



First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

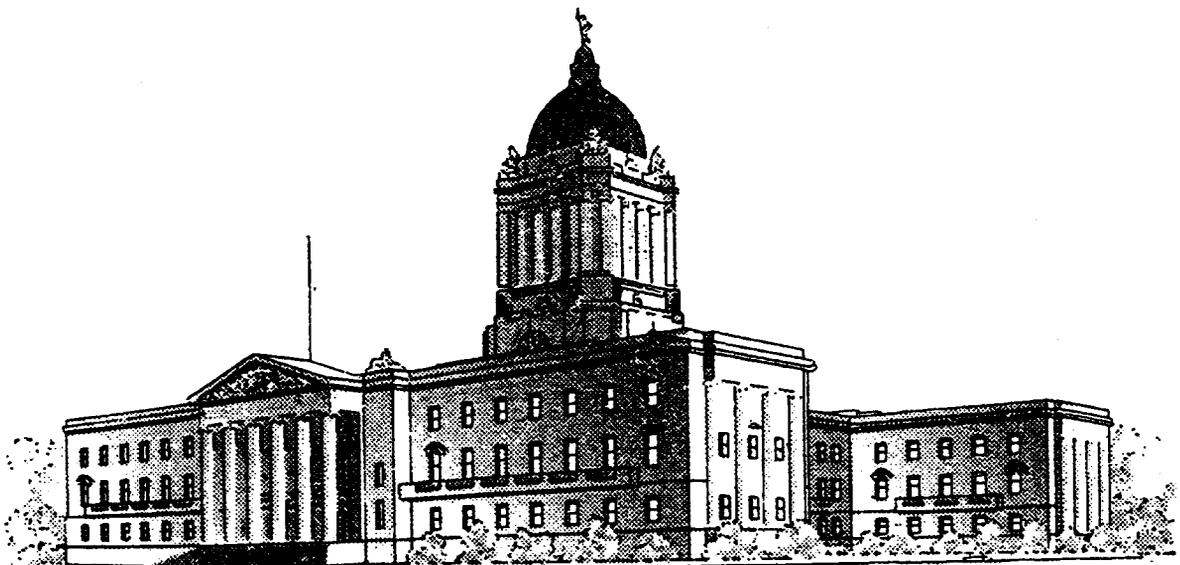
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



Vol. XLV No. 20A - 1:30 p.m., Monday, June 19, 1995

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.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
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

Monday, June 19, 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 River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to table the report of Legal Aid Manitoba for the year ended March 31, 1993, and the 1993 Annual Report of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

* (1335)

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 with us this afternoon 25 seniors from Winnipeg's Donwood South and Donwood Manor under the direction of Janet Harper. These residents reside in the constituencies of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) and the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews).

We also have thirty-five Grade 5 students from Holy Cross School under the direction of Mrs. Trudy Flynn.

This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), and we have thirty Grade 5 students from École Notre Dame de Lourdes under the direction of Mrs. Laurette LaCroix. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

VLТ Revenues Information Release

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, last Friday I asked the Premier questions about the release of public information dealing with the hearings and revenue, community by community, for purposes of the Lotteries public hearings. The public hearings have now taken place in Brandon, Dauphin and this morning in Thompson, and the people there were denied the information that the Lotteries commission has in its possession.

I would like to ask the Premier, when is he going to keep the promise he made in the election campaign, and when is the government going to keep the promise it made last December with the former Minister of Lotteries and release that information to the public of Manitoba, the breakdown of the information to the people of Manitoba, as they are entitled?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, in accordance with the requests of members of the opposition, the Desjardins commission is going throughout the province listening to people talk about the social, economic and other political aspects of gaming in Manitoba. They are there listening to people's stories about their views on gaming, about how it affects their communities and so on and so forth.

These are hearings that can avail people of that opportunity, with or without the information that the Leader of the Opposition is speaking of. The fact of the matter is I have indicated to him publicly, and I said

so on Friday, that we will have that information out as soon as possible, and that continues to be the position that we take on it.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, on Friday in Question Period, the Premier stated to the members of this Chamber and the public, as soon as the information is available, we will be able to provide it publicly.

Madam Speaker, I would like to table information from a hotel. I was in contact with three hotel owners over the weekend. They all informed me that the hotels in Manitoba, since 1992, have a breakdown by machine, by week, by hotel, by community.

Madam Speaker, the Premier and the government has this information. Will he please stop the secrecy and release the information that is quite available in data sheets that I will make available to him today?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I have said before, and we will keep our word, that this information will be released.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I have talked to a number of people who are involved in programming, and they indicate, along with the hotel owners and sources in the Lotteries commission, that this information which has been made available week by week, machine by machine, community by community since 1992 could have easily been fulfilled and made public from the promise the former Minister of Lotteries made in December of 1994. The present Minister of Lotteries (Mr. Stefanson) should be making this information available. The Premier made that promise in a debate in the election campaign.

Will the Premier stop the secrecy and provide this information to the public? They are entitled to it. The Premier said he will give it to the public when it is available. It is available. Let us get on with it.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, members on this side need no lessons from this Leader of the Opposition about secrecy.

His government passed freedom-of-information legislation and then refused to proclaim it, so they

would not have the scrutiny of the public on anything in government. For almost three years, they did not proclaim the legislation.

This government needs no instruction about how to release information from that member who covered up everything in government by keeping The Freedom of Information Act from being proclaimed for three years, Madam Speaker.

* (1340)

Pharmacare Double Doctoring

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, in February, the case of a man who had filled almost a hundred prescriptions over the course of a year came to light, raising serious doubts about the government's new DPIN system, its card system.

Despite the fact it has been known for years that some people whose medications are covered by the federal government are not part of the provincial Pharmacare system, the DPIN system was implemented without looking into this matter.

My question to the minister is, will the minister today not place the blame on the shoulders of the federal government but admit it is a failure on the part of his department to do adequate research prior to the implementation of the \$5-million DPIN system.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Certainly not, Madam Speaker. Immediately after we became aware of the Leon matter, we brought the various players together, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, the Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association, our government representatives and the Medical Services Branch of the federal government.

It is not telling any secrets, Madam Speaker, to say we have not been able to get co-operation from the federal government throughout the review process. I am today addressing a letter to Minister Irwin and Minister Marleau in Ottawa to demand their co-operation for the protection of aboriginal people in Manitoba.

SmartHealth Double-Doctoring Safeguards

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, what assurances can the minister give this House today that the new hundred-million-dollar smart-card system that the government is going to bring in will not have similar problems, especially since the government is keeping secret the negotiations concerning the implementation of this program.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): The best assurance I can give is the methodology used in both of these situations, whereby we consult with the stakeholders, with the consumers and with those who deliver services.

It is the consultation with groups like the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Manitoba Consumers' Association, the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons and various other stakeholders involved in putting the whole process together and implementing it.

Contract Tabling Request

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, my final supplementary is, since this is such an open consultation process, will the minister at least today commit to bring the contract before this Legislature and the people of Manitoba, so we will know we will not have serious problems in the system, like we did with the Pharmacare drug system.

Will he bring this contract before us and allow us to review it prior to the implementation of this \$100-million contract with the Royal Bank, Madam Speaker?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, as I told the honourable member repeatedly during our examination of the Health department's Estimates, the concerns that he and others have raised are shared by us. They are legitimate concerns, that there be quality built into the product, that the issue of confidentiality of patient records be of paramount importance.

I think the secret here is that we are listening to the honourable member; we are listening to the stakeholders, listening to all of those organizations I mentioned and more in the design and development of the system.

There is a lot of support for it. The government is moving in this direction as a result of requests of organizations like the ones I mentioned, so that we could move forward and make a better health care system. All of those concerns are going into the negotiations leading up to the signatures on a contract.

Forest Fires Firefighting Resources

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Natural Resources.

I want to begin by thanking everyone who is working to contain the fires and the volunteers helping out.

With the evacuation of South Indian Lake and potentially Leaf Rapids, does the province still have enough equipment and fire crews to cope with the rapid increase in serious forest fires in the last few days?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I just circulated the information as to the latest forest fire update with some of my colleagues in the Legislature here.

We have 81 active fires burning as of yesterday and another 40 to 50 new starts, which makes it approximately 130 fires that we have going at the present time. We do have adequate manpower, and we have adequate equipment at this time. The people are doing a yeoman's job out there.

* (1345)

Evacuation Process

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is, does the province have a backup plan if both Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake have to be evacuated?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Minister of Government Services): Madam Speaker, as was mentioned and for the information of the House, as of this morning at 8:35 a.m., there were 116 people evacuated from South Indian Lake to Thompson. We have been proceeding this morning to continue with the evacuation, and there will be approximately another 550 people evacuated from the community of South Indian Lake to Thompson.

The balance of people normally resident in the community, some are away and were away prior to this situation as it unfolded. Others are staying back to work with the firefighting people who are actively engaged at this time in the region.

Emergency Measures is working in full co-operation with local officials, both in that area and throughout the province, in fact, to develop the best strategy for protecting all Manitobans who are facing this formidable problem that Mother Nature has presented us with this year.

Firefighting Costs

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, my final supplementary question to the Minister of Natural Resources: Does the province have any idea, let us say a ballpark figure, about how much the fires have cost so far and how much damage has been done?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): I do not know whether it would be productive to even venture a figure because it keeps changing on an hourly basis, but we are well in excess of \$10 million and climbing.

Red River Community College Space Reductions

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

Last week, Red River Community College announced cuts of 26 jobs, the ending of two clear programs and 327 fewer spaces for students in a province where there is already a very small proportion of students in community colleges.

I would like to ask the minister if she could tell us today what her timetable is now for fulfilling her commitment to the Roblin committee recommendations of doubling the places in community colleges.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): It is, indeed, a shame that the federal government has chosen to proceed in the way they have chosen. I should indicate, though, what the member is aware of, I believe, and that is that last year and again next year, we have had a 6 percent increase in funding to Red River. For our part, we have created additional spaces which will now, of course, be jeopardized because of federal action.

The federal government has been written to by me, by a number of people, requesting that they not proceed in this particular direction. We, for our part, have increased funding, have created new spaces and continue to support the expansion of the colleges in terms of support from the provincial government.

Community Colleges Impact of Funding Reduction

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Would the minister prepare on an emergency basis, and I suggest it is, an emergency evaluation of the impact of these cuts at Red River, the cuts at KCC and the restructuring at ACC, on the opportunities that are going to be available for this graduating class of young Manitobans in 1995?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): My department, of course, is extremely interested in this new development, one that was expected, one that we did contact the federal government about in terms of federal actions in terms of post-secondary educational institutions right across this nation.

The colleges have been given self-governance. The employees have been given the right to free collective bargaining. We have a number of factors at play here. We know that the college governance and the board members at the universities, along with the presidents, are taking a very serious look at the very item the member has identified.

* (1350)

Funding

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Would the minister be prepared, under these circumstances, to reconsider the training grants to the larger corporations, whether it is IBM or Safeway or Centra Gas, in order to provide some help for community colleges and young Manitobans in a very serious situation?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): The member is aware, from discussions at Estimates and from a variety of other sources, that the federal government, in offloading onto the provinces, is hoping that the provinces across this nation will pick up federal responsibilities and take the people of Manitoba off the agenda that is good and right for them provincially. The member is also aware that the community colleges, themselves, have partaken of Workforce 2000 programs. Indeed, she asked me some detailed questions on that in Estimates.

So we have been working with community colleges in terms of that type of training, and at the same time, we believe very strongly in the merits of onsite training to upgrade people in the workforce at the same time that we make those same opportunities available to community colleges, along with our increase in funding, along with the creation of new spaces this year and next year.

We would encourage all members of the Legislature to use whatever influence they might have with the federal government to ensure that it does its part for post-secondary education in Canada and in this province.

Sexual Harassment Public Education Program

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): Sexual harassment continues to be a problem in all our institutions, including publicly funded ones, making it apparent that current mechanisms to stop harassment are not working. At a time of backlash, leadership and vigilance are necessary.

My first question is to the Minister of Justice.

Will the minister consider creating a public education program targeting sexual harassment?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The whole issue of sexual harassment is a very serious one. We were very pleased, as a Department of Justice and many other departments within our provincial government, to participate with the federal government, as another large employer, to look particularly at the issue of sexual harassment among other types of harassment in the workplace and to have co-sponsored a conference earlier this year in the early part of 1995.

It is important that individuals recognize what, in fact, is behaviour which may be harassing and that there be a way for people to deal with that, and so we have been very happy to begin that process and continue that process as very active participants.

Ms. McGifford: My second question is to the Minister of Education.

Has the minister ever considered direct funding for sexual harassment programs in Manitoba's universities?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I think the member may be referring to a particular situation that is occurring at the moment and is aware that there is an inquiry right now at the university by the university to look at the university's methods of procedure, and that inquiry should bring forth points that the university, itself, can consider in that particular arena.

Victims' Services

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): My third question is for the Minister of Family Services. Where can the victims of sexual harassment receive prompt and professional services?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): I thank my honourable friend for the question. I will take it as notice and get back to her with an answer.

Gaming Commission Research Staff Resources

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

We have seen a report from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba in which, in addressing the issue of problem gamblers, approximately out of 300 clients, 32 percent of them have attempted suicide.

The social costs of gambling are very, very high, yet one student researcher has been assigned the responsibility to come to grips with just the actual size of the social program costs. Madam Speaker, that is virtually a whitewash of this whole system that the Premier has put together.

How can this government, and I pose the question to the Premier, say that this gambling committee has the resources to do a credible job, rather than more of an exercise in public relations?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, the Desjardins commission has been given the widest possible mandate to investigate any and all things to do with gaming in this province. They are prepared to look at any issues that are raised to them.

They have, in fact, the executive director of the AFM, Mr. Thompson, as part of their group. They have the resources of the AFM to look into issues of this nature. There is no reason to believe that they will not investigate thoroughly and completely any and all issues to do with gaming in this province.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would ask the Premier, how is it possible that one student researcher is going to be able to do the work that is necessary in terms of providing information on the social cost of gambling, when the Premier likely knows full well that it is just not possible, and when is the Premier going to take some real action on this issue?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, Mr. Thompson of the AFM was in attendance in Estimates last week, and he

was certainly available to respond to this kind of question. I am sure he could have adequately given the information to the member for Inkster.

The fact of the matter is it is not just the one student researcher whom they have access to. I said they have the entire resources of the AFM to seek out greater information.

The member knows full well that a great deal of money was spent on two studies by Rachel Volberg, first a major study and then a follow-up which is being done, so, as a result, certainly there is sufficient information and sufficient access to information, and the committee is in no way prevented from doing the work that they wish to do.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, given that the research assistant does not even have a copy of the Volberg report, will the Premier ensure that, in fact, the research office will be given a copy of the Volberg report that is, in fact, not whited out?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I am confident that the Desjardins commission—and I think that Mr. Desjardins is somebody who has demonstrated in the past that he will get the job done, that he is committed to getting all the information that is required in order for him to do a thorough report.

I have great confidence in Mr. Desjardins, and I invite the member to go before his committee to find out whether or not Mr. Desjardins feels that he can do a good job on this issue.

Pediatric Cardiac Care Program Inquest—Legal Counsel

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

Despite our call for an independent inquiry into the role of the government and the circumstances around the tragic infant deaths at the Health Sciences Centre, this government announced an inquest which the government promised would be just as impartial. We have now learned who is being appointed as legal counsel to the inquest.

My question to the minister is, would the minister explain how this inquest can be impartial, as promised, when it will depend on evidence gathered and brought out at the hearing by two employees of the very government that is being investigated?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I seek clarification. I wonder, is the honourable member suggesting that Judge Sinclair is unable to handle the issues that come before the inquest?

Mr. Mackintosh: My question is to the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), Madam Speaker.

In light of the appointment as legal counsel two Crown attorneys, two government lawyers, would the minister now appoint independent counsel to the inquest, rather than the employees who report to her, to avoid any suggestion that evidence of government negligence or misplaced political priorities might be suppressed if the government investigates itself?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, I think that if the honourable member has some suggestion to make about the abilities or qualifications of members of the prosecution staff in this province who handle thousands and thousands of investigations and prosecutions and various hearings of different kinds representing the people of Manitoba, if he has some concern, let him put on the record what those concerns are.

* (1400)

Mr. Mackintosh: To the Minister of Justice, Madam Speaker, would the minister now appoint outside counsel to the inquest, which it is her legal mandate to do under The Fatality Inquiries Act, so there is no conflict of interest, no apparent conflict of interest or actual conflict of interest, regarding an inquest which will look at the priorities of this particular government?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, the member continues to persist. He made it clear that he would not be satisfied with an inquest, but the inquest is the way that we are proceeding.

The parameters will be wide. The people who will be acting in the inquest are people whom we believe have excellent records and certainly can do the job, which we believe will be a very wide job in a very important matter and situation, Madam Speaker.

GM Franchise Oakville, Manitoba

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

Last week, the minister expressed no interest or knowledge, in fact, of franchise legislation or the situation in Oakville, Manitoba.

I would like to know, will the minister now admit the situation is serious and schedule meetings with General Motors officials to discuss the Oakville situation, and will he set up a meeting with GM and residents of Oakville?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I can indicate to the member that, yes, I will be trying to set up meetings with General Motors.

Franchise Legislation Introduction

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, what response is the minister preparing for the requests of the residents of Oakville, along with groups such as the Motor Dealers Association of Manitoba, who have all written to him requesting franchise legislation?

I would like to know when he is going to stop his delaying tactics and introduce some legislation.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I was not aware that the member for Elmwood was now the mail clerk in my office, to determine who has written to me and who has not.

I can indicate that there has been limited contact with my office with respect to this issue. I have had some

discussions with some people, Madam Speaker, and we are taking a look at the situation.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, my final supplementary to the same minister is this.

I did not see the minister in Oakville on Saturday. How many more small towns will be turned into ghost towns before this minister decides to act?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, let this member across the way here not cry about the interests of this government. This government has done more for rural Manitoba than any government in the history of this province.

This was the government, Madam Speaker, that introduced a Decentralization program that they opposed, that put 700 new jobs into rural Manitoba. This government introduced Grow Bonds, introduced the REDI program, introduced a number of other issues that have tried to grow small business in rural Manitoba and not throw roadblocks in its way, such as the member and their philosophy would have.

Manitoba Housing Authority Amalgamation

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, when I asked on Friday about the government's plans to change the structure and the roles of the Manitoba Housing Authority and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, the minister said there was always the possibility for looking at where direction is placed, but he said they would not abandon their responsibility to ensure that there is social housing for low-income Manitobans.

I want to ask the minister if he will clarify what the government's plans are with respect to the Manitoba Housing Authority and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation in terms of their relationship, their structure and their role for the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing): Madam Speaker, I can reiterate to the member for Radisson that there are absolutely no plans to do away with the

services that are provided by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation.

It is an entity of this government, and the analysis and the redirections of talking to the department to look at the best efficiencies, the accountability and the client services that are necessary in any aspect of government that is supplying a service have to be looked at and directed from time to time.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Role

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I am wondering if the minister could clarify or tell me if he is concerned that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is abandoning its responsibility for social housing across the province, since they have changed the rent geared to income for these low-income renters to 30 percent and reduced over the next three years \$270 million that is coming to social housing across the country.

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing): Madam Speaker, the member for Radisson is absolutely correct in her analogy that the federal government has cut back significant amounts of monies from the housing market, and it is, indeed, a concern that this government has been faced with.

It is the position of the federal government, as she mentioned, to try to increase the rental to a 30 percent level. At the present time, we are at 27 percent of the net income for the occupants of the housing, but as she has pointed out, it is of deep concern, the federal offloading of housing and their apparent abandonment of increasing funding in this particular area.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister then confirm that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is looking to abandon its responsibility in this area, and what message has the minister taken to Ottawa with respect to the impact this will have on Manitoba?

Can he tell the House what effect this is going to have on Manitoba's Housing Corporation?

Mr. Reimer: Madam Speaker, I can reiterate to the member for Radisson that this is a high priority within

this department, and it will be one of the items on the agenda that I have instructed staff to make sure—there is a ministerial-level meeting with the federal government at the beginning of July of this year, and that will definitely be a topic that we will bring forth on behalf of Manitobans.

Rural Hotels/Motels Telephone Switchboard Purchases

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, two years ago, many small hotel and motel owners were given the opportunity to purchase their switchboard equipment along with a contract to have 24-hour repair service. What the motel owners were not told was that this equipment was obsolete, and they would not be offered repair service after August 1995.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephone why he allowed this equipment to be sold without telling the motel owners that this was obsolete equipment they were purchasing and that they would not be able to have this service after this August.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I will ask MTS that question myself. It is an interesting question. I hope the member realizes that MTS is a Crown corporation. They run their business with their customers.

I will inquire, on behalf of the member, about that particular incident.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that he is responsible for that Crown corporation.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Swan River that a supplementary question requires no preamble or postamble. The honourable member, to pose her question now.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if it is his government policy to ask Crown corporations to recoup their cost on obsolete equipment

by selling it to motel owners and hotel owners without telling them the real facts. Is it their policy to recoup costs on the backs of hotel owners?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Telephone System's mission is to supply quality service to all Manitobans at the lowest possible price, and they run their business on that basis, to gain profit at the end of the year, to have money to invest back in more capital infrastructure for delivering quality, low-cost telecommunications service to all Manitobans, and they do a very good job of it.

I have already said to the member I will inquire about the particular incident she has raised. I have not heard about it before from any of the affected operators or from MTS.

* (1410)

Ms. Wowchuk: I would like to ask the minister, since the information was available for some time and they knew that the changes were going to be very expensive, why did this government delay providing the information to the hotel and motel owners until after the election and now is only giving them 90 days to make the changeover?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, there is a distinct difference between the way the NDP operated MTS and the way we do. We allow the Crown corporations to run their businesses day to day.

We do not interfere with every particular decision that they make, and while we have been running the corporation, we make money every year. We average about \$20 million a year. Two years previously, they lost \$27 million in the sands of Saudi Arabia.

Winnipeg Arena Environmental Assessment

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Given that the proposed arena project is on a flood plain and has massive socioeconomic impacts and is clearly a class 2 project under the environmental

guidelines, Madam Speaker, my question is, will the minister designate the project as a class 2 project and establish a timetable for CEC hearings on the project?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, we are currently working with the proponents and with the federal authorities to gather the information to put it through the screening process.

Mr. Dewar: Madam Speaker, has the Department of Environment received the required business plan, construction drawings and environmental impact statements from MEC Spirit?

Mr. Cummings: I believe the information that he is talking about was requested by the federal authorities, and we are co-operating with them.

Mr. Dewar: My final question: Has the site been tested for PCB contamination and the required measures taken to mitigate this condition, so that PCBs will not seep into the water table and further contaminate the Red River?

Mr. Cummings: Madam Speaker, as part of our responsibilities, we intend to make sure that if there is contamination onsite, it is properly dealt with.

Whiteshell Provincial Park Private Road Approval

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger).

We have recently received the Order-in-Council for the environmental licensing of a private-gated road in the Whiteshell Provincial Park. Park users and conservation groups have raised several questions regarding this proposal. These include the fact that the proposed road would cross over the nationally recognized Mantario Trail, that it would cross through a leased timber area, that it would come within a few kilometres of the wilderness zone and that financing for the road may come from the public purse.

Can the minister explain why this decision was made not to hold public hearings on a private road going into a public park, despite submissions from the Manitoba

Naturalists', the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and concerned park users?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): It sounds to me like the member wants to go back and start over again. We went through that process and made sure that due diligence was done and appropriate process was followed.

Mr. Struthers: To the Minister of Natural Resources, can the minister tell the House roughly what the capital and maintenance costs will be for this road, and when is construction expected to begin?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I am not aware that there is any financial participation that is going to take place from the government side.

Mr. Struthers: Madam Speaker, can the minister inform the House, given that the environment proposal calls for tripartite financing and given that the federal government has stated that it will not fund the road, whether there will be any provincial money going into this project?

Mr. Driedger: Madam Speaker, the member is correct when he makes some reference to responsibility for the federal government, because it is the federal government that withdrew the service to people in that area when they withdrew the services from VIA Rail.

That is basically what triggered the interests of the people who were sort of isolated in terms of going to the federal government asking whether there would be some financial participation.

What the provincial government's responsibility has basically been is to give some advice to the group that is looking at getting some access to their cottages. The process that they have gone through has been a pretty extensive one, through the environmental process, and, ultimately, I believe a licence has been issued for a road to go through there.

My department has had the opportunity to put their information on the record that was requested by the environmental people, and the financial end of it is

something that is not within my purview to answer and to make a commitment on.

Winnipeg Jets Endowment Fund

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, the minister has repeatedly assured the House that the public sector is protected from future losses in the Jets deal.

In theory, the endowment fund of \$60 million is supposed to protect the public sector, yet in statements to the press, counsel for the Spirit last week stated that the only conditions from Revenue Canada they were looking for had to do with the value of the partnership units.

Is the endowment fund still part of the Jets-Spirit deal in your understanding?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, my understanding is, yes, that the Spirit of Manitoba continues to deal with Revenue Canada on the issue of the limited partnership and on the issue of the endowment fund.

They continue also to look at all avenues that they might have or might be able to pursue, subject to whatever ruling might ultimately come down from Revenue Canada, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak); Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin); Osborne (Ms. McGifford) for Transcona (Mr. Reid), for Tuesday, June 20, 7 p.m. [agreed]

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek

(Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson); the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings). [agreed]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call for second reading of Bill 4 and Bill 17. I erred. It should have been Bill 12 and Bill 17.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 12—The Louis Riel Institute Act

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 12, The Louis Riel Institute Act; Loi sur l'Institut Louis Riel, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of The Louis Riel Institute Act. This was a bill which died at the prorogation of the Thirty-fifth Legislature just prior to the election. We reintroduce this piece of legislation today for second reading and debate of the Assembly and hopefully move it towards passage.

This piece of legislation in essence is simply an incorporation of the institute. I think if members read through the bill clause by clause they will find that it does nothing more, quite frankly, than establish the Louis Riel Institute, set out the structure, the framework, the powers and parameters of that particular organization.

The reason why we are introducing this as a piece of legislation as opposed to incorporation of this body through The Corporations Act is because we believe and feel very strongly that it is important to recognize

the role of Louis Riel in the founding of Manitoba, as Manitoba's father of Confederation, and to create this institute with an act of the Legislature as we have done on many other occasions for various worthwhile organizations and institutes in our province.

The aims of this institute are rather broad, Madam Speaker. One which I believe very strongly in is it becomes in essence—if its board of directors are able to put together the people and the financial resources, as I believe they will be able to do—a place for continuing and expanding the study of Manitoba history.

* (1420)

One complaint that we get from time to time, I think in all of our constituencies, is that there really has not been done a great deal of work on the early history of Manitoba, that our school students, our young students, are not always fully aware of the very interesting and exciting early history of our province. So certainly this institute has as one of its powers and one of its reasons to exist to become, to the best of its ability, a place to further the study of Manitoba history and act as a vehicle for expanding not only the study but interest in the history of our province. Certainly, in this our 125th anniversary of Confederation, it becomes an even greater significance.

Another role of this particular institute is to work among Manitoba's Metis community to encourage, foster a love of education and educational opportunities for Metis students across the province.

By way of history, Madam Speaker, I can tell you that this particular institute has been the subject of a great deal of discussion and debate over the last number of years as to how it should actually be formulated. There were a host of different proposals in the early days when this concept came forward, with a variety of different purposes and a variety of different powers.

I am pleased to report that the results of many discussions and debates have led to the creation of an institute with this incorporation bill. The strength of this institute will be the fact that it has to go out and raise its resources, it has to build its board of directors

and it has to take on the projects it wishes to take on with its own ability. I, quite frankly, believe that it has the potential to be a very interesting and significant institute in the life of our province. I look forward, after its incorporation by this Legislature, to see it go on to do many good things within the provincial community.

I am very honoured, in this the 125th year of our Confederation, to be the minister sponsoring this bill that recognizes, through its name, the importance of Louis Riel in the founding of our province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Metis member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 17—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that Bill 17, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House. [interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I wonder if I might request the co-operation of all the small meetings that are taking place throughout the Chamber that the members either move to the loge or outside the Chamber.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reimer: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce for second reading, Bill 17, to amend The City of Winnipeg Act.

The main components of the bill include new legislation to enable council to regulate the use of pellet weapons, new legislation which permits council to establish a program of tax credits and grants for

renovations to heritage buildings, and amendments to the planning and development legislation. Other amendments in the bill are minor and of a house-keeping nature. I would like to describe each of the substantive changes in turn.

Regulating the use of pellet weapons, Winnipeg City Council has requested an amendment which would permit them by by-law to regulate the sale and use of pellet guns, BB guns and air guns. The city's intent is to address the problem of young people misusing pellet weapons.

Several municipalities in Canada like Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto have by-laws making powers to regulate the use of pellet weapons. The province is committed to reducing violence and increasing public safety in our communities. Accordingly, we support the city's request and efforts to find opportunities to reduce violence. Bill 17 contains an amendment which would permit council by by-law to prohibit and regulate the sale and possession of weapons other than weapons regulated by the Criminal Code of Canada.

Tax release for heritage buildings. One of Winnipeg's greatest assets and legacies is its large collection of heritage buildings. Winnipeg City Council recognizes the tremendous value of these heritage resources. It has therefore requested legislation which would permit tax credits and grants for major renovations to heritage buildings as an incentive for such renovations which are typically very expensive in the case of these buildings.

The bill contains legislation which allows City Council to establish by by-laws a program of tax credits and grants for renovations to heritage buildings and to determine by by-law eligible renovation work, the amount of credits and grants and the terms and conditions for participation in the program.

Planning amendments. Bill 17 contains a number of minor planning amendments which City Council has requested, such as the ability to terminate obsolete variances and conditional uses with the written consent of a property owner and also the ability to be able to determine if a proponent's application is the correct one relative to an undertaking before referring it to the

appropriate hearing body for a decision on the application.

There is, however, one significant change to the planning legislation which concerns the granting of land use variances. Where the proposed use of land is not permitted under a zoning by-law but its use which is substantially the same as those uses allowed in the zoning by-laws for that site, the city will be permitted through Bill 17 to grant a land use variance instead of rezoning the property. This amendment is intended to address those situations where zoning may not be appropriate. Let me give you an example.

A parcel of land may be zoned as C1 limited commercial district and a property owner may seek a relatively minor variation from the permitted land uses in this zone that does not justify rezoning the site to a C2 general commercial use. In fact, rezoning the property to C2 may meet with more resistance from adjacent property owners than granting a land use variance because a C2 rezoning would permit greater densities, a taller building and a whole new range of land uses not allowed under C1. As such, the potential impact of a rezoning on the property and on the character of the neighbourhood could be far more significant than the impact for the use of a variance.

I have described for members in the House the main features of Bill 17. Essentially, the bill provides opportunities for enhanced local government autonomy and accountability. In conclusion, I would recommend Bill 17 to the honourable members of the Legislature for their consideration and their adaptation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, Madam Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer),

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.

* (1430)

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 Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) in the Chair for the departments of Education and Training, and Northern and Native Affairs; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the departments of Health and Justice.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson): Order, please. 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 Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 1.(b) on page 31 of the Estimates book and on page 23 of the yellow supplement book.

Item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$395,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$73,700—pass.

1.(c) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$852,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$143,100—pass.

1.(d) Human Resource Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$215,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$33,000—pass.

1.(e) Manitoba Film Classification Board (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$108,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$193,900—pass.

Item 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs (a) Executive Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$266,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$70,400—pass.

2.(b) Arts Branch (1) \$470,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$129,200.

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): I have a couple of questions that I would like to ask in connection with 2.(b)(2). I noticed that the objective of the Arts Branch is to support the development of Manitoba's unique artistic resources and cultural industries. I am sure that the minister is familiar with the arts and policy review committee report of 1990, I guess sometimes known as the DeFehr Report. In the DeFehr Report there was a recommendation that an arts act be created and that it would, and I quote from the DeFehr Report: recognize the complexity and maturity of the relationship between government and the arts community.

Within that it appears to me that there were two basic aspects to the act, that the first one would include an affirmation that the minister responsible for the act be an advocate on behalf of the arts among government departments and agencies, and secondly that the minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship present to the Legislature an annual report on the arts in Manitoba.

Clearly artists and art are important to several government departments, including Education, Tourism, Economic Development, and it would seem to me that an arts act would give the minister a golden opportunity to ensure that arts fulfill their role in relationship to these other areas. It would certainly give some local artists—I guess we should speak of artists province-wide—it would give them the recognition I think that some of them feel that they are being denied.

Quite clearly, the contribution of artists to Manitoba's cultural industries is clear in Expected Results where we read, and this is the second one: delivery of \$2.2

million in support to Manitoba's cultural industries generating an expected \$15-20 million in film video sound recording and publishing activity within the province in 1995-1996. I am just wondering if the minister has considered an art act as recommended in the DeFehr Report.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): I will just take the opportunity before I get into my answer to table a couple of reports and give some responses that were called for the last time we met. I do have a copy of the arts policy review committee that the member just referred to that I would like to pass on to her. This was a report that came down in May and Art DeFehr was the chair. Roberta Christianson was the vice-chair. The members were Susan Drayson, Michele Lagacé, Murray McKenzie, Jack Murta, Louise Soubry and Max Tapper. I know they have been thanked before for the tremendous work they did in bringing this report forward.

Certainly it is a report that the department and the previous minister, as well as myself, have had an opportunity to refer to a number of times and use it as the basis of some dialogue, not only within the department but also with the wider community in setting policies and direction and, of course, the budget work that we do within the department and the groups that depend on this department for their resources. So I would like to table two copies of that, and if the member that represented the other group that was here on Friday wants a copy, I have another one that could be passed on to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

* (1440)

I also have a report that we discussed on Friday, The Future of Public Libraries in Manitoba, A Strategic Plan for Public Library Development, prepared by the Manitoba Public Library Advisory Board. I did mention some of the members on Friday, and I would just like to go over them again.

Earle Ferguson is the chair of this board; Peggy Hood who is from the Carberry North Cypress Library branch which is part of the Western Manitoba Regional

Library out of Brandon; Lucille Labossiere from the Somerset Library; Iris Loewen who is from the South Central Regional Library; Gina McKay who is an adviser to the Indian Cultural Education program for West Region Tribal Council; and a teacher from Winnipeg, Joan Oland who is with the Winnipeg School Division.

As well, serving on this board as ex officio members were Tom Carson, Deputy Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; Lou-Anne Buhr, assistant deputy minister; Jim Blanchard who is the director of the Public Library Services branch; and Mary-Lynn East, acting director, Public Library Services.

I have copies in both official languages for the critic, and other copies for the other member who was asking questions on Friday.

Lastly, questions were asked about the Manitoba Arts Council membership and specifically who the artists were that were on this. Again, that group is chaired by Roberta Christianson who is from High Bluff, Manitoba, and is a very active art supporter and volunteer. Don Timmerman is vice-chair; he is from Winnipeg and is a principal at Sturgeon Creek High School. He is very much involved in the music programs in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division and involved with the music camp at the International Peace Gardens. Pauline Braun from Thompson is a painter, and she not only is on there as a visual artist, but also, again, we talked about the gender balance and the regional balance. Lee Cameron is, again, a visual artist from the city of Winnipeg, and she is a former teacher with Winnipeg School Division.

Robert Campbell of Winnipeg is a senior minister of Westminster United Church and an adviser to the United Church Publishing House. Marie Cousins has served on this board for many, many years from Stonewall, and I think has just indicated her interest to not be reappointed. Lise Desilets from Portage la Prairie is an arts consultant and curator, and she is the current Manitoba representative on the board of trustees of the National Gallery in Ottawa.

Also, we have Barbara Ehnes from Brandon, a former professional ballet dancer and teacher at the

school of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet; Philip Ens from Winkler who is a businessman; Joan Lloyd who is a vice-principal of Gordon Bell High School in Winnipeg; Joyce McKinney who is a visual artist from Swan Lake; Lyn Murta of Winnipeg, a business person; Helen Norrie of Winnipeg who is a freelance writer and reviewer of children's literature. I believe the other two members listed here have recently resigned.

So that is the information that was asked for last week.

Now, the question about the DeFehr Report and legislation—government, of course, always has tentative legislation before each department, and I can tell you that we have looked very carefully at the report that was brought in by that committee. We have responded, I think, to some 30 of the 40 recommendations of the DeFehr Report, and at the present time we have not brought forward a piece of legislation, but we have not completely forgotten about it either.

You are absolutely right, you know, that there is interdepartmental interest and a need for co-operation on issues like this. I know that we do discuss and get into dialogue with some of the departments that have been mentioned, particularly the Department of Education and certainly also the tourism component of I, T and T, very much aware that some of the arts groups in Winnipeg are major, major attractions as far as bringing tourists into Winnipeg.

Certainly the productions, the one that was held this weekend and one that is coming up in August, bring hundreds if not thousands of people to the city to view them. Our major draws, of course, are the Museum of Man and Nature, the ballet and the symphony, very much a part of the cultural community. But, you know, we probably could even do more dialogue with the other departments in letting them know what direction we are going and what interest we have.

The member in her question mentioned CIDO, the Cultural Industries, certainly a big economic engine here within the province of Manitoba. I know that one of the major films that they were involved with, that we went to the opening of last summer, *For the Moment*, has received quite wide national acclaim. Just by way

of interest, the producer-director, Kim Johnston, is a Winnipegger who has some rural roots. I know CIDO has worked with him twice on major films, and his first film, *The Last Winter*, won tremendous acclaim across North America. It is my hope that CIDO will have the opportunity to work with an artist like Kim Johnston again in the near future.

The member is absolutely right. For a very small investment that we put into Cultural Industries, there is a tremendous payback both in the film and sound industry, and while the film industry often is the most visual of those, the sound portion also creates tremendous jobs and spin-off.

It is my hope that CIDO will continue to be able to work with and fund these groups.

By way of interest, just last week—or was it two weeks ago?—they had a group in from California. I think it was actually five groups who were looking at sites across Manitoba for new productions. They not only were impressed with some of the sites in Winnipeg but were also in Brandon and some other communities in western Manitoba before ending up at Gimli, and we are optimistic that certainly the Gimli area and Lake Winnipeg is of quite a bit of interest to some of these groups.

Just a final item that I might mention to highlight some of the artists in Manitoba, we are putting together at the present time something called buyers' guide whereby we sent out notices some months ago to be able to put into one booklet some of the names of artists and of galleries so that visitors to Manitoba, and Manitobans indeed, who are shopping for local art—and you know with the number of conferences and people travelling within the province, there is always people looking for the type of gift that is created by a Manitoba artist, and we hope to have that buyers' guide out to the public in the very near future. We did receive a pretty good response from both artists and from galleries on that.

* (1450)

Ms. McGifford: I thank the minister for the materials that he has procured for me and also for his rather full

answer. There are a couple of other things. I had asked for a list of the members of the Film Classification Board I think. The other thing is I wonder if I might have the list of the MAC membership, because just hearing it read I was not able to get quite everything.

As well I think, since we are mentioning cultural industries, we should acknowledge Manitoba Theatre Centre and their very famous production of Hamlet. I think they did a lot of—certainly did our city proud with that production and the number of people that came to Winnipeg.

However, in the interests of time, I wonder if I could move on to 14.2(b) and ask a question under 6.(b) Arts Grant Assistance. I am interested—and ask a question about the publishing support grants under 6.(b). I am interested in this particular budget line. Are these the grants that CIDO makes, the publishing grants?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, just in response to the early part of the question, the members of the Film Classification Board: Barbara Cannell is the presiding member, Meredith McArthur is the deputy presiding member.

Other members are Louise Ferguson, Ernest Friesen, Evelyn Green, Hazel Hicks, Fred Krause, Diann Magnus, William Martin, Dianne Moon, Bev Muzyk, Laurette Simard, Kuldip Singh, Arati Dutta, Eleanor Smith, Gene Telpner, Carol Litman, Bill Pickard, Jane Robertson, Helen Hourie, Anita Lee and David Kives. Those are the members of the Film Class Board, and the members of the Arts Council will be in Hansard so that you will have a copy there.

The member is absolutely right about the Manitoba Theatre Centre and Hamlet. This was a tremendous coup on the part of the theatre centre, I think, in staging a Shakespearean play. I know there were many schools and young people out in rural Manitoba that wanted to come in and have an opportunity to see not only Hamlet but the star of the show, Keanu Reeves. Unfortunately their success was such that many Manitobans did not get to see it, but I think the theatre centre is to be congratulated in the direction they took in putting on a Shakespearean play but also bringing in

someone very popular with probably people who normally did not go to Shakespearean theatre, and it was simply an overwhelming success.

I know the night that I was there I sat amongst people who were from Europe and the United States and in fact, I should tell you, the one young woman who sat next to my wife and I had come over from Germany explicitly to see Hamlet and Keanu Reeves. She was here for two weeks and this was her 10th time to view that particular play. I think again that MTC is very much part of the cultural industries in Manitoba.

You ask about the publishing support grants. These are not the grants that come from CIDO, but rather they are from within our department and the budget line for publishing support is \$159,000 and it supports three programs for Manitoba book publishers. There is marketing assistance and project support and industry-wide initiatives. Publishers apply once a year for this support and may receive up to \$12,500 from both programs, and joint programs may receive \$25,000 from the industry-wide initiatives program. I can tell the member from visiting a number of the publishers here in Manitoba, they are very appreciative of the program and are also pleased that we have been able to maintain that program even though budgeting has become more and more difficult each budget year.

Eleven book publishers will receive support from that program in 1995-96.

Ms. McGifford: Well, I am very pleased to hear that book publishers are receiving the supports they need. At this time I wanted to register a community concern which I think I had hinted at in my introductory remarks, and that was small magazines. I think I explained in my introductory remarks that last year and this year small magazines had been very concerned about the cancellation of the marketing and project support programs for magazines. I think I also pointed out that the very existence of small magazines in Manitoba is threatened because these magazines do not have the financial resources to maintain their subscription lists.

The importance of this particular form for new writers in Manitoba—small magazines are absolutely

important. Most of our new writers, whether they be fiction writers or poets, first publish in small local magazines and I think we are all aware of our very sound literary tradition. I think of younger writers like Pat Friesen, Di Brandt, Sandra Birdsell, older writers like David Arnason, all of these people began in small magazines, and if small magazines are to close because they are not able to retain their subscribers because they are not getting the necessary grants for their subscription work, we are certainly going to lose many Manitoba voices, and we are certainly going to lose many representatives of our culture. As far as small magazines obtaining funds from the private sector, I think we talked last day about the fact that small magazines do not have the same kind of high profile or focus that theatre or ballet has, and having been a part of a board of a small magazine, I know that it is virtually impossible to obtain this kind of funding. So I am wondering if the minister shares my concern about the potential loss of Manitoba writers and voices.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I think, in very difficult economic times, government has to, certainly, make some decisions, and with the tremendous pressure on the budgets of governments right across this country to find funds for health care, and education, and social services, the governments across the country have had to make difficult decisions. Certainly, we will work very hard within this department, with the resources that are allotted to us, to provide whatever kind of support we can to artists in Manitoba, and I will take the member's comments as a representation.

Ms. McGifford: I wonder if the minister is willing to go to bat with his cabinet colleagues to get increased funding for the arts. So it is hard for the artists to feel happy when they see the millions of dollars in public funding going to the Winnipeg Jets, and I am sorry to keep bringing this up, but it is a reality of the times.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, certainly, there is always more demand for resources in the public than government is able to address, and this government certainly receives the accolades of many of the arts groups for maintaining the funding that we have through the last two or three budgets, while other levels of government are decreasing their support. This government provides more money per capita to the arts

than any other government in the country, and I appreciate the member's interest in lobbying for a particular group out there.

* (1500)

I will continue to do the very best that I can, and this department will, to spend the resources allotted to us by this Legislature in the best way we possibly can. I think that I am convinced that our share of the pie is not going to get any larger. We spend \$53 million or \$54 million, and if we are going to redirect resources to the groups the member is advocating for, rather than take it out of other departments, or out of capital expenditures, I wonder if the member would go a step further and give us some advice about what allocation within the department we should find those resources.

Ms. McGifford: I certainly do not think I am quite in a position to do that, but I will take it under advisement. I have one other question. Does the minister have any advice for these magazines?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I guess, the same advice that I would have for any artistic endeavour, to work as hard as they possibly can to promote their work, and to gain the public acceptance, and they will soon know if it is the will of the public to support them.

We will try, within government, to allocate our resources in the fairest possible way. They, I think, should use the normal channels of presenting themselves within the department, and I am sure that, if there is possibility to redirect some funds at some time, they will be given due consideration.

Ms. McGifford: I have a final comment, rather than a question, and if art depended on public will, there would have been no Michelangelo, no Leonardo Da Vinci, no Shakespeare. I could go on, but art cannot survive on the public will.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, it sort of begs a final comment on my part, too. I think that, if it had not been for a government and a department that has its finger on the pulse of the province, and the will to support the art that is out there in Manitoba, this government might have gone the way of governments

in Saskatchewan and Ontario and B.C., or the federal government, or municipal governments, and drastically reduced funding to the arts.

I am quite proud that when I meet people who interact with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet or even the Artists in the Schools program that comes to small rural communities, there is a knowledge that this government has continued to provide substantial resources for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship and that we have been able to, in very, very difficult times—where 90 percent of new spending of over \$1.1 million has gone to health care, education and social services—maintain a budget that does provide substantive support to the cultural, heritage and citizen-ship community within the province of Manitoba.

While people in the arts decry the fact that the city is going to have less resources for them and find new ways to claw some of it back, while the federal government is doing tremendous reductions in their expenditures, it is this government in this province that has maintained a significant budget for the arts. Generally speaking, as I meet with people who access the arts, they are very supportive of the fact that our budget has been maintained, supportive of the process of the Manitoba Arts Council and have a very balanced view towards the manner in which they allocate those resources and the process, the jury process which allows members of the arts community to sit in and judge and make determination of where those precious dollars should be sent.

So while I could agree with the member that if we had more money, we would certainly find ways to spend it. While we do not satisfy every arts group out there, in these difficult economic times we have been able to maintain a substantial budget to the point where, in this province, we spend more per capita than any other province in Canada.

Ms. McGifford: I need to have an ultimate point, and that is: my concern is that if we do not support new and emerging grassroots artists, our art in this province will dry up and die. That is the point that I want to make in the arguments I am presenting about small magazines. We need to support people when they start. Thank you.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I tend to agree with part of what the member has said, that there has to be a balance in the manner in which we allocate the resources that we have, and certainly new and emerging artists, performers and people who rely on the arts have to be recognized and cultivated from time to time. This is why through CIDO, for example, that I am pleased that they recognize the talents of a Kim Johnston and give him the support that he needs in putting on and forming the type of movies that he has in Manitoba that have got him national and international acclaim.

Similarly, the Manitoba Arts Council is cognizant of the fact that young artists at grassroots levels have to be supported so that they in turn can gain the sort of predominance that the member is referring to. I might mention that Manitoba, through the Manitoba Arts Council, provides art magazines with grants at a level amongst the highest in Canada, and I realize what the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) is asking for is additional grants over and above what the Arts Council is doing.

I think in many areas the department supports new and emerging artists, and this I mentioned earlier. The buyer's guide is an attempt to put the names and the studios and the art of many young, emerging artists of various kinds before the public of Manitoba. I would hope, once we have that particular guide out in the public, that we will certainly send the member a copy of it.

As well, within the department, we have maintained a budget for buying local art. I just forget the budget number, it is \$20,000 or \$25,000, where through that particular budget line, we do support Manitoba artists and the studios in Manitoba.

I recognize that the member's concern is for the magazines, and I say to her that the Manitoba Arts Council does provide grant support, again amongst the highest in Canada. Again, if this department should be able to increase its funding in the next budget year, that may or may not be one of the areas that we see as a priority. There is always a demand within the department for additional funding and when the time comes to draw up the 1996-97 budget, we will certainly

peruse Hansard and take the member's comments into consideration as we make those budget decisions.

* (1510)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, the minister interests me when he made reference that there is \$25,000 which the government spends. Is that something that has been done on an annual basis? If so, how long has that been going on?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I thank the member for Inkster for that question. The budget line—and I am not sure, we could find in the budget book where that is located for the member—it is around \$25,000. I am told that for approximately the last three decades the province has been purchasing art, either directly from artists or from the studios that they work in.

Also, we have staff that go to the juried art shows around the province. Again, the purpose of the fund is to support those Manitoba artists and the galleries or the studios they work out of.

I know that the last time I was in Brandon in the art gallery there, they were very much aware that we had bought two pieces that were from artists that frequently show their wares within that particular studio.

So I think one of the guidelines that we use is not, you know, to buy it from different individual artists so that we are not buying all of the art from one person. We try to support as many artists and as many galleries as we can when we make that art purchase.

The art then goes into the government collection, which is administered by Government Services. Much of this art, or some of the art, is found in this building but also in other government buildings across the province who have access to that through Government Services. I think at one time when there was a new government building opened there was a very small part of the budget dedicated to some new art within that building.

On an annual basis then we put together a team of people from across the province who give us advice on what to buy, and eventually government makes

decisions that are accepted by the department to buy this art. Certainly it has to be a Manitoba artist and we try and do sort of a geographical representation so when those juried art shows are on, we often buy one or two pieces, whether it is in Birtle or in Carberry or in Thompson. Sometimes we buy it directly from the artist or from the gallery here in the city.

Just further to that opening of new buildings, I am told it is around 1 percent as a policy that be devoted to some of the artwork. I dare say it may well be less than that. That is for new construction—1 percent of the capital cost, up to 1 percent for art.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am wondering if the minister can somewhat expand when you say, for example, there is \$25,000 that is this year. Is that a fairly consistent amount of monies that are used on an annual basis then, over the last number of years, or do we see any sorts of fluctuations of any significant amount towards the purchasing of art? That would be one.

The second that I am interested in is when you talk about discretionary, what sort of discretion is actually used, discretionary authority, if you will, in terms of actually the purchasing of art? So there is an art show over here, art show over there, throughout the province, do we have someone that is from within the department that attends all the different art shows? Or if there is a young budding artist that would like the opportunity to sell some work to the province, is there a number in which they would call and say, hey look, I want you to see my art? How do we know, or how does the minister assure that it is kind of an open, equal playing field situation so that people are in fact able to participate?

The third and final would be the average cost for a piece. I recall the Canadian art gallery in Ottawa, the national museum I believe is what it was called, and it would spend \$1.5 million a number of years ago on a piece of art that had three lines of paint through it, that type of thing. It seems that art can be extremely expensive, and I am wondering what would be the average cost of a piece when you go out and purchase.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I thank the member for those questions. The budget has been static for quite a

number of years, and when we get to that budget line, I could get you the exact information. It is around \$25,000, though, and that to my knowledge has not changed for quite a number of years. The question about how people know about it, there are about five juried art shows throughout the province on an annual basis, and one of them is always here in Winnipeg. I know there is always one in northern Manitoba. Probably the other three are outside of Winnipeg and outside of northern Manitoba. There are five of them, and the organizers have come to expect that we will have representation at the juried art shows to make an art purchase based on the adjudication that has taken place there.

The question about knowledge, there are about a dozen galleries, I think, that the committee visits on an annual basis. They are alerted as to the timing, and they, in turn, will alert the artists who normally show their work there. I think it is well known within the community that the government has been doing this for some three decades. Anyone who wants to have their art considered, we will ensure that they have their work in one of those galleries if it is of a certain quality. I know back in March, I think it was, the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) and the former member for Crescentwood and I did a discussion at an event in the city here about the department. We were talking to artists and this came up that evening. Most of the people in attendance were well aware of the fact that government does purchase art, and we were lobbied to increase that budget.

Again, as I said to an earlier question, it is often difficult to find new resources within this department, and then the question arises, where do you spend that next dollar? I think throughout the art community it is well known that government has an annual art purchase that has been going on for about three decades. As well, another member and I were on an access television show where we talked about this with some of the artists. It appears to me that it is well known within the community that government has historically and traditionally purchased art either from these galleries or from these juried art shows.

The other question that the member mentioned referred to the National Gallery in Ottawa spending

millions of dollars on one piece; I would say the average we spend is around \$400, \$500. It may go up as high as \$1,000 for a piece. We are trying to give financial support, first of all, to artists by supporting them by buying one of their works, and also supporting galleries by buying from the galleries. I am told that in the 1993-94 budget year we bought 20-some pieces of art, so the average was a little higher. It will vary. You may get a piece that is worth maybe \$1,500 or \$1,600, but there are lots of them that come in at about \$400 or \$500.

* (1520)

Again, it is not just paintings but it is any type of visual arts. I know that within the government collection there is some pottery, some stained glass works. Sometimes these are shown in various public buildings. I know the building over here on Vaughan Street, the Archives, the first time I visited there there was a stained glass display. These had been purchased from artists within the community.

Mr. Lamoureux: You have had them in the rotunda, too?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I thank the member for the question. From time to time, there is artwork that is displayed within the rotunda. There is a room down in the bowels of this building where some of it is stored, but by and large we try to get the art out to as many government buildings as we can.

I know that sometimes when there are changes of ministers and deputy ministers, or buildings opening, people go down there, or sometimes they just want to change the art and they can go and look in the storage archives to see what is available. Of course, different ministers have different tastes, but there seems to always be a demand for art for these public buildings.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs (b) Arts Branch (2) Other Expenditures \$129,200—pass.

2.(c) Public Library Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$743,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$455,000—pass.

2.(d) Historic Resources (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,133,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$331,200—pass.

2.(e) Recreation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$325,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$158,900—pass.

2.(f) Regional Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,041,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$321,100—pass.

Resolution 14.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,447,200 for Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Item 3. Information Resources (a) Client Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,949,800.

Mr. Lamoureux: This is the line, I believe, where there is the purchasing of advertising for the government.

Mr. Gilleshammer: That is correct.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am wondering if the minister could give us some sort of a breakdown in terms of which departments would be spending what sort of money on advertising over the last fiscal year.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Maybe while I am getting that information, I would introduce Linda Perreault who is the executive director of Information Services who has joined us here at the table.

The member is correct. The information that government distributes to the public does come through this branch and it is responsible for the communications and advertising from across government. I can give the member some information on some of the work we do in Information Services that might give him a better understanding of how this works.

Travel Manitoba, which is basically our tourism initiatives, the budget line was around \$700,000. The printing of tenders which appears in many of the daily and weekly papers across the province was budgeted at \$200,000. The careers—this is advertising job openings

you may see in the daily papers, particularly on Saturdays I think, a lot of advertising for positions, was \$175,000.

And then, from time to time, there are new programs that come forward. The Grow Bonds advertising was a little over \$254,000. The Home Renovation Program, which was a very, very popular program across the province although I think the total budget in Home Renovation was underspent in terms of people responding to the advertising and submitting the applications and taking part in this program, but the program expenditure for our department was a little over \$151,000.

Information on the retail sales tax rebate was \$62,000. Advertising and information put out on DPIN was \$163,000. The Manitoba 125 advertising was in the neighbourhood of \$67,000. The welfare fraud line, which was a new initiative from Family Services that started, I think, in the previous year, was \$88,000. The International Year of the Family, which, I think, was 1994, and part of that wrap-up and expenditures was in the current budget year, was \$63,000.

There were other programs, some advertising and information on education reform was \$150,000. There was information on the economic development, \$136,000. In total there is—and I have not mentioned them all, but I am not sure just how much information the member wanted—but our budget line was \$2,384,100.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate in terms of the last three years what the total budgeted amount would have been?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I am told the number I gave you of \$2.3 million has been traditional, probably for the last three or four years.

Mr. Lamoureux: Would these figures also include the cost of production of the advertising on the communication piece?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, the budget line is for purchase of media, and in some cases it includes production.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate in which cases it would have included production?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that in the Home Renovation Program it included production. In the DPIN it included production, as well as in the Manitoba 125, in the welfare fraud line, the International Year of the Family, and education reform.

Mr. Lamoureux: If I was wanting to try to locate the costs of production for other advertising as done through government, would it then be going to each independent department, or who would ultimately be responsible for that? Would the minister know?

Mr. Gilleshammer: As the member can tell from my previous answer, the production generally is part of our costs. Where it is not, it will come from the other department who is responsible for that program.

* (1530)

Mr. Lamoureux: In just going through the different advertising that the government has done over the last year, would you have a breakdown, for example, of how much of the advertising dollar would have been spent in the first months or the last three months of the fiscal year compared to the first three months of the fiscal year, any sort of a breakdown of that nature?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told we do not have that information here, but I will endeavour to get some information on that.

Some of these, of course, are dependent upon when the program was brought forward by a particular department. For instance, the Grow Bonds did bring information on a number of the successful bonds and made the public aware of that as a vehicle through Rural Development.

I think the Home Renovation Program was, again, brought forward by Housing, and I would think that the advertising tended to follow when that program was brought forward. The education, for instance, a lot of that was done I think in the spring of this particular year, but we can endeavour to get some of that information gathered up for the member.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am interested in terms of the actual process, if you like, in terms of how it is determined that, look, here is a program, we want to advance this program, and the potential for political manipulation of sorts that could be out there. Let me give an example. In terms of appearances, I recall, for example, a couple of years ago with the antidrinking commercials that government was putting out, you would see the minister responsible talking about the dangers of drinking and driving. How much of the advertising, if you like—or maybe there was not—but out of the advertising from last year, where you actually had a minister or a government member, MLA, that is actually involved in one capacity or another of the promotion of the program?

(Mr. Mervin Tweed, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I say to the member that our department is where the Information Services are lodged, and departments bring forward their initiatives whenever they are ready. It is not dictated by when we have time to do it. Departments, when they have either legislation passed or budget passed or new initiatives that are completed, then come forward to our department to put together their package on how they are going to communicate that with the public. So we simply respond to when departments are ready to go ahead with an initiative, where they have finalized an initiative, and they want to make Manitobans aware of that. The people working within our department, with this budget line of \$2.3 million, which has been quite consistent for a number of years, we make our services available to them and then the expenditure for that is lodged within Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am sure that the department, because after all, it is footing the costs of the bill, would be aware in terms of how many members of the government's side of the House actually participated in some capacity, whether it was appearing on a TV ad, promoting a particular program. I wonder if the minister can indicate how many times, if any, where, let us say, for example, the Premier appeared in the promotion of the Grow Bonds ads? Does this in fact occur and, if so, can the minister then enlighten us as to which ministers or which government MLAs, or

opposition MLAs too, but I do not recall hearing anything about opposition MLAs?

Mr. Gilleshammer: What I think the member is asking for is a very rare thing. Particularly in the electronic media, I know that—[interjection] I will remember the question, and I will finish it when we come back.

Formal Vote

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Tweed): Order, please. A formal vote has been requested in the Chamber. This section will now recess until after the vote.

The committee recessed at 3:38 p.m.



After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:10 p.m.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. We shall now resume consideration of line 3. Information Services (a) Client Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits on page 32.

Mr. Gilleshammer: In answer to the member for Inkster, it is common practice, I think, for the department to indicate in some of the print advertising, the ads that they put out and occasionally on tender documents or some of that advertising, at the bottom the minister's name may appear.

Another thought that came to mind was a number of years ago in the drinking and driving campaign that was so overwhelmingly accepted by Manitobans, and we are often given plaudits as having the toughest driving and drinking legislation in North America, I recall that while the present leader of the unofficial third party was very much opposed to that, by and large that has been good legislation, so much so that the Broadcasters Association picked up the cost of much of

the advertising that was done as a public service to Manitobans.

Sometimes it is difficult to separate one ad from another, but there are times when groups like the Broadcasters Association will use their funding and their abilities to highlight a particular program. Of course, if that works with government and is consistent with the message of the legislation and the intent of the government, that amounts to additional advertising of a particular initiative that is not a cost to the public but one that is picked up by the private sector.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 3. Information Resources (a) Client Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,949,800.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have a question about Citizens' Inquiry Service. What does that include for the department?

Mr. Gilleshammer: This is a small unit within our department that is basically an answering service to the public, and it is operated in both official languages so that any member of the public who has a question about a government department or about government programming can phone that particular number. They in turn put them in touch with the appropriate government department and facilitate the ability of members of the public to get the answers to questions that they might have.

As the member can appreciate, some of the government programming is very complex and, to a citizen who perhaps is not sure of what each and every department does, it enables them to have an avenue to contact government, basically to get referred to the appropriate department or the appropriate program.

Mr. Gaudry: Are there complaints that are recorded in that service?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told the answer to that is yes.

Mr. Gaudry: Is there a record kept of the various complaints that are given to that inquiry?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told the answer is yes.

Mr. Gaudry: Are there statistics to compare to the previous years?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes.

Mr. Gaudry: Could the minister elaborate what kind of complaints they get on this service?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told we get a rather wide variety of complaints that come through this particular unit. It may be frustration with a particular program or the complexities of a particular program, a desire to understand government programming better. Sometimes you can appreciate people want a simple yes or no answer to a question that could be quite detailed. It will be lodged within a particular department which will require further information on that specific case. This particular group does provide the avenue for people to get that information. People get frustrated in trying to access information from government in that they are often looking for one-stop shopping and if the question is detailed and specific and personal, this unit endeavours to pass them on to the appropriate government department.

As the member is no doubt aware, if it is a more specific and serious complaint that cannot be answered by the department, or if the person making the inquiry is not satisfied with the answer, they always have the avenue of going to the Ombudsman to have their concerns taken through that route.

Mr. Gaudry: Have there been many complaints that have been referred to the Ombudsman?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told we have no record of any that were not resolved at this level that needed to be advanced to the Ombudsman.

Mr. Gaudry: My next question, you have here services include corporate communications management support. Can the minister elaborate on this support?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Chairperson, part of the responsibility of Information Services is to assist

departments as they are purchasing services from different types of media, different kinds of broadcasting. Information Services tries to get an understanding of what the government department wants and then assists them with realizing those goals by putting them in touch with the various forms of advertising.

Mr. Gaudry: The sale and distribution of statutory publications, what is involved in the sale of these?

Mr. Gilleshammer: We work on a cost-recovery basis with the statutory documents and we sell them back to departments, to law firms and to members of the public.

Mr. Gaudry: You also show the operation of the Provincial Archives of Manitoba. Could the minister elaborate on what is involved in the operation of the Provincial Archives?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I certainly can. It might be valuable for the member to take the time some day to visit the Archives to see the tremendous amount of information about our province that is lodged there.

* (1620)

I recall the first time that I made a visit over there, and the staff were aware that I was coming over and they made a conscious attempt to bring out of the Archives things that I would be interested in, like school registers from not only the school I taught at, but ones I attended when I was a little bit younger. Also, they would find copies of books that had been written by people who are my constituents. The Archives is a tremendous repository of a lot of the history of Manitoba.

I might just mention the most significant new acquisition in the Archives is the Hudson's Bay collection. We are just thrilled that Manitoba was the recipient of the Hudson's Bay collection, a collection valued at I believe over \$60 million.

I remember being told at that time that this collection of history of the Americas was probably second only to the Vatican in value to historians and in dollar value.

This area is used to some degree for research and community use, that there is a wide array of researchers who constantly access the Archives to look up some of the documents and some of the history that they would be involved in. I know the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) was interested in some of the writers whom we have in Manitoba, and some whom I am familiar with spend a lot of time at the Archives researching specific things about their area of the province.

In fact, this summer we are going to honour a late citizen of Minnedosa who did a tremendous amount of research on what was called Tanner's Crossing, which was the first name for Minnedosa. I will tell you, a lot of that history would have been lost or undiscovered in the Archives if it had not been for the research done by Dr. Peter Neufeld. I know at the time, sometimes it seemed sort of trivial as he wrote his articles, and, recently, as it has all been brought together, I think the community has certainly rediscovered what a valuable resource the Archives is, for someone with an interest in history to be able to go there and to be able to do that type of research and bring it forward to make the greater community more aware.

I would invite the member, at any time, if you would like to visit the Archives, it is tremendously interesting, the amount of information and knowledge that is stored there about our province and, again, as I said, I cannot be more pleased that the Hudson's Bay collection was given to Manitoba and given to the public. I think it enhances our Archives to a great degree to have that housed here in Manitoba, and believe me, there were other governments and other cities and other people very much wanting this particular collection.

Given that there is a tremendous change in technology as we enter close to the next century, the Archives has a real challenge, and I know the member will be able to read my comments in Hansard and would be very interested in it, that there is a challenge to update the technology that we have, so that the information that is available in the Archives will be even more accessible.

I think many people in the public think that this is a place that you need very, very special permission to go, but I encourage all members present and in the

Legislature to take some time out of their busy schedules to visit the Manitoba Archives and see a rather beautiful building, as well. In fact, there is a real history to that building which was once a concert hall here in Winnipeg, and, now, it is sort of built like Fort Knox to look after our collection, and it is very important that we have the appropriate sort of indoor atmosphere there, so that the documents and the films, the papers, can all be maintained for Manitobans at a future time.

Maybe I will just leave it at that, and I know the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) was not able to stay with us, but I would certainly offer to take him or anyone over there or help arrange that trip, because I think if you have any interest in history at all, you know, the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature is one avenue, but the Archives is probably a place with even more detail that you might find some interest in.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, indeed, it is unfortunate, in a sense, that when you have three committees, there is lots of good discussion that is going on in both committee rooms and inside the Chamber, and the member for St. Boniface, I know, was wanting to go into the Health Estimates just before it concludes to hear some remarks. Just equally, I felt terrible having to leave Health, because we were getting into somewhat of a discussion in terms of a vote that we just recently had.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Would you mind if I just interrupted to introduce a new staff. I would like to introduce Sue Bishop who is the Executive Director of the Provincial Services Division and Legislative Librarian, who just joined us at the table for our discussion of the Archives.

Mr. Lamoureux: Having said that, the minister had indicated that he was going to get back to me after the vote in terms of bringing forward some information. I am wondering if the minister had the opportunity to do just that.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I did answer that in your absence, and it will be in Hansard if you want to read it there, or I can go through some of it again, if you like.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, because I was giving a speech on health care at the time, I would appreciate it, because there is no doubt some follow-up questions that I might have with respect to it.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I regret I was not able to stay in there and hear your views on health care. I certainly intend to get Hansard at my earliest opportunity just to get a better understanding of the Liberal Party's point of view on health care. I did note that the members voted with the government, and I am very pleased to see that sort of independence from the opposition side. I will look for those comments.

I just mention that there are times when, in print advertising that goes out—I know when I was in a previous department and we advertised the summer job program, I just forget what it is called now, CareerStart. We took out block ads with a tremendous amount of information, and at the bottom it was customary to say, Department of Family Services, minister so-and-so, in the very, very small fine print. So that sort of thing happens from time to time with government advertising.

I notice with some of the infrastructure signs that I see around the province, it will have, this project is sponsored by the federal government, the provincial government and the municipal government and it will have Lloyd Axworthy's name on there. These things happen as part of the, I guess, program description so that people know which department is responsible for them.

I also made the point in your absence, while you were making your health speech, that I recall the drinking-and-driving initiative which was extremely popular with Manitobans and was, I guess, part of the picture in deeming that Manitoba had the toughest drinking-and-driving legislation anywhere in North America, that virtually everybody came onside with that initiative. They saw the good sense to the initiative. I did mention that one of your colleagues from before was against it, but he is not with us anymore.

At that time, because it was such a popular program, the Broadcasters Association of Manitoba picked that

up as a public service-type announcement. They spent, I would think, thousands and thousands of dollars highlighting that initiative because they felt they had some, I suppose, corporate responsibility and public responsibility to get on board with legislation that was so overwhelmingly acceptable, that could save lives and still allow people to pursue their lifestyles without having to drive. I recall then that the Justice minister at that time, I think, in the public service ads, took a small part.

So sometimes to the public, of course, it is hard to separate one from the other, and sometimes these are part of news clips as well. I can recall a Finance minister talking about HydroBonds and how this was a program that was being introduced to Manitobans. So it is sort of a rare thing, but it happens from time to time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, it would be fairly difficult to criticize government if government is—you know, you have a large project and then on it, it has in the small bottom-hand corner: put together from the government of Manitoba with the minister's name on it.

* (1630)

I think that has actually been going on for years. What I am interested in more so is when you get advertising that is spent and the advertisement features a government MLA in a very prominent way, I am wondering if the minister could indicate, for example, where there would have been pictures being used and particularly, say, for television advertising.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I do not have that information.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate whether or not that has occurred?

Mr. Gilleshammer: In my memory, I recall the initial ads for HydroBonds in about 1989 or at some point, and, again, I remember the public-service advertising that the broadcasters were involved in. Those are the two that come to mind.

Mr. Lamoureux: Would the minister be able to then confer with the civil servants and see if, in fact, there is

some sort of—because ultimately you are responsible for the producing or at least the paying of advertising. I assume that you watch before, whatever it is, or you screen as opposed to—and maybe the minister might even want to comment on that.

You know, all of a sudden, he has this open-ended budget department and whomever wants to advertise, they just say, we want to advertise this, and then they are given a block of money to do their advertising. I would assume that the department would, in fact, know in terms of what is all entailed in the advertising. I would think that they would have some sort of a better, more definitive idea in terms of how many times, for example, we are to see Premier Gary Filmon in a commercial or another minister or government member.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am informed by the staff that they can remember just one occasion. That was in 1988-89, and I was wrong, it was not the Minister of Finance. The Premier, apparently, was in the ad on the HydroBonds.

Mr. Lamoureux: The drinking and driving legislation that was passed, was there not a component to that where we had the-then minister, now Minister of Health, that was involved in that ad?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The only ad that he was involved in was sponsored by the Broadcasters Association.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister give some sort of an indication in terms of process on what the process would be? Obviously, government comes up with a new program. Are there checks in place to ensure that advertising does not cross a line in terms of being too political? Are there checks in place?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I am told there are checks and balances in place to prevent the misuse of ministers' pictures on advertising that are quite strict, and I suppose that is why it is something that does not happen.

Mr. Lamoureux: Could the minister elaborate on that in terms of what sort of a thing he would be referring to?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, sure. It is, I guess, incumbent on each and every department to be aware of the fact that information should not be used inappropriately; as a result, within each department, this is something that senior staff would be keeping an eye out for, and, ultimately, the deputy minister. Then, when that happens, and that sort of screening happens within each and every department, our particular unit of Information Services has the same role to look at and screen out anything that would be inappropriate. But that is a rare occasion, and I suppose there are enough checks and balances within various components of each department and at the department level and then within Information Services, so that this sort of thing does not happen.

I am told that we are in the midst of developing and reviewing a policy of a broader nature, but that nobody in Canada has come up with a definitive policy in any of the provincial governments or in the federal government. So it is something that probably other governments look at from time to time too, but it appears that our screening process in Manitoba has been quite effective.

Mr. Lamoureux: I can recall an incident—I do not know if it was last fall, but there was a travelling magazine, a rural magazine, that was being put into circulation, and the minister reminded me of it when he made reference to the screening out of ministers or whatever the proper context he would put it in. I can recall that in this particular journal there was an article with Lloyd Axworthy in it, and I am wondering—after it was produced, the government then had paid to get the page either ripped out or blackened out or something of this nature. Is this department familiar with that particular example at all?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I do not recall that.

Mr. Lamoureux: So there is other advertising, other forms of advertising of which this department would not be aware, that government does do?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The answer is that there are other publications from other departments of government that we are not involved in when they have partnerships with the private sector.

Mr. Lamoureux: To pick up on that point then, I am looking at education reform, \$150,000 was designated for its promotion. You indicated that the setup costs would have included that \$150,000. There was a phenomenal amount of paperwork, if you will, in the action plan and the blueprint and so forth.

Would this department have anything to do with that, the putting together of that package? It was that blueprint that you would actually see on TV. I had an opportunity to actually see one of the commercials. Would that be something then that would also be entirely, because it is a publication, at the cost of the Department of Education?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would point out that the word "promotion" was the member's word. I am told that we were responsible as a department for the design of the publication. The content of the publication would come from the Department of Education.

*(1640)

I tell you, when you have an important initiative like education renewal where there was just a tremendous demand out there for information contained in the blueprint and changes that were being proposed, and I might add ideas and issues from time to time that were brought up in the House where people were demanding, sort of, to see in print the correct information because sometimes they would get a glimpse of something on television or a quote in the paper, and this is terribly inadequate in explaining a major change in the structure and the delivery and the presentation of public school education in Manitoba.

I know that there were a number of meetings with teachers and with parents, with students and other interested people to develop the blueprint—and as a result of all those public meetings which were replicated in most school communities across the province.

I know within my constituency is the little school division of Rolling River that has about 20 schools. With the interest shown there, there was just a tremendous demand for information about the proposed changes. People wanted to get the detail to be part of

the final solution and, as a result, a lot of work was done by the Department of Education in producing a number of documents that were given province-wide distribution. In fact, I understand that many people in other provinces were asking for this enlightened document to get an understanding of what Manitoba was doing.

There was a production cost, a printing cost there to get that information out to the school community, to the public, who desperately want to be involved, whether at the school board level or the school council level to get a better understanding of some fundamental changes that are taking place in education. There is nothing nearer and dearer to the hearts of Manitobans than the education of their children.

As a result, there was quite an expenditure on those booklets as they were in demand by trustees and teachers, by students and parents. Our responsibility, within Information Services, was to get the layout of the thing and the technical details. The content came from the Department of Education.

Mr. Lamoureux: I do not want to spend too much time on the line. I was wanting to know in terms of when the minister made reference to the \$2.3 million in terms of an annual operating budget for the purposes of advertising, some of that advertising would also include the costs of production. I believe the minister is correct when he gives the response that that is very similar to what it has been over the years.

When we go to purchase, whether it is air time on TV, radio, newspapers, smaller community newspapers and so forth, do you do that on a project-by-project basis or does the government say, well, look, we can anticipate using this amount of time in air, this amount in print and then try to bargain from that point of view? Is there any of that done at all?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I tell you, we are very conscious of working within a budget, and I know there are some ads that go province-wide. When the Public Utilities Board has a hearing they have a rather large ad in, I think, every daily and every weekly paper. I think we have some statutory responsibility in some cases to make this information available as widely as possible.

There are guidelines within the department. For instance, when you are advertising for a senior officer within some department, then you advertise within certain papers. An ad for a new position at the senior level in Culture, Heritage and Citizenship will not appear in the Rivers Gazette but it will appear, probably, in the Brandon Sun and the daily papers and maybe even some of the national papers.

I am told that we also have a volume contract that is negotiated annually and the buy is based on volume discount so it does assist us in keeping within our budget. I am told that our budget is about .02 percent of the provincial budget. I am also told that is the lowest in Canada.

What we are expending on this line, I suppose, while over \$2 million does certainly appear as a large expenditure, it is very necessary to get that information out to the public.

Now, when you have something like this forest fire situation up north I could well imagine that this is an unforeseen expenditure because lives are at stake and we have to, in many cases, get information out there. I know when the floods were on too that there was a certain amount of advertising.

Then as people are looking for, sort of, settlement claims and compensation where there might be a confusion whether it should be crop insurance or disaster assistance, to be able to communicate those things, the department has to, on the one hand, budget for these things but often there are unforeseen things that come up which will impact on the budget.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am interested in the comments in terms of the .02 percent. In fact, whether it was the HydroBonds, Grow Bonds, CareerStart, retail sales tax rebate promotion, economic development, none of those, for example, would have included production costs. It is not necessarily fair for us to say that we are the lowest in Canada. I do not necessarily want to concentrate on that point.

With reference to the—

Mr. Gilleshammer: Can I respond to that?

I did not do these calculations myself. I rely on my deputy and my senior staff here. If they tell me it is .02 percent and it is the lowest in Canada, I accept that.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am not necessarily going to question the civil servant's response with respect to the actual dollar amount that is there, but one of the things that does need to be factored in, I would think, is that much of the advertising that is done is not, in fact, produced with just dollars from within this department. Other departments, as the minister had implied, actually do pick up production costs and production costs can be fairly hefty.

We do not, or at least, I do not know, and I would not expect that the ministerial staff would know right offhand if other provinces factor all of this in, some do, some might, who knows. I do not necessarily want to spend time on that particular question but the minister wants to respond to it. The last word it is called.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told by my senior staff that if you factor in those production costs based on the volume of work we do, we still have the lowest advertising budget in Canada. I know the member for Inkster will feel good about that.

Mr. Lamoureux: I will leave the last word on that for the minister. Volume contract that the minister refers to, do we actually have a list of those individuals, and it does not even have to be with the volume contract, is there a list of where and whom we advertise with?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I would expect that information is in Public Accounts.

Mr. Lamoureux: No doubt, in any question one could ask, they could come up with a response in terms of where it is that we can actually find it. Not necessarily knowing the format of what it might be in Public Accounts, if it is all on one page, if it is partially on one page and partially in other areas, the minister might actually have access to a list. If the minister does, fine. That would be nice to be able to get a copy if it is not too much trouble. If the minister does not have the list and is saying it is in Public Accounts and would appreciate my looking for it, I will accept that. But I ask primarily because the minister might actually have

this information more at hand as opposed to—and I could be dead wrong in my assessment. It might be one page in Public Accounts on page whatever. I do not know; that is the reason why I am asking.

* (1650)

Mr. Gilleshammer: I will endeavour to get the member some more information.

Mr. Lamoureux: To that end I am interested in terms of the volume contract. What percentage of the overall budget would that actually entail, roughly?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that probably 90 percent of our advertising would be encompassed by the volume contract that is negotiated annually.

Mr. Lamoureux: Would the minister be prepared to provide a list of those individual companies that participate in just the volume contract? I would assume, for example, it would be quite different than the other list.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, we can get some information for the member.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, the only other thing that I wanted to ask in this area was with respect to the Citizens' Inquiry line. If the minister could give some indication over the last year what sort of numbers we have had on it?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I am told that the unit responded to approximately 120,000 telephone inquiries in French or English on both federal and provincial government information through this Citizens' Inquiry Service.

Mr. Lamoureux: Is this line then for—the federal government also contributes to it?

Mr. Gilleshammer: That is correct.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister give some sort of an indication the general context, if you will, the top ten concerns that are being raised in the last year?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I would think health, education, family services, justice, natural resources and highways would be amongst the top ten.

Mr. Lamoureux: Let me get a bit more of a specific example. We went from the one line of advertising, government says: Here we are; we are going to advertise educational reform. I will use educational reform. Do we get individuals that will respond to these sorts of advertising? Is that where we would get education complaints? Or when the minister refers to education, is it my son John was treated badly at school today, what can you do about it type thing?

I do not mean to sound facetious or to try to make light of any particular issue, but I would imagine—I am trying to get a better understanding in terms of the types of issues that are brought to the Citizens' Inquiry, their nature, and if there are some things that have come up more than others.

I would have anticipated, for example, that there would have been a lot of confusion with respect to Autopac because of the change in system and which manner of payments. So, if I ask the minister, how many Autopacs, like what sort of a breakdown is it, does the minister have access to a basic understanding in terms of how the citizenry, if you will, or what it is that is on the top of their minds?

I think it is one of the vehicles that we could use to try to address concerns, and that is why I ask for the top ten. I do not know if there is a further breakdown of it, but I would think that this is something in which the minister would at least be wanting to know a bit more in depth.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I think it might be helpful to the honourable member to realize that this is the Citizens' Inquiry Services. It is not the citizens' complaint service, so that the vast majority of those calls are looking for direction. The Citizens' Inquiry is basically an answering service where somebody wants to know where to find something and Citizens' Inquiry directs them to that particular department or that particular unit in government. So to think of it only from the complaints point of view, that is a real minimum part of their duty.

It is people wanting to sort of access government. Most complaints go to MLAs or they go directly probably to that department where they should go, but there are many people who see government as some huge monolith that they just do not know where to start. You maybe come in the front door sometime and there is a directory and there are people standing there looking at it wondering who to go and see and what to do.

Government is so large that people often do not know what branch or what department to make their inquiry of, so we have a partnership with the federal government here to offer this service on a bilingual basis to simply give people direction of where to phone and who to make that inquiry of, so it sort of I guess quarterbacks these inquiries and sends them to the appropriate department.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the response from the minister. I would still take it that they would have some sort of a general idea in terms of a breakdown and of the number of calls that they receive, and if he can provide that sort of information if it is not too inconvenient I would appreciate that.

I would, as I am sure the member for Point Douglas, like to be able to move on. Just one final question with respect to Archives, I mean the Legislative Library, it is more out of a sense of interest with respect to Hansard. Is there any consideration that the minister would be aware of in terms of trying to move Hansard onto, let us say, a ROM and providing that for the Legislative Library and possibly MLAs.

* (1700)

Mr. Gilleshammer: All I can say is the communications in this world changes very rapidly, that we are always in discussion within the department on how to sort of modernize the information that we have. I know when we talked about the public libraries the other day, on Friday when we were in here, we talked about a lot of changes that are taking place there.

Certainly within the department we are looking at a number of changes and, as with everything, we have to do it on a cost-effective basis and be mindful of the fact

that we are providing a service to the people and that communications these days are taking place sort of instantaneously and sometimes we need to upgrade and change and modernize as our finances will allow. For instance, the current Hansard publication, their work is now available on Internet.

Mr. Lamoureux: Just to conclude, whenever I go down to the Legislative Library there are just shelves and shelves of Hansard and I look at it in the sense that if you had these things on ROM discs that in fact it could probably be somewhat advantageous, whether it is members of the public or MLAs or space preservation, the volumes of Hansard that are produced. This is not necessarily the most appropriate time to talk. I could talk about it possibly at an LAMC meeting, if I could participate, or during the Legislative Assembly Estimates. So I just appreciate the comments from the minister and am prepared to pass on.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I guess these things line up in terms of priority of what we need to preserve in government and where we need to make our next expenditures. For people who have been in this building in the last week they wonder why government has never made the expenditure to make the air quality better in here, but it always gets weighed against wherever else you need to make those expenditures.

I can tell you that the staff would be very much appreciative if we could redirect or acquire new funds to be completely up to date in the communications that come out of this building and of government, but I guess change will take place as resources are available and as technology changes. I am hopeful that we can do a little bit of that within our budget every year.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 3.(a) Client Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,949,800–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$348,500–pass; (3) Public Sector Advertising \$2,384,100–pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$2,773,500) –pass.

3.(b) Business Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$950,600–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$836,700–pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from other

appropriations (\$260,300)—pass.

3.(c) Translation Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$968,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$422,000—pass.

3.(d) Provincial Archives (1) Salaries and Expenditures \$1,649,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,468,100—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$20,800)—pass.

3.(e) Legislative Library (1) Salaries and Expenditures \$740,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$636,500—pass.

Resolution 14.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$9,300,500 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Information Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$356,200.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I would like to spend a little bit of time in this section under the immigration policies and various planning stages of the government to see where they are at.

I have to state a few words here because I have a lot of questions in this area. If you look at the immigration policies that we are faced with in 1995, I think we are regressing. We are not able to promote adequate immigration for Manitoba, because when you hear a lot of individuals or some individuals speaking about immigration, they say, well, they are immigrants when they come to Canada or Manitoba. It is a more negative factor for some individuals. I totally disagree with that.

If you look at immigration, immigration has a net economic and a social benefit for our society by providing labour and investment, purchasing goods and services, attending our universities, stimulating job creation, and you just go on and on. One of the real important aspects, I believe, for immigration for our province, Manitoba, is the whole emphasis of family reunification. I think that is a key. When we invite people from other countries to settle in Canada, or even

to encourage them to settle in Canada, we can never lose the aspects of one day when a person becomes a citizen to be united with their families.

All we have to do is just look at ourselves and we know how important family is. We hear it every day. When people are discussing or talking, you know, everyone says how important to have the family unit, to be with the family. You have Father's Day we just celebrated, Mother's Day we just celebrated, and for a lot of the people we have encouraged or invited to our country, they would like to have their mothers and fathers with them, too.

Also, when you talk about families of immigrants, you look at the children. Where does the real education of the children come from when you look at people from other countries? Sure, some of it is able to be delivered by the parents, but when you look at family reunification and when you look at people coming into Canada, some of the individuals that have chosen our great province to be their new home, and you look at some of the employment opportunities that some people have to start off with, and whether it is a language barrier or qualifications barrier or accreditation barriers, you really need that extended family to assist the family to raise their children, to give them the values, to know and understand the culture of the individual and to continue to learn people's own language. Because I have heard people say, and I believe it strongly, that if you do not know yourself, how can you know others? That is so, so true.

When you look at, even in aboriginal communities now, we are going back to the elders teaching the children, introducing the teaching and the cultures to the schools. So Immigration has a huge role: to make sure that when we welcome immigrants to Canada, that we are doing it with the fullest assistance that is possible.

I will just read you a story that I picked up in the Toronto Globe and Mail. I think it tells it all, because when you look at people coming to settle to our country, we always look at, what are the qualifications? Does this person have the business qualifications? Is this person a doctor? Is this person an engineer? I think that is so wrong, to just look at only that aspect.

* (1710)

This letter, that I was fortunate enough to come across, I think tells the whole story, why we as provinces, we as a country, and whoever is in power or whoever is in government has to encourage immigration, but at all levels, not only for the highly, highly skilled individuals.

I just want to read this letter here, because I think it is so important that we all start off understanding and appreciating what some individuals have gone through and how they are contributing to our great country that we call Canada.

It states here: Sometimes incongruities in the news are instructive. I read with interest your article about Canada's efforts to attract wealthy and highly skilled immigrants, as opposed to others who are deemed to be less qualified—and in the bracket it says, Canada strives to upscale immigrants, July 7.

The assumption guiding this policy apparently is that immigrants with capital and/or with special skills are more likely than others to contribute to Canada's changing economy. The very next day, one of our local newspapers carried an article about one such less-qualified immigrant who came to Canada in 1957 with neither capital nor special skills and with nary a word of English. This man became a janitor at the University of Alberta and, after 38 years of cleaning university buildings, was happy to celebrate the graduation of his youngest two children from the university. Now, all of his 11 children—four engineers, three teachers, one accountant, one computer scientist, one animal nutritionist, one geophysicist—have graduated. Our economy and our community now have the benefit of their special skills.

It goes on: Incongruity between current federal immigration policy and the contributions of this immigrant and his family seem striking. Certainly, immigration policy should not be based on evidence alone. I do wonder, however, whether capital assets and currently marketable skills should be the primary variables to be considered when trying to assess a person's potential for contributing to Canadian society and also whether the income levels of recent

immigrants should be the primary evidence of their contribution. The case of the university janitor illustrates the point. If we want an immigration policy that will be optimal in the long term, then we need to measure a diverse set of outcomes over the long term before attempting to judge the likely contributions and productivity of people who seek to live in Canada.

I think that really tells the whole story about immigration and the policies we are now facing today, which I see as being regressive and as going backwards.

When I was fortunate enough to attend a few mothers and fathers of the year awards in the Philippine community, and I was fortunate enough to be asked to be a judge in picking one of the candidates, we looked at all the qualifications that the individuals brought forward, and it was amazing. The qualifications that they had put forward were: how many children they had, what careers, what education their children had achieved. You look at some of the individuals, what careers that they participated in and the sacrifices they made to make sure that their children had the best education opportunities possible, and it was incredible.

Some families had eight children, some families had 10 children, some had 12 children. They were so proud when they said, my son or daughter graduated from high school, attended university and is now an engineer or lawyer or what have you. That was their achievement of their lifetime. That is important when you look at individuals that immigrate to, well, if you just kept it to Manitoba—when you look at the people, the individuals that immigrate here, you know, you see a lot of people say, well, a lot of people immigrate, and they come, and they go on social assistance. You know, it is only 1 percent of the total immigrants who are on social assistance, 1 percent. So that is the kind of stuff that I think we have to make sure that we pay very, very close attention to.

For instance, immigration to Manitoba has steadily declined over the last four years, and now reflects only 1.8 percent of Canada's immigration, instead of the 4 percent of Canada's total immigration to which Manitoba is entitled. We are entitled to 4 percent of the immigration population that comes to Canada. Yet we

are down to 1.8. There is something wrong here. There is an imbalance, and I hope the government will look at that and correct that.

Then you go on and you look at the various promises that were made by different governments. In 1993, in the federal election, the Liberal Party promised to maintain a fair immigration policy, including immigration levels set at 1 percent of Canada's population annually, but we know that has not happened.

Also, the federal government promised a system that balances strong enforcement and fair and humanitarian and family values. But changes to Canada's immigration policy have been announced which will see the numbers of independent immigrants increased, while family reunification is curtailed through changes in categories of immigrants, making immigration levels well below the 1 percent of the population target.

When we stress family, what has happened to the family class? Immigrants will now face tougher criteria such as greater emphasis on English or French, and now there is even talk of a sponsorship bond, and I heard somewhere that they are looking at a neighbourhood of \$10,000 for this bond. That is ludicrous. Where are you going to get \$10,000 to place a bond to try and come to Canada because you want to have a new country to call your new home? Plus, application fees have gone up, and reductions in the number of family members who will be allowed into Canada, they are reducing that.

So I have some very interesting questions that I hope I will get answers to. When you look at what has happened federally, how is the Manitoba government assisting immigration to Manitobans for family reunification, to help individuals to bring their parents and their grandparents here? As I mentioned earlier, the people that immigrate to Manitoba, there is less than 1 percent on social assistance cases in Winnipeg alone.

In Manitoba, the federal and provincial governments are beginning talks that will form the basis of Manitoba's immigration policy for years to come, and that is that bilateral agreement. I hope that this

government will include other individuals to hear some stories, and to ensure that experiences of immigrants are heard, some of the hardships, and some of the barriers, and how best we can assist the government to overcome some barriers that have been placed. But we hear very little about that, and it is a shame if these negotiations are going to be held behind closed doors between the federal and provincial governments. If we had some public hearings, or some consultations with some individual groups, or individual members, to have an input from the best experts that are out there, and that is the people that have immigrated to Manitoba, I am sure that they would be more than willing to advise or assist the government to, hopefully, change what I say are some wrongs and some unnecessary barriers that have been placed by the federal government.

The province is the government that has the chance to do something here because I do not know how far you are with your negotiations with the federal government, but I hope you will take that into consideration. The other day I found it very interesting when we were in Question Period, I think it was the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) who was raising the question about fashion industry workers that why, with the vacancy or high need in Manitoba, we were not filling those jobs. I think there was some mention of openings or some jobs that were being unable to be filled.

I thought to myself, you know, in the past, a lot of those fashion industry jobs, yes, were filled through immigration, through our immigration policy. Then I spoke to some friends I had in various ethnic communities and I said, if a person immigrates from another country and takes a job in the fashion industry, what kind of salary are we looking at? Most of the response I got was, it would be starting at minimum wages, the very low end of the wage scale.

* (1720)

So I started to calculate a little bit, and I looked at the cost just to immigrate here. The \$975 fee came right out, and then the \$100 right of citizenship and then the cost of \$200—this is only for one adult; this is not even a family—for one adult for citizenship granting fees. Proof of citizenship fee went up to \$60; retention of

citizenship fee \$60; reunification of citizenship fee \$100; searching for citizenship records \$100, and it says the new fees are on top of processing fees announced earlier, \$500 each for adults and \$100 each for dependents. So my friends and I sat down, and they figured it would cost roughly around \$2,000 to immigrate to Canada. That is sort of a ballpark figure that they had said.

If you look at some of the countries where normally or in the past we have recruited for fashion industry workers, that is about three, four years' salary in some of those countries. Then on top of that, now we are hearing about a \$10,000 bond.

So if you look at the amount of money one would have to have to immigrate, say, from a country to Manitoba to fill one of those fashion industry jobs, and, say, if the starting salary was \$5.50 an hour, and when you look at it, they would need to have worked 2,199 hours at 35 hours a week at \$5.50 an hour. Sixty-three weeks they would have to work just to pay their way to come to Canada, if that \$10,000 bond is required.

That is excluding what it would cost for your housing, your food cost, your clothing cost and entertainment. That is over and above. That is just to pay the cost to come here—63 weeks. That is over a year's salary without even having five cents to buy even a piece of food. So if you look at that, and the way my friends were explaining it, well, how are we encouraging people from different countries to come and fill the jobs that are required?

I would encourage and I would ask the minister if he will talk to the Immigration minister when you have your meetings, to say, look, these requirements that you are putting up we do not agree with. We do not agree with them, and it is stopping people from certain countries in making Manitoba their home.

If you look at these figures, Mr. Minister, would you agree that some of these policies that I have just stated are putting up unnecessary barriers to achieve our goal of immigration to Manitoba?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would like to respond to the issues that my honourable friend from Point Douglas

has brought up. I think it is important at the beginning that we all accept and understand the responsibility of the two levels of government.

The federal government, the federal Liberal government in Ottawa, is the only level of government which sets rules about who can come into Canada and who cannot. The federal Liberal government makes the rules. They are the sole gatekeeper. They are the government that decides what immigration policy is. They decide the numbers that can come. They decide the cost of letting people into the country. They, in effect, have total and complete control of immigration to Canada, to Manitoba and all the other provinces and territories.

The role of the government of Manitoba is to assist those people once the federal Liberal government has allowed them into the country. We assist them with finding housing, language training, jobs, different kinds of training, albeit with some assistance from the federal government, although that too is dwindling and disappearing.

So with that background, I would like to proceed to respond to some of the comments that the member for Point Douglas has made, because the inconsistency that he sees between those wonderful red book promises and the policies that are now being adopted by Lloyd Axworthy and Prime Minister Chretien and Minister Marchi are certainly in conflict, certainly totally different than the promises made in that red book in 1993. It is not difficult to understand why the public is perplexed and why immigration groups are annoyed and why there is this tremendous misunderstanding of what it is to be a Canadian.

Canada, historically and traditionally, has welcomed people to its shores from all over the world. In fact, the United Nations has again said that we are the most favoured country in the world in which to live, and we have always accepted immigrants and refugees and welcomed them to Canada because there is a tremendous impact to many parts of our society, not just the economics of it, but the tradition and the history that my honourable friend has so eloquently talked about, particularly in the whole area of family reunification.

So it is with some degree of anger that I see the federal government saying one thing and doing another. I do not understand how these red book promises can be thrown aside and discarded the way they have been and these new policies brought in which are going to prevent immigrants from coming to Canada.

I would like to maybe just elaborate on some of them. I might say, I have tremendous admiration for one of the members of Parliament from Winnipeg here, Dr. Pagtakhan, who is fighting his government tooth and nail to say, listen, reconsider, this is wrong. I admire the courage that it must take for Dr. Pagtakhan to get up and criticize his government, particularly after we have seen other members fired from their duties, other members from Manitoba threatened, and the whip is being brought down on these Liberals who dare to be different, and an old, fine parliamentarian like Warren Allmand who was a minister in the Trudeau government who said, I cannot support this government, you are tearing this country apart with your new social policies, and I am glad that there are two members of Parliament from Manitoba who are prepared to stand up for what is right.

I certainly take my hat off to Dr. Pagtakhan who has seen the error of their ways and the foolishness around these new immigration policies, and I would hope that as a member of this—all of us as members of this Legislature can make our feelings about these immigration policies known to the federal government.

The member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) said he hopes when I meet with the federal minister, that I will be able to raise some of these issues. I have been trying to meet with him but to no avail. I have written him a number of letters to say, listen, we have to meet about these things. Manitoba wants to go ahead with an immigration agreement. We are being frustrated. We need to solve this blockage wherever it is, but after a number of letters, I still have not had the opportunity to meet with him.

In fact, the only comment that I saw him make about Manitoba was back in, was it late March or early April, that Manitoba was being unco-operative. Even that comment was in the news media. It was not made to

my department or to me directly, and one would have to think that a member of the Crown would not be interjecting himself into a provincial election at that time, but it was just sort of bad timing on his part.

Anyway, to get to these policies that the member is talking about, the right-of-landing fee, and it is called ROLF by the bureaucrats, so if you hear that term, it is in reference to the right-of-landing fee. On February 28 of this year, the government of Canada introduced a right-of-landing fee of \$975 now imposed on all immigrants over the age of 19.

* (1730)

The member for Point Douglas has already gone into the detail of what a fee of this sort does to potential immigrants to Manitoba and to Canada. It is a tremendous detriment. Our government believes that it will negatively impact the family class sponsorships by decreasing our annual intake as well as placing undue hardships on sponsoring families in Manitoba, because as the member has indicated, in other parts of the world \$975 Canadian is a lot of money, money that is made not in a year or two years, but maybe three or four or five years.

One would have to wonder how when the red book says we are going to open our shores and our gates to immigrants because we want immigrants, that this cannot be viewed in any other way but a broken promise and a slap in the face for those families who want to bring other family members here to Canada, to Manitoba to join their families.

The application of this \$975 per adult is required as the form is submitted to Citizenship and Immigration Canada by a mail-in process. Before you get to meet a real live person, you have to send that money away with your form. I might say that the Filipino community in particular has stated its opposition to this fee and this process and recommends that the fee not be required until the application is successful, that you pay the fee after you have been accepted, not as a right to put an application in. This fee is totally refundable when the application is refused, but it ties up that money for some long period of time and with no hope of success in some cases.

(Mr. Mervin Tweed, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

This is the same recommendation made for the general immigration processing fees, which is \$500 per person. There is a difference, though. While the ROLF fee is refundable, this \$500 per person processing fee is not. So if you have a family of four—and the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) articulated some of the large, large families that some immigrants have and bring to this country—you can imagine this fee for a family of four being \$2000, and it is not refundable. Talk about a detriment to getting applications and getting people to come to our country, it seems to me like it is simply another roadblock that is being placed out there. It puts one's feeling about the federal government and the red book—we have to choose our words carefully I know—but it seems to me that they are being sort of factually incorrect when they change these policies from what they had printed.

We have raised our objections at the deputy minister's level and I have written to the federal minister indicating what our position is and how this will negatively impact the family class reunification here in Manitoba. We have raised this in our discussions at the federal-provincial level. This right-of-landing fee is a very, very negative initiative on the part of the federal Liberal government.

I might just turn my comments for a minute to the sponsorship bond. It appears that this is the other shoe falling. This is the next initiative. It was announced back in November that it was the federal government's direction to establish a financial guarantee for family class sponsorship. The federal government has continued to pursue this agenda. At a recent meeting of the highest officials in our department and Minister Marchi's department, it was brought forward by all provinces that we did not support this \$10,000 bond.

We have asked Canada to see if they can explore some other options. This so-called bond is being put there because of what they call sponsorship default. In Manitoba the default rate is .4 of 1 percent. We are putting in place a bond of \$10,000, which again, as my honourable friend for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) pointed out before, and I know that his colleagues

would agree too, it is just a tremendous roadblock to bringing people into this country.

I question why the federal Liberal government would make national policy affecting Manitoba based on the perception that there may be a problem in Toronto. I dare say the responsibility of those 98 members of Parliament from Ontario is to be sure that they bring into the policy-making tent members of Parliament from Manitoba to see how they feel about it.

If there is a specific problem in Toronto, there must be another way to address it than to put a \$10,000 bond into place which is going to affect all provinces, all territories, and so negatively impact on family class immigration where people want to reunite their families.

Again I repeat, and I know the member has taken note of this, that the default rate in Manitoba is .4 of 1 percent, just a minuscule number, just a minute number of people, and we in Manitoba do not see that as a problem. The flaw in this policymaking is to make national policy that affects all of us based on that one particular issue in Toronto.

We have done our own research. We have done our own work, and we have voiced strong objections to the federal government that this is not the way to increase immigration to Canada and to Manitoba. We are working with the federal government and trying to have them see the error of their ways.

We want to have more immigrants come to Manitoba. We are hopeful that Dr. Pagtakhan and other members of that Liberal caucus from Manitoba will be able to talk to Minister Marchi and have them rethink and reject those two policies on the bond and on the right-of-landing fee. I dare say they might even look at the processing fee and say, we can find other ways to do cost recovery than to put these hardships in the way of people who want to come to this country.

Many of us in this room, I am sure, are sons and daughters of immigrants or have perhaps immigrated to this country themselves. We know the hardships that people went through and the importance, as the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) said, of family

reunification, where parents want their children to join them here in Canada or to bring their grandparents.

We have a number of proposals that I will get into in a minute, but it just seems that instead of working with the provinces to streamline a very slow and unresponsive system, instead of correcting the system that was there to make it more responsive, they are now putting financial impediments in there that people from many parts of the world have no hope of meeting. So I say, as the federal Liberal government gives lip service to wanting more immigration, their policies and their lack of responsiveness to streamlining the system would say otherwise and it just speaks volumes.

Now, the member also made a comment about setting Manitoba policy based on public input. I know that some members of the Legislature were aware, but we did have quite a good public consultation in the fall. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), one of his colleagues attended the meetings, and I am not sure if there was a member from the official opposition's caucus, but we had public meetings here in the city of Winnipeg, two of them which certainly—and I think if memory serves me correctly, some 650 applications were sent out to interested groups within the community to come forward and bring information to the Manitoba government to help us set our policy.

As well, I believe, there were meetings in other parts of the province where there were members from our staff including the assistant deputy minister who toured rural and northern Manitoba and spoke to over 25 groups about changes that the federal Liberal government were imposing as the sole gatekeeper for immigration in Canada.

* (1740)

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

This public consultation here in Winnipeg, the two meetings we had here and the 25 groups that we met with in rural Manitoba, brought forward tremendous ideas of how our department can be more responsive, how we can work with people, and they were very, very beneficial.

So we have had some public consultation, and we welcome input from the public and immigration groups. In fact I, personally, have met on a number of occasions with representatives from the international centre and the interfaith group about immigration, particularly about refugees. I think we have found ourselves in concert with them in condemning what the federal Liberal government has done in terms of these new policies.

We in Manitoba desperately want to up our immigration, and we have taken a very proactive stance towards that with the selling of Manitoba at our posts overseas. I tell you we are the first jurisdiction in Canada, and possible in North America, to use the Internet to attract people interested in immigrating. The information we have been able to distribute, through our more normal advertising channels and our Internet, has brought in hundreds and hundreds of requests. Some are quite active in wanting to come to Manitoba. After you get by a discussion about the weather, people are interested in jobs. They are interested in a country and a province where the streets are relatively safe, where the air and water are of good quality and where they can find jobs.

I know the member for Inkster was talking about the number of jobs available in Manitoba just last week and highlighting the tremendous economic development which has meant that there are jobs going unfilled. I tell you, the people we can get to fill those jobs are not going to be able to come because of the bond and because of the right-of-landing fee and because of the processing fee. I cannot believe the federal government and the minister would not see the error of his ways.

We have raised that with him in letters from myself to the minister and at the staff level and it would seem that the federal department is not of one mind here. In fact, I am told that some of the pronouncements by the minister caught his entire department by surprise. So we will continue to press the federal government to look at these issues, to rethink their policy that affects us and to find a way to solve the problems in southern Ontario without putting into place these fees that are just prohibitive.

With those few comments, I will maybe stop for another question.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Chairperson, I have to totally agree with you when you look at the fees that are placed before individuals and some of the barriers—totally unfair barriers—that are placed before certain citizens of other certain countries. If you look at a person who is in a country where their wages are comparable to ours, a \$975 fee and the processing fee and even the possibility of saving \$10,000 to post a bond is there. A lot of those individuals who are from those countries, if they are making comparable wages to ours, I do not think a lot of them would want to move.

If you have individuals who are wanting to move to Canada to better their own lives, maybe because of overcrowding or possibility of war or the whole negative aspect that some individuals face in their countries, wanting to move to a more peaceful country like Canada, I think we have to make sure that door is always open for people to move.

So when you look at those kinds of different countries, I really believe that we have to make sure that the government in Manitoba does everything possible, that each and every 57 MLAs that are elected here in Manitoba of all political stripes stand up to the federal government and, hopefully, they will see their error in judgement.

You know, there are so many negative things that people say about immigration which are so totally false. I had someone try to tell me that but they were using the example of Toronto—they were saying, well, so many immigrants come to Canada and they get into all kinds of trouble and they are incarcerated and blah, blah, blah.

In my previous career, I used to look after training adult corrections officers in the Manitoba jails right across Manitoba that the province is responsible for. I used to have to go to the institutions, each and every one, at least once every six weeks. I can tell you there were very, very few immigrants who were incarcerated in those jails. So anybody that believes that is totally off the wall, because it is not true.

The whole role of immigration is all positive, and I am really glad to hear that you are going to—if you ever get that meeting with the federal minister—will state your opinion and stand up for our province, because I do not have to remind you, everyone knows that this province was built on immigration, and you are right. You just look around the room. At one time or another, each and every one, their families or themselves immigrated from another country. That is true.

So when you look at our immigration policies—and we as a province, I am sure we have targets for the province. So when we have targets, I would like to ask the minister, when you do an assessment of skills needs for the province, is that related to the federal immigration government so that way when there is a skill shortage or need by the province that the government could say, yes, Manitoba is in need of say fashion industry workers so then we will help you recruit in that area. Is that how the process works?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that support from the honourable member and his endorsement of our direction we are taking, because I think we do need to work together on this and see if we cannot increase the immigration to Manitoba.

When immigrants are allowed into the country—and when we had more of them before all of these fees, it is the same as now—they go where they want to go. The federal government cannot steer them. They can steer refugees and say, would you take some refugees in Manitoba? We have always said we will do our share. For family-class immigrants, they tend to come where their family is, and for independence they will go where they want to go. Unfortunately, they migrate to Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

The one way that I think we can assist in bringing more immigrants to Canada is have the federal government recognize our labour shortages and recognize our labour needs. Unfortunately, they do not do that. I think the garment industry for instance and the fashion industry have been mentioned a couple of times as an area where there are jobs going wanting.

* (1750)

We need to get the federal government to recognize the needs we have. At the current time I think it is safe to say that they are not recognizing them. If they would recognize that we have a need there and accept that and make it easier for those people to come into the country, knowing that they have a job when they get here, the kind of immigrants we want to fill the need here, we could perhaps dramatically increase immigration to Manitoba.

The federal government does not recognize our needs in that particular area and as a result are not—and we are not saying make some special case for these people, just accept the fact that there are jobs here and people that want to fill them and that they will fit through the process. At the present time, the government does their own labour market statistics. Given that we are only 4 percent of the population of Canada, this little picture in Manitoba does not get recognized. It is one small way that we have been trying to work with the federal government.

They asked us to come up with some suggestions on pilot projects. I think we have three. I will not go into the details of them just now but we can later if you want—three pilot projects where community groups have made suggestions to us and where we have responded to the federal bureaucracy. I have written to the minister and said, you asked us to come up with ideas and pilots; here they are. We are being blocked. They are not being accepted.

I will tell you, I have a very mild-mannered staff who normally do not get too upset about these things, but they are being very much frustrated by this blockage in the federal bureaucracy. Whether that is coming from the minister's office or not, I do not know. We want to work with them and co-operate with them, and we thought we were on a track to get an immigration agreement, but even when we come up with the pilot projects—I guess they have not said no; they just have not said yes. It is very, very frustrating.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Chairperson, when you look at Manitoba and the whole immigration policy, we have very little input it seems on recruiting needs for the province. When you do your assessment of skill shortages or skill needs for the province, when you

pass them on to the federal government who is responsible for immigration, they must do some kind of analysis to help you recruit in the skill shortage area, if you would not mind answering that.

The other thing I would like to get more information on are the three pilot projects, and then if you would add, what is the province doing to set up or is there an accreditation board set up to interview people coming to Canada with their certificates or degrees or needs?

Mr. Gilleshammer: You know another example in the garment workers, the industry has asked us to try and recruit 800 people as garment workers. The jobs are there, and we would love to go out and recruit them. Again, the federal government is not recognizing this as a need when they screen applicants in. Then without special consideration of our economic needs when they just go into the general pool of applicants then they are faced with the bond and with the other roadblocks that the federal government has put in there in terms of that sponsorship bond and the right-of-landing fee as well as the processing fee. If we could get a little bit of movement we could perhaps make some progress there.

The member also asks about a pilot project. We submitted a proposal from the Manitoba Ukrainian community. I guess I can go into a little bit of detail on this. We have had people from the Ukrainian community who are aging and whose families are not with them. They have some resources they have gathered over their period of time here. They are saying that they would like to sponsor relatives, at their cost, to bring relatives to Manitoba to live with them to keep them out of a personal care home, keep them out of expensive care, someone they can introduce into Canada and to Manitoba, to help them to find work and have their resources stay here in Manitoba after they pass from the scene rather than have them sent back to Europe.

The member asked about community consultation. This is a project that came up from the community and said, you know, we have resources, we have no relatives immediate here—that we would like to bring from Ukraine. We will sponsor them. We will help them find work, get them settled.

It sounds like a great opportunity. We have put this forward as a pilot project, plus the wealth that they have accumulated, their life savings, their resources would stay here in Canada with these relatives.

We have not been able to get the federal government to give an okay on this. This is the kind of project that we think the minister asked us to come forward with. It is very frustrating that we have not had a green light on this to be able to go ahead with it.

That is just another example of our frustrations where we think we have come up with suitable ideas, suitable pilot projects, good ideas that will benefit Manitoba, that will benefit Canada. These will be gainfully employed people, people who can be assimilated because they have relatives here with resources. It keeps these people out of more expensive care. They want to stay, just as my parents do, want to stay in their own home as long as they possibly can. Somebody with a similar background, language skills, other background, and we think it would be a great pilot for Manitoba. We are still waiting for the green light to go ahead with this.

Over on top of these sponsorship bonds and right-of-landing fees and other fees, when we have a good idea we are getting frustrated by not being able to pursue it. Certainly it would be an initiative targeted here to Manitoba, and we think that is what the federal minister asked us to do and the federal bureaucrats asked us for. We cannot understand why we cannot get approval for this.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The time being 6 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings.

The Committee of Supply will resume consideration at 8 p.m. this evening.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson (Gerry McAlpine): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume

consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 6. Support to Post-Secondary Institutions (a) Universities (1) Universities Grants Commission (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits on page 45 of the main Estimates book.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): At the end of last time, I had been asking for an evaluation of the number of years of special funding that have been given to the faculty of management at the University of Manitoba.

The minister had indicated that such funding was for the development of doctoral programs and for an increased number of staff and I assume some of the resources that would go with that. The minister was about to respond I think with some response to my request for an evaluation.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): The university makes an annual report each year to the department, and the department will be doing an evaluation of that when it comes.

* (1440)

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister mean that the university does an annual report of the effectiveness of that million-dollar grant approximately? Is it specifically upon the faculty of management grant that the university reports?

Mrs. McIntosh: They report on the extent to which they have met the development plan.

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister mean the development plan for the faculty of management?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, that is correct.

Ms. Friesen: Has the minister looked at a cumulative report of the cumulative impact of these special grants that have been given to this faculty? The reason I am pressing this is that it is not unique, but it is unusual for a large amount of money to be directly given to one faculty for a long period of time.

I am concerned at, for example, the extent to which this is becoming part of the annual operating costs of that particular faculty and the prospects of a government which gives out and which also takes away. So I am looking for a longer term evaluation of the impact of this particular type of policy, first of all, and secondly, of the implications for this faculty.

Mrs. McIntosh: We will be taking a look at the cumulative effect this year.

Ms. Friesen: Will that report become public?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is anticipated that that would in all likelihood be part of the Estimates for next year, so in that sense, yes.

Ms. Friesen: Has part of the development plan, which the government's special grant has been supporting, been the establishment of the executive MBA, the one that is to be a shorter term but a far more expensive program? Has that been part of the development plan the government has been supporting?

Mrs. McIntosh: I understand that the executive MBA was not a specific portion of the development plan per se.

Ms. Friesen: One of the reasons I ask that question is because the executive MBA takes the first step in Manitoba towards the establishment of funding programs within a university on a differential basis; that is, fees will be quite different and established on a very different basis of cost recovery.

This is something, of course, that the Roblin report wanted the government to look at and believed had a future in Manitoba, and I am interested to know whether the minister has looked at the faculty of management which the government has a special relationship with, looked at the executive MBA and looked at the financing principles on which it is being established.

Mrs. McIntosh: The short answer would be that we are looking at having a tuition fee policy sometime this fall in response to some of the things that were said in Roblin's report.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us who will be involved in setting that fee policy?

Mrs. McIntosh: The department will consult and dialogue with institutions and student bodies. Ultimately, the decision will be one that government will assume the responsibility for.

Ms. Friesen: And such a tuition fee policy would take effect for September '95 or September '96?

Mrs. McIntosh: My expectation would be September 1996.

Ms. Friesen: Why would the minister be doing this in advance of the creation of a post-secondary education council?

Mrs. McIntosh: Basically, Roblin had identified this particular decision as one that he wanted to see action on and did not indicate that it needed to wait for the formation of a council. Having said that, I do not know when the council will be up and fully functional. My anticipation, though, is it would take a bit longer for the council to be up and running.

Ms. Friesen: When the minister said she would be consulting widely on this, could she give me some examples of who will be consulted?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, student bodies, of course, would be high on our list of people with whom we would like to discuss these types of items, and they have proven to be very receptive and willing to meet so far on any number of topics, and the institution itself, of course, would be another body that the department would wish to have dialogue with.

Ms. Friesen: Are we speaking entirely of universities here, or does this include colleges? Is this a university fee policy? The second part of the question was, is this something the minister will be setting on the basis of each university, so that there could be different policies for different universities, or is it something that she is looking at the whole sector for?

Mrs. McIntosh: Ideally, of course, we would love to have system-wide policies in this area. We may find, though, that certain institutions would have different components and different facets, which might mean that they could have a less expensive fee established.

So it is early in the game and perhaps a bit premature to be able to make a definitive statement and a definitive response to that question.

Ms. Friesen: Will this fee policy take into account the proposed changes of the federal government in the transfer of post-secondary education dollars?

Mrs. McIntosh: We hope to have some indication by then of what the federal government is planning to do by way of post-secondary education cuts.

There are two dilemmas in terms of decision making, once we know that figure or even in anticipation of that figure. One is that we wish to, insofar as we can in the light of federal cuts, not see any dilution or any diffusion of anything that we are currently doing.

The other side of that coin is that we do not wish to be thrown off our agenda by having initiatives set in place for the good of the students of Manitoba thwarted, because we then have to use our existing dollars to pick up what should be a federal responsibility.

So as we make decisions in that regard, those two points of consideration will have to be weighed and balanced. It will be difficult. I do not have an answer at this time, but I do identify, for the member's benefit, the two points that will have to be looked at as we go to make those decisions.

Ms. Friesen: I assume that the minister is aware that this is a reversal of government policy in the past. When the universities charge fees for visa students, and when the government indicated, for example, that a different kind of fee could be established, I spent some time discussing with the previous Minister of Education whether in fact the government was requiring the universities to introduce the new recommended fee. The assumption that was always brought back was that the universities had the choice of

what to do about visa student fees, that fees, including the student service fees that were added last year after the government put on a 5 percent cap, were that which the government said that it could do nothing about because fees were a university responsibility.

Do I understand the minister correctly then that what she is proposing is a reversal of past government policies on fee policies for universities?

Mrs. McIntosh: No, this is not a reversal of previous positions. I was simply identifying for the member the kinds of dilemmas that governments are faced with when they have decisions made at other levels. I indicate that we have done a number of things in regard to fees to try to ameliorate any effects for students: the 5 percent cap, the tax credit, those types of things the member knows and I will not go through them.

What we have attempted to do as we make all of these decisions is to ensure, bottom line, that the student does not bear the full brunt of extra costs, and we do not want to see those costs pass through to the people who are students in the institutions.

But, no, we are not reversing any decisions. I am merely identifying points of concern that are there in reality when the federal government makes decisions that affect provinces, and those points of concern are real concerns for every province facing this particular situation.

Ms. Friesen: Have there been any joint meetings between any of the provinces or through the Council of Ministers of Education indicating a joint provincial response on this proposed change in the federal government policy?

Mrs. McIntosh: There was a meeting of deputies earlier this year and meetings of deputies at the Family Services, social service, community services disciplines as well—each province will call it something different; in our province, it is Family Services. But part of the problem they have had in their meetings was the lack of detail provided by the federal jurisdiction as to exactly how these cuts were going to take place. The Council of Ministers of Education will be meeting again in September. I would be very, very surprised if this was

not a topic on that agenda. Although the agenda has not been finally set and approved, I would imagine this would be one that would definitely be discussed, that ministers would have a high desire to discuss this particular problem.

Ms. Friesen: The predictions are that the increase in fees if the loss of federal funds is passed through directly to universities and then passed through to students is considerable. I am sure the minister is aware that, whatever prediction you look at, it is in the region of a 20 percent increase for each of the next three or four years or at least of the first three years of the new program. How does the minister plan to address that issue?

Mrs. McIntosh: I think the member is aware of some of the things that Roblin said when he talked about doing things differently. Indeed, he made reference specifically to anticipated federal cuts in funding to post-secondary education.

In setting up the council—which is not yet set up but which, as I indicated earlier in Estimates, would be one of my immediate goals upon the conclusion of the session to get that underway—one of the things the council will be asked to do or will be looking at doing would be to fulfill that portion of the Roblin report where he talks about doing things differently and talks about cost-effectiveness, overlap, duplication, any number of items that he has identified as being ones that universities could use to do things differently and bring down the expenditure side of their column as their revenue side begins to show some ill effects because of the federal government's actions.

I know that in terms of timing—I should not say I know. It could be that because of timing we have a gap, but we will be moving as swiftly as we can to attempt to have the council in place so that it can deal with the wider picture of post-secondary education, particularly as the university spends money, to delve into how it spends money, and is it spending money in ways that make the best utilization of offerings for students.

* (1500)

In short, the member asks an extremely good question, but it is a question that has us dealing with a policy that has not yet been set. In that sense, it would be a question that could probably be given a full answer in next year's Estimates or at some point during the period between now and next year's Estimates once we have had an ability to: (a) know the full impact, (b) have suitable responses to that impact put in place.

Ms. Friesen: One of the apparent consequences of the proposed changes in the federal policy as well as a variety of provincial reasons, I would say, a question of pricing and a question of employment have led to a decrease in anticipated university enrollments for this year right across the province. All three universities are experiencing it, Brandon I believe more severely than others. It is at the moment an anticipated loss, but it is comparable figures. We are looking at comparable anticipated enrollments compared to anticipated enrollments of the previous year.

I am wondering if the minister is beginning to look at the prospects of a smaller university sector for Manitoba, whether that is in fact acceptable to the government. Is that the way they see the post-secondary sector developing in Manitoba, a smaller university sector and a larger community college sector, as Roblin had hoped?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I think one of the first things I would say to that would be, in terms of looking at enrollment at universities and colleges, we know colleges are up, universities are down, so in that sense Roblin's desires are being played out, so to speak, in the student bodies. However, I think it important to note that we are not talking about downsizing universities.

What we see happening across the nation in terms of university enrollment could be reflective of a number of things. One, and I think we talked very briefly about this on an earlier occasion, whenever employment and job opportunities are up, enrollments in post-secondary education goes down.

We know that from this time last year till this time this year, we have seen another 14,000 jobs created and filled in this province in the private sector. So you no

longer will have the situation that has been identified of having people say I cannot find a job so I will go to university and either (a) fill in my time in a productive way, or (b) seek some particular level of education that would enhance my opportunities to obtain a job. That reality and that particular phenomena is at play right now.

We have done a number of things to ensure that those students who do wish to attend university have maximum opportunity to attend. I think I just mentioned a couple of minutes ago capping the university fees to no more of an increase than 5 percent for two years now, the tax credit coming into place that will see students, or those who pay their bills for them, being able to get a tax credit, and so on, measures such as those to encourage or to make it easier for students to obtain a university education.

We have no plans, as the member asked, to consciously say we are now going to have smaller universities. We also know that over time university enrollments fluctuate, and they are up and down, up and down for a variety of reasons. Faculties will grow and shrink, and that will be for a number of reasons that have nothing whatsoever to do with government initiatives, but rather student desires, marketplace demand, new opportunities in learning coming into existence and old ones becoming less relevant. So you will see these little fluctuations and anomalies occurring over time, just as a matter of evolution.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, what are the government plans for the faculty of education and for the production of education graduates in the province?

There are three faculties of education at the moment. There was, some years ago, a long-term plan for enrollment and for the production of teachers taking into account labour-market issues. Has the government revisited that lately? Is it revisiting it in its discussions with the faculty of education in its new proposals for certification?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the Board of Teacher Education and Certification is currently looking at content, has not looked at numbers in the sense that I think the member is referencing.

Oftentimes these questions of supply and demand become self-determined, would be the right word, in that you will find as there is a short demand for teachers, fewer students will enroll in the faculty of education just as a matter of course. Then when there is a high need for teachers coming out of the faculty, more students will then register in the faculty of education because they sense that there is going to be some demand for that kind of supply in the marketplace. Oftentimes they straighten themselves out just by people's experience in the workplace. When they straighten themselves out that way, though, they usually lag a year or two behind what is happening out there.

The short answer to your question is staff advises me they have not looked at the numbers in the way that you have just referenced them, and that the Board of Teacher Education and Certification apparently at this time is dealing with content as opposed to numbers.

Ms. Friesen: The recent study—I believe it was done about five, six years ago now perhaps, which included labour-market strategies for teachers—I do not think anticipated the decline in funding for school boards and would not have anticipated, for example, the loss of 270 teacher positions this year.

So there are some sudden changes that seem to be cumulative across the province, and it seems to me that there are concerns there for the future of a profession and for the regeneration of a profession. It is partly generational issues which were anticipated; it is partly new needs such as special needs education which were anticipated, but the continuing loss of teacher positions is something which was not anticipated, and the numbers are becoming quite large.

* (1510)

So I am wondering if the minister has a normal mechanism for reviewing those kinds of issues with the Board of Teacher Certification.

Mrs. McIntosh: Planning and research will provide ministers with that type of information, the planning and research in the Department of Education. I should indicate, first of all, just because I have a different

perspective on what is happening in terms of supply and demand for teachers in the marketplace because the member I think realizes that some divisions are experiencing overall student decline in terms of numbers. The member also realizes that overall in terms of funding over the last seven years, there has been a fairly good percentage increase on average. I am just trying to recall the average out of memory but suffice it to say that over the past seven years the percentage increase has been extremely good indeed.

School boards have been for decades, or for over a decade anyhow, indicating to teachers in collective bargaining situations that if they are trying to contain costs that they will ultimately be faced with a decision of having to go over what they have allotted for wages with layoff as an alternative. That has been stated for many, many, many years, school divisions have made that statement at the bargaining table. So I do not think there would be any lack of anticipation that a board, as many have said since the mid-'80s, I am really sorry but we cannot afford this particular increase, and if we are forced to provide it, we will have to downsize the staff.

Associations and societies have responded by their position at the table with the indication that they would prefer to have the percentage increase as opposed to concern about layoff. I mean, I am sure they are concerned about layoff, but they have indicated very clearly since the mid-'80s that they would prefer to see layoff as opposed to not taking the annual percentage increase over and above the incremental increase.

That is just a reality that I think has been fairly widely known between the society, local associations and the board. The fact that boards are now saying, we really have reached our limit now, we are going to begin laying off as opposed to once again putting in yet another annual increase, should not be surprising to anyone. It is not an unforeseen or unexpected event.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, the planning issue I was addressing was not from the perspective of the individual teacher, but from the perspective of the department, which does have a board of certification for teacher education. It seems to me the conditions, for whatever reason—and the minister and I would clearly disagree on what the reasons are. For whatever

reason, those conditions have changed, and I am looking for what the mechanism would be for revisiting the issue of the provision of teachers in a labour-market sense.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, staff advises, the whole question of supply and demand and the number of people who might enroll in the faculty versus the number that are required in the marketplace is something they will be looking at, along with a number of other things, in the '95-96 year.

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): I have a few brief questions to ask the minister in regard to post-secondary education. One area that is of concern to people in the inner city and many of the residents of my constituency is the number of teachers from target group members, visible minorities and aboriginal ancestry.

Can you tell me, does the university fall under the provincial guidelines or program for affirmative action?

Mrs. McIntosh: In terms of the make-up of the faculty members?

Ms. Mihychuk: No, I am talking about the students that are selected in their program.

Mrs. McIntosh: Do you mean like so many whites, so many blacks, so many aboriginals, so many women, that type of thing, allowed into the faculty as students?

Ms. Mihychuk: What I am talking about is, when they are selecting out of a pool of applicants that wish to enter the teaching profession as students, are there some criteria that include either initiatives for target group members, including the physically disabled, visible minorities and aboriginal ancestry in particular?

Mrs. McIntosh: I am advised that I think in the sense you are referencing that the universities do not sort of screen students on an affirmative action basis, although they do have many programs available for people who wish to go into Hutterite education, for example. They have the Winnipeg Education Centre teacher program, which will work with the aboriginal student needs and the Provincial Northern Teacher Education Program

and a few others of that nature where they identify a student population that needs or could benefit from teachers who have a certain background. Training is available for them.

I am advised that for the faculty of education itself students wishing to go through and take a degree in education do not go through an affirmative action process.

Ms. Mihychuk: Given the under-representation of target group members as teachers, particularly in the North and in the inner city and probably in communities like The Maples and Inkster, is there any intention on behalf of the ministry to review this program and take steps to ensure that the future graduates in education do reflect our population and are available to take those spots that do become open in the school system?

Mrs. McIntosh: I am advised that there are no plans in that regard beyond the current programs that are available to prepare teachers upon graduation to work with specialized groups of students.

*(1520)

Ms. Mihychuk: One of the programs that I am familiar with that does provide training for a number of new immigrants and aboriginal people is the program that is going on at the Winnipeg Education Centre. That program has faced funding cuts and less graduates, I understand, over the past few years than they have in the past. Can the minister give us an outlook for the Winnipeg Ed Centre? What is the plan for that program?

I would just like to add that it does produce teachers that school divisions are searching out for. It provides an opportunity for teacher assistants who have the practical experience and would never perhaps be able to get the degree that they need to become teachers. It provides a program for teacher assistants to get that teacher training. That is also a very exciting program.

Can the minister give us some insight as to the future of the Winnipeg Ed Centre and hopefully the weekend college program?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Winnipeg Education Centre, I am pleased to note, has a fairly stable, slightly increasing enrollment pattern, and the graduates are being replaced by new students. So as one leaves, another comes in. The weekend college, the program for educational assistance to become teachers over a period of five years, is also stable.

Just to give you some indication of figures, I have the table. It tells me in 1992-93 for the Winnipeg Education Centre with the education students that the intake was 19, the enrollment was 66, and the graduates were 14, and that has increased up until this year. In '95-96, we now see the intake being 25, the enrollment being 83, and the graduates being 16. So it is stable, increasing and appears to be meeting the needs and appears to be one that people who wish to become teachers and serve in this way are willing and eager participants.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask the minister about the postponement, shelving, whatever term is appropriate, of the geological engineering program at the university, and I am wondering how this has been effected through the UGC, if at all.

Mrs. McIntosh: I am advised that that particular announcement was made by the dean of engineering without consultation with the various authorities at the university, and that announcement will now be going to the senate and the UGC and the other authorities at the university, essentially I suppose to see if it will be confirmed.

Normally the process would be that it would go through those others first before a dean would make an announcement of this nature. In this case the process, shall we say, has been reversed, so we do not know what the senate or the UGC will say at this point, of course, because they have not yet made a pronouncement, and we do not want to pre-empt or interfere with what they might say.

Ms. Friesen: What I am looking for are two things. First of all, the announcement means that no students will be applying into that program or being accepted. So we are looking at a short space of two or three months now, during which students are normally

accepted into such a program, which they have now announced in the way that would be most public to students: it will not be available to them. So I am concerned about the fate of students who might be interested and who might go to other universities. Calgary, for example, I think, is one university which still has a program in this area.

Secondly, and here I am not sure really how to phrase it, what I am looking for is the argument about the UGC. The UGC approves new courses. Must the UGC approval be sought before a program can be withdrawn? I think the minister will find that there is a distinction being drawn in this case. I think that the dean has not said that he has cancelled the program. I think that he has said that he has deferred it, put it on a shelf. I do not know what term he is using. But the net result is, from a student's perspective, that this is not available to entering students.

So there are a number of issues there. One of them, certainly, as the minister has indicated, is the various levels which may or may not have yet given their acceptance of this decision, and the other is, what should they be doing, and what should students be thinking?

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate that the University Grants Commission does not need to give permission for a program to no longer exist, and the pause in this one, so to speak, is the result of the enrollment dropping down to approximately 11 students. I may be off one way or the other by a couple of students. I understand the rationale that has been put forward is that to put the number of resources into 11 students that are required to make the program viable, when they have hundreds in other sections of the engineering faculty—the rationale presented was that the dean felt that it would be better to put those resources into programs that have high enrollments. I understand they have made a commitment to those students currently enrolled in geological engineering that they will be able to—

* (1530

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. A formal vote has been called for in the Chamber. I am

interrupting this portion of the Committee of Supply to recess at this time to attend to this business in the House. The committee will recess until this business can be attended to.

The committee recessed at 3:32 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:11 p.m.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. We were considering line 16.6 Support to Post-Secondary Institutions (a) Universities (1) Universities Grants Commissions (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, what I was looking for at the end of the last question was the principle of the withdrawal of university programs not necessarily having to go to the UGC, and I think that is what I was hearing, was a general principle that it went to the senate, the board of governors, and there was no requirement for the withdrawal of a program to come to the UGC.

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate, without placing a judgment on the decision to either retain geological engineering or not, that deans and others will make decisions as to at what point a program becomes a viable program or ceases to be a viable program. Eleven students versus, you know, a hundred is a fairly substantial difference. So we have people in those decision-making areas making statements such as we would be better to redeploy our resources into a more required or more sought-after discipline. The university, I am sure, would be taking into consideration, as it formalizes this decision, if it formalizes it, where those students might then obtain geological engineering. They have indicated that any who are currently in the program, of course, could complete.

But we do see universities taking care of each other, so to speak, and I think the member is aware of certain

ones. I will just read a few where we as a province pay for courses in other jurisdictions. In Education and Training Manitoba, for example, our Advanced Education division pays for veterinary medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, optometry at the University of Waterloo, and surveying engineering at the University of Calgary. Similarly, the Department of Health will pay for nuclear medicine in Alberta and prosthetics and orthotics at British Columbia.

We also will have here in Manitoba students coming to Manitoba for occupational therapy training and being paid for by other provinces. So there are those kinds of opportunities to ensure that Manitoba takes responsibility for training in a certain area being made available for our students that do not necessarily mean a course being offered here in Manitoba. Those decisions, as they affect geological engineering, have not yet been decided and/or announced. So I await the final announcements on this and indicate that it is my expectation that students in the program would complete here, and that opportunities for students who wish to enter the program would be made available either here or in another jurisdiction close by.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask a couple of questions on the university innovation fund which is on another line, but if we could look at it here and then we can just pass straight through on the other one. The issue, of course, overall in universities is the declining resources that I think almost every section of the university feels. It is felt particularly in libraries, laboratories, laboratory sections, areas which have a direct impact upon the nature of the student experience. It is also particularly being felt in the area of graduate studies. I think Manitoba universities, and in this case it is largely the U of M since that is where graduate programs are focused, are, I think, feeling that they are increasingly less and less competitive with other universities to attract graduate students.

This has implications for the province's economic development as well as for the well-being of a rounded university program. I think it is important to put that on the record. I am sure that the minister is aware of it. It is not just in the capital area but it is also in the continuing grants to universities that people are feeling as though we are slipping further and further behind.

I wondered how this innovations fund can be used to address some of those issues. There is a million dollars in a different line. It is part of the Lotteries funded program under 16.8. Could the minister give us some idea of what the criteria are for that Incentive Fund and who will be making the judgments?

Mrs. McIntosh: We have three basic criteria for accessing the Incentive Fund. One is probably an obvious one, but it is stated because every once in a while it is not always obvious to people who put forward ideas, but that the project and the initiative, or the innovation, be consistent with the mission of the university. That is the first criterion.

The second is that the project or the initiative or the innovation be consistent with the government's response to the University Education Review Commission. This may include projects which are linked to the government's framework for economic development; emphasize improving the quality of teaching; emphasize joint research projects with business and industry; create joint university-community college programs; are intended to increase internal management efficiency and effectiveness; promotes institutional co-operation; promotes the use of communications technologies, et cetera.

Three is that the project or the initiative or the innovation changes the way the proposing university delivers its services. So we are looking for an innovative change in the way of doing things, in other words, as per Roblin, doing it differently.

Those are the criteria, and considerations will be given to proposals which will either seek one-time funding or long-time funding. All of the proposals have to define the objectives being pursued, identify what the institution intends for change or intends to change, establish the need and the demand being addressed and identify the student or other populations being targeted and describe any co-operative or articulation arrangements being established and present a detailed budget.

The university, the government, as you are aware, is looking at in terms of another point that you raised linking up libraries and has set money aside for that

purpose to link up libraries electronically. That is just an aside in response to one of the points that you mentioned in your query.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Would it be accurate to say that \$260 million—

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Excuse me, could you pull your mike forward, please?

Mr. Kowalski: Would it be accurate to say that the \$261 million figure for support to post-secondary education together with \$11 million in capital expenditures for universities, community colleges, represents our provincial commitment to post-secondary education for this year? The two things combined, is that our commitment to post-secondary education?

* (1620)

Mrs. McIntosh: That is not completely correct, because we have money going to post-secondary education from a wide variety of sources other than just through the Department of Education and Training. For example, Government Services spends money in support of colleges. Student aid. Through the infrastructure program we are putting money into an agricultural building. The Department of Health is putting a tremendous amount of money into the downtown centre. The Winnipeg Development Agreement is putting money into a technology centre. We also fund Access. We also fund interprovincially. We also fund the Bible colleges. Those types of things are not included in the amount that you identified. We do indeed spend the money you identified, but these types of items I have listed will also receive money from the government of Manitoba over and above and beyond the amounts that you have named there.

Mr. Kowalski: So is there a figure on how much the provincial government of Manitoba spends on post-secondary education in Manitoba? Is there an accumulated, total figure on our commitment to post-secondary education here in Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: Staff advises that it would be difficult to add this all up here and now, because they have to

get into the other departments and break out, for example, how much is Health putting into the downtown centre, and go into Family Services and look at the Welfare to Work programs, what kind of training are they providing through Family Services for post-secondary advanced training through Welfare to Work, and all those other things, but it can be done. We are quite happy to do it for you, but we probably cannot do it today. We could try and get you the information, but with so many departments—it is easy for us to identify what we are spending, but we do have a lot of cross-departmental initiatives. If you would like us to do that, we could, and bring it back to you, probably later this week.

Mr. Kowalski: Continuing with the line I am going along, how much money did the federal government designate for post-secondary education in the province with its formula for apportioning EPF between Health and Education? How much did the federal government apportion to education for this year, for 1995-96?

Mrs. McIntosh: Staff advises me that that particular piece of information would properly come under Department of Finance because they will take a look at all of the government of Manitoba revenues, all of the government of Manitoba expenditures. What I can say, especially financing for existing or established programs, I can say that we do not, or the provinces generally do not support an arbitrary splitting of funds between health and post-secondary from the federal jurisdiction. That is just an aside, a little digression.

Mr. Kowalski: I will table a letter from Bruce Leckie, special assistant to the Minister of Finance, in which it shows the EPF funding from 1986-95 and the proportioning if you follow the federal government formula for health and education. I would like to table that document.

Looking for today we have the figures right up until 1994-95. We are in '94-95 according to the federal government funding formula; post-secondary education from cash entitlements would have got \$111,932 from cash entitlements and from tax transfers \$126,982. I am looking for a similar figure for the 1995-96 year that is going to post-secondary education in Manitoba. Is that figure available?

* (1630)

Mrs. McIntosh: Those are based on population, and they are done twice a year. Updates are done twice a year, and I just point out two things: the cash transfers to the province are declining from Ottawa; and the tax points you referenced represent our citizens' money collected as taxes and returned to us. So it is not money that was given to us from some other jurisdiction. It is our own money or our citizens' money. They collected it, and then they gave it back. So I guess it is better than not giving it back, but it is not new money. It is not a gift.

Mr. Kowalski: With the information we have received from the Minister of Finance, and with the federal government's report to Parliament on federal-provincial support to post-secondary education in Canada for '93-94, we are able to determine the net provincial contribution to post-secondary education every year, from '88-89 to '93-94, by looking at those reports and looking at the information given by the Minister of Finance's staff here in Manitoba. By net provincial contribution, I refer to the amount after the federal EPF funds are factored out. Is it fair to characterize the proportion remaining, after EPF funds are factored out of the total provincial spending on post-secondary education, as a net provincial contribution?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is just not that simple, for a variety of reasons. I will just give you one example. If you go back to 1977 when this was first put in place, when all of this started, at that time the federal government made a funding arrangement that included Grade 12, because not all provinces offered Grade 12. So Grade 12, then, was included or counted as a post-secondary item for purposes of advancing this money, and it is not really, of course, in the world we live in today, but we have a lot of interesting things like that caught up in this particular arrangement. So it is not quite that straightforward. Grade 12 is not really post-secondary.

Mr. Kowalski: The federal report I mentioned, that is, the Federal and Provincial Support to Post-Secondary Education in Canada, employs a consistent method of measuring post-secondary education financing from StatsCan data. For all provinces, it is consistent. This

data allows us to compare different provinces' net provincial support to post-secondary education.

Now, looking at that and using the figures supplied by the Minister of Finance's office, we have taken a look at the last six reports to Parliament on Federal and Provincial Support to Post-Secondary Education in Canada. Here is what we found.

We found in '93-94 Manitoba spent less money per person on post-secondary education than every other province except Saskatchewan. This is also the case when you exclude federal EPF funding contributions to post-secondary education. From '88 to '94 Manitoba spent less money per person on post-secondary education than any other province except B.C. When EPF funds are factored out, Manitoba spent the least of any province over the six-year period. Regardless of the federal government's commitment, when it comes to spending its own money on post-secondary education the province has been reducing its support.

In '91-92 Manitoba spent \$58 million on post-secondary education after EPF. In '93-94 they spent \$48 million. If Manitoba had kept pace with the national average, the province would have spent \$28 million more in post-secondary education. Similarly, had Manitoba spending on post-secondary education been on line with the national average from '88 to '94, the province would have spent an additional \$106 million. I would like to table that report that I just quoted.

Now, is this Minister of Education going to continue along the lines that the previous ministers have with Manitoba's contribution?—and I am not talking about the federal government. I could join in the calls for more money from Ottawa. When I was on the school board, I screamed about the offloading by the provincial government to our Seven Oaks school board, but once we finished with all that, we went on with the business of saying, with the money we have got, what we are going to do? We had to find the money, we had to set the priorities. Will this minister indicate that she will put a stronger commitment and bring this province's spending on post-secondary education up in line with other provinces?

Mrs. McIntosh: It would be helpful if I could get the source of some of the statistics you are quoting, because I do not know where—you must have been adding in some statistics on your own that were compiled from you or someone with you as opposed to some statistical group. That is a question.

Mr. Kowalski: It was done by our research department by taking the Federal and Provincial Support to Post-Secondary Education in Canada report, the document from the Minister of Finance and StatsCan figures for the populations in each province.

Mrs. McIntosh: Any federal reference report that you had talked about earlier, I believe, did not include per capita information, so it would be very hard to verify accurately. The member did indicate that our support was lower than Saskatchewan and British Columbia to other provinces in Canada with different political parties than we have here.

I just want to indicate to the member—and I appreciate what he is trying to do here, because I know and I regret that they are locked into trying to defend the federal Liberal government in almost everything they do. You may recall that I indicated to the Liberal leader before the election when he was trying to follow along the same line, I said that the member for St. James would live by his support of the federal party, and he would die by his support of the federal party. I welcome the new member from St. James who is not the leader of the Liberal party.

I would just indicate to you that when you get into the game of trying to defend the federal government at all costs because it happens to be your own political party, whoever is advising you is leading you down a death row, and if you were not such a nice guy you probably would have been out on the street with your leader.

You know, we never made that mistake of saying, our party, do or die. We always said what is best for our province, do or die, regardless of that. I have got to indicate to you that my staff has just indicated to me that British Columbia and Saskatchewan expenditures were lower than us. So wherever you are getting your statistics from, that was not a correct statistic.

Manitoba participation rates, just to give you some information that might help correct some of the conclusions drawn from the information you have presented, we have, as you know, people who are registering—the member for Wolseley pointed out earlier that enrollment figures are down in terms of some of the post-secondary institutions here, and I indicated that whenever job creation is up, that is a traditional thing that happens. We have had 14,000 new jobs created between this time last year and this time this year, and, historically, whenever that happens, enrollments at post-secondary institutions go down because people have work. Enrollments will go up when there is less opportunity to be employed because people will decide either to fill in their time by taking education or try to pick up some particular training that will help them acquire a job.

It is fair to say that we do spend less on post-secondary education than some other provinces. I come back to Roblin saying that universities need to do things differently. I caution people to bear in mind some of the things that Roblin identified that are going on at universities in terms of the need for cost containment, overlap, duplication, those types of things. Roblin had suggested money be pumped into colleges, which we have done, which the federal government has not done. Twenty-seven percent cut, no matter how you slice it, 27 percent cut from the federal government into community colleges, which our detailed study indicated needed a boost because that was the area of post-secondary education we should be concentrating on and that universities should begin to look at doing things differently, particularly as it pertains to costs.

* (1640)

Throwing more money at things that have been identified that should start to contain costs does not make a lot of sense. Putting more money into things that have been identified that should have money put into them does make sense. The provincial government is responding to both of those things and the federal government is not.

In terms of education expenditures per capita, these are the most recent Statistics Canada figures, the most

recent available StatsCan figures. Manitoba ranked fifth in terms of education expenditures per capita, fifth, F-I-F-T-H, in 1992, which is the most recent StatsCan figures two years ago.

In terms of education expenditures per capita of the labour force, Manitoba ranked fourth, again, using the same source for statistical analysis. Education expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product, Manitoba ranked sixth. Education expenditures as a percentage of personal income, Manitoba ranked fourth.

I think the member has to take that into serious consideration because we know, and I will tell you if you do not know, but I think you also know that in terms of personal costs and taxation, it costs less to live here in Manitoba than in most other provinces in Canada. So we can afford to set up businesses here less expensively. We can afford to have almost any kind of lifestyle here less expensively.

We can afford to run our institutions less expensively. Not to say they do not need money, but to run an educational institution in Toronto, believe me, costs more than to run an educational institution in Winnipeg because you are taking into consideration all kinds of other costs above and beyond the training that are real.

My department will review the most recent StatsCan information on post-secondary expenditures in light of your question here, but I caution you about saying that we are the lowest in terms of expenditures, and I also caution you against drawing any implications out of the lowest if that is your conclusion. I cannot take you away from that conclusion.

Spending more does not necessarily mean providing higher quality. As we move into setting up councils and looking at all kinds of articulation processes where we see costs to students being reduced and opportunities increased because we have various kinds of articulations, when we see all kinds of other things occurring in terms of reform at the university level that actually improve quality while at the same time delivering that with a lower cost, the member must remember that is within the realm of reality.

We have historically—and this is another very important point—since 1977, Manitoba has historically given more of its EPF transfers to Health expenditures, and I suggest it is a critical area and with the Canada Health and Social Transfer being what it is, it is something that cannot be denied. I have to indicate as well that we have tuition fees that are really good for students in terms of their place on the line nationally. The university is very accessible in Manitoba when you look at the size of the fee; it compares very, very favourably indeed to other provinces. In addition to that, we have capped them for the last two years to ensure that they do not rise beyond 5 percent, that the universities cannot pass it on.

Our community college tuition fees are amongst the lowest in Canada, if not the lowest. They certainly are the lowest in the four western provinces and Ontario, and those tuition fees, as I say, they compare very well across the nation.

We have also now made a commitment to the tax credit where university fees—people are going to be able to get a credit for fees that have been paid. So what I am saying is that none of these costs that are going to be incurred because the federal government has cut transfers will be passed on to students.

Paul Martin's budget indicated that there is a \$79 million reduction in cash transfers to Manitoba for post-secondary education over the next two years, and that is a big reduction. If you want to try to build the case that we should not be requesting that money still be sent to us, then I invite you to try, but I would encourage you for your own sake not to publicize too much that you are asking the government not to ask to have that money reinstated because I do not think that is a service to the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Kowalski: To talk about provincial spending on post-secondary education is in no way a defence or talking about the federal contribution to post-secondary education. I am not here to defend the federal government. I am in the Legislature of Manitoba. It will be interesting in two years time, it seems a number of our members are more interested in the federal parliament than they are in what goes on in Manitoba, possibly they will be running in the next federal

election because that seems to be where the majority of their attention is diverted to.

I was talking about this province's spending on post-secondary education, and the figures that the minister just quoted, putting us fifth and sixth depending on which terms of reference you use, all include EPF funding in them, which brings up our position. If you remove the EPF funding, this province's commitment, the amount of provincial dollars—and I am a member of the Manitoba Legislature and I am here dealing with the Estimates of Manitoba Education and Training in the government of Manitoba, so taking out whatever money, and the more money we get from Ottawa, the happier I will be, okay.

But taking that out, this province's portion of spending in post-secondary education, and I will stand by the stats that we presented here that were taken from the Federal and Provincial Post-Secondary Education in Canada, a report to Parliament in '93-94 and from previous reports by the same title from '92-93, '91-93 and so on, and using the figure supplied by the Manitoba Minister of Finance from his office subtracting out the EPF funding, it has established that this province's funding of post-secondary education is lower than other provinces.

That is what I am here dealing with, this province's commitment to post-secondary education. So I will stand by that.

I continue to ask, will this minister make spending in post-secondary education equal to the other provinces?—keeping in mind that the minister tries to play on both sides of the fence, where if this government spends smarter in post-secondary education, they are being efficient, but then if the federal government, who I am not here to defend, does it, it is unconscionable cutbacks. You know, you can not play both sides, but I am hear talking about the Manitoba spending, the Manitoba budget in post-secondary education.

* (1650)

Mrs. McIntosh: The member is absolutely right that you cannot play both sides of the fence and expect to get away with it. You cannot do that. Let me talk

about provincial comparisons between Manitoba and other provinces and federal-provincial comparisons between Manitoba and the federal government.

Manitoba spends more of a percentage on Health, Education, and Family Services than ever before in the history of this province. Manitoba has consistently said, we have three priorities. They are Health, Education, and Family Services. Each year we have been able to keep taxes frozen or reduced and bring in tax incentives for things like mining, aviation fuel, other very important economic incentive things that we have tried to put in place to build the economy. We have been able to do that and make Health, Education, and Family Services the biggest percentages of our budget. That means that we have reduced expenditures in a lot of other areas in order to keep that high percentage.

Two-thirds of our provincial budget goes on to those three items. We are saying to the federal government and we are encouraging other jurisdictions as well to show that kind of prioritizing, to show that you would be willing to spend two-thirds of your budget, federal government, on Health and Education, instead of on a lot of the things that the federal money goes on, and we could bring a list in if you want to find out where the federal government spends \$79 million on things that I would not consider nearly as important as the cash transfers to Manitoba for post-secondary education.

We could start taking a look at the CBC, a whole lot of other things, a whole lot of other things where money goes that are not deemed as important as this. We have made the decision here that we will live without some of those other things in order to fund Health, Education, and Family Services. We have done it without raising taxes, as other jurisdictions have, and if other jurisdictions are spending more money, I assure you, I absolutely assure you, that their people are also being more heavily taxed.

That is why we have more businesses, and more expansion of business, and those kinds of things happening in Manitoba today than other provinces are experiencing because there is a tax advantage, and people come here for that tax advantage, and when they do, they add to the strength of the economy, and more

money is generated for things like our three priority items which are not necessarily the three priority items of the federal government which you are defending.

Nine out of 10 new dollars since 1988 have gone to Health, Education, and Family Services. You show me, sir, that the federal government places the same priority on its new dollars and I will agree with you, then, that we are asking for one set of standards for us and one set of standards for them, which you have not recognized here. What you should absolutely recognize is that we have managed to do more with less and other provinces, not all, but some, have managed to do less with more.

It is a question of priorities, and I do not know what your point is here because you are sitting there wanting to make it clear to people that we could have spent more money on post-secondary education in Manitoba. Indeed, we could have spent more money on post-secondary education in Manitoba. What is your point, sir? Are you saying that because we could have spent more money, tuition fees are the highest in Canada? They are not. They are amongst the lowest. Are you saying that because we could have spent more money that we do not have new initiatives and new innovative things happening at colleges and universities such as, for example, Distance Education and Technology? We are having those things happen.

So I do not know what your point is. Are you saying we should spend money for the sake of spending money so we can say we spent more? Are you saying because we did not spend more money on post-secondary education we should no longer ask the federal government to reinstate the money that it has chopped from us, which it is currently spending on other things that are not nearly as important as this? I mean, what is the point you are trying to make? I would really appreciate knowing, aside from the fact that you have said that we have not spent as much as we could have spent, which I acknowledge, what is the point that you are trying to make behind that?

Mr. Kowalski: Again, the minister has gone on and on about federal priorities, federal spending. Again, I am in the province of Manitoba in the Manitoba Legislature. You know, if the minister sometime in the

future will run for federal office, she will have input into the federal budget, but in Manitoba, yes, we could have spent more. Yes, right now we are hearing a lot of the negative effects of underfunding at the universities from programs closing, layoffs, and, as a result, our competitiveness amongst the provinces in Canada has been decreased.

So my point is that, yes, possibly as a proportion of our spending, but we built up a deficit in this province. It may not be financial, but a social deficit of high suicide rates, high crime rate, less spending on post-secondary education, that shows the priorities of this government. Again, I am concerned about the provincial proportion of funding. What I am hearing today is the minister indicating that the continuing underfunding of post-secondary education in Manitoba in comparison to other provinces will continue to leave us at a competitive disadvantage to other jurisdictions.

Mrs. McIntosh: Well, what you are hearing is incorrect because we are not at a competitive disadvantage with other provinces. I invite you to attend with me when I go to visit other provinces, and you will hear what you should be hearing here. Manitoba has an advantage. Manitoba has an advantage, and all of the economic indicators are there to show it. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) could give this answer far better than I, but we have economic indicators in Canada that are known, proven, true economic indicators and Manitoba is winning on virtually all of them.

We have a major Manitoba advantage. It is referred to in other provinces as the Manitoba advantage. I mean, it has a name in other parts of Canada. It has a name in some of the neighbouring states. It has a name in Kansas. It is called the Manitoba advantage. It has a name in the Pacific Rim, the Manitoba advantage. We are not disadvantaged.

You mention suicides, and I feel it is really sad when we have suicides. That is very tragic when we have suicides. No one would ever deny or negate that. I would ask you to indicate how our making Health, Education, and Family Services our top priorities has caused more suicides in Manitoba. We know where the suicides are taking place. It is something that is

very difficult to talk about because whenever we do people get upset in terms of references to the tragic circumstances in which our aboriginal people find themselves, but we know where the highest suicide rates are. We know where the highest incidences of teenage pregnancy, of solvent abuse, of mothers and children in care. We know where the highest medical costs are in terms of dialysis and renal failure and all of those things.

* (1700)

We know that our aboriginal people—if there is anybody in Manitoba that is experiencing a lifestyle and requires help, it is our aboriginal people. We are doing the absolute best we can to try to change the circumstances of their lives, to make things better for them, recognizing that in many instances when we do this we are once again picking up dollars, real true dollar costs, that are the responsibility of the federal Liberal government, which you defend, which you defend to your detriment.

We pick up those costs over and over again because we cannot bear to see things left unattended, even though they are the responsibility of a federal jurisdiction which chooses to ignore its responsibility and persist in offloading onto jurisdictions like Manitoba and Saskatchewan, which have the highest per capita percentage of aboriginal population living in these kinds of circumstances, needing help, and those two provinces are pitching in and providing the help over and above their own responsibilities.

You are saying that somehow because we could have spent more money on post-secondary education as a province, that is the reason for all of these terrible things happening in our society, and I am saying to you that what you are doing here today is trying to find a point that you can argue with the provincial government to help the federal government look good.

I am saying to you, that is what you have been sent here to do today. You have come here to try to make the federal government look less bad than it is by pointing out that we could have spent more money in one of our top three priorities. That is what you are doing.

Point of Order

Mr. Kowalski: I believe my motives are being questioned, and I believe that is not parliamentary, that the motives of an honourable member should be questioned.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member does not have a point of order.

I would remind honourable members, though, when they are making reference to other members of the committee, that they do choose their words carefully, and you are absolutely right, the honourable member for The Maples, all members here in this committee are honourable members, and I would hope that we will continue to maintain that level.

* * *

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member for The Maples, did you have any further remarks to make?

Mr. Kowalski: Yes. I was not sent by anyone other than the people of The Maples, and I am talking about provincial spending in post-secondary education.

As much as the minister would like to paint the picture that I was sent here, I am a defender of the federal government, no, I am here in the Manitoba Legislature talking about provincial spending, and while I am using figures from Stats Canada, from the Minister of Finance of Manitoba, taking the Stats Canada figures for post-secondary education spending in each province in Canada, subtracting the EPF funding as reported by the Minister of Finance, looking at the per capita spending, in this government's literature, it has said that post-secondary education is an engine to drive industry, to drive the economic boom of Manitoba, I agree with it.

When I was referring to suicides, teenage pregnancy rates and all that, I was not talking just about their priority in funding post-secondary education at a lower level than most other provinces. I was talking about their overall priorities of spending.

As Mark Twain used to say, there are two types of lies. There are ordinary, everyday lies and then there are statistics. No, I am not saying anybody lied. I am not saying the minister lied, but statistics can. We can manipulate statistics to say what we want to say. I will let the statistics stand. They are there in the report I mentioned. They are there in the document I tabled from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson). They are there in the Stats Canada populations for each province. Anyone can take that figure and compare, when you take out EPF funding, this province's commitment to post-secondary education is lower than what I think, and many other people think it should be as a priority in Manitoba.

I will just go on to another subject a lot easier to deal with, probably. It is regarding the veterinarian medicine program in Saskatchewan. How many Manitobans are there attending that program this year? The second part of that question would be, has there been an increase or a decrease from the previous year?

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Before I recognize the honourable minister, I would just like to remind the committee members that they choose their words very carefully. They are bordering on imputing motives, and I would ask honourable members to bear that in mind in their questioning.

Mrs. McIntosh: We see the absolute stability there in that the enrollments for this year are 48 and projected for next year to be 48, as well, from Manitoba students in the veterinary medicine at the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Kowalski: How many students does the province fund, new students, would the province fund each year, allowed to go into that program from Manitoba? Is it, you know, 12 per year, or how many go in each year for Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: Twelve.

Mr. Kowalski: How long has that number been fixed at 12?

Mrs. McIntosh: We do not have previous information here but certainly since '94-95.

Mr. Kowalski: Has there been any study to compare the need in Manitoba for veterinarians with the number of students that we are funding?

Mrs. McIntosh: We believe the number of veterinarians graduating as Manitoba students may be correct in terms of identified need, but where they choose to practise may be a bit of a problem. What we find is that there are not enough Manitoba-funded veterinarians who graduate who wish to practise in rural Manitoba with large animals. We see a disproportionate number of them gravitating to urban centres and dealing with companion animals, pets, dogs, cats, as opposed to horses and cattle in rural Manitoba. We believe we have the right number of veterinarians but not practising in the right location.

It is a problem we are aware of, and it is one that the Department of Agriculture has identified. Like we have with medical doctors who deal with people, again there is difficulty attracting these medical graduates into some of the more remote places in the province. If you have any suggestions on that one, we would be sure willing to listen as to how you can inspire veterinarians to want to settle where they are most needed.

Mr. Kowalski: For those 12 veterinarian students that enter per year, what assistance do they get from the province, financial assistance, if any?

Mrs. McIntosh: It would be the same as they would get were the veterinary college situated here. For example, we fund the University of Saskatchewan itself for the cost of the program. The student pays whatever the regular tuition fee would be and is eligible for any student assistance or financial aid, just as they would be if the college were here in Manitoba.

* (1710)

Mr. Kowalski: I guess that opens the door for the possibility of some kind of contract for someone who wanted to enter in the program, because the added cost of going to Saskatoon to study as opposed to Manitoba is an added cost to Manitoba students. If some students from rural Manitoba could receive some type of assistance with an agreement to practise in Manitoba

for a period of time, possibly that would be one way to rectify the shortage of veterinarians in rural Manitoba.

Mrs. McIntosh: I thank the member. I should indicate that if a student is from, for example—I will just pick a place—Russell, Manitoba, and was going to veterinary college, he or she would still have to travel to either Winnipeg or Saskatchewan, incur travel costs and residential costs whether they be in Saskatchewan or Manitoba. It is not necessarily more of a cost unless the person was already resident in Winnipeg, in which case there maybe would not be the same residential cost.

The suggestion he has made about trying to look for some incentives to encourage people into rural Manitoba is one that we will accept as a constructive criticism and put it into our mix of ideas we are trying to get to address both rural medical doctors, rural veterinarians, and rural dentists and all of those needs that rural Manitoba has that we are having trouble luring people into—I mean, if only they knew how great it was in some of these towns. Once they got out there and lived there, they would just love it. But you have to get them out there first and that is part of our problem.

Mr. Kowalski: Maybe the minister could get the federal Liberal government to help fund such a program.

Mrs. McIntosh: With a little of assistance from my friend from The Maples, I would be willing to go for it.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Item 16.6 Support to Post-Secondary Institutions (a) Universities (1) Universities Grants Commission (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$268,000—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$113,100—pass; (c) Grants in Lieu of Taxes \$18,837,800—pass.

6.(a)(2) Grants \$195,296,500—pass.

6.(a)(3) Access Fund \$640,000—pass.

6.(a)(4) Faculty of Management \$1,139,000—pass.

16.6(b) Community Colleges (1) Colleges Secretariat (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$377,900—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$65,100—pass.

6.(b)(2) Grants \$41,637,300—pass.

6.(b)(3) Strategic Initiatives \$2,620,000—pass.

Resolution 16.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$260,994,700 for Education and Training, Support to Post-Secondary Institutions, \$260,994,700 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Item 16.7 Expenditures Related to Capital (a) School Divisions \$24,777,900—pass; (b) Universities \$8,940,000—pass; (c) Community Colleges \$2,120,600—pass.

Resolution 16.7: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$35,838,500 for Education and Training, Expenditures Related to Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Item 8. Lotteries Funded Programs (a) School Divisions -Technology and Science Resource Centres -Capital \$700,000—pass; (b) Universities Incentive Fund \$1,000,000—pass; (c) Manitoba Educational Research and Learning Information Networks \$744,400—pass.

Resolution 16.8: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,444,400 for Education and Training, Lotteries Funded Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

The last item is consideration of the Minister's Salary for the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training. It is item 1.(a) Minister's Salary, page 37 of the main Estimates book.

At this point, I request that the minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item.

1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary \$22,800.

Ms. Friesen: We have gone through the last section of the department very quickly, and I think I just want to put on the record that it is not because of a lack of concern about each of those areas.

I had indicated I wanted to discuss further some of the issues in community colleges and also MERLIN, and I look forward to spending more time on those next time, next year. There are other departments which are following behind us and obviously want to have some time as well.

Other things that I want to raise in this last opportunity with the minister are a number of individual cases which have been brought—I think that she has probably seen most of them, but I do want to put them on the formal record. Since we talked about the library issue, the change in the person assigned, seconded to deal with libraries in the department, I have had a number of additional ones, letters, and I think they have also been sent to the minister.

The one that I have in front of me is very typical. It is from the Boissevain School library, which has also been sent to the minister and deals with the issues facing school librarians, many of whom, as this particular writer points out, are not teacher-librarians but library clerks. This is particularly an issue in rural areas where they are feeling the loss, the potential loss of this specialist from whom they had found a great source of assistance and guidance.

* (1720)

They are particularly concerned, and I did emphasize this earlier, about the future of the resource-based learning model that the department is introducing and the prospects for that for schools which do not have teacher-librarians and which are involved in a great many other activities besides the selection of books and overall library activities. So what I am doing here really is drawing to the minister's attention that there really are concerns out there about this issue. They are particularly strong in rural areas, and I did suggest at the time that there were some options the government had for dealing with part of this issue, just part of this issue, through other means, and again it is to draw to the minister's attention that issue.

I do not know if the minister wants to respond on each of these. They are each very different, so I can stop.

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, and I will not prolong it, just to indicate that I have now received some correspondence on that issue as well from people in the field, and so I will certainly take a look at what she has there just to let her know that I am familiar with the issue.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you. A second issue I wanted to raise, and I have faced this issue with constituents over a number of years, and this is people who take out a student loan. In this case both the constituents are disabled people who took a student loan and then found it extremely difficult, more difficult than other people, as I am sure the minister would appreciate, to find a job upon graduation.

So they are graduated, they have a large student loan, and they are unable to find work and yet the interest is mounting up. My guess is that this is not an extensive problem, but it is a very severe problem for those individuals who are facing it, and I do not think these people are alone. I want to draw that issue as a general policy issue to the minister when she looks at student loans and bursaries or at the tax credit program or at alternatives to the tax credit program that might address the issue being faced by these particular graduates and also will look at the issue in more general terms for the future as to how this can be addressed in the future, particularly when we know what the federal government's intentions are with student loans and student issues.

Mrs. McIntosh: I think I heard the member correctly. Just to confirm, you are not talking about people who just are not repaying their student loans, but rather people who through circumstances have been unable to, and the interest is mounting up and that type of thing. Okay, I understand.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, Mr. Chair, these are people who have greater difficulty than others finding work at the end of their degree program because of their disabilities of a variety of kinds. In that period when they are on a form of social assistance, the interest on the loan begins to mount up, and they have no way on social

assistance of even beginning to make those repayments. In some cases, the loan has been turned over to a debt collection agency even though they are on social assistance, even though they are looking for work. That adds to the frustration and to the increasing mental difficulties that people have in facing any situation like that.

Mrs. McIntosh: Are you suggesting, just for clarification, that if a person was caught in these circumstances that there would be, let us say, a pause, and that there would be no attempt to begin collecting until such time as that person was employed and then resume once the person is off social assistance and working, that type of thing? I mean, we are not asking for a full solution but is that the kind of idea that you are talking about?

Ms. Friesen: That was an idea that was proposed by the federal government, and it is what they call the income contingent loan repayment system. Certainly aspects of that would address these kinds of issues.

I remember the minister and I talked about this during Estimates. It does not look as though we are going to get that kind of a system. Is there a possibility, I suppose, for having some policy that would address the issues particularly faced by people with disabilities? That is really all I am asking the minister to look at at this stage.

These are primarily federal loans, I think, that are involved so the actual redress for the individual is at this stage. I shall also be dealing with the federal government on it, but it is an area of joint interest, I would think, and an area where it might be possible to define a particular policy that would address this.

Mrs. McIntosh: I thank the member.

Ms. Friesen: A third issue that I want to draw to the minister's attention and which has also been drawn to her attention, I think, by the individual himself—it is Allan Hawkins in the Dauphin-Ochre school area. The issue is really one with the University of Manitoba, but the individual does not seem to have been able to reach an agreement with the university. It deals with teacher certification. The issue is really a particular course

which is required for clinician's work. I am sure the minister will find all the details in the correspondence.

Essentially what has happened is that the university is now not offering this course in the summer, which it had previously done. So for somebody from a distance outside Winnipeg, it becomes very difficult to take the course. As he said, it is not possible without people in our area quitting their current jobs to take the course in Winnipeg every Monday. He has discussed it with his school area trustees, he has talked to the university. Now he seems to be in a Catch-22 position. I wonder if the Minister—I am sure the department has an interest in having well-trained rural-based clinicians, particularly for an individual who has got caught in a series of changes of scheduling at the university. The date is June 2.

Mrs. McIntosh: I will look that letter up. In all likelihood it has been referred to staff, but I will check it out.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, finally, I want to draw to the minister's attention the School for the Deaf issue which we spent a number of hours discussing earlier. I do think there is still considerable discomfort among some parents; I do not know how many. I again draw that issue to the minister's attention and hope that some meetings can be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, that one issue, I can assure the member absolutely that I will be doing whatever I can in my power to make sure that everything is resolved satisfactorily for those parents and students. I think I saw how things unfolded there. It would be wonderful if we can go back in time and change things, but I guess we work from where we are. I appreciate her concern and interest in that topic and want to see them satisfied, as she does, in whatever appropriate way we can manage here.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Item 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$22,800—pass.

Resolution 16.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,054,800 for Education and Training, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

This now completes the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training.

The next set of Estimates that will be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply are the Estimates of the Department of Northern and Native Affairs.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I should have said this earlier, but just a thanks to the minister and to her many staff who have been here over the last 30-odd hours.

Maybe for the record we should also say that some of these Estimates were conducted in temperatures of well over 30 degrees.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, yes, 37 degrees outside for a couple of days running, but I want to thank the critics too, and I am sorry that the critics from the independent MLAs are not here.

I learned a tremendous amount through this process myself being a new minister. Some of the questions were questions that sent me delving, and I thank the members for getting me delving in some of the areas they did, because I have gained some knowledge through this that I appreciate having. I am glad we do not have to sit through this evening's heat. Thank you very much.

* (1730)

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: I thank all honourable members. Shall we briefly recess to allow the minister and the critics the opportunity to prepare for the commencement of the next set of Estimates? Agreed? [agreed]

We will recess for five minutes.

The committee recessed at 5:32 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 5:34 p.m.

NORTHERN AND NATIVE AFFAIRS

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson (Gerry McAlpine): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Northern and Native Affairs. Does the honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs have an opening statement?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Yes, Mr. Chair. Given the fact that the temperature in this room is very hot, and I know that Estimates' time is somewhat in short supply, by department, if my colleagues are willing to waive their statements, I would be willing to waive mine, and we could get into questions and issues. It might be a more civilized way to approach it on such a hot day.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): I am easy, except that I would miss your, as per usual, eloquent, profound opening remarks. So, if you want to go ahead, go ahead. Whatever.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Is it agreed we will not have any opening remarks from the honourable minister and the official critic of the official opposition? [agreed]

Mr. Praznik: Yes, Mr. Chair. I do not know how much time has been allocated for this—five hours?—but we have usually had a tradition that if we wanted to deal on specifics, we can go through line by line, or we can deal with a host of issues within that time. I am very flexible on that to accommodate the process.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: What is the will of the committee? To proceed line by line?

Mr. Lathlin: The last time we were here, I believe that my preference would be to not necessarily go line by line throughout, but talk about the department in general terms, policy, and afterwards go through it line by line. I believe that is how we did it last time.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: For the benefit of the committee, would it be in order for the Chair to

suggest that we consider a broad discussion on each section of the Estimates book?

An Honourable Member: Maybe we could just do it in big sections, and then we can vote on them all.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Is that the will of the committee to deal with this section by section and open discussion? [Agreed]

Mr. Praznik: If I could then call up my staff, we can get into our discussion. I would like to introduce the new Deputy Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, Mr. Michael Fine. This is Michael's 14th or 15th week in the province. He was recruited from the federal public service where his expertise was in international marketing. In fact, he was a chief negotiator for Canada in a host of issues in the textile portion of their responsibilities. He was recruited to Manitoba as Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines because of our thrust in attracting mining exploration and development. When the cabinet shuffle occurred following the election, it was the Premier's decision—in which I am obviously in concurrence and I had some discussions with him—that the appropriateness of having one deputy minister for the two portfolios for which I was responsible—so Michael assumed the Deputy Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, as well, following that shuffle.

I want to at this time just acknowledge the excellent work of Mr. Tom Farrell as the previous deputy minister. If you remember, Mr. Farrell was initially recruited as the Deputy Minister of Labour, and when I was appointed Minister of Northern Affairs in addition to Labour, he was also given that responsibility, again because of the convenience of having one deputy. So I want to welcome Mr. Fine to this table in his first Estimates debate.

We also have with us Mr. Jeff Polakoff who is the director of the Development and Coordination branch of the department. Jeff is no stranger to this table or to many here—and Mr. Rene Gagnon who is the director of Administration and Finance for the department.

Regrettably Mr. Oliver Boulette who is our assistant deputy minister with responsibility for Local

Government Development is absent today. I do not think he will be joining us either, for a very good reason, as members opposite know, particularly the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin). The forest fire situation in northern Manitoba has necessitated that he remain in Thompson as the senior provincial public servant.

As you are aware, last night we began the evacuation of South Indian Lake, and I have just been informed that Gods Narrows is also in the process of being evacuated today. So we have a pretty serious situation, and I am sure my critics will appreciate the need for the ADM of Northern Affairs who is based out of Thompson to be in Thompson. I know I spoke to him late last night at the central command post, and he was quite busy in the process of working with the city to make arrangements to receive the people from South Indian Lake. We apologize for him not being here, but I think one understands the reasons behind it.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: 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 the consideration of the next line.

We will now proceed to line 1. Northern Affairs Executive (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits on page 124 of the main Estimates book.

* (1740)

Mr. Praznik: As we struggle to kind of get a handle on the branches, just the breakdown by the Estimates book as well as we have the Administration and Finance section which is the first following Minister's Salary. That is followed by Local Government Services which are 56 Northern Affairs communities. We also have the agreement's management, which is Northern Flood, treaty land entitlement and those particular issues, Economic Development side and the Native Affairs Secretariat. So if we could perhaps deal with them in those batches of issues, it would give some structure at least to the issues. Unless members have questions in the Admin and Finance area, I would

suggest we proceed to Local Government and get into those areas.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to pass the line 19.1(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits, and then go into the other areas referenced by the minister? [agreed]

Item 1. Northern Affairs Executive (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$275,300—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$121,700—pass.

2. Northern Affairs Operations (a) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$382,900.

Mr. Lathlin: Which main part are we on here now?

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Item 2. Northern Affairs Operations (a) Financial and Administrative Services (b) Program and Operational Support (c) Thompson Region (d) The Pas Region (e) Dauphin Region (f) Selkirk Region (g) Technical Services (h) Northern Affairs Fund (j) Inter-Regional Services (k) Northern Co-ordination Services (m) Northern Flood Agreement.

Mr. Lathlin: I usually have a problem getting started on these.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): While my colleague for The Pas looks at his notes, I would like to just take a couple of moments to ask the minister a few questions dealing with a particular issue that I raised in the House the other day. That has to do with the capital funding and the process that the communities use right now.

In particular, I refer to the capital funding in my region of the province and the Camperville area. The community of Camperville has been trying for some years now to get a firetruck. It is my understanding that through the regional process they have had the approval of the region, and they were supposed to be getting a firetruck. They were on the list, and at no point over the past three years were they told that theirs was not a good project. It got put on hold one year

because of the hall that burned down, and they had to cover the insurance costs so they could not get their firetruck. It is my understanding that just very recently they found out that their project did not qualify.

So the question I have to ask of the minister is twofold, and I will begin with the regional, the process. If a project is recommended by the communities, is that recommendation taken very seriously or is there a process that overrules the decisions made by the communities?

Mr. Praznik: The member asks a very good question, because she catches us at a time when we are moving from one process to another. I think when I get into my explanation she will appreciate a little more my answer, which was I must admit somewhat short in the House the other day. I offer my apologies. I should have provided more information to the member.

The process we have used to date are where the communities, with departmental staff at the regional level, start the process by developing their wish list, so to speak. The communities, we have been working more and more with NACC as they have developed as part of this process, and so from the regional level we will get an allotment of projects from the region. We will get the wish list, we will get recommendations on the number of projects that come out of that process.

Then they will be dealt with centrally by both NACC and our departmental staff, who meet together and sort out the recommendations for the regions, because obviously it is not just allotting a pile of money between regions and saying, that is your budget for the region. It is the budget for all of the Northern Affairs communities. So projects which may get support at the regional level, when they get to the central level, for lack of a better term, may not be as high a priority as others. A community hall may be a very high priority in a region, but when compared to a needed sewer, water, infrastructure project in a community in another region, may move down the list, as the member can appreciate. From that list then comes to me as minister a set of recommendations for the entire capital budget.

When the member spoke in the House the other day, the part of the equation that she was not aware of was

that central step. Yes, the Camperville firetruck made it out of the regional discussions, but it was removed at the central table in which NACC was also very much a participant simply because of priorities within the overall province.

So the list that came to me from this process did not include a recommendation for a Camperville firetruck. I think when there are other issues we will get into that specifically.

Now, what really concerns me is when the member for Arthur-Virden gets into the questions. His knowledge of this area gives me great concern when he gets into the questioning, whether I can handle the issues.

To the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), what we are looking at over the last year is that we spent a fair bit of time with NACC, with our communities and our staff in developing a better process, one in which the criteria or the prioritizing of projects is done better at the regional level. Often what has happened to date at the regional level is it becomes the debate among a number of communities in a region about their priorities, but they are not judged against some objective standard.

Do we rate a water and sewer project higher than a community hall? What do you need to have in place before you do a project? Obviously, in the case of a firetruck, if you do not have a fire department that is—and I do not use this specifically for Camperville, although there are some issues around the training at Camperville—a community can request a firetruck, but if they do not have people willing to be volunteer firefighters and do the training, a firetruck in a garage means nothing. Those types of issues have to be included in the criteria by which projects are judged.

In the case of the firetruck, whether or not the truck one currently has is adequate and meets standards and is usable versus a repair or work that has to be done at a sewage lagoon because it is failing. What we have not had in the process to date is the kind of criteria by which projects should be rated within the region. They are sorted out within the politics of the region, and I say the "small p" politics of NACC communities and then

come up to the central table. It is at the central table where those criteria tend to be applied.

* (1750)

We have worked with the groups very strongly, and I would suggest by next year we get into the capital process. In the fall time we will be using a somewhat different process. We have developed, or will be developing, with NACC a set of objective criteria which we will use then to rate projects and that will then be carried on at the local level. When the member made her comments in the House, one can appreciate where they are coming from with the information that is available. We all represent communities who are going to be out there trying to get things for their community, and that is certainly fair. MLAs will be representing that; that is certainly fair.

What we have done is a fairly good consultative process over the years, and I think we are going to make it even better because what has been missing has been those objective criteria. When that happens at the regional level, you will probably have communities like Camperville and others who will be seeing how their projects stack up on objective criteria earlier rather than later.

Ms. Wowchuk: Did the minister then indicate that you are changing the process by which the regions participate? Are the people in the regions, the community councils, aware that this change is taking place? If this is going to be the process, how is it being accepted by people in the region?

Mr. Praznik: Over the last number of months, and I want to just make the point that this new process, if it is acceptable to NACC and all works out, will be in place for this coming budget. It was not in place for this past one. We have had a lot of discussions and workshops in our communities to develop a host of ideas. We have a report that I intend to be tabling prior to the NACC conference in August of this year, and we expect to have a fair bit of discussion with the NACC group at that convention. Given the fact that they were part of developing this new process and were very much part of it, and a lot of their suggestions and ideas were incorporated into it, I suspect it will be

recommended by NACC this fall, and assuming it is recommended, that we will then have it in place for the fall time.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can the minister indicate, was there dissatisfaction amongst the communities with the old process that they made recommendations to have a new process in place, or where did the direction for this come from?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Chair, we have launched in the Department of Northern Affairs over the last couple of years under the leadership of Tom Farrell as deputy, a whole general process of looking at what we do as a department and trying to improve the service we offer. In this particular area of the capital program, and as the member can appreciate we probably have about \$12 million, \$12.5 million worth of capital projects at any one time that come forward from the communities. Some of them are very much needed; others are, like any community, they have their wish list of things they would like to do if there is money available, and we spend about \$2.5 million on capital.

So no matter how you make your selections of the projects you are going to take, you are always going to have people and communities that are not going to get the projects they want. Traditionally the process we have had has always led to some dissatisfaction, communities not understanding why they might get agreement in their region, but they do not get the project after it has gone through the central process with NACC and the department officials.

So we thought it would be better to have NACC communities help develop the criteria by which projects will be judged and have that criteria applied much earlier in the process, so that we reduce to some degree the number of communities who come out of it and say, well, how come I did not get my project?

I have to tell the honourable member I get lobbied regularly—as I know she does from her communities—as minister, and the president of NACC tells me he gets lobbied regularly because, again, \$2.5 million versus \$12.5 million worth of requests and you are going to have people always saying, well, if I go see the minister or I go see my MLA, my project will get on the top of

the list. We are trying to reduce that as much as possible.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chair, the question I wanted to start off with, and I am not sure where it is going to fit in, but I will ask it anyway, and maybe the minister can think about it for a while after, because I think we are just about ready to adjourn.

Since I have—well, even before I came here, I looked at the government of Manitoba in this province—and also I am quite familiar with how the federal system works in regard to Northern Affairs or Indian affairs or aboriginal affairs—and I have always wondered how the minister interacts with other government departments because I see the Department of Northern Affairs as being—it could be a pretty important department. I am not saying that it is unimportant right now. I mean, it has a role to play. But in dealing with northern Manitoba and the residents there, particularly the NACC group, I have always viewed Northern Affairs as having a lot of potential to do many things, worthwhile things. I have always viewed it as well that the Minister of Northern Affairs is really in an advocacy role. I mean, he is a minister of the Crown, I realize that, but he is the Minister of Northern Affairs. There is no other Minister of Northern Affairs in this province. So I have always viewed the department as maybe playing some sort of an advocacy role for the North, you know, like the minister speaks for the North, the minister is in charge of some programs for the North.

Yet this department is so small compared to the work that I see and I always perceive that needs to be done through this department. I know there are other government departments like Education, Health and so on, but I wonder how the minister sees his role as the Minister of Northern Affairs. Does he go into cabinet speaking on behalf of northern Manitoba, or what is his role?

When I came here the budget was \$20 million. It is down to \$17 million. There is a changing demographic out there as a result of Bill C-31. Numbers in the Metis community are going down, while on the First Nations side the numbers are going up very drastically. So it is changing.

There is talk, like in the goals and objectives, mission statements, there is a lot of stuff written about local government, local government development, developing those people to the point where they can assume greater autonomy and all those fine words that come with the books that we look at every year. So I would like the minister to think about, how does he see his role as Minister of Northern Affairs? Does he see it the way I see it, or how important is the Department of Northern Affairs? Like I said, it has gone from \$20 million to \$17 million, and if it goes down to a million dollars—

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., as agreed, the committee will recess until 8 p.m. We will resume here at 8 p.m. in Room 255 to consider the Estimates of Northern and Native Affairs.

HEALTH

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Will the Committee of Supply come to order, please. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health. We are on Resolution 21.1 (a) Minister's Salary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, I just have a few very brief questions, comments, if you will, and then would be prepared to give a final comment to see the Department of Health pass sometime in the not-too-distant future with a half-hour, hour-type thing.

At the beginning of the Estimates, quite often what happens is there are individual cases that are brought forward to the minister. I had one individual who called me fairly recently and had indicated—and I can provide the minister the name, if need be, or I will provide the minister with the name and maybe he can get back to me with respect to it.

This particular individual has a rare bone deformity called Madlung deformity and needs orthopedic shoes. Now, the cost of orthopedic shoes is approximately \$150—cannot necessarily afford it, and of course they are not covered by Manitoba Health.

I think there is, no doubt, a number of cases of this nature, and I guess what I would ask the Minister of Health is: Under what sorts of circumstances could financial assistance be given? I am sure, possibly somewhere within the Department of Family Services, there might be something. Or is there something within the Department of Health? Again, I will provide the minister with the name, and he might just want to take it as notice.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, I will do that. Quite often honourable members, the honourable member included, bring to my attention individual cases, and I believe that is an appropriate role for an MLA to bring forward issues of concern to constituents. In the ordinary course we take each such request for attention to be directed to a particular case quite seriously. We raise the issue with departmental personnel, explore what options are available to us and to the client or the patient, and sometimes we are able to help, sometimes we are not. But we always give it our attention so that when the honourable member brings this to my attention in more detail, I will be sure to raise it with the department.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, the other day I was talking to the Minister of Health with reference to the whole question of capital and had asked the minister if in fact he might be able to provide me some information with respect to process from the tendering aspect, once a project has been assigned, to seek some sort of assurance that it is an open-tender type of a process and the ways in which priority decisions are made with respect to capital projects that would both be driven from, let us say, the smaller community to the larger community, if you like, hospital versus clinic type of request and the process. Just to be on the record, if you will, in terms of asking for that information, again I would appreciate receiving that.

I wanted to conclude my remarks on the Department of Health by, in essence, making reference to the fact that this has been my first time going through the Health Estimates, and I anxiously await next year when we can possibly spend a bit more time going through the lines of health care. Throughout the health care debates, the minister has been most helpful in terms of providing information to the critics. I do applaud the

minister for doing that because, ultimately, I believe that it will provide for much healthier debate, questions and so forth. I do appreciate, as I say, the information that he has provided thus far. I will be going through Hansard to see if there is other information that may help facilitate me for the next round. I found this one to be somewhat of a learning experience for me. I have enjoyed participation from both the minister and the official opposition critic.

* (1440)

I wanted to make reference to something, once again, because I do not believe I can reinforce it enough. You know, during the debates and so forth, the member from Kildonan would make reference to the Minister of Health's speeches by one, two, three, four—it ended up being at nine. The minister would respond that, you know, if it is really important, sometimes it is worth repeating. One of the things which I feel is worth repeating—and I would ultimately argue that it is my No. 1, if you like—is to underline the importance of health care to every Manitoban.

I think that this Chamber can do a service to Manitobans by trying wherever and however we can to depoliticize this particular issue. Mr. Chairperson, it does not necessarily mean letting government get off for where it has made some mistakes or some of the ideas by being critical when some of the ideas that they are talking about—no doubt there are going to be areas and, in all likelihood, many areas, in which there will be an agreement to disagree, if you will. That is, in fact, something that can be very healthy again for us.

I am concerned, as all members of this Chamber, that it is very easy for us to stand up and to take the political easy route of attempting to score political points at the expense of what really needs, in many cases, to be done in health care. I recall, for example, some of the discussions, some of the responses in particular from the Minister of Health. I will pick out one of those examples, the tobacco. When the Minister of Health was in here, I was actually in the Finance Estimates for a period of time and I asked the Minister of Finance what he thought about the tobacco tax reduction impact on the province of Manitoba. The Minister of Finance indicated that it was really a minimal impact on the

province of Manitoba in terms of new people starting up smoking or smuggling and so forth. This is what he had somehow implied.

Then I came into the Chamber and, as coincidence would have it, shortly thereafter I posed that question that the Minister of Health was talking about how bad Ottawa was and how that was expanding—and endangering so many other lives and trying again to give the impression that that particular decision had a very dramatic impact on health care in the province.

I do not want to underestimate because, after all, I too did not support the reduction of the cigarette tax. I feel that in fact the higher the cost of a pack of cigarettes, the better it is, but I do not want to over-exaggerate something in order to plant the seed of doubt or fear.

So many times I heard the Minister of Health comment about, you know, planting the seeds that cause seniors in particular to get upset because they are fearful of what is happening in health care. Whenever there is change people get uneasy, and if you misuse facts or spread rumours that really do not have any solid grounds, what you are doing in many ways is, you are planting fear in the minds of people when it is not necessary.

Some of these individuals, I recall a lady that I knocked on on Burrows Avenue, and she was very pleased to see me. She started to cry, and she talked about the importance of health care, and after about 10 minutes at the door, the lady indicated to me that she cannot vote for me, she is going to vote for the New Democratic Party, and the member for Burrows asks why? Because that particular senior believed that the New Democratic Party was the party that was best able to deal with health care needs.

I had indicated to this senior that in fact it is individual MLAs that have more of a role to play in terms of the overall survival of medicare, of the five fundamental principles that we talk about, that no political party owns the health care agenda.

As I have referred to so many times in speeches before this one, you know, if one wanted to be political

and strictly talk about the politics of health care, I could say the Liberals talked about it first in 1919 in a policy conference. I could talk about, it was a federal Liberal government that put it across Canada. I could talk in terms of what has happened.

Well, the member from Burrows says, the dismantling of it. He believes because he is a New Democrat that he owns the issue of health care. Need I tell him, look at what is happening across Canada? It is just as much a political issue in every province where you have all political stripes that are trying to come to grips with the need to change health care.

I have seen governments that appear on the surface in treating of health care to be more right of centre, if you will, of traditional thinking in dealing with health care that you would be very surprised to see and, likewise, in terms of governments that have been left of centre, and seen some of the positions they have taken. That gives me a great deal of concern, but I go back to my No. 1 statement. That No. 1 statement is that each and every one of us can contribute to positive health care reform, can contribute to the health care changes that are needed that every province of every political persuasion is trying to come to grips with. The question is, is the political will there to do it? I believe from our perspective, from our party's perspective, that the political will is in fact there to do it, and I hope in the few questions that I did get to ask the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) that I was able to demonstrate that.

Mr. Chairperson, I hope that when we go into the health care Estimates the next time round that we will see more of the goodwill questions, answers, being responded to in a short, concise fashion; that we see government being not just criticized, but constructively, creatively critiqued where they are doing a job where we believe that they can do better, and not to be shy to take positions.

I think that we could virtually sit down and have a debate, for example, for 60-70 hours in Estimates, just dealing with the one issue of comprehensiveness, what is health care, very easily as the Minister of Health points out. We could do that, and you will find that, yes, there will be some difference among the three

political parties that are sitting here—but to come up with what we feel collectively through a consensus of what is comprehensiveness. What are the things in which we are in full agreement on? Then we go into the other aspects, the other fundamental principles, and be able to articulate on that. That in itself would garner a tremendous amount of good political will to be able to see a positive debate on those issues.

We all must concede at the onset that there is going to be a tremendous amount of disagreement, but there is no doubt in my mind that there would also be a tremendous amount of consensus that we would have achieved.

Mr. Chairperson, I just wanted to say those few words. As I have indicated, I appreciated the opportunity for the first time of being the health care critic, assigned to me as a part of my legislative portfolio. I look forward to next year's Health Estimates, and I look forward to receiving what other information was requested from the Minister of Health so that we will be able to further the dialogue in the upcoming session and possibly even arrange for some meetings. I know personally I would like to be able to tour a couple of the larger facilities and some of the smaller facilities that are out there so that I can get a better understanding in terms of the everyday workings of our health care system because I believe it would better prepare me going into the next year's Estimates.

* (1450)

With those few words, Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for his co-operation at this juncture.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I want to just thank the minister first of all for the opportunity to ask a few constituency matters and questions on some issues in the Interlake constituency.

One of the most up-front ones that I have had to deal with in the last four-and-a-half years, and the minister has dealt with this for some two years now, I believe, since he took over the portfolio, is the personal care home in Riverton. Questions are still asked of me as to what the minister's actions are on this matter, what the minister's department is doing with this.

First of all, I would like to ask the minister whether there has been any further correspondence from his office prior to the election and since the election to the committee in Riverton with respect to the personal care home, and if there has been, what message did the minister provide?

Mr. McCrae: I thank the honourable member for his interest in the issues related to Health in Manitoba as well as his constituency. Very quickly, in reference to comments made by the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) who spoke of the Estimates process as a learning experience, it is a learning experience for all of us. It certainly is for me as well. I learn from questions that arise, contributions to debate and discussion that happens in this House as well as elsewhere.

This is, as I recall, my second examination of Estimates, unless we did it in the fall of 1993. I do not think we did. I think we are something over 100 hours of discussion and debate in totality. Sometimes it can seem a little bit tedious. Sometimes it seems a little tiring, but taken as a whole these discussions are very good for all of us, and they are very good for Manitobans.

The honourable member wanted to avoid the tendency of repetition, and there is one area of repetition that is always in order, I suggest, and that is when it comes to saying thank you. I have the honour to be government spokesperson for Health, but there are so many people involved in the delivery of health services and health care services that I just do not know where to start. There are so many in Manitoba who embrace some of the things that were said by the honourable member for Inkster with all sincerity.

I am very pleased to repeat again, again and again: Thank you to all of those people who assist their fellow Manitobans, assist the government, assist institutions and communities in delivery of sound and safe health and health care services.

With respect to the question raised by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) respecting health services in the town of Riverton, there has been mail both prior and subsequent to the election. I

recently received another letter signed by the mayor of the town of Riverton, and there seems to be a single-minded determination in the mayor's mind that there will be a personal care home in Riverton. That approach is making it somewhat difficult for us to have a meaningful discussion of the health care needs of the population in that region.

I have been to Riverton. I have met in a town hall type setting with the people in Riverton. I have met on repeated occasions with the mayor and delegations from Riverton in my office. I have made it clear, I believe, in my correspondence that I support the facilities and/or services in Riverton that would be appropriate to a population health outcome-based analysis of the needs there.

My position has not changed in that regard working with the community and working with my department. I just encourage the community to work with the department in developing whatever health services might be enhanced or sustained or made available in Riverton. I am not committed to a personal care home and I have not been until I can be shown that is the appropriate thing to do. I recognize the desire amongst the people of Riverton for personal care capacity. I also look at what the rest of us have to do in the context of the province as a whole and the various regions of the province.

I owe Mayor Bjarnason a letter. I received one recently, and his letter is very clear that he sees simply the building of a personal care home in Riverton as the best outcome for him and his community. I do not agree with that at this point and that is the point I have made. It does not make me agree more to just discuss it in the absence of a discussion of the relevant health facts that would go into an appropriate determination of need for a personal care home.

I am very interested in the health care and the health needs of communities in every community in Manitoba, including the town of Riverton. All I would do is rather than keep having one-on-one meetings with the mayor, or meetings with the mayor and his consultant or others who might join, rather than continuing that process to attempt to persuade, I will be persuaded by the population health assessment that is

made by the department in consultation with the community.

I encourage that approach. I encourage the community to work with my department. There seems to be some sense that in the community, or certainly on the part of the mayor, that the department does not wish to move toward a personal care home. Well, the department does not walk into the discussions with that in mind. The department walks into the discussions with a view to planning for what is the most appropriate services for the town of Riverton, taking into account all of the circumstances. The mayor walks into the discussions with only the personal care home on his mind. So there has to be a better meeting of the minds than there has been, and any more personal involvement from myself will not assist in that endeavour. I intend to be corresponding with the mayor with that message.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for those words. It seems that the whole process—as the minister says that the community is dead set on a personal care home and nothing else. I think that perhaps some of that stemmed from when the consultant was indeed hired and put together the numbers and that that there was a fair amount of discrepancy between the consultant's numbers and the community's numbers as to the needs of a personal care home, or an institution such as, with their numbers and requirement as what the department felt was indeed perhaps not a requirement with their numbers. I think perhaps that is where some of this discrepancy may have began, and this is where the determination of the community to specifically stay with the personal care home comes from.

The minister indicates that there may be another direction that we may be able to go instead of specifically a personal care home. I believe in the last correspondence that I have read from the mayor to the minister, it indicates—I may be reading it wrong, between the lines, and I will share my thoughts with the minister and the copy of the letter, but I think perhaps we should get together very soon with the committee and the mayor and satisfy ourselves, and satisfy everybody, not only the department but the community as to what direction we should be taking. Is it

specifically a personal care home, or is it some other type of institution that we can provide so that the community will have access to proper health care?

* (1500)

I would ask the minister, has his department or is he planning to put together a proposal in lieu of the consultant's report? And the committee's suggestions, is there something in the very near future that we can take to the table with the community, with the minister's department? Hopefully, I would ask the minister that. I am sure this would be all right with the mayor and the community. I would certainly like to get a little bit more involved in some of the discussions, not only between the minister and the community but the department, if the minister would agree to that.

I have stayed out of this pretty well, excepting bringing it up to the minister's attention of course. I have stayed out of the meetings. I have wanted to have the committee present to the minister's department exactly what was needed. Not in light of any sort of thoughts that we are getting too political or we are getting too this or too that, but is there something in the process? Is the minister preparing something for the community so we can bring this to them?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, I hope the honourable member did not detect that in any way I would be critical of his role. The honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) has played, I think, an appropriate role as a member of the Legislative Assembly representing as well as he can the interests of a community. Let that be very clear for the record. Also, if the honourable member feels that he would like in some way to be of assistance in any further discussions, I would feel quite comfortable for the honourable member to get involved. I say that with some trepidation for the honourable member because, as I said in my previous response, I make myself as accessible and available as I can.

I have attended a number of meetings with Riverton folks respecting this matter. I do not see, at the present time at least, any further help that I can be until I am satisfied that the committee in Riverton has exhausted its discussions with representatives of my department.

I do get feedback from the mayor—I will not quote him because I do not have his letter in front of me—about the way the department is conducting itself. It is not always positive or laudatory. I really do not know if I should accept that as a criticism of the department. I am normally very much one to challenge the Department of Health or any department I happen to be fortunate or honoured enough to lead. I think that is the role of a minister to challenge a department. In this case, indeed I have done that.

I just find that a meeting of the minds has not been possible to this point. I would not venture to guess why exactly. I am trying very hard to keep an open mind myself, but to this point I personally have not been persuaded that the best population outcome would be served by the construction of a free-standing personal care home in Riverton.

I have discussed other possibilities with the committee and the population through the public meeting. I remember one woman at the meeting said, we will not back down. I thought, well, that is a pretty firm kind of position to be taking if we are going to look at population health outcome data in order to arrive at the appropriate services to be delivered in Riverton. We are not getting off to a very good start if some people have a personal care home on their mind and nothing else and they will not back down. That makes it very hard for the sort of population health planning that I am trying to talk about here.

I say, I have tried very hard, and I have worked with the community and met on numerous occasions. I invite the honourable member indeed to attend some of these meetings if he feels he can help. I certainly think there is a role for a local member.

There is apparently a long history here in Riverton. It is not just something that has been on the minds of the people in Riverton since my government took office. Reference is made by others to that point, and I will not bother going over that right now.

All I say—because after all they are voting on my salary this afternoon, Mr. Chairman. To the honourable member, if he is volunteering to get involved in this, I say, God go with you.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for those words and encouragement and the blessing that he has passed on to me.

I will be actually, Mr. Minister, getting more involved with the committee. I have had some discussions with the mayor and some of the other people on the committee. I think what we will be doing is—I would like to get together with them first and discuss other options, the pros and the cons of it, and certainly come back to the minister with it.

In light of that, and if such discussions can come about for the future of some type of institution or service in Riverton, I hope that if the community sees fit to come to the minister with a new agenda or new plan that the minister and his department do whatever is necessary to expedite any sort of service that we can provide to the community.

I would also like to say that for the Fisher Branch home the ground has been turned, if you want to call it that. They are ready to go on that. I am pleased to see that. That is part of what I was saying to the minister last year. You have these communities and these people who are working together to get something for their communities, and with the will of their hard work and proposals, financial input, I think we will all benefit with communities like that.

If I might ask the minister, we are all aware of the doctor shortages. I was at the Arborg meeting a couple of weeks ago that the minister was unable to attend because of the Estimates. I think one of the questions I would like to ask the minister is with respect to this. Talking to both doctors that are left right now in Arborg, their duties and their schedule are just tremendously overloaded. They are looking for some relief, summer relief for a weekend or two through the months of July, August, perhaps September.

The question that was asked of me by the doctors is, would the minister or his department be willing to perhaps do some cost-sharing with the Arborg area in respect to the doctors that they may be able to come and relieve them, the cost to that from Gimli? There are doctors that are willing to come over, but, as the minister is aware, it is a cost factor that right now the

Arborg community and Arborg district board cannot themselves take on. Is there something that the minister's department can do to help?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member and I discussed a meeting to be held on the 5th of June and, being unable to attend, Dr. Peter Kirk, I believe, attended and from reports I have heard probably added something to the meeting that I would not have been able to do, and I appreciate Dr. Kirk's attendance there. I understand that there was a good exchange of views there and that the meeting ended on a fairly positive note, which is very good to hear.

* (1510)

I do understand, having discussed this with the honourable member in the past privately, I do understand the gravity of the concerns felt by people in some Manitoba communities when physician shortages loom or when physician shortages happen.

I also understand that when there is a physician shortage, the physicians remaining are faced with very much increased workloads, their time is virtually never their own, their family life is impacted in a very significant way, negatively, I might say, to the point where in some cases it does not take very long until the burnout becomes so unbearable that the remaining doctors are not comfortable about staying around.

So I want the honourable member and all honourable members to know that I understand that, and you know that has not changed from the circumstances that have existed in rural and remote areas of Canada for years and years. Unfortunately, the solutions that have been brought to bear on that problem over the years have to some extent worked in isolated cases—a new initiative will be applied to a problem in a certain community and the problem is solved.

I have been experiencing it myself in recent months, that we can solve sometimes on a short term, sometimes on a longer-term basis, a problem, but the looming nature of the problem is something I would like to avoid. I find it very hard on the nerves of people in the community and hard on mine too, because I think it is a very serious concern.

If you live in the city of Winnipeg and a family practitioner decides to cease practice and go somewhere else, well, it might be an inconvenience to those patients who have become involved or have retained the services of that physician in Winnipeg, but there are other physicians they can go to, and arrangements are made and it is not such a serious problem.

In a place like Arborg it is a serious problem, and if this happened 10 years ago in Arborg, it would have been a serious problem and was when it happened and did happen. So we have to continue, it seems, with this particular problem looking for new and different solutions.

A solution in one community may not work in another community. That is why the members of the Physician Resource Committee, that is why the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, that is why the Department of Health for Manitoba have all turned their attention to this problem with a view to solving all the short-term issues we have right now, but also to looking at the longer-term solutions that can be resorted to so that physician resource issues can be resolved, hopefully, once and for all. I do not have any magic for the honourable member today on those long-term solutions. We have put on the record quite a number of times various things that are being done and they are solving some problems short term. I continue to look for that final report from the Physician Resource Committee which will come later this year.

The honourable member asked about cost-sharing for locum tenens programs or for shorter-term services coming from Gimli and what role the department plays. At this point I can take the question as notice and get some information for the honourable member. I take it he is putting forward a proposal or a representation on behalf of the district in Arborg. At this moment I am not prepared to say, but I will undertake to find out more about that and get some information to the honourable member.

Mr. Clif Evans: I thank the minister for that. I just want to refer back, if the minister does not mind—I did find the letter from the mayor that I got a copy of, and it was March 2. If the minister at his first opportunity

would go back to that letter, I believe the third page of that letter does indicate perhaps some changes in the scope of exactly what the committee and the community are looking at. I think we can get together on that and discuss that further.

I do have two very short little questions. One of them is a concern that was brought to my attention last year from some people in the Hodgson area about dialysis machines and the need for dialysis machines in Hodgson. Just lately I received a letter and a request from some people in around the Ashern area. I have done some investigating. I have talked to some people from different areas about this, trying to get a better sense of it. I understand some of the criteria that has to be put in place to have a dialysis unit brought into an area. I understand about the training program. I have gone through all of that, but there is a letter and I would like to—I am sure the minister because of the Estimates has not had time to peruse all of his correspondence. I would just like to provide the minister with this letter from the folks out in the Hodgson area.

The letter was addressed to the minister. There are support letters. I am really asking the minister's assistance on this. Is there something that we can do? I was basically told at one time that we should not as politicians, believe it or not, be sticking our noses in health areas where we should not be. I found that rather strange because we are not sticking our noses in it; we are inquiring about it. When I kept pressuring about, have there been studies done, there has to be a certain amount of people—and, from my understanding, there are a lot of people, or a fair amount of people, enough people that would provide for a dialysis unit to be put in place. On a scope—I mean, there are people from Ashern, from Hodgson, from Peguis, some who had to move to Winnipeg because they cannot travel back and forth, and it has caused some hardships.

I think between the whole scope of all that whole area, I think that perhaps we should be seriously looking at a dialysis unit for the area, somewhere perhaps central. Hodgson has got the facility available as far as a hospital there goes. I know that there is training for nurses involved. I am basically asking the minister's support in this and will follow up with a letter to him this week in response to the letters from

LaFrenieres in Hodgson—and his assistance in putting together and getting the Health department, if it so be, to find a comprehensive analysis and numbers that we can see whether a dialysis unit should be put in place in the Interlake. It is very important, and it would be very, very useful to a lot of people in that community, so I am looking for the minister's help on that.

Mr. McCrae: I thank the honourable member for bringing this letter to my attention. It is dated June 12. I have been through my mail. The honourable member may have got this copy before me, and that is all right, because it is talking about something that is very important to the people in that region. If the honourable member is going to follow up with some correspondence from himself to me, I will be watching for his correspondence too.

There are a few regions in Manitoba where requests for dialysis services come forward, and we have certainly added a lot of support to the provincial dialysis program. It is something that, fortunately or unfortunately, keeps on growing. What dialysis does is saves people's lives, and the more lives that are preserved, the more dialysis is required. It is something that, tragically, is growing in Manitoba. I wish we did not have to continue to increase funding for dialysis, but there is no choice in the matter. It allows people to keep living in, we hope, as independent a lifestyle as possible. It is not very convenient, I recognize, to travel great distances to a central location for dialysis services, nor is it convenient or something people want to do to actually move their home and possessions so that they can be near that sort of service. It is not a lifestyle I would wish upon anyone.

I look forward to hearing further from the honourable member. We will follow up at that time.

Mr. Clif Evans: Just one last, quick comment. From my understanding that there are—through my checking into this, I understand that there are units available, and there seems to be a problem between the units being available and initiative to find out is there really a need in a certain area. That is where I am having my problem.

* (1520)

Just on policy, one last question on policy, I have had a constituent come to me who had taken his wife to the doctor, right to the hospital. From one hospital the doctor indicated they had to send his wife to Winnipeg via the ambulance, local ambulance. That was done, and two or three days later, once the medical situation was corrected, the husband went and picked his wife up and for that received a bill for about \$275 to pay for the ambulance cost.

Now it was not up to the constituents themselves; they were told that she had to go via ambulance to Winnipeg. The situation in return was not necessary for an ambulance, but yet he still had to pay the bill. Can the minister explain that?

If they were to go both ways, they would not have had to pay, but if there is no need from a hospital from Winnipeg back to the community, not only are you saving the money basically for the ambulance, but why are you then paying for both trips?

Mr. McCrae: I hope I have understood this correctly, Mr. Chairperson, but it needs to be said that when medicare began in Canada, it was not a totally comprehensive program, "comprehensive" meaning everything that you can think of being covered. Ambulance service has never been part of insured services. There are certain exceptions for things like interfacility transport and that kind of thing. I take it the honourable member is referring to a trip from home to a Winnipeg hospital.

If I have this right, if I am understanding the issue correctly, it is my recommendation always when I talk to people about our health care system, there are some people who are surprised that our health system does not cover everything. That is why we have private insurers too, to provide supplementary coverage for those things we do not cover.

Here again, maybe if the honourable member would not mind putting something down for me on paper, we will follow this particular case up. I am disturbed sometimes when I see cases of people thinking that ambulance service is part of medicare; it is not. There are certain exceptions, but ambulance service was never insured under medicare from the beginning. It

was not insured in Ed Schreyer's day or Sterling Lyon's day or Howard Pawley's day or now, except in certain particular hospital circumstances.

We will get to the bottom of this, I say, Mr. Chairman, if the honourable member will remind me, privately, with the name of the patient concerned. If there is some opportunity for coverage, we will follow that up too.

Mr. Chairperson: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Just a few brief comments to close out, at least from our perspective, this particular Estimates process.

I indicated on Friday that it was a very useful exercise and a very useful interchange and exchange of ideas. I am very tempted to comment in response to some of the comments made by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) concerning his interpretation of the role and duties of members of this Chamber concerning health care. But I am resisting that, as well as resisting some of the tendency to reflect on issues that are of a controversial nature that have come up during the course of Estimates or during Question Period or, frankly, that came up in the recent provincial election. I am actually avoiding that and basically closing on the basis that it was a generally useful exercise of information. We do not agree certainly with all that is proposed or contemplated by the government, but I think we have been able to have a useful exchange.

There has been one issue, however, that is paramount in this particular regard that has not been dealt with, and we think it would be most useful if by moving a motion in this House we would have the opportunity to deal with it, Mr. Chairperson. It is a very specific point, and it is very, very directed toward this government and a failure, we think, on the government's part to make adequate and proper representations concerning the recent Bill C-76 before the federal government.

This particular piece of legislation will forever change the way that we deal with health care and post-secondary education in this country. This particular bill is of such significance that we think all elected

members provincially, federally and municipally should be actively involved in trying to salvage what we can and in trying to convince the federal government of the wrongness of their direction with respect to how they are heading with Bill C-76.

We have had discussions during the course of these Estimates concerning this, but there has been a failure on the part of this provincial government to make adequate representation in this regard. It has been brought home to bear, particularly when one considers that during the recent debate over the gun control legislation the provincial government sent two cabinet ministers to Ottawa to lobby with regard to gun control. We find for a bill that is going to see \$87 million removed from the province next year, \$160 million in the following year, that is going to fundamentally alter the way we deal with universal health care in this country, there has been no representation made to the federal government.

I know the minister said during the course of these debates that he is going to discuss this matter at a federal-provincial conference that is scheduled, but this is not enough in light of the fact that the provincial government saw it necessary to send two ministers to deal with the gun control legislation, in light of the fact that we have had a nonpartisan relationship of dealing with issues of this kind. In fact, there was an all-party committee that went to Ottawa when the federal government began the cutbacks to health and post-secondary education in the '80s, an all-party committee went to Ottawa to make the provincial case.

Now one of the most fundamental pieces of legislation to affect medicare, to affect health and post-secondary education has been passed by the House of Commons, Bill C-76, and we did not make adequate representation to the federal government with respect to what is wrong.

So, Mr. Chairperson, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton),

THAT the Minister's Salary, line item 1.(a) of the Estimates of the Department of Health, be reduced by \$950, an amount roughly equivalent to one round-trip ticket to Ottawa which would have allowed the

Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to appear before the House of Commons committee that reviewed Bill C-76 legislation that reduced federal support for health and post-secondary education.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate some of the things the honourable member said about the quality and nature of our procedures here in the examination of these Estimates. It has been an extremely sporting affair in the sense that honourable members have treated me with kindness and respect which I have tried most of the time to reciprocate.

*(1530)

Getting right to the issue that really has me preoccupied now, Mr. Chairman, this latest resolution moved by the honourable member for Kildonan, he must not have known the efforts we have made in light of the actions by the federal government to very, very seriously scale back funding for transfers to the provinces, various types of transfers, health, post-secondary education, CAP, equalization and all of those things.

The honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) and I engaged in some very useful and helpful discussions. I think the honourable member has also engaged the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) in the same type of discussions. We are very concerned about these very, very serious cuts.

I know the problems faced by the federal government. I do not excuse this federal government. I say it had a chance last year to begin in a more serious way addressing the extremely sticky problem that federal governments have created for themselves and by extension all Canadians in the way they have been spending our money.

I take this back to some time ago when this cycle of taxing and spending began. It began, basically as I have suggested, in the early '70s or perhaps slightly before that with the Pearson and Trudeau governments, and it got really bad '72-74 when there was a Liberal-NDP coalition in Ottawa. This is back in the '70s, I

say, to those who now find themselves in the situation of wondering how we got here.

Well, it did not just happen in the last few years. I am critical of the Mulroney administration for not addressing this problem sooner and leaving it to the Liberal administration to leave it still one more important budget opportunity, which they missed, to lower the boom on us in 1995 on February 27. I made the point very clearly that what happened on February 27 in the federal budget makes Meech Lake and Charlottetown look like relatively unimportant debates.

The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) knows that what I am saying is true, that that budget alone undid whatever might have been undone by Meech Lake and Charlottetown combined because we are into very serious sledding in the years ahead. I am critical of all of those governments, and I guess, by extension, all of us as Canadians; we put them there, and they delivered what they delivered.

I am told I am supposed to have appeared before the Commons committee that reviewed Bill C-76. Frankly, I can accept any kind of criticism you want to level at me when I deserve it, and I have done so. I do say, just what is it that honourable members opposite are trying to do? Do they think they can stop the people of Canada from insisting that they cease and desist gouging and pulling money out of the pockets of Canadians?

Canadians have had it up to here with taxation. I just saw in the papers a few days ago that—what is the name of that date?—tax freedom day is getting later and later every year, not because of new taxation policies, but because of prolific spending 20, 25 years ago.

We are still trying to pay for it. We are asking the next generation to pay for it by saying we ought not to address that problem; well, we have to address the problem. I am critical of the—

An Honourable Member: Mr. Chairperson, is this a filibuster?

Mr. McCrae: No, sir. No filibuster here. I am critical of the federal Liberals because their budget does not

demonstrate much in the way of priorities in terms of some of the items of spending in it. I remind honourable members that there is a meeting of federal and provincial Ministers of Health coming up on July 4, and I will be there. Manitoba's point of view will be heard loudly and clearly about the lack of priorities in the federal budget and about other matters relating to the financing of our programs.

I do humbly, however, appeal to my colleagues in this Legislature not to take \$950 away from my salary, because I—

An Honourable Member: How much?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, \$950, they want to take from my salary.

The point is, I ask honourable members not to be taken in by this sort of approach to—

An Honourable Member: Irresponsible of them.

Mr. McCrae: We have been involved in this too at one time or another, but surely taking \$950 from the salary of a Minister of Health who has just undergone over 50 hours of merciless grilling at the hands of honourable members opposite, unrelenting attacks on the spending priorities of this department. I put my fate in the hands of all honourable members in this Chamber.

Mr. Chairperson: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it. I declare the motion defeated.

An Honourable Member: Recorded vote.

Mr. Chairperson: A formal vote has been requested by two members. Call in the members. Let the bells ring.

* (1600)

The committee will come to order. In the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in the Chamber considering the Estimates of the Department of Health, a motion was moved by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak). The motion reads:

THAT the Minister's Salary, line item 1.(a) of the Estimates of the Department of Health, be reduced by \$950, an amount roughly equal to one round-trip ticket to Ottawa, which would have allowed the Minister of Health to appear before the House of Commons committee that reviewed Bill C-76, legislation that reduced the federal support for health and post-secondary education.

The motion was defeated on a voice vote, and subsequently two members requested that a formal vote on this matter be taken.

Formal Vote

Mr. Chairperson: The question before the committee is on the motion of the honourable member for Kildonan.

All sections in Chamber for formal vote.

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 23, Nays 31.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is accordingly defeated.

The three sections of the Committee of Supply will now continue with the consideration of the department Estimates.

HEALTH (continued)

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. We are dealing with (a) Minister's Salary \$22,800.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, I find it very interesting. At the end of my comments regarding the Estimates of Health, I talked about how important it is to all Manitobans that we start taking the politics to the degree that we have been playing over the years out of this Chamber. That was the focus of my comments at the end.

Mr. Chairperson, if you look across from one province to the next, coast to coast, you will see every political party acknowledging the need for change. I am disappointed, very disappointed in that we have once again seen an attempt by the official opposition to try to politicize a very important issue to every Manitoban in the province. I take great exception to any individual who will try to say—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The Minister's Salary is what is under discussion at this time; that is line (a) for \$22,800. The motion that was brought forward by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak)—

* (1610)

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, and—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The debate has been concluded. The motion has been defeated, and it is no longer to be discussed. The honourable member, on the Minister's Salary.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, then it is not appropriate to be able to say anything at this point in time?

Mr. Chairperson: I would just like to inform the honourable member that the debate on the motion that was brought forward by the honourable member for Kildonan has already been defeated.

Mr. Lamoureux: So now we are on the ministerial salary?

Mr. Chairperson: We are dealing with the ministerial salary at this time.

Mr. Lamoureux: That is right. Mr. Chairperson, at the end of my remarks, I will definitely pose a question to the Minister of Health.

I am concerned because I believe that there is no one inside this Chamber, and I do not want to say that I am better than anyone inside this Chamber, but I believe, Mr. Chairperson, that I am second to no one when it comes to defending that which all Manitobans care so very much about, those five fundamental principles. I talked, we talked for hours and hours about how important it is to acknowledge the need for change in this province. It is only the New Democrats in opposition in the province of Manitoba who defend the status quo. We will not progress in real health care reform unless the New Democratic Party takes some responsibility in dealing with this issue.

Yes, it is important for us to critique the government on health care, and we will do that, Mr. Chairperson. When the opportunity comes, when the government is doing something which we believe is wrong, we will critique the government on this very important issue, but we also acknowledge like every other political party across this country, whether you are an NDP in government or at least to a certain degree NDP in opposition in other provinces, that there is the need for this change.

Mr. Chairperson, the NDP will constantly and consistently argue, constantly, that health care in the province of Manitoba is in a crisis because they are, for all intents and purposes, a one-issue party. They need

and they believe that it has to be a crisis in order for them to be elected. They are wrong. In fact, Manitobans are smarter than that. The other day I was reviewing 1990 campaign literature, and they were saying that health care was in a crisis. In the 1995 scenario, they were saying health care was in a crisis.

Yes, there is a need for change in health care. Every province has acknowledged this. Every political party of all stripes has acknowledged this. We have seen cuts in all sorts of different areas, reforms in many different ways, from all political parties. We will continue to see that.

The minister and the NDP brought it forward, and we had dialogue about the \$416 million transfer payments, Mr. Chairperson, and the loss of revenue from Ottawa. At the time, I asked the Minister of Health what percentage of that is actually designated to go towards health care, and there was no definitive percentage that was designated to health care, even though the federal government does have funding formulas that have been established.

The federal government has provided opportunities for the government of the day to set health care as a high priority. I will be disappointed if the federal government does not live up to its obligation in terms of ensuring that provinces do what is needed in order to preserve health care, but I do not need to get a lesson from New Democrats on how to protect health care because I refuse to participate in the scare tactics that the New Democrats have used in the past.

I will not participate in that fashion. I will provide constructive, creative critique of this Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae). I believe I have done that during the last series of health care Estimates. I anticipate and will look forward to next year's health care Estimates where, as I have indicated just prior to the vote, I am anticipating that there will be a great deal more hours dedicated to health care so that we can enter into the discussions on the whole idea of comprehensiveness and how important that we address that particular issue, and the other fundamental principles that are out there.

I look forward at that time, and I hope that the New Democrats will look at their principles instead of trying

to operate solely on the purpose of bashing the federal government and trying to misquote what Liberals are doing in the provincial Legislature and saying that we are supporting everything that the federal Liberals are doing.

Instead of doing that, why do the New Democrats not get some principles on the whole issue of health care and do what every other New Democratic Party has done when they are in government, Mr. Chairperson? Why will not the New Democrats look on what has happened in the province of Saskatchewan, the province of Ontario under the Bob Rae administration, the province of British Columbia? If the New Democrats in opposition only did and reacted the same way in which they saw their cousins in different provinces react, this would not be the New Democratic Party that it is today.

I believe this is an official opposition that will do and say absolutely anything to try to tell Manitobans that their health care system is in an absolute crisis.

Yes, there is some need for change. I will acknowledge that there is a need for change. Yes, this government has made mistakes. We did not support, contrary to what the New Democrats say, Connie Curran.

When the health care reform package came out, Mr. Chairperson, what happened? We saw unions supporting the initial idea of health care reform. There was only one advocacy group of any sort, from what I could understand, that opposed the health care reform package even before it was released. That was the New Democratic Party, because they know where it is that they are coming from. It is important for the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I am having a very difficult time hearing the honourable member for Inkster in his presentation. I would ask the honourable member for Inkster to maintain the relevancy of the debate. We are dealing with the Minister's Salary. I am trying very hard to hear what the honourable member is saying.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I should keep my comments somewhat limited in the sense that I am needed in the other committee room where I am going to be talking about many other issues such as citizenship and, hopefully, if they are still on the line, to continue on talking about government contracts for advertising.

Suffice to say, Mr. Chairperson, it is important to me, it is important to the constituents I represent that health care and the importance of health care and preserving, enhancing and improving the quality of health care to the patients is in fact my No. 1 priority. I am prepared to do what is necessary in order to ensure that the positive, creative, straightforward and constructive criticism of the government is in fact done. I am not endorsing. We had numerous disagreements during the Estimates. We will continue to have disagreements.

I do believe that there comes a time when we have to start putting the patient first and foremost and acknowledge the hard work of so many thousands of health care providers that are out there. I will conclude by asking the Minister of Health—yes, it is important that the federal government knows where the Province of Manitoba is coming from. You have a Health ministers' conference that is coming up. We anticipate strong representation from this government.

I can assure all members of the Chamber, even the New Democrats, that my concerns I have talked about this afternoon will in fact be expressed to my federal counterparts in Ottawa. Then, hopefully, Mr. Chairperson, the patient will be the first priority to every elected MLA inside this Chamber. I would like very much to see the same sort of an attitude adopted when we pass the all-party resolution inside this Chamber talking about the importance of those five fundamental principles.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I do have to get to the other committee to deal with other Estimates.

Ultimately, as I say, the question to the Minister of Health is to give a response on what he believes are going to be the important issues in going to the Ministers of Health conference.

* (1620)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I listened with careful attention and no small amount of interest to what the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) had to say.

Mr. Chairman, I have to admit being on the receiving end of the resolution that was brought forward today that the member for Inkster really does raise some issues that are very relevant to a minister's salary but also very relevant to this discussion today and for the last nearly 50 hours, I understand, of discussion and debate on the Estimates of the Department of Health.

I have pleaded many times for the same thing the honourable member for Inkster is raising. That is that we all get together as Canadians and agree on those principles the member for Inkster talked about, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) and myself and others talked about, an appeal for a less partisan approach to the health issue.

We only need to look at what is transpiring in all of the jurisdictions across this country to know that every province and every administration, no matter what its political persuasion, is faced with the same very fundamental, extremely important challenges.

What I am still happy to report is that I sense a national feeling of support for our national health care arrangements. That means, make them work for all Canadians wherever they happen to live. I am more concerned for some jurisdictions than others, but they are concerned too.

I just respond to the honourable member that the priorities for health remain the priorities that are very amply and very carefully laid out in the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Health for this fiscal year.

With those brief comments, Mr. Chairman, I will again thank honourable members for their participation in the discussions we have had respecting the expenditures for the Department of Health, which I remind the House are the highest level of spending as

a percentage of budget anywhere in this country, right here in Manitoba. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) disagrees with that, and I am sure we will have further opportunities and further debates and future Estimates to debate that. If we are not the highest, we are right up there equal with the highest level of commitment to health.

Now let us commit ourselves to quality health services, Mr. Chairperson, and sustainable health services. Health services that we can pass on to the children and the grandchildren rather than through the profligacy which is urged by some honourable members and some political persuasions in this country. Let us pull together, as the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has said, to preserve the best of our health care system for future generations.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Chairperson, I feel that it is necessary for me to rise and respond to the tirade of the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) on this matter of the Minister's Salary.

I am quite surprised at the fact that the member for Inkster should make comments about the fact that we should become nonpartisan when dealing with the Minister's Salary and the particular issue at hand when at the very same time he stood front and centre as soon as the federal government was slightly criticized by members of this House in terms of their cutback on expenditures.

Even the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) was indicating that there is great difficulty, given what the federal government is trying to do with Bill C-76, and the Liberal member for Inkster, like all Liberals, stood up and said, yes, Mr. Axworthy, yes, Mr. Chretien, we will do whatever you say in Ottawa. We will do whatever your federal Liberal counterparts say.

If one wants to talk about being nonpartisan, if the Liberals in Manitoba had the intestinal fortitude to stand up and say to their federal cousins, no, we are not going along with your cutbacks, no, we are not going along with your renegeing on your promises in the red book, perhaps this Confederation would work to a greater extent. But, no, they have to stick with their federal cousins.

Mr. Chairperson, we have had a fairly good discourse and discussion during the course of these Estimates dealing with the minister, and I think that part of the best of what we see in this Chamber has occurred during the course of these Estimates. I also indicate that no cause is advanced by the perpetual sitting on the fence of the members of the Liberal Party and their refusal to acknowledge that when there are problems in the health care system and their continued reliance and their continued inability to even remotely criticize their federal cousins.

We are facing a crisis and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has indicated there is not a crisis. We are in a crisis situation and part of the difficulty is the federal Liberal Party and their cousins in Manitoba do not recognize the financial situation that they are placing this Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) and this province in by virtue of Bill C-76 without even discussing or without even calling federal-provincial ministers in, federal ministers of Finance in, to discuss how best to deal with the financial constraints that are placed upon the federal government. No, they have gone ahead and passed, without consultation, Bill C-76 and without embracing in the context of that legislation any mention whatsoever of the so-called five sacred principles that the member for Inkster pretends to support like most Liberals. There is not a single mention in Bill C-76 about preserving, legislatively or otherwise, those particular principles.

It is typical of the Liberal Party, both provincially and federally, to talk and not do the walk, to pronounce platitudes and to do very little. I sat in this Chamber for five years and watched the Liberal Party say nary a word about health care because they supported the changes. They voted in favour of Connie Curran and they saw the consequences of their actions. The members opposite say—and the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) is saying, fearmongering. If it was not for the New Democratic Party, the issue of Connie Curran would not have come to the public's attention.

If it was not for the New Democratic Party, the issue of the Home Care cuts would have stayed as a nonissue and the public would have been more affected by those cuts. If it was not for the New Democratic Party any

change made by this government in the last few years in terms of softening the reform process would not have happened if we had followed the dictates of the Liberal Party that were prepared to stand up and say yes to anything that was going on, Mr. Chairperson.

I do not want to prolong with debate. I held off for some time from dealing with the Liberal Party, who somehow can come to this Chamber and pretend that they are nonpartisan in health care and yet as soon as the federal government is criticized, stand up and defend the federal government right to the core. I find it hypocritical on the part of members of the Liberal Party to purport to be nonpartisan and then to follow the party line 100 percent in this regard.

Having said those few comments, Mr. Chairperson, I am prepared to pass these Estimates.

Mr. Chairperson: Shall the item pass? The item is accordingly passed.

Resolution 21.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,373,900 for Health, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1996.

This concludes the Department of Health. We will now move on to the Department of Justice.

JUSTICE

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Justice. We will begin with a statement from the honourable minister responsible.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Chair, it is my privilege and pleasure, as the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Manitoba, to present the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Justice for 1995-96. These Estimates provide details on the operations of each division in the department.

The Department of Justice is a very large department, providing services to the people of Manitoba in areas as

varied as Land Titles Office, Personal Property Security Registry, the Human Rights Commission, Legislative Counsel office and the Law Reform Commission.

At every stage of the criminal justice system, the Department of Justice also plays a critical role. I will begin my remarks with the activities of the three divisions most closely linked to the criminal justice system: Public Prosecutions, Courts and Corrections.

* (1630)

(Mr. Mike Radcliffe, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Through Law Enforcement Services, and particularly through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contract, the department plays a lead role in policing issues in the province. When a person is apprehended by the police, the department prosecutes the defence. It is the Department of Justice which provides courts throughout the province to decide whether an accused is guilty or innocent. If a person is found guilty of an offence, very often it is provincial Corrections which will be responsible for his or her incarceration or supervision during probation.

The justice system is absolutely fundamental to our democratic society. In carrying out our functions, we must be conscious not only of the rights of the individual to be considered innocent until proven guilty, but we also must consider the rights of society as a whole. We must also ensure that at every step of the process, the concerns and the needs of victims of crime are being met.

It is a fundamental right of the people of Manitoba to enjoy their individual lawful pursuits without fearing for their safety. Their government owes it to them to do everything in its power to foster public safety.

As important as the efforts of the provincial government are, it is the federal government which can do most to protect citizens through changes to the Criminal Code and the Young Offenders Act and by dealing more effectively with the most dangerous offenders who are sentenced to federal penitentiaries.

Our commitment to enabling the safety of Manitobans means we will continue to pressure the federal government to reverse existing laws or to introduce new ones to help us to protect our citizens.

While acknowledging the federal government's jurisdiction, we feel it is absolutely imperative to protest laws or legislation that are ineffective, outdated or simply unworkable. Manitoba Justice has several areas of concern, and we will continue to challenge Ottawa's position and their reluctance to act.

Manitobans recognize that government cannot do everything on its own. Making our province safe requires community co-operation and assistance. I am pleased at the number of Manitobans who take an active part in fostering community safety through such organizations as Neighbourhood Watch. While the overwhelming majority of Manitobans are law-abiding, there is a minority that is prepared to use criminal means to take what it wants. Increasingly, that minority has turned to violence. Manitoba Justice is in the forefront of the national drive to deal with these violent offenders more severely.

This government believes that there is no excuse for anyone to commit a crime. No matter how difficult an individual's personal circumstances may be, that person must be held accountable for his or her criminal activity. We have applied this philosophy in areas as varied as impaired driving and domestic violence.

Individual responsibility is the cornerstone of our approach to the justice system. We believe that criminals who are held accountable for their actions are less likely to commit other crimes. Public safety is a top priority for our government and for the Department of Justice.

These Estimates provide significant new resources for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The provincial police budget is increased by 3.6 percent. In addition, we will provide \$2 million to the City of Winnipeg, so it can hire an additional 40 police officers.

In addition to providing increased resources to police agencies, we are addressing the needs of victims. I am

pleased that the Women's Advocacy and Child Witness Program has been expanded to Brandon, The Pas and Thompson. A review of the operations of these offices has been completed, and I understand they have been most effective.

As well, the RCMP has victims' co-ordinators in seven detachments. These co-ordinators work directly with the victims to help them access the legal and personal services available in the community they need to cope with their experience.

We will be reviewing all of the programs provided to victims and develop a strategy to deal with victims across this province. The police are the frontline of defence for the ordinary citizen against crime. We expect a great deal from them, and they often perform heroically in responding to the many demands upon them.

The commitment of new resources by our government will assist the police in making our communities safer. We are committed to making police more effective. In the context of the First Nations policing policy, we are participating actively with the Solicitor General of Canada and the RCMP in consulting First Nations as to the kind of policing they want. Departmental staff have met with officials from all reserves in Manitoba. We have established the Dakota Ojibwa police service which polices six reserves. We expect to sign more agreements in the course of the year.

The efforts of the police, however, will be in vain if the rest of the justice system does not deal adequately with those who are apprehended. We believe that trials must be held promptly, and I am pleased to advise that Manitoba courts generally are able to provide trial dates in a timely way. We have implemented a number of measures to speed up court times, and we will continue to work toward improvements in this area.

In June 1994, the Summary Conviction Court was fully automated. All common offence notices generated in Winnipeg are processed in the new system. We expect to phase in the common offence notice system at all regional court locations during this fiscal year.

New technology can greatly assist us in dealing with the volume of cases. For example, the bail program currently working out of the St. Boniface Court is being relocated to 408 York Avenue. We will be introducing a new video link between the Public Safety Building and 408 York so that all first appearances will be made by video. This will reduce the amount of travel required by police, freeing them to provide services to the public.

We have appointed community magistrates in Oakbank, Lundar, Wabowden, Fisher Branch, Altona, Crystal City, Little Grand Rapids, Moose Lake and Virden. We are in the process of recruiting magistrates in several more communities. These magistrates ensure that justice services for community members and police agencies are locally accessible.

On the civil side we will be introducing legally trained hearing officers to the Small Claims Court. This will allow complex legal cases involving less than \$5,000 to be addressed in a new way providing greater options for members of the public coming to court. We will establish a task force which will consider other ways to speed up the courts.

As well, we are reviewing the experience of the pilot project for the new youth night court. A major concern is the willingness of some lawyers to work in the evening, and we are working with the defence bar. It is our plan that the night court will be relaunched later this year.

The Court of Queen's Bench, Family Division, is introducing a pilot project on case management of Family Division cases and a pilot program for parents who are separating or divorcing, which will provide the information on issues as they affect their children. It is our hope that these initiatives will reduce the length of the proceedings in Family Division and reduce the stress imposed on all parties, particularly the children.

When police have arrested a person and that person has been found guilty, we do not accept that they are to be coddled by the justice system. When a person chooses to break the law, and make no mistake every crime is an individual choice, that person must be made to realize that there are serious consequences for their

acts. We have, therefore, taken significant measures over the past year in order to make our Corrections programming, both for adults and youth, more focused and more likely to change that person's criminal behaviour.

In Adult Corrections we are developing a prison industry strategy and have been successful in increasing work programs. We have increased the number of inmate work crews and have worked with communities to identify work projects that are community based for inmates. In all of our adult institutions inmate privileges have been reduced. TV is now only available in evenings and weekends and visits to institutions have been restricted to those times as well. The prison schedule now resembles work.

We have moved from a system of automatically awarding a remission of sentence to one in which remission must be earned by the inmate for participation in industries and positive behaviour. We have also reduced the number of temporary absences that are granted and insist that they be allowed only where they are an integral part of the prisoner's rehabilitation plan. In all cases community safety must be the paramount concern.

In Youth Corrections we have established two boot camps and a work camp at Milner Ridge. This innovative approach to dealing with young offenders has caught the attention of correction workers across the country. There are five principles which our government applies to our boot camps. We believe that a spartan environment, regular work routine, limited privileges, consequences for inappropriate behaviour and participation in school and intervention programming will help turn the lives of these young people around.

* (1640)

The Corrections Division has developed programs on such issues as anger management, domestic violence and spousal abuse, drinking and driving program, alcohol and drug education and programs to help young offenders develop basic problem-solving skills and to increase their motivation for change. In delivering its programs and supervising persons on probation, the

Corrections Division has developed a broad network of volunteers numbering some 1,200.

It has entered into community participation agreements with 24 community organizations for delivery of general community correctional services. Twenty-one of these agreements are with aboriginal communities. As well, there are approximately 150 agreements in place for the administration of the fine option program in local communities.

Manitoba Corrections has also been instrumental in establishing more than 60 community justice committees. These committees provide diversion programs for young offenders. They engage in crime prevention and public education activities. They identify useful work in the community that the young offender can do.

I am proud to note the way Manitoba Corrections has also worked with communities. I am pleased on behalf of the government and I am sure all members salute the many volunteers who have devoted thousands of hours of their time in the effort to make our communities safer.

While we are justifiably proud of the quality of the Corrections programming that is provided in Manitoba, we recognize that this is dealing with the offender after he or she has broken the law. It is obviously best if we can work with the community in order to prevent crime from happening in the first place.

Manitoba Justice supports a broad range of crime prevention activity. Various local organizations receive grants to help their communities respond to criminal activity. We have developed with communities innovative programs.

I understand that about 30 schools have submitted ideas under the No Need To Argue program and that their ideas for reducing violence among youth will be considered over the next few weeks so we can have as many of them in place as possible at the beginning of the next school year.

The gang and the youth contact line has been another successful anticrime initiative.

We also believe that when the community is aware of danger it can take actions to protect itself. For that reason this government and the Department of Justice took the lead in developing Canada's first co-ordinated plan for notifying the public of the release of high-risk sexual offenders into the community.

This process recognizes the rights of offenders but allows us to make the safety of all Manitobans our paramount concern when dangerous offenders are released into the community. Our government consulted with the police and Corrections Canada to develop a detailed procedure that must be followed in order to provide police with the best possible advice as to how they should proceed.

With administrative support provided by the Department of Justice we now have in place under an independent chair a committee of responsible correctional and police officials to address this issue. They will consider in a systematic way the prior criminal record and the response to treatment of persons who are about to be released and whose cases have been referred to the committee.

The chiefs of the police departments, who remain ultimately responsible for the decision to publicize the return into the community of a dangerous offender, are given thoroughly considered advice as to the appropriate way to proceed under these circumstances.

Tragic events within our own community have led us to take an aggressive stance to curb violence, especially violence against women. Manitoba was an important contributor to the development of the federal antistalking laws. We will continue to review this legislation and make our recommendations to increase its effectiveness.

Currently there is before the Manitoba Legislature a bill on maintenance enforcement, The Maintenance Enforcement Act, which is designed to enhance Manitoba's ability to collect maintenance payments. These measures are quite extensive and affect other legislation, such as: The Family Maintenance Act, The Personal Investigations Act, The Highway Traffic Act, The Pension Benefits Act, The Garnishment Act and The Parents' Maintenance Act.

These changes reflect our recognition that the end of a relationship does not release an individual from their obligation to support their family. The amendments include reporting delinquent payers to the credit bureau; suspending and refusing driver's licences and vehicle registrations; attaching pension benefit credits; attaching jointly held monies; and increasing jail terms and cash penalties for defaulters and a few others which in our view will strengthen our Maintenance Enforcement Program and its effectiveness in collecting monies owed by defaulting payers.

The development of the maintenance enforcement package of amendments is an illustration of the way this government proceeds in making changes. We consulted those who use the system and sought their ideas about how it could be improved. We believe that the community with its broad range of experience can provide government with ideas for improvements and programs that we simply would not have been able to develop without their input.

This public consultation was the basis of our changes in the youth correction system. The people who came to the summit on youth violence made it clear that they wanted the government to deal more severely with those who break the law. Consultation was also the basis for the changes we made in the way the justice system responds to domestic violence. We will continue to consult broadly with the people of Manitoba as we seek new and better ways of making our communities safer.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): We will now have the customary reply by the critic of the official opposition.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Chair, just to outline some of the main areas of concern that we will be advancing in the Estimates for this year, as with last year we have not seen much of an increase in activity on the part of the government dealing with aboriginal justice initiatives. During this series of Estimates we will be reviewing the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report in greater detail than in the recent past.

We are also very concerned about the issue of violence against women, and particularly following the travels of the NDP caucus task force on violence against women throughout Manitoba this past winter, we have very many questions for the government.

We will be looking at the operations of the Family Violence Court. We will be looking at the support or lack of supports for women as they must enter the legal system. We will be looking at bail and how it is handled in Manitoba. Particularly we want to canvass with the minister why the bail court in Winnipeg that deals with violence against women cases cannot be moved into the Family Violence Court.

We will also be looking at the issue of counselling, particularly the treatment that is not available for alleged abusers and those who are proven to have abused.

We also want to canvass with the government the issue of its dealings with matters of child abuse. In particular, we want to look at the supports that are available to people harmed by such abuse, and we want to look at how child abuse cases are being handled in the Family Violence Court.

We want to turn some attention this session to the issue of senior abuse, both financial and physical, and when we get to the item dealing with the Public Trustee's office, I think it will be appropriate there to deal with this issue.

With regard to maintenance enforcement, the new voice mail system has now been implemented and we want to canvass some concerns there and as well deal with the problems that will remain dealing with maintenance enforcement.

* (1650)

Of course, Manitoba continues to, and I gather this from many different statistical sources, lead the country in terms of the level of crime. Most disturbing among the trends is the increase in youth violence.

We will be looking to review the minister's initiatives and statements over the last year and a half to deal with

that great challenge. As well, we will be very interested in reviewing with the minister the government's reaction to the general increase in crime, particularly among youth.

We want to explore the issue of the rights of victims and what can be done to enhance those rights.

As I said last session or the last time that we went through these Estimates, I deal with this process not so much as one for extended debate, but one which allows for accountability of the government to the public through the opposition critics. As well, it is a great opportunity for information-sharing among Manitobans.

With that approach in mind my participation will be mainly question-based rather than argumentative, although we certainly will have our points of view to exchange. So with that I have no further comments.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): Is the minister prepared to introduce her staff members present to the committee?

Mrs. Vodrey: I would like to introduce to members of the committee, Mr. Bruce MacFarlane, who is the Deputy Minister of Justice; Mr. Ron Perozzo, who is the Associate Deputy Minister of Justice; Mr. Pat Sinnott, who is the Executive Director, Administration and Finance; and Mr. Greg Yost, who is the Executive Director, Policy and Planning.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): The item before the committee is item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits amounting to \$401,400.

Mr. Mackintosh: I know the department has gone through some significant changes over the last year.

I am just wondering what action is taking place to fill the position of Mr. Stu Whitley.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, just to tell the member that the details are just being formalized to fill that position, we expect that the advertisements will be out for that position within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Mackintosh: Will the government be advertising that across Canada?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, yes, it will be a national search.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister describe whether that appointment is seen as one that is up to the discretion of the minister or is there deference to the Civil Service Commission and hiring solely on the basis of merit?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, certainly the position will be filled on merit, and I have to take issue with the member's question of any suggestion that an individual filling such a very high-ranking position within the Department of Justice would be on anything other than merit. Certainly it will be a matter of merit.

It is going to be filled by a selection committee chaired by the Civil Service Commission. The deputy minister will be on that committee, and we are also looking for a practitioner to participate on that committee. However, as with all positions of that level, they are, in fact, finalized by Order-in-Council.

Mr. Mackintosh: I suggest that instead of the minister taking offence to it that she relish in the fact that the official opposition and that in our democracy people ask these questions and are watchdogs in the government to ensure that that in fact is the case, and we will be watching.

I wonder if the minister would tell the committee who is filling the role of Mr. Whitley at this time.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, the position is currently being filled on a rotational basis by Mr. Mike Watson, who is the Director of Regional Prosecutions, and Mr. Les Kee, who is the Director of Special Prosecutions. The rotation is approximately two months each.

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the position that was held by Mr. Bruce Miller, is there a competition now underway to fill that position?

* (1700)

Mrs. Vodrey: At the moment that position is being filled on an acting basis. The plan is to first of all appoint the ADAG. With that, that individual will then sit on the selection committee for the director of Winnipeg prosecutions.

Mr. Mackintosh: I acknowledge that the department has gone through a lot of changes over the last number of years. I know historically the department had very little turnover in all the different positions. I know that there are difficulties in adjustments that can follow from such changes.

I want to thank the minister for providing, although at a late date, the answers to the undertakings from the last time we went through Estimates. That was about just over a year ago. There are a number of questions that remain outstanding. I wonder if the minister can advise me in particular on the record what the answers are.

First of all, I had asked for the particulars of the information campaign regarding the health care directives legislation that was enacted, oh, three or four years ago now. No information was provided. Am I to take it that there, in fact, is no information campaign that has been launched by the government?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, my understanding is that that question was answered by the Department of Health—oh, sorry. That information campaign was handled by the Department of Health.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, I will pursue that with the Minister of Health because I certainly know of no information campaign by the Department of Health, although I am aware of one by the MMA. I will clarify that with that minister.

Another question which is unanswered is the number of charges laid under the antisniff bill. Might I take it that there have been no charges laid under that legislation?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I believe the member will see that question is answered in his book that I provided.

For the record, I would be very happy just to describe this very large book of undertakings which we took from Estimates last year, which are listed question by question. The department did carefully outline the questions taken directly from Hansard, provided the indication and an answer under it and provided appendices, alphabetically, following those questions. I believe, if he looks on the third page, he will find that question reflected and an answer.

Mr. Mackintosh: I thank the minister for that, and I regret the oversight.

This issue of a lack of tracking mechanism to segregate these cases is a problem. I wonder how we are to find out whether the legislation is effective or not if we do not know how many charges have been laid and how many prosecutions follow. I wonder if the minister is able and willing to put such a tracking mechanism in place.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I presume, in the course of these Estimates, there will be a number of suggestions and recommendations which come to the Department of Justice. We will certainly have a look at all of those suggestions and see if it is possible to implement that. I take this as the first of what I believe may be many suggestions from the opposition to look at ways to make our system the most efficient it can be.

Mr. Mackintosh: I do not see in here the answer to the question whether reference was made to the Hawrylyshyn report when the internal inquiry was conducted into the Chief Medical Examiner's Office. I am just wondering if the minister knows the answer to that.

Mrs. Vodrey: In checking with the department and my own memory, we do not recall an undertaking for that particular question, nor did we find it in Hansard. To my knowledge, we did not.

However, when we get to the line dealing with the Chief Medical Examiner's Office, perhaps the member would like to raise the question at that time.

Mr. Mackintosh: There are other questions regarding, for example, the travel budgets for the Thompson and

The Pas Women's Advocacy Program offices. I take it, it would be better to deal with that item under the appropriate line in the budget. Maybe the minister could indicate by nodding. Okay.

I have some questions of government policy generally. Unless the minister requires support staff from divisions that are not represented here today, I would like to proceed with that.

First of all, with regard to an issue that was raised in Question Period today, and that is regarding the inquest into the infant deaths at Health Sciences Centre, it is my understanding that two Crown attorneys are being seconded, or have been seconded, to be the counsel to the inquest. That leaves a number of concerns.

Mr. Chairperson, No. 1, these two Crown attorneys depend on the government for their career paths. They report to the minister and, therefore, are not independent of the government. The inquest will look at matters, not only internal to the Health Sciences Centre, but will be looking at the priorities that the government has placed on certain areas of health care expenditure and staffing, and will be looking at how the government and the minister's office has responded to certain issues raised from time to time by people involved in the issues.

So there is, Mr. Chair, what I see an apparent conflict of interest, a cause for concern. Manitobans can certainly come to the conclusion that the inquiry, the inquest, is not independent. From that, there are always lingering concerns about whether evidence may have been suppressed, whether evidence was as aggressively pursued as it could have been. Those are all the kinds of questions that arise when one looks at whether there is an apparent conflict of interest.

I ask the minister whether she, as the Minister responsible for The Fatality Inquiries Act and as the minister responsible under Section 27 of that act for the appointment of legal assistants to an inquest, has considered the issue of conflict of interest?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I am attempting to take the member's earlier comments seriously in that he is asking questions that he feels may be questions in the

minds of other people. I am hesitant to believe that he would be accusatory about our Crown attorneys and the behaviour and the professionalism that those individuals would display within an inquest. I certainly believe that, if he is questioning the integrity of the Crowns, that is a very serious allegation. I would wonder what he has in any way that might back up such an allegation, and I think he should present it.

* (1710)

In answer to the question in a broad sense assuming that he has asked a question that might be in the minds of other people in the public, I would say to him first of all that Crown attorneys historically and to my knowledge have always understood their role in this kind of a situation, their role which is one of being neutral and detached and the role to assist the judge. The Crown attorneys appointed are senior Crowns and, I believe, have a record of doing the work of a Crown attorney in whatever capacity required in a very professional way.

Secondly, as he well knows, there is a judicial officer presiding. During this inquest, it is Associate Chief Judge Sinclair. He has expressed concerns about evidence suppressed, a very serious allegation in my mind. However, I would remind him that the presiding judge has the complete authority to pursue any avenue that individual wishes to pursue and that, if in the mind of the judge there is some reason to look further into one area or to ask for further information, then that most certainly can and will be done.

The role of the Crowns is to assist the judge in this fact-finding inquest, and I am certain that I am able to reassure him and members of the public, if that question existed in the minds of any member of the public, that our Crown attorneys are professional and act with integrity and are there to assist in the fact finding in this really very serious issue which is before them.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, if the minister thinks she is going to stifle my comment or the role of the opposition on this matter by suggesting that we were reflecting on the integrity of an individual, she is darn wrong. We are reflecting on the role of people in the

system. This government cannot identify a conflict of interest when it is looking them in the face. This inquest is going to be a two-year process, one that deals with the most sensitive of matters, the death of infants.

There is no use getting off on the wrong foot here and screwing this up before it even gets into the hearing stage. I do not know for a moment why the inquest itself would want as its counsel individuals who could raise the possibility of arguments of apparent conflict of interest. You do not even get to the issue as to whether there in fact would be real conflict of interest or a real bias because the individuals concerned here are outstanding individuals and they have reflected very well on both their role and on this government. The issue is one of conflict of positions. The government is investigating itself. That counsel is responsible for the gathering of evidence over a two-year course of time and for the eliciting of that evidence before the inquest.

I ask the minister whether she has received any communications from the court expressing concern about the counsel that has been appointed to act for the inquest.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, the member need not get all worked up and exercised on his side when the Minister of Justice makes a very valid point about the integrity of Crown attorneys working for this province. That is my role, to assure him of that integrity, and that is exactly what I have done today.

I am very pleased that he feels that the individuals who have been chosen to do this are, in fact, individuals of integrity, and I hope what goes along with that is respect for the fact that they will handle this position as they have handled others which are very important.

The member has gone on about a time frame which he has stated as fact. He does not know that. He has indicated that there is a certain time frame for a certain length of time for this inquest. He does not know that. So I would ask him, when he states facts and when he states, for the record, his opinion, that it be recorded as his opinion in terms of length of time of the inquest and so on.

Mr. Chair, the individuals, as I have said, are there to assist the judge. We believe that their assistance will be professional. He is absolutely right. This is a case which is a very serious case for the people of Manitoba, and it has been treated in exactly that way.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, on top of the concerns that I have expressed, does the minister not have some concern about the senior prosecutor in the youth court being seconded to deal with this? She says, it is not two years. I recognize that. I do not know how long this will take, but when the youth court is backlogged as it is, why is that prosecutor being taken away?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, the member continues to allude to what he refers to as a delay in the area of youth courts, and I know, when we get to courts, we will spend some time speaking about exactly how long this process takes. I assured him the other day in Question Period that in fact, in the area of youth courts, things are proceeding very well. He has alluded to a time frame during Question Period, which was completely incorrect.

So what I would assure him and those I believe he may be questioning for, that we certainly do not expect any further delay. We do have a number of competent people who are working in the youth court system. If I can offer him assurance at this point, I am pleased to do it.

Mr. Mackintosh: It will be one of our themes as it has been for the last year and a half that the youth court is bogged down. It is bogged down now according to some observers and for some it is—well, let us put it this way—we have been advised by some that the system is not working as well as it has in the recent past. We have indications both from the private bar, the people who specialize in youth cases and from Legal Aid that deal in youth prosecutions or youth defence, that the backlogs in the court continued unabated in the last year and a half, that it takes up to a school year in some cases.

I am not saying what averages are. I am not saying what the in-custody period is. I am saying that it takes—and this is not unusual—up to a school year to get some youth prosecuted. It takes up to, as I recall—and

I will bring the statistics in—but I recall as much as six months for someone who pleads guilty. We had the recent case of an individual who pled guilty and was unable to be sentenced for 11 months following the date of the incident.

* (1720)

We understand that in the youth court the predisposition reports are taking weeks and weeks. It is getting worse. The probation officers are absolutely swamped, let alone do they have time to deal with the supervision of youth who are released into our community.

We understand from many that there is a shortage of Crown attorneys in the youth court and when, as we understand, there are only two full-time permanent employees of the government who are lawyers in the youth court, I ask this minister how she can justify seconding the senior prosecutor in the youth court leaving only one full-time permanent government lawyer left in that backlogged court.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, this question came up in Question Period and I believe will come up again when we get to Courts Division.

As I said in Question Period, there is certainly time available in youth court, and I believe that we are looking at in and about a three- to four-month availability of time, certainly not nearly the time that the member has tried to put on the record today of something like a school year, in the range of 10 months. I think he is alluding to 10 to 12 months. I am not sure where he is getting his figures, as I assured him the other day there is, and there are, court dates available.

He also knows that we did put into place a pilot program for youth court, and it is true, and we will get to the discussion on this, that some lawyers were not interested in utilizing that time in the evening, and it says that we do need to have the opportunity to work with some of those individuals, so that they can understand that young people do not really want to miss school. You know, if we can see a young person in the evening, then that is a benefit to the young

person, whose routine is not broken, and that young person then is seen and is able to keep their regular schedule of activities.

It has also been our view, as we were discussing policy in this part of the discussion of the Estimates of Justice, that parents must again be involved with their young person through the justice process, and through the youth night court initiative, there was an opportunity for parents then to attend with their young person.

Many parents just cannot take time off work. The cost factor to them and their families, economically, is really significant. So we set up this pilot project, and we believe that we can work with the defence bar to see that, in fact, these cases are seen in the evening, as well, and that certainly will assist in making sure that youth court operates in a very timely way.

However, I have the June dates for the member which have been provided for me by Courts. I am happy to go over them again when Courts attends at Estimates, but in-custody dates are two to three months, and that is as of June, '95, so the member's questions and his dates, I am not sure where they come from.

As I said, in the area of out-of custody cases, the range is approximately four months, so the time frame is one in which we have been working very hard as a team within Justice, and as he knows, this requires not only Crown attorneys in the area of Prosecutions, it requires court staff. It also requires the judiciary to be interested in this and also to be willing to support it. This really has been an effort in the whole area of making sure that our court system operates in a very timely way that we have been able to bring it to this time frame.

As I look over some of the information that we have from other provinces across Canada, I see that our time frame is certainly very, very good, compared to other major cities across Canada. In fact, we are able to have court dates available sooner than in many other major cities across this country, but I stress to the member court dates are available, as he well knows. Some lawyers, in some cases, decide not to take advantage of those cases and those court dates which are available

earlier. So, if I can provide that information to the member, I hope it will be helpful to him with the dates as of June 1995.

Mr. Mackintosh: Given that the minister acknowledges that there is work being done to try and reduce these backlogs, I am just wondering then why she has acquiesced in the secondment of the senior prosecutor to the inquest.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, the member uses again a term of backlog. I wonder if he is listening. Somehow he has not heard across the floor what the answer is, and that is, the very timely period in which court dates are available.

I am surprised to hear him continue to repeat what in his mind is something that to the rest of us is a myth. Court dates are available. I am surprised to hear him continue to repeat that somehow they are not.

As I said in an earlier answer, yes, we have agreed to the secondment of Crown attorneys for the inquest. That is the usual practice, by the way. The member, I think, knows that. It is the usual practice that our Crown attorneys act at inquests.

The member for Rossmere (Mr. Toews) reminds me that the previous NDP government appointed him when he was a Crown to act in an inquest by Judge Kimelman—in an inquiry. I beg your pardon, Mr. Chair, it was an inquest. The former government also followed this practice, too. It is a practice that certainly has been seen as workable.

I did say to the member that we do have Crown attorneys who are available to continue keeping the youth court operating. We look at its present level. We are always looking for improvements in the area of processing through the court system and will continue to do that.

Mr. Mackintosh: I want to confirm with the minister that indeed Crown attorneys are the usual counsel to inquests, and they are even sometimes and usually are a counsel to inquests which involve government action, for example, whether it is a death in a public institution. This inquest is different because it will reflect on and

make inquiries into broad and specific political priorities.

We will pursue the issue of the backlogs in the youth court. I might suggest to the minister that she get feedback from the legal community that is active in that court, because they are saying that it has never been as bad as this, that there are horrendous backlogs. It is with that advice that I bring that information to the House.

I understand the minister's department had a meeting of officials, individuals who are involved in the justice system in Manitoba numbering about 80 about two or three weeks ago. I am wondering what the objective of that meeting was.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I am thankful the honourable member brought this forward because it does give me a chance to speak about a proactive measure which was taken by this department under this government. What it was, was representatives from the full spectrum of the justice system met, and they were discussing ways to continue to improve the criminal justice system.

It is the first time this has happened in Manitoba. I can tell the member that there were representatives, including judges, prosecutors, Legal Aid, the police, Corrections, court administrators, financial managers and information technology specialists.

* (1730)

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the objectives of the meeting though, can the minister list what those were?

Mrs. Vodrey: The goal is in the statement I gave to the member, and that is that these representatives of the justice system came together to discuss how to make the criminal justice system even more effective. They were looking at improvements. That was the broad question.

They were looking at it from one end of the system to the other. They were not looking at it on separate days with separate little segments or chunks, but instead it was an opportunity for the full continuum of the criminal justice system to be together to try and

look at how this system can be made even more effective.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand the minister's deputy was there. Were there not any concerns expressed about the backlogs, particularly in the youth court?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I am told the answer is, no. The deputy minister tells me, as do other staff who were present, that they were looking at ways across the system to make the system the most effective it can be, but no one jumped up on that day, I am told, to speak about concerns regarding court delay.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand that the meeting broke down into several discussion groups, I think eight or nine in number, and I am wondering if there was a listing of the concerns that were raised in those group meetings, and second of all, whether the government plans to publish a report on the recommendations that came from this group.

Mrs. Vodrey: The member seems to have the wrong idea about the tone of this meeting or the purpose of the meeting. The meeting was not to walk in and say what was wrong and here is how we are going to fix it. He seems to be asking questions which relate to people's criticisms.

The purpose of the meeting was, in fact, to get together and think about how do we make the system even more effective. We brought together people who are very familiar with the process. These people were encouraged to bring forward ideas ranging really far and wide as ideas, so that those ideas then could be examined.

The Department of Justice is currently looking at gathering all those recommendations together, putting them together under themes, and looking at each of them. That feedback will be provided to the participants, so that they can see what actually was gathered together from each of the several groups that were working on the issues.

Mr. Mackintosh: I suggest to the minister that if you are going to look to improve, then you have to know what is not working as well as it should, and I would be

amazed if people did not bring their concerns to this meeting.

I will ask the minister whether she is prepared to share with the official opposition the recommendations that are gathered.

Mrs. Vodrey: The member continues in the whole negative tone that his party always puts forward in this Legislature. Virtually everything is a negative. Anything that is undertaken to benefit a system must be driven by a negative in his mind.

It has to be because people have complaints. It cannot be because people have vision. That is in fact what this was looking at. It brought together people within the system for vision, to look at how we can make the system operate in the most effective way. It was systemic. It was a way to look at the whole system and how the system works one part with another.

So the driving force is not, as the member seems to indicate, a list of complaints. That we will somehow then get a list of ways to try and fix the complaints. That was not the purpose. That was not the tone, and I am told that certainly is not what happened.

This day was in fact a day of people familiar with the system attempting to come together and looking at their vision for the system. It is not a study. It is not going to put together a list of recommendations like a task force. Instead, what we expect will be contained, what I expect will be contained—and the member knows I was not a participant at this—are some strategies which may deal with the system. We understand other provinces are also quite interested.

If the member is truly interested in some of the wide-ranging ideas, then I think that would be helpful. If the member is instead intending to get a list of recommendations for which he will just hold up a scorecard and try and say, this was done, this was not done and so on, it is never the tone and that would not be helpful.

What would be helpful is to really look at what was provided, how these things can be accommodated, if possible, as people are thinking. All of their ideas may

not be able to be accommodated, but they may not all be able to be accommodated immediately.

The problem with the other side is such a negative point of view in that they just simply get a list of numbers, and they are not really thoughtful about how those actually apply to the system or can be effective. So I am certainly looking, this is our government, for some benefits to come from the day of vision.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, if the minister would like me to be more thoughtful in my contributions, perhaps then she could agree to share with me the recommendations that are gathered from this meeting.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, what we expect will come forward when all the work is put together is some ideas. The member calls them recommendations. I think from my discussion about what we expect, I would not want him to have the wrong idea, and I think he might have. So I would like to say to him again that we do expect that there will be some ideas.

I am told that some of the ideas are things such as even sharing resources, such as sharing xerox machines within departments or divisions. If some of those ideas would be helpful to him, then we will see that some of the productive ideas are shared with him.

* (1740)

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, I take it from the minister's answer that she is not prepared to share the document that will be prepared for feedback to the participants with the opposition. Is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, of course, there is the member right away looking to get into some kind of an argument, believing somehow that he is not going to get everything he thinks that he should get, and if he reflects on my answer—when we get the ideas and the ideas are put together and there are some ideas which will be helpful, we will be happy to have him see it.

Mr. Mackintosh: I ask the minister to share with me those ideas or recommendations, both which she thinks

would be helpful and those which I might think are helpful.

Would the minister agree to that and provide the entire document that will be provided as feedback to the participants?

Mrs. Vodrey: Absolutely.

Mr. Mackintosh: I will have to check my question. There must be a loophole in there somewhere.

We have been becoming increasingly concerned about the delay in receiving annual reports in this Legislature from agencies and indeed the Justice department that are under the control of the minister. For example, the annual report for the year ending March 31, 1993, was tabled in the Legislature on March 14, 1995, which is almost two years to the day after the date for the ending period of that report.

Then, today in the House, the minister tabled a report for Legal Aid Manitoba for the year ended March 31, 1993, and, as well, tabled the report for the Manitoba Human Rights Commission for the calendar year December 31, 1993.

I ask the minister what rationale she has for the public of Manitoba as to why it took so long to table the annual report of her department's activities.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, the member is speaking about reports in the plural so I feel it is important to answer him that two of the reports which I tabled today are reports which are the responsibility of independent boards of groups which provide that report to government to table. I table them in the House when I actually receive the information from the group. As the member knows, we have to be sitting in the House to table a report. That answer is similar for the Department of Justice report in that I am told that it arrived in my office but the House had risen the day before.

So there is certainly every effort being made to see that the information is provided to the people of Manitoba, certainly, to the members of the opposition

when it is received, but sometimes we simply have to be sitting in the Legislature.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister advise the committee when she received from the Human Rights Commission the annual report for the year ending December 31, 1993?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I do not have that information available to me now but I will see that the member gets it. However, really the answer is the same in that we look to provide the information and if he is looking to suggest that somehow I was casting to our Human Rights Commission or any other commission independent of this government the fact that they did not provide it, no, that is not the case. However, I do understand they have work to do in the preparation of reports and so that is one reason why reports come in the time that they do and then, secondly, as I said to the member, we need to be sitting in the Legislature.

Mr. Mackintosh: I also wonder if the minister would advise the committee when she received from Legal Aid Manitoba their report for the year ending March 31, 1993.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, I do not have that information available today, but I will see that the member receives it.

It looked to me as if the member might be moving on, so I just wanted to take a moment to say that we certainly understand on this side of the House and I understand as minister that it is important to have these reports tabled in a timely fashion and, certainly, we are looking at ways to make sure that process is more effective. That is exactly where we are now. If there has been any consideration about the time frame, we are certainly looking at trying to remedy any of those concerns at this time.

Mr. Mackintosh: I have some questions for the minister regarding the meetings that were held about the changes to the maintenance enforcement regime. I am wondering if the minister wants to deal with that now or whether that is more appropriately dealt with later on.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, it would be more appropriate to deal with that a little bit later on when we are at the Family Law line when the people who have worked in that process are here.

May I take a moment, Mr. Chair, to introduce a new member of the staff who has joined us at the table. This is Mr. Mike Watson, who is the Director of Regional Prosecutions.

Mr. Mackintosh: Perhaps since Mr. Watson is here, we can discuss the Family Violence Court in Brandon. I think the minister has at her disposal some information which I think Manitobans are waiting to hear.

I was surprised, to say the least, to read the annual report for the year ended March 31, 1993, and discover in there the proclamation, the pronouncement that a Family Violence Court has been established in Brandon based on the model of the Family Violence in Winnipeg. It says, "Aside from a focus upon family violence cases, this court also hears all sexual assault trials."

That was particularly surprising, especially after the NDP caucus task force on violence against women concluded its hearings in Brandon and heard from many people who are in the know, women in particular, who said, gee, whatever happened to the discussions that had been taking place some time ago about establishing a Family Violence Court in this city.

* (1750)

In the Estimates from last year and at no point since I have been critic have I been aware of a Family Violence Court operating in Brandon. So, when I called the Provincial Court in Brandon to find out whether this was in fact true, the Provincial Court in clear terms said that there indeed was no Family Violence Court in Brandon.

The Women's Advocacy Program personnel in Brandon would not confirm or deny that to me, which is astounding given the fact that it is the job of the Women's Advocacy Program to advocate, to advise of what services are available.

I phoned the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women in Brandon, and was advised that, although there had been members of the committee accompanying women to court dealing with abuse cases, there certainly was not any Family Violence Court that was identified, and in fact other kinds of trials were on the same docket. It is my understanding that there is at least one defence lawyer in the city of Brandon who says there is a Family Violence Court in Brandon.

The minister the other day said that we were offending all of those people who worked in the Family Violence Court in Brandon. Just do not leave us hanging anymore. I am wondering if the minister can explain just when the Family Violence Court was established. She first said it was in September of '93, which actually was after the date of the annual report so that did not make sense.

When was it established? Is it given a budget? When does it operate? Is it certain days? Is there in fact a certain judge or judges who are assigned to deal with Family Violence Court? Are there particular Crown attorneys who have specialized insights into family violence who prosecute these cases? Perhaps the minister can take it from there.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, let me assure the member now, as I assured him when he asked the question and I assured others through a media report, there is most certainly a Family Violence Court operating in the Brandon area.

The member really thinks it is funny. It amazes me because this is a serious matter. It is very difficult sometimes to figure out what further information he wanted.

The Family Violence Court in Brandon was established in September, 1992, and the first docket that we can identify is actually October 28, 1992, with cases being adjourned from earlier points probably in September. So the docket marks that it was in fact a Domestic Violence Court day.

The court was established on recommendations of Pedlar, but what we were asked to consider and

recognize was Brandon's geographical community, Brandon's population. We were asked to be sensitive to the court in Brandon and how that court would work.

It is hard for me to tell, but I think what he is trying to do is sort of lift a court out of Winnipeg and have it operate in exactly the same way in Brandon, yet the recommendation was to set up a Family Violence Court in Brandon for the Brandon area but recognize the discreetness, the geographical area and Brandon being the city that it is to make sure that it fit that city area and that catchment area. That is exactly what happened, Mr. Chair, and that is exactly how it operates.

The model was achieved, as I said, in September, 1992, with the first docket that we have marked on the court docket as October 28, 1992. Perhaps it would have been easier if I had said to the member from the very beginning that it had been operating since the fall of 1992.

What we were asked to consider, as well then, was population. The intake court is, in fact, as I described, a general court, because if we were to try and hold cases till there was the volume of cases to have a specific domestic violence intake, then those cases could, in fact, have been held over and over, and it would have been slow to get those cases to court, so in the intake, there is a general intake. However, after the general intake, cases are seen on a specialized day set aside for domestic violence cases. The only difference there is that cases of sexual assault are also heard on the domestic violence day, and that is not necessarily what happens within the city of Winnipeg.

However, the court is operating. That is how the court operates. The Crown attorneys do have training in the area of Domestic Violence Court. As the member knows, and we can speak further as we move into Prosecutions, it has really been our effort to see that our Crowns across the province certainly have sensitivity and training in the area of domestic violence.

Mr. Mackintosh: Are the Crown attorneys that prosecute these cases given specialized knowledge, or do they also deal with all of the other kinds of prosecutions in Brandon?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Chair, since the implementation of the Family Violence Court, Crowns have been involved in seminars relating to family violence issues at the Manitoba Crown attorneys and western Crown conferences.

Yes, there has been some specialized training. However, the implementation committee, when this court was being set up, identified two Crowns that they believed really were the ones who had shown the greatest sensitivity, willingness and interest to work in this area. It is these two Crowns who primarily do the work of the Family Violence Court.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister tell the committee how many Crowns are in Brandon?

Mrs. Vodrey: There are four Crown attorneys in Brandon. Two of those four are Crowns who do the work in the Family Violence Court. The Crowns do do work other than family violence work, however, the two Crowns who primarily work in the Family Violence Court are the ones that had been noted as having a special interest and seen as having a particularly good skill in working in this court area.

As I said to the member, there has to be consideration for the population of the community and for the volume of cases. That was part of the request to us by the implementation committee in setting it up. They asked for something which would in fact suit the city of Brandon and area and not necessarily just lift a model from one place to another.

As I said, the difficulty, had that model been lifted, is on the intake court, where in fact there may not have been the volume to sustain a single intake court, and therefore those cases or that docket would have been held over until the volume reached a certain point. That really does not seem that would suit the people of that area to hold over cases in that way.

The court in Brandon, which most certainly exists—and I am pleased the member referenced the defence bar as well, because the defence bar does know that there is a Family Violence Court. He says, well there is only one. Well, there was one quoted in the newspaper article where he did his research. In fact, I

would think the defence bar is more knowledgeable than that and certainly does know there is a Family Violence Court.

I guess it is all in the way you ask the question and how you will get information back. If he tells me that he phoned the Brandon courthouse, I am not sure whom he spoke to and how he phrased his question.

However, this government has fulfilled its commitment, Mr. Chair. The commitment is to see

there is a Family Violence Court in the Brandon area and also to extend the services.

The member referenced Women's Advocacy. Yes, that was a decision of this government a year ago to extend the services of Women's Advocacy to the Brandon area as well as to other areas in this province.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 19, 1995

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Committee of Supply
Laurendeau 1893

Tabling of Reports

Report, Legal Aid Manitoba;
Annual Report, Manitoba Human
Rights Commission
Vodrey 1893

Oral Questions

VL T Revenues
Doer; Filmon 1893

Pharmacare
Chomiak; McCrae 1894

SmartHealth
Chomiak; McCrae 1895

Forest Fires
Jennissen; Driedger; Pallister 1895

Red River Community College
Friesen; McIntosh 1896

Community Colleges
Friesen; McIntosh 1896

Sexual Harassment
McGifford; Vodrey; McIntosh;
Mitchelson 1897

Gaming Commission
Lamoureux; Filmon 1898

Pediatric Cardiac Care Program
Mackintosh; McCrae; Vodrey 1898

GM Franchise
Maloway; Ernst 1899

Franchise Legislation
Maloway; Ernst 1899

Manitoba Housing Authority
Cerilli; Reimer 1900

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.
Cerilli; Reimer 1900

Rural Hotels/Motels
Wowchuk; Findlay 1901

Winnipeg Arena
Dewar; Cummings 1901

Whiteshell Provincial Park
Struthers; Cummings; Driedger 1902

Winnipeg Jets
Sale; Stefanson 1903

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Second Readings

Bill 12, Louis Riel Institute Act
Praznik 1903

Bill 17, City of Winnipeg
Amendment Act (2)
Reimer 1904

Committee of Supply

Culture, Heritage and Citizenship 1906

Education and Training 1934

Northern and Native Affairs 1954

Health 1959

Justice 1974