We have had that ability in the department for ten years, but never, as I said, was it ever a permanent position; it was always a seconded position.

So we are looking now at having the resource teachers and the parental involvement as our secondment area, and a very important area indeed, and we are glad we have that seconded position to be able to fill in this way.

Ms. Friesen: Where would I find in the lines that staff year secondment? Which line is it?

Mrs. McIntosh: Under provincial specialists.

Ms. Friesen: Which appropriation does that come under?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is 16-2(f), and I think that is the one we are on right now.

Ms. Friesen: That secondment year is one of these 52.3 professional SYs that are here.

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: One of the regrets that has been expressed by the people whom I know have written to the minister has been the loss of the newsletter that went along with that teacher-librarian position, which I guess people have become accustomed to relying on for a number of areas, not just being kept in touch with library issues but with the selection of materials.

I think, particularly, I have heard from two divisions where there are no teacher-librarians, and they feel the loss particularly keenly, and that is not necessarily an area that is going to be filled by having teacher-librarians on curriculum steering committees. That ongoing responsibility to purchase for school libraries, for example, is something that people felt was very much helped by the newsletter.

So what is the future of the newsletter, and what kind of replacement does the department see for that?

Mrs. McIntosh: I am flattered on behalf of the department that people come to rely as heavily as they do upon the things that are provided by government. There are, however, other areas of life that provide very good writings on libraries, all facets of libraries, their influence on our lives, and the wealth of information that is available from a well-utilized library.

We also have a new phenomena in our world, I guess it is really no longer a phenomena, it is still new, in a relative sense, and that is this whole opening up of technology, and access to a wealth of material through electronic means far surpasses anything that we could ever have dreamt of 20 years ago.

There is a tendency, it seems, for some reason, away from newsletters, and not just here, with libraries. Previously, there used to be newsletters in a variety of subject areas that for some reason those have dwindled away for reasons I know not why. I do not know if, because of the wealth of material that is available in a world independent from government, if people are utilizing other materials, or if they have just shown a lack of interest, or what.

We are looking at the inclusion of information which formerly appeared in the teacher-librarian newsletters. We see it now occurring in a variety of ways, including materials, by the way, in the department's own bulk mailings, because you will see some fairly good material coming out from the department, also the inclusion of information, including department information, in the journal of our educational partner. I am going to go into big, long initials here again with the MSLAVA; that is the Manitoba Library Association in short form. So, you know, those things

are still there. I am, as I say, flattered that there were people who had become dependent on the newsletter, something that was provided by government, and is not currently provided by government, and I point to the wide variety of reading materials that are now so plentiful and available on the marketplace regarding literacy, regarding a wide number of reading or media associated opportunities.

Ms. Friesen: I am not quite sure what the minister means by a wide variety of materials available. I think the area that the newsletter, or the need that the newsletter most fulfills, from what I understand from teachers in these areas, is selection of materials for purchase for their own school libraries. Is the minister directing or advising people, the people who have written to her, to use another particular source? I mean, for example, are we looking at school library selection advice elsewhere in the department, or is there an advisory newsletter that might come from a Canadian organization, or from another provincial organization? What is the particular substitute that will enable nonlibrarians—and in this case they were from rural areas—to have some degree of comfort in the expenditure of their public funds for their library?

Mrs. McIntosh: I indicated to the member earlier about the department's own bulk mailing. I referenced the electronic availability of information, the Internet being one example, journals, those types of things. We also have a new materials listing that the department has, and that information indicates all the new material that might be available for people who are fulfilling librarian roles in schools. That is called What's New, and it goes out, mailed out from the department right across the school divisions in Manitoba.

* (1710)

We have produced a process to be used for local selection, and we would be distressed to think that the only material that someone involved in library work with students was able to use would have been the newsletter that previously went out for a few years from the department. As I say, I am flattered that people came to rely upon it and depend upon it, but I am also confident that that was not their only source. In fact, I would be somewhat alarmed if it was their

only source. I doubt very much that it was, because I think that those who work with children in the area of reading have developed a few more vehicles than a newsletter, no matter how good it was, to make use of to benefit their students.

So I am confident that, with the involvement of teacher-librarians in so many different areas, the fact that the secondment is now complete and we have chosen to use that secondment position for a new endeavour—we now see teacher-librarians working on the outcomes of the work that was done by the teacher-librarian we seconded to complete a specific task for us. I have confidence that the loss of the newsletter, which I regret because it was something that people did obviously enjoy—I do not think the loss of the newsletter, however, will lead to the failure of the system.

Ms. Friesen: The minister suggested three other sources: the new materials listing, What's New—and I would appreciate seeing a copy of that. It is not a publication I know, so if it is possible, please bring a copy of that. The other two areas that the minister suggested were the Internet and journals. I wonder if the minister could tell us where on the Internet, for example, a school in Dauphin should look for advice on the selection of school library materials. Which journals would be available for similar kinds of advice?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, in terms of the journals, one very good one would be the MSLAVA, the Manitoba School Library Association's journal. That is a good one. There are other related journals available at the Instructional Resources unit. On the Internet they would go to Blue Sky, Freenet and Gopher.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I think what the minister means by the last few is simply that is the roadway, that is not the content. I am looking for content. That is what they got from the newsletter. They got advice and selection advice. So could the minister tell me where on the Internet they would look on, or whatever the terminology is, to get the advice that previously they had got from the department in a newsletter?

Mrs. McIntosh: We would have to get that specific address on the Internet, and it might be helpful if the

member could suggest a couple of topics that she would like looked up, because, you know, they would need to be looking for something.

I understand that the member feels the importance of this issue. I am wanting to indicate, however, that governments have to make choices, and we chose to fill the seconded position this time with a resource teacher, parental involvement secondment, because we had seconded for a 10-year period a teacher-librarian who had now completed her task.

I wonder if the member would care to answer a question and indicate, if there was only one seconded position to be filled, which would she rather see in it at this point in history. Would she rather see a seconded teacher in on resource teachers and parental involvement, or would she rather see an 11th year of a teacher-librarian whose task was complete? Or would she rather add to the cost of taxpayers by adding yet another seconded position so that we could have both, or maybe three, add another seconded position, because all areas are important—maybe five, maybe 10?

That is what I think happened to government, unfortunately, many years ago, and that is why we have no money now to be able to fill endless seconded positions much as we would like to. We have a heavy debt burden, and we all know why we have it. We are here trying to hold the system together and improve the position by making choices.

We have made a choice to emphasize resource teachers and parental involvement in a seconded position at this time because we feel that we were able to take advantage of a teacher-librarian secondment. We would love to continue with it. We would love to do a lot of things, but we do not have the money and one of the reasons we do not have the money is because when her government was in power they spent money like they were throwing confetti around at a wedding, and we do not have enough money left to do the things we should be doing. I just want to put that on the record. I would appreciate an answer to what her priorities would be in this area.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would remind the members of the committee that we

are here to discuss the Estimates of the Committee of Supply and that we should not be provoking debate.

Ms. Friesen: My considerations in this particular question are dealing and trying to represent the views of people who have written both to me and to the minister to indicate the loss that they feel at the loss of this particular newsletter and of this particular position.

The minister suggested some alternative resources and the Manitoba School Library Association Journal is certainly a good one, and I would think would be available to most libraries in some form or other throughout the province. The second area the minister suggested was the Internet and that struck me as a useful idea. Newsletters and information and selection lists can be very easily conveyed through the Internet. I have asked before about the department having, essentially, a mailbox on the Internet which could be used for exactly this kind of process.

The cost involved in developing a newsletter could easily have been transferred using existing resources much more wisely to a group who are already connected to the Internet, who are used to and are in the process of being trained in many areas to instruct their students in the use of the Internet for educational purposes. Again, maybe we could stick to this particular issue and try and find some ways to meet the expressed needs of those people who have written to us.

Mrs. McIntosh: We appreciate the loss felt by the people the member has heard from. I appreciate her sharing those concerns with us. We too have heard from probably the same people, I would imagine.

* (1720)

I do feel it is necessary, though, to seek a response from the member. As she has asked questions, we have provided the answers and she, by, again, implication, not direct statement, is implying that somehow we should be retaining this secondment for a teacher-librarian. When she talks about the extreme loss, she talks about all of the problems that are going to occur from this and I, again, would appreciate an answer from her as to which priority she would place. Would

she fill that seconded position with the teacher-librarian, would she fill it with a person seconded to deal with resource and parental involvement or would she add another seconded position? I would appreciate an answer to the question.

Ms. Friesen: The issue we are addressing are the needs expressed by teachers outside the city of Winnipeg who have some concerns about needs that they felt were met by the department before and which they feel have not been met. I have suggested to the minister ways in which, particularly, the newsletter issue could be addressed by the use of existing resources in a more effective way.

I would still be awaiting some response on that. Is it possible, for example, to put some elements, whether drawn from other provinces or whether drawn from existing work that the department will continue to do in curriculum development and resource-based learning, and to use the Internet to transmit that in a very timely and efficient and very cheap way to libraries and schools throughout Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: From the answer, I appreciate the positive, constructive suggestions as to how we can provide for people dealing with library services in their communities, services such as I have already identified, Internet and those types of things which she now indicates as ways in which we can do the things we have suggested could be done. I appreciate that.

I take from her answer to my question that she then is supporting that we fill that seconded position with something other than teacher-librarians. I appreciate her ability to help us fill any gap that that might create. I appreciate her support for filling that position, as we have with a different seconded area, so that we can, as we develop expertise in one area through a seconded position, when that is complete, bring in another to develop yet another area. It may come time eventually for a teacher-librarian to be seconded again, because the work that was done is in need of updating. I appreciate the support for that that I hear inherent in her position.

The staff, of course, of the department of the instructional resource unit are also available to support

teachers in the area of selecting materials and, as I say, we have worked very hard to get local jurisdictions more independent, and we are working on the establishment of the home page.

She suggested we have our own mailbox on the Internet. We are now working on the establishment of the home page, and we see that as a very valuable communication tool. I do indicate, I take by the member's answer, that she is supporting having that position of teacher-librarian that was seconded, filled instead by a new area that needs some seconded help right now. I put that on the record that that is how I am interpreting her answer and, hearing nothing to the contrary, will let that stand.

Ms. Friesen: Well, the minister is, of course, provoking debate. She may choose to interpret my questions in any way she chooses. My concern, and again I am sticking to the issue, is the concern for the needs of people who have expressed them to myself and the minister that I felt could be met in one section of their need, by an Internet.

I am glad to hear about the home page. I certainly would support that, and I support the development of that throughout the Manitoba government. I think we have been rather slow off the mark in many areas, the Manitoba government in developing Internet access and home pages. Some departments have done it, some are just beginning to come on line, and it is a very fruitful area that both New Brunswick and Ontario have been very active in the last five or six years. So I certainly support that home page.

The other issues are the minister's issues. She has made a choice and I expect that in three or four years the people will express their views on that choice.

Mrs. McIntosh: The member said the same thing about six months ago. The member's party indicated that they expected that people would make their choice on these issues, and it appears that they did.

I will interpret your statements as I do. You indicated I may interpret your statement any way I wish, and I will interpret it any way I wish because you consistently refuse to clarify what you do mean by it.

So, in the absence of your clarifying for the record that you do not agree with me, let the record show that I interpret that to mean that you do agree with me.

Well, the member mutters away, and the member chirps and mutters away as she does under her breath, but I will indicate that I have no problem with the questions you asked regarding how we are going to deliver certain services and this type of thing.

I have a lot of problem with the snide innuendos about the great dramatic loss and all of those things because I do think the member is attempting to leave an implication on the table by the phraseology that is used. The member is an expert in the use of the English language, and she knows full well, when she uses words the way she does, the impact of those words. She knows it consciously, she knows it intellectually, and I just want people to know that I know that she knows.

Ms. Friesen: I do not want to prolong this debate, but I do think that the minister is twisting words. The minister is interpreting words for her own purpose, and she is putting on the record things which I have never said and never intended. The clarification is that I am expressing the concerns of people who have written to me and to the minister. I have asked about the needs that they expressed that they had, and I have suggested ways in which those could be filled.

The minister wants to divert this to another topic. And she is right, the people did make their choice a couple of months ago, and that is fine. We live with that choice. As an opposition member, my job is, in fact, to express the concerns and to be the voice of those people who have concerns about aspects of the minister's policy. That is all that I have done.

Mrs. McIntosh: I maintain that is all that you have done. I quite agree with you, but I maintain your role is simply to do much more than simply that. I maintain that your role is not just to reiterate people's positions but to place an alternative. Whatever you choose to do is up to you. You are a free agent, you are a free person, but you have not answered the question. You have not clarified your position.

You have done very well at presenting people's concerns and views, and I appreciate that. We want to explore those concerns and views because they are important to us. We are government, and we want to know what we can do to give the best possible service at the lowest possible cost to the people. But I think it is rather alarming that you put on the record that your only job is to put forward views you have heard and not to formulate an alternative plan of your own because opposition to me means that you should have some alternative plans. You choose not to have one. I accept that.

You choose not to clarify what you would do in this situation. I accept that. I recognize it for a slight abdication of responsibility, but that is your choice. You have put forward, and I commend you for putting forward, concerns of those who are interested in this topic in a very clear and forthright way, and we do appreciate that, because we too want to see the best service possible go to those who deal with our children, particularly as it comes to anything involving the basic foundation skills which we emphasize as government in terms of literacy, in terms of communication, language arts, very important to us. We have identified them as mandatory, and the member has complained that we have done that perhaps to the exclusion of some of the optional subjects. So we get on the one hand you are spending too much time on mandatory subjects and not enough time on optional subjects, the mandatory subjects being the very ones that she expresses great concern about here under this particular topic.

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): The minister had the opportunity in this section to talk about the Home and School Association which I understand has changed its name to the advisory council association. Is that correct?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Manitoba Association of Parent Councils.

Ms. Mihychuk: In this area, can the minister provide us with information as to the number of schools the association represents and the distribution of those schools across Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: We do not have that there, but we could get that from the association itself.

* (1730)

Ms. Mihychuk: I would appreciate that. It is right now I believe the only official representatives of school councils representing, I understand—some estimates range up to 800 schools in Manitoba, so it is an important role that this organization fills. I appreciate the minister's response that she will get us that information, and I hope she can table it for us.

The other question I have is in regard to this important function. What roles, what committees does this organization sit on in terms of a provincial perspective?

Mrs. McIntosh: They sit on the Interorganizational Curriculum Advisory Committee, they sit on all subject area steering committees, they sit on the finance advisory committee, and they are also represented on the review panels that are being set up for the development of curricula.

Ms. Mihychuk: I am just writing that down. Can you outline for us what the review panels will be doing? How many committees are involved, and these are mandated with the reform implementation? Am I following that correctly?

Mrs. McIntosh: The review panel in terms of the structures of curriculum development, that group has selected representatives from educational partners, and that is a whole gamut of educational partners who are responsible for reviewing draft curriculum documents and providing feedback to the department.

What used to be the Home and School, now called the Association of Parent Councils is an umbrella group that the member may probably recall was first acknowledged as the official group of parents by the New Democratic Party when it was in government.

There were some organizations, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and groups like that, that at the time felt that the Home and School was given too much prominence by the former NDP

government, but they have come around because of the good work that is done to acknowledge their importance and recognize their contribution, and we have too.

We have said we do support them because over time—I hate to acknowledge that the NDP was right in this area, but by them saying the Home and School Association is the association we will recognize and for involvement on a number of activities, their record of performance proves their caring and concern and involvement. So we too now join with our opposition in supporting what is now a name change, what is now called the parental, the Home and School, the Parent Councils.

We go to them for advice. We go to them as an official group because all school councils whether they are members of the association or not can register with them by choice. I think the member probably knows that. The association was working over the last number of months under their own mandate for renewal, and they are securing a new revitalized role. They are being sought out by schools that do not have any parental organizations for advice because of their record of achievement.

We feel very fortunate to have a recognized parent group in the province because the parental input is very important to us. In any of these committees, we would not want to be without parental representation. I suppose we could go and just choose individual parents, but it is good to know that you have people who have been elected and represent hundreds of others.

Ms. Mihychuk: Well, I am sure that the minister is aware that concern has been expressed by the Manitoba Association of School Trustees as well as certain school divisions as to their representation. There is, I am sure, correspondence. It may have not gone to you as minister, but the previous minister. I will be interested to see their representation.

I am also interested in the comments that they have a revitalized role and that many schools are seeking out for their support. Do we have any evidence of that? One of the major concerns that schools have, and the

trustee association, is that the organization has been very expensive to join for any advisory group.

It became prohibitive for most, I should say. For most groups there is a licensing fee or registration fee that has been a considerable barrier for involvement. So I would be very interested in hearing more about that organization because, as I say, over the past few years there has been concern raised about the organization.

Mrs. McIntosh: No, I have not heard that, so that is news to me. I know that, when the NDP were using them for everything, MAST was concerned because they felt that they were relying too heavily upon them. But I had understood, over the years, from trustee friends of mine, that they had grown in respect and stature with trustee organizations, so I am very surprised to hear that MAST still does not support having the Home and School, or the new name, involved.

In fact, I am very surprised because I met, as the member may know, with some 20 educational organizations, such as the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, Manitoba Teachers' Society, Manitoba Association of Principals, superintendents, Manitoba Association of School Business Officials, Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. You know, I met with them all, and I asked each one of them, what are your specific concerns, what are the things that worry you? Please tell me the things that you are concerned about that we are doing so that I can be aware of what your concerns are. Not one of them mentioned any concern, whatsoever, with this problem that you identified to me that they have apparently written to the minister over a few years.

* (1740)

Yes, I will definitely pull the files and look to see exactly what their concerns are. Staff have just indicated to me that they have not been made aware of any of the concerns of MAST, and it seems sort of odd to me that they would write to the minister with a large concern of this magnitude, and that senior staff would be totally unaware of it. Perhaps, it was maybe just a private letter to the minister, I do not know.

I understand that, of all the resolutions they presented at MAST this last time, there was no resolution on this item at the MAST convention, and I further understand at the last ICAC meeting that MAST itself initiated a joint project with the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils. I find that rather strange given what you tell me about how they do not like working with this group, or feel they have too much power. So, maybe, they made a mistake when they initiated that joint project. Maybe there were people from MAST there who did not know that MAST does not support involvement of this particular group.

I will look into that, and try to find out exactly what the problem is because the government has certainly been appreciative of this support and assistance of the parents who have volunteered. They volunteer; they are not paid for their time on committees as some of the professional organizations are. In my meeting with them, because that was one of the other groups that I met with, I was very impressed with their grasp of the issues and their dedication to their students. But, certainly, if there is a problem, and I can find out what it is, I would be pleased to look into it because we certainly do not want to have groups on there who are not representative of their area.

Now, I do not know, but maybe there is another parent organization in the province that is larger than this in terms of membership. If so, I am not aware of it; to me, this is the largest elected parent group that I am aware of. We will find out just how large when we get the numbers. I do not think there is any larger representative group.

I place faith in the people who elect them that they would not all be out there electing people that they did not think were going to represent them. I trust that when they elect someone, they kind of think that they will go to bat for their cause. Maybe I am wrong on that as well, but I will check into it. That is news to me, as I say.

Meeting with all those educational stakeholders, not one identified that as a problem even when I asked them what their issues were and what were the items of importance that they wished me to know about. I said, tell me what your concerns are, put those concerns in

my brain so that I can be aware of them as I deal with issues, and not one of them mentioned this item you say is a big concern with them.

Ms. Mihychuk: I would like to clarify that I said that some organization expressed concern. I know that as a representative or a past-representative of the Winnipeg School Division, a letter was forwarded to you under my signature—MAST, having sat on the executive, it was discussed.

I am not surprised that organizations would not list this in their top ten for this year. There is a great deal of concern about the blueprint, reform, changes to education, boundaries, there are a lot of different issues, curriculum developments, special needs, supports for schools and a variety of issues.

It find it a little disturbing that this discussion is going this way. My concern, I think, will be alleviated once we see the statistics as to the representation and the distribution of schools that elect to choose this organization. When, for example, Winnipeg 1 presented their concern, the issue was raised that, for example, in that division, which is one, mind you the largest, there are representatives of 80 schools. It was my understanding at that time that this organization represented 50 schools.

So for the minister's information, there is an organization presently that represents more schools than this organization, at that time. Now there is a revitalization and I am pleased to hear that.

If there is greater representation now with this organization, I think that then you will find many of the concerns that I heard around the MAST executive table in regards to representation probably alleviated. It is, from my understanding, the will of the educational partners to work with a provincial organization that is well represented. I do not wish to speak for MAST, I do not sit on their executive anymore.

Last year the issue was raised, and I just wish to articulate that I know from one school division, at least, that the letter of concern went to the minister. I do not wish to imply that I know what other organizations did, and if I gave that impression, it was not my intent, but

I am familiar with at least one letter that went to, and numerous discussions, about representation.

Mrs. McIntosh: I thank the member for that clarification. I have one comment and then another question. The member indicated that concern about who the parents were represented on these committees would probably not be one of the top 10 concerns of the educational organizations. But I have to indicate that one of the top 10 items that is there with the stakeholder groups is parental involvement and how we are going to get it. It is one of the top 10 issues. It is not a low priority.

Parental involvement is a high priority of this government, hence of high interest to all the stakeholder organizations in terms of what will our new relationships be. So if there was a concern about the parents we were choosing, I beg to differ. I think it would have been one of the top ten issues, what kind of parental involvement you are going to be bringing in here in part of your education renewal. It is one of the fundamental basics of our whole program. I cannot see how it would not be on the top 10 list.

I am interested though, and I think it would be important for me to know what the concerns are. Is the concern that—is the feeling that it does not represent enough people? You mentioned there is another organization that is bigger than this one, of parents. What organization is that? Is it a province-wide organization of parents larger than this one, and is that the concern, or do they have concern that they have done something or have not done something?

Ms. Mihychuk: Well, I was just pointing out to the minister that I am familiar with one school division that has representatives from 80 schools, and there are, as the minister knows, over 50 school divisions amounting to approximately 800 schools.

So depending on how this organization is structured and which schools it represents, there could be perhaps some greater involvement. Now, that is why I am interested to see the number of schools this organization represents, because there are divisions with a greater number of schools that do have structures like that.

Mrs. McIntosh: I thank the member for that. We are looking, of course, for province-wide representation where you will have groups of people coming together to meet who represent various regions of Manitoba. So you might have 10 schools from the Winnipeg area or have 10 reps from the Winnipeg area, one rep from southeast, southwest, northeast, northwest, whatever part of the province.

So if there is a local division that has a very large division such as Winnipeg 1, for example, which in terms of schools may have more schools but they would be focused very strictly and strongly on an urban perspective, very definitely issues of busing and things like that, would be much different from an umbrella parent group that represented only the city, the inner part of the city to boot, in terms of transportation. Their transportation issues would be vastly different, vastly different from people who live in some of the rural divisions.

* (1750)

So we are looking for a group, and we think we found one here in the Association of Parent Councils that has an across-Manitoba perspective and not just a single-issue perspective dealing with one division, one localized area of the city with problems peculiar just to that division. So I think the member understands the need to have more than just one division's perspective even if it is a division that is a large one, because we represent all students in Manitoba, not just one division's students.

Ms. Mihychuk: It was not my intent to suggest that one division could represent the province. Hardly. The question was, was I familiar with any organization that represented more schools or more people, and at the time that seemed to be the indication. I would look forward to the information that the department and the minister will bring forward in terms of representation. Does the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils represent the diversity of our province? So that will be reassuring, and I look forward to that information.

I would like to move on, if possible, to the area of special needs, and I would like to start with the Level I funding of special needs. Would the minister indicate

the number of divisions that have more than the average number of Level I special needs students? Is the ministry aware of which divisions actually lie above the grant level, and could you just let us know how many divisions are actually above what was calculated as the norm in terms of Level I funding?

Mrs. McIntosh: For Level I the department uses a formula which is based upon the number of dollars for every 180 students, and they do not do as they used to do where every year the division had to send in applications on an annual basis and get information flowing back and forth until the money could finally flow. There were a lot of complaints about that system.

The special advisory committee on finance came up with a solution to have addressed the ongoing complaints of divisions, and the member may have been a trustee before the new system and knows how frustrating that was, every year to have to resubmit and resubmit and resubmit. So what the department now does is they take a statistical base, and they will say that for 180 students statistically \$45,000 would be required for Level I, and so then that money flows to the divisions, and that is the way it is done now for Level I.

Level II and Level III, of course, they still have to go through the various machinations of application and so on, but those are much more complicated levels and tend to be there not in as predictable an amount of students. Those Level II and Level III are much more difficult to deal with, smaller in number and more profoundly in need of assistance, so they need more intensely individualized plans made available for them.

Ms. Mihychuk: I know that any financial formula is difficult to make it fair, but one of the problems with a per capita grant is that for divisions that have more than the norm of special needs children, Level 1, receive less support than what we would consider fair, and there are other divisions with perhaps fewer Level I students than what we consider the norm for our formula. Has the department given consideration for some type of recognition of the additional stresses on those divisions that have higher than the norm for Level I students?

Mrs. McIntosh: We have asked the advisory committee on finance to take a look at the formula on an annual basis, so that what we are asking them to do is to review this on an annual basis, to have any concerns come forward such as the ones you have identified. Those are very valid comments that you have made. Those are good questions to ask. We are asking those of the advisory committee as well. We are saying, could you please review that on an annual basis?

If you find that you are getting complaints coming in that they had more children than were funded—we probably would not get too many complaints of having fewer—but that we get those things identified during the course of the year, would you come back and let us know if this seems to be an ongoing problem. Then can you give us any different advice than your first advice as to how to address it without having to go back to the cumbersome method of having individual applications come in year after year after year?

We do not want to make the cure worse than the disease. We do not want to put in place a solution that actually creates more problems. So it has been in place now a couple of years, four years, I am not sure of the number of years, a few years, enough of a time now that I think they can trace a pattern to see if it is fitting or not.

So you have raised a valid concern. We are asking the finance advisory committee to monitor on an annual basis, report back to us if they see any need for changes because of situations such as the one you have just described.

Ms. Mihychuk: I am going to ask a more philosophical question in terms of the special needs. The government through our mandate as government and now through the Conservative government has looked at mainstreaming of special needs students. Can the minister articulate the government's position? Are we looking at full mainstreaming of students, and are those supports going to be available to schools?

Mrs. McIntosh: We still support what was outlined in the Special Education, Manitoba 1989, which is the

green book. The green book indications, that there should be a range of options for a special needs student. We would not force profoundly handicapped students into the classroom if their parents did not wish it. We will not go that far and mandate that they must be placed in schools if that is not their desire.

Indeed, for some profoundly handicapped people, their parents may wish to do things differently. We know we have parents who have opted for home schooling for some of their profoundly handicapped children, because they do not wish to place them in the mainstream for whatever their personal reasons are. We still support those who wish to come into the mainstream and, to that extent, we have done a number of things. The member may be familiar with some of them.

The Chairman is telling me to wrap up. I will just quickly finish this. We have established now the Child and Youth Secretariat and that is looking at portions of the options where we have medically fragile children in the school system that maybe require medical support. So what could the Department of Health do to assist the Department of Education to support these children as being part of the mainstream? We will maybe pick up next time, because I see the hammer is about to come down.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: The hour being six o'clock, committee rise.

HEALTH

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Would the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health. We are now on item 2. Management and Program Support Services (c) Health Information Systems (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,143,900.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber at this time.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): We are on 2.(c) or 21. 2.(c) in the process. I am wondering if the minister

has any information that we requested yesterday afternoon concerning the SmartHealth matter, specifically the report that the minister was going to table concerning the evaluation, the feasibility, presentation of the SmartHealth.

I am wondering, yesterday we talked about—the minister was going to provide a copy of the feasibility concerning SmartHealth, the—actually, the word escapes me.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): The information the honourable member is seeking is in the process of finding its way to this Chamber.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for that. With respect to the estimated five-year cumulative benefits of SmartHealth, under the administrative initiatives, it is estimated a saving of \$22.5 million as a result of reduction of health care fraud, double serving and abuse. Can the minister outline for me how that figure was arrived at?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, the honourable member is asking for the rationale behind the cost-savings over the five years and making specific reference to things like duplication and abuse and wondering how we quantified that?

Mr. Chomiak: The question is how you arrived at that specific figure of \$22.5 million?

Mr. McCrae: I guess I can only answer this question in parts because I can give an example for the honourable member, and then if he wants to know further he can ask.

* (1440)

With respect to lab tests, our consultations with physicians revealed to us that Manitoba physicians felt there were tests being done in Manitoba that did not need to be done for whatever reason. So what we did then was we checked in other jurisdictions to get a feel for whether that was the view in other jurisdictions and if we could ascertain some kind of estimate as to the extent of this sort of waste, if you like. Then we took, I guess, an average of the jurisdictions that we

consulted. We discounted it so that we could be conservative in our estimates and came up with a figure in that way.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, that answer is helpful. I understand now the methodology. I specifically chose that first number of \$22.5 million because it is a very specific category and a very specific number. It is a reduction of health care fraud, double serving and abuse, and the figure arrived at is \$22.5 million. I guess I would like to see the equation or the ratio, because it is the first time I have ever seen it quantified.

If the minister recalls, I asked that question earlier in Estimates in another context about if there are any numbers or any figures with respect to that kind of expenditure in the Department of Health. This is the first time I have ever seen it quantified, and I am wondering if the—I know that Ontario had done a study and had extrapolated some figures.

Can I take from that, if we were to divide five into \$22.5 million, that would give us \$4.5 million per year roughly—that would be the figure that we assume is health care fraud, double serving and abuse in Manitoba?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, on its face, one would think the honourable member's arithmetic would work out, and certainly arithmetically it does, but that is not quite the way we look at this.

In the first place, information from Ontario, for example—we discounted their numbers because we felt that whatever level of abuse, double procedures going on and all of that estimated to us by officials from Ontario would not be replicated in Manitoba in the first place. So we discounted it some for that belief that we held, and also discounted it further because we do not want to assume there are more savings available than are available.

Then dealing with the arithmetic the honourable member did, he took 22.5 divided by 5 years, I think he said, and that brings us to in the neighbourhood of \$4.5 million. The way this has graduated over five years, we expect to see the greater savings at the tail end of

the five years as we get the system going. In fact, the first year we do not know whether we can claim any savings on the areas the honourable member has referred to because of the time it will take just to get the first components of this system going.

We expect to see the greater savings near the latter years of this five-year period, so you cannot break it down into equal five-year chunks. The first year might be zero-to-some-small saving, the second year might then be some more significant savings and so on down to the last year where we would see the greatest savings.

Mr. Chomiak: One of the larger savings is under tactical initiatives, the electronic storage and transmission of lab results. It is projected to be \$32.9 million. That is a substantial sum of money, and I wonder if I could have an explanation as to how that figure was arrived at.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, just to try to keep current, I was asked by the honourable member about the Child Protection Centre and the budget of the Child Protection Centre.

The Child Protection Centre is an agency of the Department of Family Services. The amount budgeted for this agency is \$625,060, and as I said before to the honourable member, if he has further questions about the agency, I would recommend he direct them to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson).

The honourable member for Kildonan and I were discussing the document, *The Health of Manitoba's Children*, and he was asking for a general idea of the distribution of some 800 copies of that. The list that I have, and which I will share with the honourable member, sets out various agencies and some individuals, which would give the honourable member a very clear idea of where they all went. For example, the Department of Health has 86 copies of this.

At this point so far, hospitals only have three copies, but various community services have 14 copies. Manitoba ministers and deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers have a total of 94 and so. It will give the honourable member an idea. I would pass that to

the honourable member. The question—\$6 million was it?

An Honourable Member: 32.9.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member, Mr. Chairperson, asked, excuse me—the honourable member had me talking so much last night, I have got kind of a sore throat today. The honourable member did ask about an update on the activities of the Patient Utilization Review Committee and I will give an update of the 1994 activities.

The Patient Utilization Review Committee, sometimes known as PURC, was established as a standing committee jointly between Manitoba Health and the Manitoba Medical Association with representation from the Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association. The committee reviews listings of patients who received servicing that would appear to be beyond medical necessity and recommends educational and/or regulatory initiatives as appropriate.

* (1450)

The current members of the PURC are Mr. R. Kuropatwa, who is the chairperson, Dr. M, as in Murray, McConnell, Dr. Midwinter and Kay Plett. The committee met seven times in 1994. It reviewed the top 99 high users for services provided from April 1993 to March 1994.

The outcome of this review is as follows: Three patients, it was felt required no action be taken. Sixty-seven letters were forwarded to 55 different physicians requesting additional information on patients. Three physicians were referred to the Medical Review Committee. Eleven patients are to be monitored and a medical history will be produced in six months time for further review. Seventy-eight patients are to receive letters restricting them to one physician and one pharmacy. Seven patients are still under review. Of these 99 high users, there were 40 patients repeated from the previous listings, 40 of them.

PURC recommended that patients identified as high users voluntarily enter into an agreement with Manitoba Health that will restrict them to one physician

and/or one pharmacy for all nonemergency medical services. Since the committee was established, 36 patients have signed an agreement with the Department of Health.

The honourable member asked on the subject of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services about additional expected results information required for Estimates Supplement regarding Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

With an additional 16 child and adolescent community mental health workers—and these are new positions which are the result of mental health reform—services will be provided to approximately 2,395 children, adolescents and their families in the 1995-96 fiscal year.

We are going to take the present question of the honourable member under advisement because they are still working to get a response for the honourable member, and we will have that for him when we have put that answer together.

The honourable member also asked about the access and confidentiality committee. That was established in 1979 for the purpose of review and recommendations with respect to matters pertaining to processing, retention and security of data in the health care registries and files maintained by Manitoba Health. It reviews requests from researchers for obtaining and using confidential data contained in the registries and files of Manitoba Health.

Members of the committee are: Dr. Laurel Strain of the Centre on Aging at the University of Manitoba; Dr. Robert Walker, who is the chairperson of the College of Physicians and Surgeons; Dr. Frank Friesen from the Health Sciences Centre; Judy Cook from the Manitoba Association of Community Health Centres; Randy Locke from the Manitoba Health Organization; Linda Sawatzky from the Manitoba Health Records Association; Doug Nanton from the Manitoba Medical Association; and Dr. Graham Connor of St. Boniface General Hospital.

(Mr. Mike Radcliffe, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

The honourable member asked, with respect to Health Information Systems, appropriation 21.2(c) on page 39, about the composition of Other Operating expenditures totalling \$2,337,000. The breakdown is as follows: hotels, \$2,200; meals, \$1,800; insurance, \$4,800; publications, \$5,600; ISM charges for corporate systems, \$2,288,400; and \$34,200 for training and/or education. That is all I have for the moment.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I guess we are awaiting the reply on that previous question.

What are the ISM charges that the minister alluded to of \$2 million?

Mr. McCrae: That is for storage and work done by ISM in the conduct of our ongoing relationship with them.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I will also be asking specific questions with respect to other aspects of the initiatives under the cost benefits. I will be going through this exercise in a few items as we go down the list. More specifically I will be looking at the clinical guidelines, savings of \$25 million, as well as the proactive clinical guidelines for savings of \$33.8 million. I will be looking for explanations in both those areas.

Mr. McCrae: I think that is an efficient way to put the question. We will put together a response and when we have it, hopefully, later today sometime. It is a matter of allowing Mr. Alexander an opportunity to access the data so that we can put together an answer for the honourable member.

* (1500)

Mr. Chomiak: I appreciate the provision of that information. I will perhaps go on to another line of questioning.

Last night when we talked about, when we were dealing with nongovernment agencies, the issue came up with respect to the possibility that agencies such as Sara Riel, Salvation Army, et cetera, may or may not be plugged into the SmartHealth system. Does the

minister have any idea whether or not plans are to put those services online as well?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, the work of the project is being guided by our advisory committee. At this point there is Sara Riel or Salvation Army and their agencies, and the work of their agencies is not programmed at this time as part of the schedule for inclusion of various services in SmartHealth. That would come perhaps later, but at this point the priorities have been set out as the medical, continuing the Pharmacare part of it and the laboratory parts are the identified priorities at this time.

Mr. Chomiak: While we are still awaiting those particular responses, I am just going to pose a general question, because we touched on it yesterday in terms of confidentiality and in terms of security and protection in the system.

While I appreciate systems are being contemplated, that legislation may actually result, we may see legislation and there would be other developments—it is certainly clear that it is very difficult because of the evolving nature of systems of this kind and because of the mass of information.

It is a very tricky field to be involved in. I think experience in the past has shown that we basically are treading in uncharted waters, and there will be difficulties. There is no doubt.

My question is far simpler than that, and my question is the security of the person and the individual with respect to their data and their information being online at a variety of agencies. I will just give an illustrated example. I will use the example of a middle-aged woman who is suffering some form of depression, is on antidepressant, some kind of medication of that kind.

Is there not a danger that that information will show up at the pharmacy, will show up at the doctor's office, will show up at the lab, will show up at various agencies, and is that in fact appropriate? Or are there restricted levels so that some information can show up only at some places? For example, drug information will only show up at the pharmacist and, say, the doctor, but may not show up at the lab? Are there

varying levels of restrictions and access that will prevent that kind of information?

I am actually asking several questions in this, so I should be more specific. My question is: Will there be various restrictive levels of data transformation? If I am that individual who is taking a type of drug that I may not want anyone other than my pharmacist to know, how will I restrict access to that kind of information?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, in some ways we are indeed charting a new course here, and in other ways we are not. Information technology exists, and so in that sense—well, I guess we have always been breaking new ground in information technology in the last number of years. The constant is that improvement and change just keep happening all the time.

We are of the same department that through our mental health reforms broke new ground every step of the way. Not to do that would have been a decided disservice to the consumers of mental health services in Manitoba. So, yes, I can understand what it means to break new ground or chart a new course, and that there is rough water ahead sometimes and rocky shoals and what not, but that is still not enough reason not to make the right changes for the right reasons for the people we represent.

Mental health, I use as an analogy here. Mental health changes are coming about in some cases more cautiously than other cases because, indeed, we are doing things we have never done before. So, as you go about this, you embark upon a course—and count on your relationships, your partnerships to help you through. At least if we take a step too far in one direction, we have enough partners that will tell us and that will say, you know, this is not working quite the way we had expected that it would.

But, working together, we will now just take a step back and go a little to one way or the other to correct our course. That, I suggest, is expected. I suggest also that when it happens there will be severe criticism, as if somebody did not know what they were doing or some such thing. That criticism will come sometimes for the right reasons, and sometimes for the wrong

reasons. Well, I talk about that to make the point that change is very, very desirable because with change can come significant improvement.

The honourable member, as part of his question then, went on to ask about what kinds of protections are there, and what kinds of information can be shared with which professionals, all very valid questions, and all very valid questions for our privacy and confidentiality committee to make sure they ask. I have no doubt that those same questions the honourable member will be raising, the same kinds of examples that he would bring to this House, will be discussed around the table of the members of the privacy and confidentiality committee.

There are blocking and encryption techniques in the computer field that are used. Let me try to use an example. The honourable member is a certain kind of health professional. It is really not relevant to the conduct of his work to know A, B, or C bits of information about a certain patient, but it is relevant for him to know D, E and F. So the code that would be ascribed to the honourable member through this encryption technology would allow the honourable member access only to D, E and F types of information.

* (1510)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): It is a little bit like boarding an airplane. You can go to seats A, B, C, and D, E and F is on the other side.

Mr. McCrae: It is something like the honourable Minister of Agriculture says. Certain people will not be assigned the right to access certain types of information, and extreme care and caution has to be taken in deciding which professional gets to know what because, as we do our work today, certain professionals get to know this, that or the other piece of information. But I could not answer the honourable member if he asked me right now what safeguards we have in the present system to keep information from falling into the wrong hands. I know there are certain legislated requirements, legislated proscriptions, and things like that. But the honourable member knows, as well as the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), just because a law is in existence, that is not going to keep a

wrongdoer, for example, or an eavesdropper, or whatever, from attempting to gain access to information to which he or she is not entitled. That may happen. People may make those efforts, no matter what teeth we put into our legislation.

The key is going to be how well we design our computer system to keep the wrong eyes from certain information. I have been given a crash course, and very much a brief one on this sort of thing. I do not have any expertise, but I am told that computer technology is such today that through the use of codes assigned to certain people who have access to certain information allows only certain information to come forward on the screen.

I would offer to make Mr. Alexander available for a meeting with the honourable member to discuss some of these things if the honourable member wanted to put together some of the concerns that might occur to him, or people that he might be talking to, because I would be happy to see those concerns brought to the privacy committee's attention. I do think, however, the privacy committee's membership will be extremely vigilant, knowing the organizations from which they are drawn, but it never hurts to have another opinion, and we would be happy to have the honourable member's.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate that offer of the minister and I have no doubt that the privacy commission and individuals responsible will be reviewing all of these issues, but I just want to reflect on this for a couple of minutes.

At present, if I attend to a primary care individual, be it a physician or a nurse, I relay certain information to them which they then put into a file and store away to pull out at some future point. Presumably, under this new system, when that information is provided to my caregiver, certain aspects of that information will go online. For example, previous lab results will go online to fulfil the tactical initiative of transmission storage of lab results. Certain treatments that have been offered to me will go online to deal with the proactive clinical guidelines, et cetera.

So if one really looks at the implications of it, in order for the system to work, that has to happen,

because otherwise if that stuff does not go online, then there will be no savings from preventative care programs and there will be no savings from clinical guidelines based on past treatment effectiveness and there will be no savings based on duplication transmission of lab results.

Perhaps the minister wants to respond at this point because, if I understand it correctly, that is the only way the system can work. It will require input of certain information on all people that will have to go online under certain circumstances. In other words, how else will there be knowledge about how many particular tests I have had in a particular area unless my caregiver punches it into the computer and it gets passed around the entire system, so it is going to appear everywhere. Perhaps the minister can comment on that.

Mr. McCrae: I hope the honourable member understands that I take very seriously these questions because they are fundamentally important to this whole discussion. I think the honourable member may have some knowledge of how these systems work. It is probably fairly rudimentary, like mine, my understanding of these things, unless the honourable member has taken some training I do not know about.

First off, we must clearly identify and understand what information must be protected and from whom. We are going to do this by extensive consultation with consumers, health care providers and regulatory bodies. Who better to look at that information and make judgments about that? We have already set up an access and confidentiality committee. Members include regulatory bodies, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, consumers groups, Manitoba medical associations. I refer to consumers groups such as the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Consumers' Association and the Rights and Liberties group. Other members may be added as required.

Let me give an example that might help illustrate the point. DPIN is up and running. There is nothing on that system that has anything to do with anything but what would be of concern or interest, not interest but concern, to a pharmacist. If it is not necessary for a pharmacist to know as I am being prescribed a certain

pharmaceutical medicine, and it is not necessary for that pharmacist to know for the purpose of making a good decision about a drug interaction, for example, that I have a certain condition that may or not be a sensitive matter—it does not matter whether it is sensitive or not, it is private—if it is not necessary for the conduct of the pharmacist's professional duty to know, it is not on there. There is all kinds of information available now, but not to pharmacists, through the DPIN system.

The honourable member should know that the Canadian Mental Health Association is also on the privacy committee for the health information network, which is an important issue, I think, that their viewpoint be known and clearly stated. I know the Canadian Mental Health Association well enough to know that they do indeed clearly state their concerns when they have concerns.

I wish I could give the honourable member more examples, but maybe I can. If it is not necessary though for a part of a system, in the conduct of their professional work, to be apprised of certain information, then it is just not available to them. There is a blocking system in the computer network. Whether it is online or whatever, there is information that is not available to certain people, and this committee will make determinations about what information ought to be available.

* (1520)

There may be some information that is almost too sensitive for, and I do not know what information this could be, but there may be information that is felt should not be part of this network. That decision, if there is going to be a decision like that, will be made, and that information will never be online, as the honourable member has put it, nor available to anybody else. I do not know what information that might be, and I do not know whether that will even happen, but it is possible for that to happen in the way this is set up.

Mr. Chomiak: I am not going to belabour the point because we could probably spend the bulk of the afternoon just dealing with these intricacies. If one looks at what initiatives are being undertaken under the

tactical initiatives and the strategic initiatives, it does require a fair amount of information to be passed back and forth within the system. Much of that information, if it works and if it achieves the ends, is desirable.

At the same time, the other side of that coin is, and the minister has indicated, that it does enter into an exchange of information that had been formally kept relatively—had been kept in very small circles, generally. It is an opening up of information, by necessity, if the system is going to work. My only point is that, well, clearly it is being looked at and hopefully it will be developed with as few difficulties as possible. Have we been able to establish some of the numbers with respect to the previous questions?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, we are still working on that.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. When the minister said yesterday that one of the three initiatives that is going to be proceeded with in the near future concerns lab testing, which of these initiatives was he talking about? Was he talking about the electronic storage and transmission of lab results, or was he talking about remote lab testing, a combination or something else?

Mr. McCrae: Those decisions have not been made by the advisory committee yet, the advisory committee composed of caregivers, consumers and regulators.

Mr. Chomiak: Perhaps I should clarify. The minister indicated yesterday that there were three initiatives that would be the initial modules, and he mentioned lab developments or lab testing as one of them. Which areas does this fall in? Is it the remote lab initiative, or is it the initiative to deal with duplication, or is it the initiative to deal with storage of all lab materials? Because there are various initiatives in terms of the proposals from the department.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, at this time I am sharing with the honourable member a document entitled, Request for Information for the Development and Implementation of a Provincial Health Information System for the Province of Manitoba, Department of Health. Date of issue: September 14, 1994; closing

date, 4 p.m. Central Daylight time, October 12, 1994. This went to 33 vendors, which resulted in 11 responses, which resulted in the selection of SmartHealth as the vendor for this particular project.

I have also some information, and we have it dated June 13, that is today. It says: Attached for your information is the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services Resource and Research Inventory, second edition. Additional information is included with the inventory to try to reflect some of the more recent changes in child and adolescent mental health services. The inventory will be updated to reflect the anticipated mental health reform changes in the future. Also attached is a summary of some more recent information collected by community and mental health services. Sections of this summary from psych health are not available at this time.

The honourable member asked yesterday about the Mental Health Review Board, additional information required for Estimates Supplement regarding Mental Health Review Board hearings.

Pursuant to amendments to The Mental Health Act proclaimed on March 1, 1988, the Mental Health Review Board continued to hear appeals regarding any aspect of the admission or treatment of a patient in a psychiatric facility. During the period April 1, 1994, to March 31, 1995, the Mental Health Review Board completed 26 requested reviews, each lasting from one hour to 12 hours. During this time period three automatic hearings were completed.

Legislation requires that there be an automatic review of all involuntary patients after the filing of the third certificate of renewal and annually thereafter. It is estimated that the board will complete 33 requested reviews and six automatic reviews during April 1, 1995, to March 31, 1996.

* (1530)

Mr. Chomiak: I thank the minister for that information. Can the minister indicate whether or not it is a vision that the home care system will be placed onto the SmartHealth? Will the database for home care be put onto the SmartHealth system?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, home care is the subject of another project, and it is in progress and an important project at that. The honourable member may have other questions relating to that, but it is a separate project altogether. It could be brought in to the main SmartHealth project in the future.

Mr. Chomiak: On that point—and it may be more appropriate under Home Care, it may be appropriate here—who is undertaking that project, and when do they expect completion?

Mr. McCrae: This project, Mr. Chairperson, is divided into three parts, and the first part is contracted to ISM.

Mr. Chomiak: Can the minister outline what the three component parts are, the purpose of the three component parts of the particular project?

Mr. McCrae: The three parts of the system's job being done with respect to home care in Manitoba include, first, the development of an assessment tool; secondly, the distribution of the assessment tool to workers in the province and to build a central storage facility for home care data; and, thirdly, we want to build an integrated network, and the key functions of that are assessment, the scheduling of clients and workers, and paying workers.

This is something that I believe could be viewed to be somewhat overdue. This is an area that the home care system has grown so fast because of the humongous infusions of cash, enormous infusions of cash from the government of Manitoba, certainly, especially in the last seven years into home care services. So you have seen tremendous growth in the program, in the services provided, the number of people working in the system, various union and nonunion arrangements that we have, casual, part-time, full-time arrangements, and the assessments are a very, very key element of decisions made about services provided under the Home Care program.

I have felt that scheduling is an area where improvements could be made, and I have been hearing from representatives of elderly persons housing units, here in the city especially, wanting to congratulate the

Home Care program for the excellent improvements that have been taking place in the scheduling of work functions and services to various elderly persons housing blocks. That is encouraging, and it is a credit to the staff at the Home Care division of the Department of Health.

There is quite a new emphasis in our Home Care branch towards focusing on the client. A client-focused approach is the only one, I think, we should be going with. After all, if it was not for clients we would not have a Home Care program. I need to remind myself of that every now and again, and I hope everybody else does too. It is so very important that we do not build something that after a while our efforts are directed towards serving the organization, rather than serving our clients. It is a natural tendency sometimes in human endeavours, Mr. Chairperson, but to the credit of the people working in our Home Care program we have seen some significant improvements.

* (1540)

I think part of the reason for that would be that we now have a Home Care Advisory committee that is a permanent feature in the Department of Health. Till we reach that stage where we can claim that our home care system is working without flaw, we are going to need that sort of help. We also have a Home Care appeal committee and the members of that committee and the staff of that committee work very hard to give us the best service they can and to give the clients of Home Care program the best service possible.

It seems to me a very common-sense thing to do to have a mechanism whereby somebody can be heard from an independent source with respect to decisions made by the Department of Health about services to be made available to Manitobans under the Home Care program, that they have that opportunity to be heard should there be a disagreement. I believe the appeal mechanism is working, and working reasonably well. I say that because there are so many matters that are resolved because of the existence of the Home Care Appeal Panel. Its very existence is there to remind not only the staff of Home Care but also the client that you should not be making unreasonable demands of the program either and the department ought not to be

unreasonably rigid or inflexible in making assessments in home care decisions.

Care is such an indefinable service that there are times that, no doubt, differences of opinion or outright misunderstandings do arise. So we need an independent function. As long as we have a Home Care program that has not yet reached that flawless state I spoke about, we are going to need the services of an appeal panel.

With respect to the honourable member's question about the labs, there are a number of things that are going to be happening here that the honourable member is asking about. I will begin with a very important review or study which amounts to a re-examination of cost benefits with respect to labs and identifying the possible bite-sized pieces. That seems to be an expression that gets used in this industry. It is important that we do that.

There is always a danger of biting off more than you can chew sometimes too. We want to bite off pieces that we know we can work with and make improvements in. We need to obtain agreement on which pieces we should begin building on. We need decisions along the way as to whether we go with this particular piece or do not go with this particular piece. It is important to understand how this particular piece affects the next piece, and if it does not, then you can have a no-go decision and get on with the next piece. Or if there is an impact, then you have to study that a little more and make a decision as to what to do.

We need to set up schedules for building and developing this system. We want very detailed cost benefits for each part. As a result of that detailed cost benefit analysis we need a decision, a go or a no-go decision.

Up until now, as the member has brought out in these discussions, as we developed the contract and developed a picture of what it was we wanted to achieve, necessarily, we had to use the best and the most educated estimates for certain things, and that is what we have done in arriving at determinations of what the value of contractual relationship should be. Once we get into the first steps, we have got to get

more clarity and more finite understanding of the facts and figures that we are going to be working with and building into our system so that we can have some assurance that we are going to get that cost benefit that we expect.

We need to develop a detailed plan, as I have said. We need to refine the costs, build prototypes. We have to maintain and design plans and then make a go or no-go decision. We have to build our final plans and confirm our requirements, finalize design and then make a go or no-go decision. It is going to be like that all the way through.

If we have made a go-decision, then we develop a system, and then we manage the network that we have built for the remainder of that five-year term. The multistakeholder committee is the one that makes the go and no-go recommendations to government on each stage along the building of this health information network.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, can the minister indicate on this scenario, since it is very specific in terms of what the cumulative cost benefits will be and what the cost of the system will be, when the province will start paying for this system?

Mr. McCrae: No money will flow from the government to SmartHealth under these arrangements for at least 18 months, and it might be even a little longer than that because it is 18 months after the delivery of the first invoice. So it could take a little longer than that.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, so 18 months after the delivery of the first invoice, Manitoba will then pay for what?

Mr. McCrae: After it has gone through the normal processes of government when it gets a bill, should the bill be found to be appropriate, the invoice would then be paid.

* (1550)

Mr. Chomiak: So based on what the minister said, the start-up costs, the developmental costs, the hardware

costs, the software costs that were expended by SmartHealth in the 18 months to develop a component system, after 18 months a bill will be handed to the government and the government will pay for that developmental cost. Correct?

Mr. McCrae: When that first invoice comes and we review it and use the usual resources of government to do our due diligence on whether we have received value for the money, then we will pay that invoice. What it will reflect will be services rendered or supplies made available or whatever. We will not pay a bill until we know that there is value for the dollars that are being asked for.

Mr. Chomiak: When the minister talks about a go and no-go scenario in terms of the project, what is he referring to?

Mr. McCrae: "Go" means you proceed; "no go" means you proceed no further. I do not mean to oversimplify, but I do mean to say that we put a lot of store in the advice that will be coming to us from the consumers, caregivers and regulators who are part of the committee. So what I am saying to the honourable member is that the committee will be very key in government decisions as to whether we move onto another stage, whether we leave it for now and do something else, whether we forget the whole idea with regard to a certain component. Very much will depend on the advice that we get.

There will be, no doubt, time and perhaps money involved in having a good, hard look at a particular proposal for the growth of this network. After some work has been done, it may be the decision not to proceed. In that case too, there will be monies expended in going through that exercise, and there may not be a go decision as a result of that. So one might want to argue that in that situation you have spent money but you did not produce something that I can hold in my hand or look at.

But the fact is I would rather pay some money, get some good advice for it from people who are qualified in technology and in information, to gather the best advice that Manitoba can make available. If it is felt as a result of that on the part of the committee that is a no-

go decision, then it is a no-go decision. However, there would have been some money expended to arrive, to gather the information and interpret the information so that important decision could be made.

Mr. Chomiak: I thank the minister for that explanation because that changes my understanding of the contract, because my only understanding of the contract is basically as a result of the press release and now discussions that we have had during the Estimates.

But there is an 18-month provision; it was stated in the press release that for 18 months the province will not have to pay any up-front money, but effectively that is in fact not the case unless it is going to be conditional on certain goals having to be achieved, but that is not what the minister said.

Clearly, what the minister just said is that regardless of whether specific goals have been achieved, we will still have to pay for the development costs of the product, which is something that I thought I was under the impression that SmartHealth would be responsible for the developmental costs during the first 18-month period and then decisions would be made, but I guess I interpreted it wrongly.

Mr. McCrae: I would like it to be very clear that the honourable member does not understand this contract. The comments that he made are incorrect, and I would like to explain why.

I told him a few minutes ago of several steps that would be taken in the performance of this agreement. Out of six steps, the No. 5 step is the one that has the most cost associated with it.

That is the step where after all of the review and all of the setting up of schedules and various decisions being made, examinations of cost-benefit analysis, obtaining agreement on what bite-sized pieces to go with or not go with, setting up schedules for building and developing and very detailed cost-benefit analysis for each of them, go and no-go decisions on them, developing a detailed building plan, a plan for the actual putting together of this network, refining costs, building prototypes, the maintenance and design of plans, again more decisions, decision points are arrived

at, final plans for building, configuration of the requirements, finalizing design and another decision at that point.

Then we arrive at point No. 5, which is the one that calls for the largest amount of money, which is part of this contract, developing the system itself.

The honourable member is wrong in what he has said. That needs to be made very clear, that he is wrong and he is not understanding—I guess I am not explaining it well enough. He does not understand. There has been a lot more said than what was printed in a press release. Since that time, all through the election campaign, for hours on end during these Estimates we have talked about SmartHealth, and after all this time and after very repetitious treatment in this area, when I say that no money passes to SmartHealth for at least 18 months, that should be fairly clear. No dollars are in this budget.

That is a year from April 1 of '95 to March 31 of '96, no monies flow. It may be that in the latter part of next fiscal year some monies will flow under this arrangement. I do not know how much more clear I can make that. No dollars flow for at least 18 months. As we just explained, it may be some time after that before any dollars flow.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I just want to remind the minister that this is actually the first intensive discussion we have had of the actual contract itself. [interjection] The minister says there is no contract, but he has indicated in this House he is in the midst of finalizing a contract, and the key person negotiating the contract is sitting in front of the minister. So it is very close to a contract and an understanding is very important given the nature of this contract.

From what the minister says, we cannot expect then any of the savings to be achieved for presumably the first 18 months of this contract as well, because the development of the project will not take place until after the 18-month period, presumably after we have achieved step five.

The minister just said the development will not take place until at least a year after. The development will

not take place, that is what the minister said. Presumably that would mean we will not be achieving any of the savings as well because there is no development, there are no savings to achieve. Am I correct in that assessment?

Mr. McCrae: In my answer earlier this afternoon I was very clear. I said to the honourable member that savings, if any, in the first year would be very small compared to the later years. I could not have been more clear about that either. It is true. We do not have a contract at this point. We are indeed going to have one.

I disagree with the honourable member when he says we have not had significant discussion of the point—

Mr. Chomiak: Of the contract.

* (1600)

Mr. McCrae: Well, you know, I guess lawyers can nit-pick over the wording of a contract all they want. This is not a lawyer's chamber. This is the people's chamber here in Manitoba and this chamber is to discuss, with all due respect to the honourable member, Mr. Chairperson, the honourable member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Toews), the honourable member for Riel (Mr. Newman).

With all due respect, this is a people's health system and I do not think I want to get dragged into a discussion of the WHEREASes and the RESOLVEDs today when the document does not exist yet. I think that is asking a bit much.

What needs to be said, however, is that we have a group of 31 people on this side of the House committed to the development of the best health care system that we can develop in Manitoba, committed to making prudent decisions about how we do that, prudent decisions about with whom we do business, prudent decisions about where we get advice from and responsible conduct of the affairs of the people of Manitoba. [interjection] The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is right. I should have said 29, I suppose, because the Chairperson sits in the Chair

and the Speaker sits in the Speaker's Chair. Is that what the honourable member is getting at? [interjection] Yes, I remember. Good point.

Let me just say that honourable members on this side of the House work very hard day in and day out to provide the best quality representation and conduct of the public affairs of the province of Manitoba as is possible. We put our record before the people. We argued this matter almost daily during the election campaign. The people made their decision on April 25, and here we are attempting to be accountable to the people about a contract that does not have a signature on it yet.

The things that we are talking about today are not in the budget. Maybe you want to have a discussion about relevancy. I do not know, maybe that is possible, too. I do not need to do that. I do not want to do that, because this is very, very important. The issues of what we are going to build, how we are going to build it, those are important issues. The issues of confidentiality is fundamental.

So the honourable member is right to raise them all but some of the things that he sometimes comes out with do not make much sense to me and they defy logic. I cannot be drawn into a discussion of the word-by-word content of the contract. The contract is being negotiated in the normal course of doing the public's business. This is what is done.

We felt that it was important to move in this direction so we asked 33 vendors whom we felt would be interested in this kind of work and who could make a contribution. We asked 33 for information. I just passed to the honourable member the request for information that we put out to the vendors.

Eleven decided to respond; 22 did not. They either joined up with one of the 11 to make a joint type of information presentation, or they were working alone or whatever, but 11 vendors put in requests for a proposal to help us build a health information network in Manitoba.

All this is predicated on the fact that we have a very, very significant database on which to build here in

Manitoba, probably unequalled in the world. Let us use that. Let us do something with this excellent information that we have. We can use it to assist patients get better care. We can use it to help us in policy development, epidemiological research.

It is there and researchers can use the epidemiological information. We can make decisions about vaccination policy, immunization policy. We can use this information to help us make very, very important decisions relating to the health of Manitoba children. We can use this information to help us make extremely important decisions about our institutions, our facilities.

There may be a point down the road here where the information that we pull out from this system can be used to help us decide where centres of excellence should be located, what kinds of centres of excellence, what kinds of services should be provided in rural Manitoba, where in rural Manitoba, what kinds of services should be provided in northern Manitoba, where in northern Manitoba.

We can help prevent serious problems arising, problems arising because of the working of the health care system. There are times our health care system causes problems for people. Through the appropriate sharing of information, which the honourable member and I went through a while ago, we can prevent all kinds of unexpected or preventable situations from developing for the average consumer of our health system. We can make it more convenient.

We can save people driving miles and miles around the province. As much as we like to do that, sometimes in the wintertime it is not a very pleasant thing, or if you are not a very well person, long trips in vehicles are not the best medicine. So through proper information-sharing amongst health professionals, we can make life so much easier for the patient.

We know, out of an abundance of caution perhaps, honourable members opposite have come out four square against this, but I can understand the caution because I have it, too. I share the concerns that are raised, but the upshot of my concern is not, well, let us not do anything then. My response is let us address the

concerns head on. Let us deal with them. Let us get past them and get on with a better health system for Manitobans.

I do not accept the criticism that, you know, we are dealing with a bank. We are dealing with a bank, the Royal Bank of Canada. The fact that the bank makes profits, I do not have the same difficulty with that that the member does. To me, profits say success; success means maybe some things being done right. Maybe we can get some good results here from—[interjection] My colleague reminds me that if it were not for profits, we would not have social programs in this country, so I do not view profits in the same light as the honourable member. But the point that he is making is wrong, and how long will people view the truth and deny it? Well, I guess as long as they do not feel convinced is the answer.

But I understand the situation the honourable member has got himself into. He knows this is the right thing to do, but he is so firmly on the record as being unalterably opposed to it, because we are dealing with a bank that makes profits—never mind that it is the right thing to do, never mind that we are going to get good results for people in Manitoba. That is not relevant. What is relevant is that the Royal Bank probably does not pay enough taxes or something on all of those profits that it makes.

That is a whole other debate, which is a worthwhile debate. No problem with that. If somebody is not paying appropriate tax levels, that is fine. I do not know if the Royal Bank is paying too much, too little at this time. I do not know what its situation is today, but I know that the Royal Bank has shown itself to be successful in dealing with millions of computer transactions in one day. That is the kind of work it is in.

* (1610)

Anybody who uses a bank machine knows that other people use bank machines too, and I understand that the Royal Bank and its network can process millions of transactions in a very short period of time. It is that kind of technology that we need for a health system that does many thousands of health transactions every

day. We need some vendor that has some experience with that sort of technology.

Because they have got themselves so far down the path of being opposed to this, then they have to start making up stuff to help with their case, like, let us make up a new allegation that the bank is going to have access to my health records. Well, that is pretty scary. That should scare quite a few senior citizens and others in our province. Let us use that one, that the bank is going to have access to the health records of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey). Would that not frighten you, the honourable minister, if she believed it? Certainly, it would.

I do not know anybody who would be more inclined to want to protect the confidentiality of people's health records than our Minister of Justice. So, if there is any hint that that might be true, do you think I would not have heard from the Minister of Justice about it?

An Honourable Member: She would be on you like a

Mr. McCrae: That is right. We take that sort of thing very seriously indeed, I could tell you.

An Honourable Member: Is not his half hour up?

Mr. McCrae: I thought you were wanting me to spin it out for a while because you were getting tired.

Mr. Chairperson, I will await the honourable member's next question, but I say to him that, when I say no money flows from the taxpayers of this province to SmartHealth for 18 months, that will be part of the contract. That is what we said in the press release; that is what I say today; and that is what will happen.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, it is fairly clear. It will not flow for 18 months, but it will flow afterwards. The minister still has not answered the question as to whether or not the deliverables are there. If the development has gone on, the money will flow, presumably.

I have another line of questioning for the minister. The request for information tender is dated October 12, '94, the closing date, et cetera. I appreciate the minister

forwarding that to me. Can the minister indicate for me whether or not prior to that tender going out there was any kind of a strategic assessment done of this project?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member asks about viability assessment. That I guess goes back to 1993, somewhere midyear. At that time we decided whether or not we would go with a full-blown health information system.

We could certainly see the benefits of proceeding with a Drug Programs Information Network, which began operation somewhat frantically for the people involved in July of 1994. Following that, I guess through the development of the DPIN and the initial results indicating a successful approach, a successful program, it was decided to take further steps to add to the DPIN, which is basically what this five-year project is all about, adding to, learning from and building on what we have learned in DPIN and applying it to other sectors of the health system, doing so, as I have pointed out, very carefully with significant input from providers, from consumers and from regulators.

Mr. Chomiak: Who undertook this strategic assessment in 1993?

Mr. McCrae: That was done in concert with the Royal Bank and the Department of Health.

* (1620)

Mr. Chomiak: So, the Royal Bank. Can the minister indicate who the others are?

Mr. McCrae: Yes. In addition to the bank and the Department of Health, the Manitoba Telephone System was involved in that consultation; CDSL, a company from Saskatchewan which had some experience in building these types of systems; and KMPG consulting firm from Winnipeg.

Mr. Chomiak: Who represented the Department of Health on this strategic assessment?

Mr. McCrae: The steering committee for that, I am not able to give an exhaustive list, it is quite a long one, but they consist of Gary Neill from our Information

Branch in Health; Glenn Alexander, who is with us today; Henry Shukier, from our branch again; Tony Deluca, from the Information Technology Review Office, otherwise known as ITRO; Les Roos of the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation; Betty Havens, who was then the assistant deputy minister responsible for continuing care. Those people were involved at that time, and others as well who we cannot immediately recall.

The committee recessed at 4:26 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:43 p.m.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, so there was a committee or group that provided a strategic assessment. Did that assessment form the basis of the request for information for the tenders?

Mr. McCrae: Partly, and a very important input to our decision making was consultations early on with health care providers. Physicians especially for some time have been pressing us to get on with some improved method of health information system development.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, so following consultations and following a strategic assessment done by SmartHealth, KPMG and others, a request for tenders went out, which subsequently was awarded to SmartHealth and KPMG ultimately as well. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: A request for information went out, and 33 vendors responded. Let us go back. The DPIN came along as well, and the DPIN was also the result of an RFI and a tendering process, and Systemhouse was the successful proposer at that time. Systemhouse was the vendor in setting up of our DPIN. After that, the RFI that I have made available went out, and there were 33 of those went out. Eleven vendors responded, and the proposals were evaluated, and SmartHealth is the vendor. SmartHealth has KPMG—how would you put it?—working with them, INT, IDT, various subcontractors involved as well.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I am just trying to get a time frame in terms of the information that I requested.

Will we see that information today, or will it be subsequently tabled with respect to the cost factors or the cost savings to be realized?

* (1650)

Mr. McCrae: We are still preparing that information for the honourable member. I hope to have some of it to make available to him this afternoon. Yesterday, when we were talking about Mental Health Services, I made a brief reference to some information about reform initiatives in the mental health area. I told the honourable member that I could at that time have read from an eight-page document, which I declined to do in the interests of time. I now have it, and it is a current status of the mental health reform implementation plan as of this month, so it is up to date. I would pass that over to the honourable member.

Further to the honourable member's question with respect to a \$25-million estimated, five-year cumulative benefit respecting new clinical guidelines based on past treatment effectiveness, the use of clinical guidelines or utilization management can be defined as the practice of measuring, understanding and, where appropriate, developing appropriate practice guidelines. In general, there are three possible approaches to developing and using clinical guidelines.

First, reactive guidelines: the data are analyzed after patients have been treated in order to develop guidelines to influence the care of future patients.

Secondly, concurrent guidelines: the care of patients is reviewed during their treatment or hospital stay, and the treatment is modified as needed.

Thirdly, proactive guidelines: patients are screened before treatment or admission to determine the appropriateness of the proposed treatment and to define guidelines for care.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for explaining to me the definition of what the clinical

guidelines are, based on past treatment effectiveness and the proactive clinical guidelines.

The former is \$25 million. The latter is \$33.8 million in terms of projected savings. Can the minister outline for me where he sees these savings being realized?

Mr. McCrae: I believe we would like to hear the honourable member's question, if he would put it again for us.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, let us talk about proactive clinical guidelines. Presumably, these are systems that are put in place that alert individuals and officials as to potential health-threatening risks and allow an individual to receive early treatment or preventative measures in order to ensure that individual does not ultimately develop a worse health condition. Are there any examples?

There is a specific figure of \$33.8 million attached to that, which is one of the largest initiatives. I am wondering where and how the department sees that, how they arrived at that figure.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairperson, this proactive issue raised by the honourable member, the whole idea behind this concept is that it is believed that there are physicians in various jurisdictions, and I tell you that some of them input for the numbers that we are talking about, are based on work done in other provinces, most notably British Columbia. There are physicians who it is suggested by various data gatherers and researchers that should be encouraged to engage in best-practice methodologies in the delivery of their medical services.

* (1700)

A Manitoba-based study, conducted by Noralou Roos and published in 1986, indicates that there is a large variation in hospitalization practices of physicians. The study found that physicians who were high users of hospitals served 27 percent of the patients but that 27 percent consumed 42 percent of the hospital days. The study went on to indicate, and I quote: In summary, physicians' decisions to admit patients to hospital contain a major element of discretion and may be amenable to prospective guidelines and review.

Many of the physicians that were higher users of hospitals were located in either rural or nonteaching hospital settings. As a result, these physicians generally have less information readily available to them. That is not a best-practice scenario. A best-practice scenario is to have maximum information that can properly and appropriately be made available to a medical practitioner and then to have that practitioner working within practice guidelines that are acceptable in the medical profession. Industry standards, if you like.

A public health information system could radically improve the distribution of information to all physicians and particularly those who are high users of hospitals. The study indicated that in general rural physicians have higher hospitalization rates than urban physicians. Younger physicians have a higher hospitalization rate than older physicians. Do not ask me why. This is what the study found.

Here is another interesting one, physicians not connected to a teaching hospital have higher hospitalization rates than physicians in teaching hospitals. This is extremely important information and it helps serve—this kind of information tells me as a layman something here could be helped or saved or changed if people were working with adequate information.

If a young rural physician who admits patients, for example, at apparently higher rates than older urban physicians, if that young physician knew that his or her practice of admitting patients was way out of line from the practices of other physicians in the system, would that not cause a professional to stop and ask why, to re-examine his or her admission practices, examine the criteria by which he or she makes decisions about who should or should not be admitted to hospital.

If you do not think these things are important, well, check out the \$1.2 billion that goes into the hospital sector. If you think that maybe we could spend a little more money to help pay for Lorenzo's Oil for some families in Manitoba, for example, then why would we not use the dollars available in the best-practice scenario? This is all very interesting. It is also very important, and is part of the reasoning behind any kind

of study, or whatever these things or assessment or whatever, to help us make decisions about what we ought to do about it.

This information has the potential to bring the physicians who are high users of hospitals into line with the overall average hospital use. Thus, automated clinical guidelines or guidelines devised with the help of automated clinical information would in theory, and I suggest in fact, have the potential to reduce overall hospitalization so that doctors working together, comparing notes, comparing admission criteria, could make better health decisions, better not only for their patients, because people who should not be hospital for long periods of time should not be in hospital for long periods of time.

Nobody should argue or wants to argue, I suggest, that we ought to have people in hospital simply because it is a good practice. You have to have reasons for making that kind of suggestion and so it is that kind of information that is important. Dr. Roos at one point, Noralou Roos, made the very interesting observation to me or maybe it was something I saw on a W5 program on television that pointed out that admitting practices for heart patients in Brandon are very, very different than admitting practices for heart patients in Winnipeg.

I do not remember the detail—in fact that was Dr. Roos who told me about this. This question is not, well, are all those people in Winnipeg who are being admitted for heart surgery, are they being admitted in error or should they not be admitted because who wants to replace their judgment for that of a professional trained in cardiology? I do not, but I would like the cardiologist who is admitting more patients than some other cardiologist to have a look at the admitting practices.

Maybe that particular cardiologist has patients who are much sicker than the other cardiologists. If that was the case that would explain the difference in the admitting practices. Apparently, the numbers demonstrate a very, very significant practice between the cities of Brandon and Winnipeg. Brandon people are not referred for surgery at anywhere near the same rates as Winnipeggers on a per capita or on a proportional basis.

There are reasons for it and what are all the reasons? Even Dr. Roos would not jump at a conclusion, but does it not beg the question, if that kind of information is in the hands of all the cardiologists in Manitoba and all the cardiologists in Manitoba are working from the same set of criteria, what would the result then be? I suggest to you, and I am speculating, that perhaps more people in Brandon would get surgical intervention and fewer people in Winnipeg would get surgical intervention but that is just a guess. That is a speculation based on a nonmedical input by me.

I do say, surely we owe it to the taxpayers, to the patients in Manitoba, to answer those questions using the best professional minds available, but the example that I just referred to set out by Dr. Roos is a good example of the use of online or proactive clinical guidelines.

Mr. Chomiak: I am not the one to explain to the—I think the minister gave a good example. I think that is more a clinical guideline best based on past treatment effectiveness. Proactive guidelines, I am given to understand, are more epidemiological in nature and deal with preventative things and matters of that kind. That is my next question.

Can the minister outline how they arrived at the figure of savings of \$33.8 million based on proactive clinical guidelines?

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member will agree that this discussion is extremely interesting for certainly people like me and I suspect him too. I would simply repeat the definition of proactive guidelines. I stand by what I said in terms of which is proactive, which is reactive. I will simply repeat that proactive guidelines involve patients being screened before treatment or admission to determine the appropriateness of the proposed treatment and to define guidelines for care.

* (1710)

I ask the honourable member to contrast that with my definition of reactive guidelines. With reactive

guidelines, the data is analyzed after patients have been treated in order to develop guidelines to influence the care of future patients.

It seems to me that there is a time for reactive guidelines and that is when you do not have any others. If you look at proactive guidelines and remember the definition that I have given, surely it is a good idea to screen patients before treatment or before admission to determine the appropriateness of the proposed treatment. If you did not do that you are really only providing treatment and not always knowing if it is the right or the best practice to do that.

The appropriateness of what it is you are doing is not very well measured if you have no yardstick by which to measure it.

It is like being a mechanic and, by the jiminy, I am going to fix your car whether it needs fixing or not. That is not what mechanics are supposed to do. We want mechanics to fix broken cars, and we want our professional people to apply their professional training in those areas and under those circumstances where we know that a positive outcome is the likely result. It is very simply that that I believe our whole health care system right across Canada has not addressed to the extent that it should.

Only by using information and sharing it in a nongeneric way sometimes, a nonspecific way, do we achieve population health results, and we achieve best practice situations in all areas of the health system.

Mr. Chomiak: The reason I belabour the point is because the clinical guidelines and the proactive clinical guidelines are projected, between the two of them, to achieve savings of \$58.8 million, which would be the single largest saving in the entire plan, in fact, would amount to more than a quarter of the projected savings.

I agree with the minister. That is only one aspect of it but it certainly does not deal with a lot of the information I thought, dealing with screening and dealing with preventative measures, would be incorporated in a system of this kind. I would have assumed that a system of this kind would have been

much more elaborate in its development of preventative and other kinds of health measures.

Mr. McCrae: I think we have this all sorted out now. The honourable member and I agree on some very important principles here. We would sometimes end up with a different interpretation of what the results should be, and that is all right, but certainly he has missed an important point here with which he agrees, I think.

He agrees with good information to help us carry out appropriate primary care initiatives. Let us use the example of a cholesterol test. That early look at a person's cholesterol level can lead a physician to prescribe for the patient that the patient engage in certain dietary adjustments, shall we say, so that a positive health outcome could be the result.

The next time that patient comes to the doctor a month later, says, I want to have my cholesterol done, for whatever reason that patient did that. The doctor uses the information available to the patient and says, well, you just had your cholesterol done a month ago. It was not too high. How has your diet been? You have been eating better. Good, good, sounds good. You do not need another cholesterol test.

This is a female patient by the way. The doctor also looks at his screen and says, you do not need a cholesterol test, but you know it has been three years since you have had a pap test. It would be a good idea for you to have that. I do not know how often you are supposed to have that, but I think you are supposed to have it more often than that and age comes into it. The doctor checks out the age and checks out other indicators.

What I am trying to get at is I agree with the honourable member, and he is saying that there are not enough dollars saved to reflect good primary health care decisions, but that is not where you see the pure savings.

We spend our money in the health system, to a large extent still, on doctors, on hospitals, and at that end of the spectrum we are spending more in the community. But in care situations, to a large extent, we still have to

put a larger emphasis on the primary part and on the determinants of health and all of those things we have already discussed.

The honourable member and I do not seem to disagree on this except to the extent that the honourable member is saying, well, show me all the dollars in an area of prevention where you cannot do that. You cannot count the number of crimes that were prevented last year.

You can count the number of crimes that were committed, but we do not know how many crimes were prevented. I honestly do not know how many heart conditions were prevented because of good diet, because of good advice given by doctors to their patients about exercise and good advice given with regard to lifestyle issues.

* (1720)

I think the honourable member is looking for numbers that are very hard to quantify, and he is looking for more money in an area where it is very, very hard to make firm determinations, so we are talking about areas where we know we spend money. I do not think the honourable member wants to defend bad practices, bad medical practices, medical practices that charge a fee but cannot demonstrate a positive outcome or any outcome for that matter.

I do not want to defend somebody going down to the doctor every week or every month to get a cholesterol test done, but that is possible to do unless a doctor can have information at his or her disposal to say you do not need this. There are those who would argue that, whether you need it or not, you should have it if you want it, to make you feel better, to make your cares go away.

This is the place where public health information and education come in. The public in Canada needs to understand that neither can we afford, nor do we need or want excessive testing, excessive diagnostic procedures.

There are people who need more than other people do, and surely health care professionals with an

appropriate information basis are the people to make those decisions, but let us give them the information with which they can work.

I am pleased that the honourable member agrees with me on the value of information-based preventive primary services, but I think his insistence that we attach a dollar value to things that are impossible to attach a dollar value to, is difficult and indeed impossible for us to do.

Mr. Chomiak: I recognize that the dollar values are attached in terms of the contract and the savings, and it is my attempt to try to find out how and why.

The minister has indicated before that—do I understand this correctly?—you will table or make public the contract once it has been signed?

Mr. McCrae: At the appropriate time the contract will be made public and it is not even signed yet, but it is not going to be made public until after it is signed.

Mr. Chairperson: 2. Management and Program Support Services (c) Health Information Systems (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,143,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$3,740,600—pass.

2.(d) Facilities Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$673,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$336,800—pass.

Resolution 21.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$19,498,900 for Health, Management and Program Support Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

We will now move on to Resolution 21.3(a) Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$998,700.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, I had a number of questions in this area that I was wanting to touch base on, page 46, in the Supplementary Estimates, for the minister.

In this area, of course, this is where the co-ordination of health care facilities and types of health care

facilities is, from what I understand, so it is probably the most appropriate place to ask questions with reference to the different health care facilities that are out there.

What I was wanting to comment on is to get some sort of an idea—I did not quite expect it to pass just this quickly, so I did not have my questions in front of me here. I will have to just kind of recall from memory.

I was wanting to get somewhat of a better understanding, if you will, of the differences, let us say, between Nor'West Health and Mount Carmel Clinic. When we talk about the deinstitutionalization of health care, what sort of expanded roles would both types of facilities that I have just listed have to play?

* (1730)

Mr. McCrae: In the city of Winnipeg, we are fortunate that we have acute care hospitals; we have tertiary care hospitals; we have long-term care facilities; we have personal care facilities; we have chronic care facilities; we have community health centres.

Community health centres work in some ways like other facilities in that they have missions, they have roles, they have boards made up of volunteers to reflect what the community wants and needs.

So it is a good concept. We want the community health centres to play a more significant role in the areas of primary care. There are people attached to community health centres who have a very clear and a very good understanding of communities and community development.

Each of the community health centres in Winnipeg will be a little different from all the others. They do not all do exactly the same things. Mount Carmel Clinic, for example, is involved with so-called inner city issues. They are involved with issues relating to sexually transmitted diseases, issues related to family planning issues. They have a diagnostic lab.

We like to see an integrated service delivered from community health centres, so you will see doctors,

nurses, sometimes an occupational therapist. People involved in foot care, I know are involved in some cases. Outreach in communities is something that community health centres have shown that they can do, so that is, in a way, how their role differs from the acute care sector.

We are involved in—the honourable member will recall reference to Bell-Wade and also in these Estimates we have referred to Bell-Wade 2. It really does not have anything to do with Wade or Bell, I guess, but it has to do with secondary care, secondary care being our community hospitals.

That is an acute care sector which is separate and apart from our tertiary or teaching hospitals at St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre, but as a component of that secondary care review, we are also doing primary care review as part of that whole exercise. There will be significant study done with respect to the community health centres, as well as other primary services delivered in Winnipeg.

Do not forget, I suppose you could call nurse resource centres a form of community health centre, too. Let us not forget the Youville Clinic and the work that it does in the area of diabetes education, diabetes counselling. I am told that some 500 physicians are engaged in referring people to the Youville Clinic and the Youville Clinic refers people to physicians, too. That is an excellent kind of understanding between the profession and the community nurse resource centre.

This government is committed, totally committed to the concept of the nurse-managed care centre. We are engaged in the satellite of the Youville Clinic in St. Vital. We are committed to the development of a community nurse resource centre in Thompson. We are committed to a community nurse resource centre in a to-be-disclosed site in the Norman region, and we are committed to nurse-managed care in a to-be-disclosed site in Parklands. That will keep us busy for the next while, working with Dr. Helen Glass and her implementation committee.

We will make good on those commitments that were made some time before we went to the people in the election and the work at the Youville Clinic—and thank

goodness for the Grey Nuns who have really pioneered nursing in Manitoba. Thank goodness for their 150 years of selfless service to this province. While they are delivering all this service—you know, they were doing home care 150 years ago and here we talk about it as if it is a new program, but they were indeed doing that. They were providing all kinds of services in the community.

They were helping families who needed help. They were assisting in times of flood and they were assisting in times of difficulty in the community. They looked after kids whose parents could not look after them. They taught the children in Manitoba.

Those are the same Grey Nuns who are involved with the Youville Clinic. What better place to start than to have a satellite of that and then to move forward in the other areas.

Nurse resource centres can also be involved in the development of the communities they are serving. They can also be engaged in partnerships with other professionals to provide an integrated sort of service in the communities, so that is another form, if you like, of community health centres.

It was interesting during the election to hear the three parties and their campaign commitments. I cannot remember for sure what the Liberals said off the top of my head, but I know they made reference to this concept too, and the New Democrats, they focused on the nurse practitioner.

We are essentially talking about the same kind of health promotion, disease prevention, community development, quality of life issues. We were all talking about the same things, and I was very pleased to be part of that discussion, because we are the ones who were in a position actually to do something, and we had already made some steps forward in this regard and to the credit of Larry Desjardins. I will give Larry Desjardins his due, because, as I recall, he was the minister when the Youville Clinic got going some 10 years ago.

So we can all share in a little of the glow when it comes to doing the right thing for our fellow Manitobans and be happy to see the continued

development of services in the community with an emphasis on primary types of services, preventive measures, nutrition, prenatal, those sorts of things we discussed when we discussed the report on the health of the child.

An extremely important shift is taking place. We are going to be asking the community health centres this year itself to engage in operations, more hours in the day, to help take pressure off emergency rooms.

Pressure is one thing. Appropriate use of the emergency room is the other thing, if a walk-in clinic or a community health centre is there for the express purpose of providing services to families and people in times of need. Sometimes not all emergencies require all the resources of the Health Sciences Centre to address emergency matters, and they can be very, very appropriately addressed at the community health centre or the walk-in clinic or, circumstances permitting, at the regular doctor's office.

Mr. Lamoureux: I believe that whether it is opposition or the government, I do not think that we have really gotten a very clear message to the public about these community health centres.

I know this even from my own area, so I, too, could possibly even share in some of the blame in terms of why it is we do not get the full utilization that we could be getting from these centres. I think in the whole realm of health care change, this is one of the areas in which there is the greatest potential for a better quality of service being delivered, right from the preventive side of health care to the prescription of drugs potentially through having things such as salaried doctors stationed at community health centres. I think the potential for enhancement is fabulous if in fact we want to take advantage of this particular level of service.

* (1740)

I am wondering if the minister can indicate, do we have any health care committees at all that are established that are strictly, if you will, looking at the future role of the community health centres? I am also interested in knowing, is it the community in which the

health care centre is served that ultimately will decide what sort of services are going to be rendered from that particular facility, or is there some policy that comes from the government saying, here is what we believe you should be offering and then you can expand upon that if you can find additional financial resources, or here is the envelope, we request that you provide a foot care program, we request that you provide this sort of a program, but anything over and above that you are going to have to explore?

So is it community driven in terms of what the community feels they want out of their health care clinic and, if so, to what end does the Department of Health get involved in terms of, here are the services we feel that are essential for you to deliver? Maybe again, a comment with respect to the committees, and if in fact there is the provincial mandate, if you will, for the community health centres, if we can get some idea, something that maybe the minister might have at hand that we could say, here is what the province obligates you to do.

Mr. McCrae: In a way, there is a committee representing community health centres. There is an organization called the Association of Community Health Centres which represents the community health centres throughout Manitoba.

There are not very many. We are just sort of arguing here about how many there are, but that association represents the various community health centres, meets with representatives of my department, meets with me. I meet with them and we hear their concerns. Their boards represent the communities they serve, and it is through that mechanism that the government has its liaison with community health centres.

We want to see community health centres providing services that, indeed, do work within the spirit of the Action Plan for Manitoba. It is something that the health centres agree with. We know that certain populations need to be targeted, and I think that the community health centres are in a position to assist in that regard.

The majority of their funding is from the Department of Health. There may be other smaller grants made

available, but the majority of funding is provincial government funding.

We are, as I said, engaged in a review of primary health issues in the city of Winnipeg, and it is as part of that review that community health centres will have a participation in giving us advice in respect to their operations and their proposed operations in the future. The shift of dollars within the \$1.2-billion envelope for hospitals, personal cares and community health centres will see the personal care centres and the community health centres as the principal beneficiaries of the shift.

You do not hear questions from the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) about that in the House. What you hear from him is that the dollars are coming from the hospital sector. Well, that is true. That is where they are coming from.

Surely, the honourable member for Kildonan does not argue that a commitment that is far greater than any commitment his colleagues ever showed to health care in Manitoba is insufficient. I hope they are not arguing that. The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), I know, is not arguing that the envelope that we spend for Health is insufficient.

The argument is sometimes over how well we are spending it, and that is certainly a legitimate and welcome argument, because how would we ever know what we are doing wrong if somebody did not tell us?

So yes, the argument my staff people and myself were having has been resolved in their favour. There are eight what we call formal community health centres in Winnipeg, a couple that we call something else other than formal community health centres, but in total there are 22 outside Winnipeg.

You see, for example, in Hamiota, Manitoba, you might drive through there and think what you have there is your traditional hospital, but it is a very different concept. They have the salaried doctors there. I suggest some day when the honourable member is out in that region that he stop by there. They are very pleased to tell me or the honourable member about their concept, and it is a concept of integrated service delivery, of team approach.

The salaried doctors work closely on a daily basis with all the other members of the health-care team there and that includes home care and it includes public health nurses employed by my department and it is a concept that works well in Hamiota. It can work very well in other communities as well and does. That is an example I use because I have got acquainted with the concept that they have there.

Some say that it might not have happened except that the medical practitioners in the region were open to an integrated approach to service delivery in health care because the physicians of our country have played a very key role in the development of our health care system. They will also play a key role in the development of our new health care system, which is a more integrated team approach to health service delivery.

* (1750)

Just in case you think there is not too much meaning to what I have just said, I was invited to sit in on one of their daily committee meetings, and the chair of the committee changes either every day or every week, I forget which, but it goes right around the table, so all the members of that team ultimately have their responsibility to chair the meetings and to be true members of an integrated health care team.

So I see a present for the community health centre, I see a future for the community health centre and I see an important role not only in service delivery but in community development which is so very important. Community development is all about the education of the public with respect to what is the best nutritional sort of regime to have in place for an expectant mother or for the newborn. Are we well positioned to provide that family with health information, health education prevention supports at those very important times of our lives.

Our seniors population can be greatly assisted by the community health centre. I am speaking a little bit prematurely now by getting into a whole lot more detail because as part of, as I said, that secondary care review or Wade-Bell 2 as it has been called, which it is not, but that is what it has been called, that primary care

component of it will, I believe, assist health care planners in future directions with respect to the community health centre.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I would go as far as to say that when we look at the community health care centres, what we should be looking at is, virtually at every facility, the idea of having a salaried doctor. You know, if we look at walk-in clinics, and there has been an expansion, if you will, of walk-in clinics, I am convinced at least—I speak in most part from the health centre that is in my area—that if more people were aware, and we knew that there was a medical doctor that was there much like the services of many walk-in clinics have, that in fact would probably get more people attending them.

I think the centres have a lot more to offer, and even though at times government, the Department of Health has to move very cautiously, no doubt, in anything and everything that it does, I do believe that one could be somewhat more aggressive in the approach and in the promotion of the health centres.

I would ask the minister, he made reference to the eight that are formal inside the city of Winnipeg, I could also maybe at a later time ask about the rural, but the one I want to concentrate on is Nor'West, which is the one that is in my area. Does he have access this afternoon to the budgets? How much money is given to each of the eight and to name the eight?

What I would really appreciate having is seven years ago the budgeted amount from the Department of Health in terms of allocation for each of those eight. What I am trying to do is to get a better idea in terms of what sort of financial resources are going towards them, and then possibly, if time permits, on Thursday to have some sort of a follow-up. Hopefully, the minister will remind us, maybe at the beginning on Thursday because we are on bills tomorrow.

At the next opportunity, he might want to list all of the different health centres, urban and rural, and give us an idea in terms of the budget, and then we can start, in terms of that expanded role that the minister sees that they might play, to be a bit more specific on—for example, I made reference to the salaried physicians,

the idea of having a complement of nurses. Is that something that is, in fact, feasible?

Up front, we might say, well, geez, you know, if you are talking about having a doctor and you talk about having a nurse and all this in these health centres, that is a good sum of money. No doubt it is a good sum of money, but I would ultimately argue that if we manage and have very healthy, prosperous types of community health centres, that the demand for things such as the walk-in clinics would, in fact, go down because the health centres—and I do not have the numbers to substantiate it, but I would assume, potentially, could be fairly cost-efficient, especially as we get more in line with the health card system that is coming on stream, that this really could assist.

Mr. McCrae: I will give the honourable member the figures for 1992-93 and 1993-94, because those are the figures that I have available today, and for previous years we can, I think, also dig those figures out for the honourable member.

While I do this, I will be naming the community health centres, so that the honourable member will have a sense.

The Churchill Health Centre had a budget—the amount the department made available is a better way to put it, because the department's funding is not the total of their revenues.

In '92-93 at Churchill the appropriation from government was \$830,256; in 1993-94, \$831,472.

Deloraine Southwest Health District Facility: '92-93, \$1,130,112; in '93-94, \$1,084,120.

Emerson: '92-93, \$400,272; '93-94, \$405,264.

The Fisher Medical Centre, that is at Fisher Branch: '92-93, \$233,976; 1993-94, \$236,568.

Gilbert Plains: '92-93, \$104,784; '93-94, \$100,944.

Gillam-Sundance: '92, \$543,602; '93-94, \$328,080.

Glenboro: \$288,624 in '92; in '93, \$316,008.

Hamiota Health Centre: in '92, \$951,864; in '93, \$985,056.

The Health Action Centre: in '92, \$1,066,200; in '93, \$1,550,904.

The Hope Centre: in '92, \$357,919; in 1993, \$397,392.

Klinik: \$2,389,512 in '92; \$2,404,678 in '93.

Lac Du Bonnet Health Centre: from \$451,848 in '92 to \$474,024 in '93.

Leaf Rapids: \$899,472 in '92; \$955,008 in '93.

Lynn Lake Medical Clinic: in '92, \$318,192; in '93, \$324,024.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Marcel Laurendeau): The hour being 6 p.m., the House now stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow (Wednesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 13, 1995

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