



Third Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

33 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Hon. Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Q.C., Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	IND
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Hon. Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 17 May, 1984.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a statement; I believe the Clerk has copies.

On behalf of myself, acting in my capacity as Attorney-General, and on behalf of the Minister of Highways and Transportation, and the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, I am today announcing the second phase of the government's ALIVE traffic safety campaign, the first phase of which was launched in November, 1983, and focused on the province's new seat belt, child restraint and motorcycle helmet laws.

The initiatives announced today concern the grave social problem of drinking and driving. These initiatives mark both a continuation and a stepping up of initiatives first announced in May, 1982. At that time, Mr. Speaker, in addition to other steps, a Task Force was established to make recommendations to the Attorney-General. Some of the initiatives announced today are based upon recommendations contained in the Task Force report released last July.

Legislation will be introduced in this Session to amend The Blood Test Act in order to extend exemption from civil liability for taking blood samples for alcohol and drug analysis purposes without consent, where consent cannot be obtained, to cover registered nurses and duly qualified laboratory technologists in addition to doctors, who are currently covered.

This proposal, I am pleased to say, Sir, is fully supported by the Manitoba Medical Association.

Legislation will also be introduced eliminating provisions in The Highway Traffic Act which currently permit a suspended driver who is unsuccessful in his or her appeal to the License Suspension Appeal Board to appeal further to the County Court.

Mr. Speaker, a careful analysis of comparable legislation in other provinces shows that only one other province, and that is New Brunswick, Sir, permits what is, in effect, a second appeal. A further analysis of available statistics, as recently as for the full year 1982, demonstrates that our License Suspension Appeal Board deals fairly with those who appear before it. It is our belief, and that of the Task Force, that a second level of appeal weakens the deterrent effects of the license suspension which automatically follows a conviction for a drinking and driving offence.

Mr. Speaker, it is our view that an increased certainty of being apprehended is not only the best deterrent

there is but, properly used, can act as a preventive measure. We strongly support the extension of the ALERT program which, when operating, has proven highly successful and commands great public respect.

We have offered to provide the City of Winnipeg with a specially equipped Breath Alcohol Testing vehicle similar to one successfully used in Vancouver. We are prepared to help fund a three-year pilot project whereby the ALERT program would utilize this special vehicle throughout the year. The vehicle makes it possible, Sir, for the police to administer the full legal breathalyzer test on the spot, increasing the efficiency and certainty of the operation.

I may say that the RCMP are already doing spot checks for impaired driving on a year-round basis on the highways.

In May of 1982, Crown Attorneys were instructed to charge an impaired driver as a second offender, that is, one facing a mandatory jail sentence of not less than 14 days upon conviction, if the driver had a previous conviction at any time within a two-year period. At my request, Crown Attorneys have now been advised that this time allowance, announced in May of '82, is a mandatory minimum and that, where circumstances warrant, the second offence charge can and ought to be laid even where it occurs later than two years from the first offence.

Mr. Speaker, to carry on the work of the Task Force on a permanent basis, we are appointing a Ministerial Committee on Drinking and Driving. One of its mandated tasks will be to monitor our program and report back to government with recommendations for improvements to and possibly extensions of the program.

I am very pleased to announce that Margaret Taylor, founder of Citizens Against Impaired Driving, and herself the mother of a victim of a drunken driver, has graciously agreed to be the chairperson of this committee. As one of her first tasks, Mrs. Taylor will be representing the province at a major North American Conference on Alcohol and Highway Safety being held at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institution in Baltimore in June.

The government, through the Attorney-General, Sir, has communicated to the Minister of Justice its support in principle for proposed changes to the Criminal Code designed to strengthen the criminal sanction against drinking and driving.

A preventive theme is reflected in the Safe Grad Program introduced in a number of high schools this year. Through the Department of Education and the support of the Minister this program has received strong provincial support and endorsement.

Mr. Speaker, in support of these initiatives announced today, the government and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation are launching today, at the beginning of the first long weekend of the summer, a multimedia public information and awareness campaign.

This campaign will run to the end of the year and then be evaluated using as its theme: "Drinking and Driving: The Hangover Can Last a Lifetime."

Its purpose is to remind drivers of the tragic consequences which all too often result from the abhorrent practice of drinking and driving. It is also designed to bring home to everyone the legal consequences to the driver as well as the social consequences to the victims who often, Sir, include the family of a convicted and jailed impaired driver.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the opposition and the vast majority of Manitobans will support this government's actions in stepping up the campaign against drinking and driving. Those who drink and drive must be made to realize that the public will no longer tolerate this irresponsible behaviour. With the help of the Ministerial Committee and, I hope, of members of the public we will be monitoring the situation on a continuing basis. I want to assure this House and to assure the people of Manitoba that if further steps are required and capable of being effective, we will not hesitate to consider further action. The counterattack on drinking and driving will not let up. It is the responsibility of all Manitobans including the government to take a stand against drinking and driving.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We on this side of the House thank the Attorney-General for his statement and we would offer to him I am sure, Mr. Speaker, the unqualified support of members of this side of the House in this particular program.

I think politicians and governments of all political stripes support action of this type in order to attempt to stop or reduce these tragic incidents that affect lives of Manitobans much too often.

Mr. Speaker, I offer one comment to the Attorney-General with respect to his announcement and that is with respect to the elimination of appeals from the Licence Suspension Appeal Board to the County Court. Mr. Speaker, those appeals are with respect to persons obtaining licences for the purposes of work only, to drive for the purposes of work.

I would ask the Attorney-General, Mr. Speaker, to review and investigate and perhaps have the information available when he brings the proposed legislation before the House, to inform the House as to the number of persons who have had an appeal allowed by the County Court. How many of those persons have then, while that order has been in effect, violated the terms of that order and, in fact, been impaired while driving for the purposes of work?

If there is a significant number, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Attorney-General I will support the amendment; but if there is not, then I will not personally support the amendment because that appeal is there to allow people to continue to work under an order of the County Court.

If the deterrent action that has been taken is proven successful in those instances, that is, people who have had appeals allowed, have followed the orders in the great majority of the cases and continued working, then obviously there has been a deterrent effect in what is being done and there may not be any need to eliminate that appeal.

On the whole, though, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House support the action of the government with respect to this matter.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like leave of the House to make a non-political statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Minister have leave? (Agreed)

The Honourable Minister.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Thank you. Last evening, Mr. Speaker, the YWCA held its Eighth Annual Women of the Year Awards dinner and announced winners in seven categories. Included among the winners are several women familiar to this House.

In the Business category is Carol Johnson. Carol is the only woman representing management on the Manitoba Labour Board. In the Professional category, Betty Havens, our Provincial Gerontologist, was the winner. For Public Affairs, the awardee is Olga Foltz, the Director of the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Association.

Other winners include Dr. Wendy Dahlgren in the Sports/Leisure category, a new category; Mary Lile Benham in the Arts category; Myrtle Lorimer in the Community Services category; and Dale Turner for Management category.

I am certainly pleased that the contributions made by these women to our community have been recognized by the YWCA and by all of us. I am sure that all members of the House will join me in congratulating these women.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the opposition, I, too, would like to associate myself with the remarks made by the Minister of Labour. It's been an honour and a wonderful association for these women to have been chosen, and we certainly go along with the appreciation.

RETURN TO ADDRESS FOR PAPERS NO. 7

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have for honourable members Return to Address for Papers, No. 7, Correspondence concerning Wiesinger Systems Ltd., dated January 9, 1984, on the motion of the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 38 students of Grade 5 standing from

the Kleefeld School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Martens and Mr. Siemens. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

There are 10 foreign exchange students of Grade 12 standing from Inter Culture Canada who are attending various Manitoba high schools. These students are under the direction of the co-ordinator, Mrs. Gagné, and Mr. Stevens. They are accompanied by five visitors from the International Centre, English as a Second Language Program, under the direction of Mrs. Stevens.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Wife-beaters - prosecution of

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Attorney-General. Today's news reports indicate that, according to lawyers and judges, the Attorney-General's policy of prosecuting wife-beaters is wreaking havoc with the victims, their families and the judicial system. Is the Attorney-General prepared to review his policy?

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I'm always prepared to review any policy in place and in force and being carried out where complaints are received about it. We're certainly open to that extent. I must note, however, that in a sense I'm taking this question as notice. I've asked the Director of Prosecutions and the Director of Osborne House for their comments and I will endeavour to obtain statistics.

I do note, however, that the Senior Crown Attorney at the City of Winnipeg feels that, by and large, the program is effective. My own information which is anecdotal at this point is that, indeed, it is successful. There will always be a certain number of cases where it isn't; that goes without saying. But, yes, it will be reviewed and I have immediately asked for a report from the Director of Prosecutions who is now the Acting Assistant Deputy Minister and from Cathy Hiller of Osborne House so that I may see the other side of the picture as well.

MR. G. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the Attorney-General then undertake to inform the House of the results of that review and whether or not there will be any changes in his policy?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, indeed, I'm pleased to give that undertaking.

Home Management Systems - conflict of interest

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, during the Estimates of the Attorney-General, I raised a matter with him regarding the interest of an Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, Zorianna Hyworon, who's in charge of

computer information systems for the government, and has an interest in Home Management Systems as a shareholder and director of that firm, and Home Management Systems entered into a contract with the Liquor Commission to provide computer information advice on wine. Has the Attorney-General completed his investigation of that matter and determined whether or not there is a conflict of interest?

HON. R. PENNER: Indeed, I advised the Member for St. Norbert at that time that I would look into the matter immediately. I have not yet completed - I'll use his term - investigations. What I have done is collected the basic information and sent it on to the Provincial Auditor for his comments. But, let me put it on the record here at this juncture, first of all, that what is being dealt with is a three-month trial program, a contract which began on April 1st and expires on June 30th.

Secondly, that at all material times, the person in question has filed first with the government and then, subsequently with the Liquor Control Commission, her interests in that and other companies indeed. So, indeed, she's filed and refiled on her own initiative so that I want to make it clear that this person has been, at all times, fully open in her disclosures of various interests. The other thing that I would note is that, prior to this contract being entered into, the Director of Internal Audit of the Liquor Control Commission gave it as his opinion that there was no conflict of interest. I don't feel that that necessarily concludes the case and, therefore, subsequent to the Member for St. Norbert asking his questions, I have put all of this material, a copy of the contract, a copy of correspondence with the Liquor Control Commission, a copy of disclosures with the Provincial Auditor and, as soon as I have his report I will either table it in the House or give it to the Member for St. Norbert, but certainly it will be disclosed.

The final point that I would mention is that the little pilot project, I think the contract is for \$3,000 or \$4,000, involves a product which is only marketed by this one firm. So, it wasn't a question of one tender being preferred over another.

Police Commission hearings

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on another matter, would the Attorney-General inform the House as to the daily cost of the Manitoba Police Commission hearings, that is, the cost of the rental space, the commission, the lawyers, court reporters, etc., everyone involved in that hearing? Could he advise us today of the daily cost of those hearings or undertake to obtain that information and provide the House with it?

HON. R. PENNER: I'll take that as notice and, to make that clear, undertake to obtain the information if it can be computed on a daily basis; I suspect it can, in round terms, and to provide it to the House.

Co-operative Implements equity

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister responsible for Co-operative Development

and ask the Minister if he can confirm that farmers have had their hard-earned equity in Co-op Implements reduced to \$100, thereby forcing many farmers to take a substantial loss on their Co-op investment?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Co-operative Development.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, as the member is aware that would be a matter that would be a decision of the membership of the co-operative itself and would be in their realm and their purview to make. I can get at the details as to any decision they made recently in that regard and report back to him.

MR. D. GOURLAY: In light of the fact that farmers have had their equity seriously reduced or, in some cases, confiscated entirely, did the province as a major investor recommend this course of action?

HON. J. COWAN: The province has representation on the Board of Directors, but I would not suggest in any way that it is a controlling factor, or that it in fact would be able to make such a decision unilaterally. What I can indicate is that the Board of Directors would be the appropriate body to make that decision, that the membership would be involved in that and, if they have done so, I will report back as to the details of any decisions, but I can't accept the assumption that the province would have a major role to play in respect to the internal decisions of a co-operative such as the one we're discussing today.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll ask another question to the same Minister. Does the Minister agree and condone this course of action that has been taken?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Whether the Minister agrees or condones something is not a suitable question. Would the honourable member wish to rephrase his question to seek information?

The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same Minister, in light of the fact that the Board of Directors of CCIL has sitting on the board representatives from the Manitoba Government, Saskatchewan Government, Alberta Government and Federal Government, in light of the fact that this company is really being run by a government-controlled board, would the Minister inform the House whether or not his directors, which he has appointed to that board, condoned this action and put this forward as a favourable way of helping this company?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Co-op Development.

HON. J. COWAN: Again, there is an assumption that we control the board and that the Manitoba Government controls the board and, in fact, that a number of governments control the board. I think that is an erroneous assumption and should be laid to rest; that is, indeed, not the case. I can check back as to what

recommendations were made by the government representative, the Manitoba Government representative, as to any discussions that were undertaken on this issue and report back to the member and I will undertake to do that, but I can't accept the premise that we, in fact, would control the board or would make this decision on behalf of the board or on behalf of the co-operative itself. We are a member of that board. We act in an advisory capacity on many items, but our advice is given the same weight as the advice of anyone else, as an individual participant on a Board of Directors that runs that co-operative.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A further question to the same Minister. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House as to the status of the refinancing package which was entered into by the province approximately two years ago, one of the criteria being that the membership from CCIL, the farm population, would raise an excess of a million dollars in equity over the two-year period; could the Minister now inform the House whether or not that objective has been met?

HON. J. COWAN: Well, I can inform the member as to our participation in it and what we've done to date. I'm not certain that's exactly what he requires. In respect to participation of other parties, I can attempt to get that information and that which can be made public will be provided to the member. So if he wants detail as to our participation at this time, I can provide that to him. If he wants details as to the participation of other parties, I will make a determination as to what that has been and if, in fact, it is general practice to make that information public and if so, we'll do so.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, since most co-operatives are public, I believe that information, whether it comes from the government or the co-operative, should be made available to the people of Manitoba, but a further question, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if the Minister, in light of the refinancing package which was negotiated two years ago, in light of the fact that the \$1 million equity to be put up by the farm population represented a major initiative by the government at that time, because without that commitment by the farming population this company will, in essence, become a Crown Corporation controlled by the Federal and Provincial Governments.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. R. BANMAN: Could the Minister inform the House as to how exactly this fund-raising, this equity drive by the membership is progressing and whether or not there has been any achievement of that million dollar equity position by the farm population?

HON. J. COWAN: Well, I don't want to repeat the comments that the Minister of Agriculture has made in respect to all that we have done for the agricultural community in this province to the member who has addressed a comment from his seat. However, if they want me to go through that long list of progressive and positive things that we have done, I would be prepared

to do it. In the meanwhile, I'd like to answer the question which was put in the appropriate fashion in respect to that which has been done on the refinancing package.

I think the Member for La Verendrye should be aware, and I know he is aware, that the refinancing package was finalized and when it was so, it involved twelve major co-operatives, three Provincial Governments and the Federal Government and Co-op Implements itself. So if he is suggesting that that refinancing package turns it into a Crown Corporation, I would suggest that the very structure of it was made so as not to allow that to happen.

If he's repeating his earlier question as to how much has been raised in respect to the \$1 million commitment, I will repeat my earlier answer, that I will find out that information for him, find out that which should be made public by the government - because we are dealing with an entity here that has an organizational life of its own - and they may be the ones that would be more appropriately suited to make that information public and I'm certain they would do so. But I will find out what has been the normal practice in the past in respect to making information of that sort available to the House. We'll undertake to provide that which is available and that which has been provided in the past.

Raising of drinking age

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, another question to another Minister. At the beginning of this Session the Honourable Attorney-General made a government statement with regard to drinking and driving. In his statement he mentioned that he will not hesitate to consider further action which will reduce the amount of problems caused by drunk drivers.

In light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that many provinces, as well as states in the United States, have raised the drinking age from 18 to 19 and to 21, in light of the fact that the statistics show that increase does help to create safer highways and more accident-free highways, could the Minister inform the House whether or not he will be bringing in legislation raising the drinking age from 18 to 19?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: I'm not entirely sure of what the phrase used by the Honourable Member from La Verendrye "statistics from other provinces show" imports, but if he indeed has statistics I would be pleased to see them and consider them. I can say this, that we looked at statistics in our own province which I think would be the appropriate thing to do, and the population, at risk, our statistics show in the Province of Manitoba, in terms of the highest percentage of those having involvement in a fatal accident, is in the age bracket 21 to 35. That's where the population, at risk, is in the Province of Manitoba. So that if he has other statistics certainly they will be considered, but we did, Sir, evaluate the situation in Manitoba.

Wife-beaters - prosecution of

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question also for the Attorney-General. He mentioned

in an answer for the Member for St. Norbert that he was willing to review the policy on wife abuse. I wonder if he could clarify that for myself, as well as other members of the House. Is this review with a view to changing the policy or for dealing with procedural matters to make the present policy work more efficiently?

HON. R. PENNER: Well, primarily to make the present policy work more efficiently. I'm continually monitoring our programs and the response I've had from the Director of Prosecutions, certainly from the RCMP, is that they are strongly supportive of the program. Let me make it clear, Sir, and I think this ought to be known, that when the police are called to investigate an assault and it turns out to be domestic, in terms of the origin of the complaint, the police do not automatically say, okay, let's arrest someone. They carry out, being very responsible, the preliminary investigation that one would expect them to carry out, and only then do they determine - and this is the appropriate thing to do - whether or not there may have been a breach of the Criminal Code.

If there's a breach of the Criminal Code, at least prima facie, an apprehensive breach of the Criminal Code then, not only do they have the duty to make an arrest, but in doing so - and this is really the most important part of the program - they frequently defuse a situation which, if left unattended, history tells us could lead sometimes to fatalities. That's where the strength of the program is initially.

Then a Crown Attorney will review and will speak to the complainant, and it doesn't automatically follow that a charge is laid in every instance, but simply because the complainant, after some reflection, is reluctant to proceed is not, under present policy, a reason for not going ahead particularly where there has been any injury to the person - there, we will go ahead. Any suggestion that we shouldn't I think is wrong.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Further to the Attorney-General. I wonder if it would not be accurate to say that in any other kind of criminal cases, when someone is charged with a criminal offence, that that does not also wreak havoc with family life.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is argumentative. Would the honourable member wish to rephrase her question to seek information?

The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

Remand Centre - suicide attempt

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services. I congratulate the staff at the Remand Centre for being alert and preventing an attempted suicide of a 70-year-old grandmother at the Remand Centre last night. However, according to reports, this woman was obviously distraught when she was placed in the Remand Centre. My question to the Minister is, why was the family of this lady not notified that their mother was in the Remand Centre?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the woman in question was offered the right to make phone calls on several occasions and declined. Now, to date, there hasn't been a practice of people calling beyond the permission of an individual in a remand situation. I think it's worth looking into and I thank the member opposite for suggesting that, but I think the staff did follow the procedures as set down. As you may know, we've added about 14 or 15 phones to the Centre, so there's no excuse now that phone lines are not available. The staff did keep a close watch on this woman, but she was uncooperative. She did attempt suicide, was spotted in time, given oxygen, taken to the hospital and admitted, and I'm thankful to say has come through it all right.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same Minister. Will the Minister make enquiries into this case so that possible cases of this nature could be avoided?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I have already enquired and have given the report, but I think the ongoing question of how to give maximum protection and security to the people in Remand Centre and in correctional institutions is a continuing concern. I can assure the member opposite that in the design of the rooms and in the procedures being followed, we're looking at every possible means of providing that protection and would welcome any suggestions the member opposite might care to give.

Victoria Hospital - overcrowding

MR. A. BROWN: I have a question of the Minister of Health. Since this incident involved overcrowding at the Victoria Hospital, will the Minister assist with this investigation and work with the Minister of Corrections and come up with a policy that could prevent further incidents like this from occurring?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, this is something that could be better discussed during my Estimates which will be fairly soon, and also when I announce the five-year capital program of our department in government.

Emergency psychiatric treatment

MR. A. BROWN: I have a further question of the Minister of Health. Is there no way that persons in need of emergency psychiatric care can be accommodated at the Health Sciences Centre or any other place so they could receive the emergency care which they need?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Same answer that I just gave would apply here also. I think we will discuss fully the intended program of the government in the question of psychiatric health. I think it would be more proper to discuss it at that time than just during this question period.

MR. A. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I believe there are a number of people who would like to know. Is there no

other place where they can get emergency psychiatric treatment other than the Health Sciences Centre which was overcrowded?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, the member should know that, of course, any acute care facilities in psychiatry will give the same service and there are facilities at Grace, at St. Boniface, at Victoria Hospital, so it's not just the Health Sciences Centre. Maybe you should do your homework.

A MEMBER: You have no answers.

University of Brandon - President

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Education. I'd like to ask her what is going on at the University of Brandon. Dr. Earl Tyler who, in February of this year, was appointed Acting President of the University, I understand was inaugurated on May 12th as President and Vice-Chancellor in an informal ceremony prior to Convocation. Is it a fact that Dr. Tyler has been appointed permanent President of the University without the benefit of the traditional search committee which usually assesses numerous applications?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to either confirm or deny the points made by the Member for Morris. I can simply say that Mr. Tyler was appointed as the Acting President and, at the time, the appointment of Acting President was very well received by the entire community of Brandon, and that he had done an excellent job in that capacity. I can also say that I know that the Brandon board has been undertaking an active search over the last few months and I have not personally been given any information about what has been happening with that search.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious, on the surface at least, that no one else is maybe interested in becoming President of that university because of goings on in that place over the last number of months.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister, when is this government going to come to grips with the situation at that university; and will the Minister reconsider her denial of early requests for a judicial inquiry into all aspects of the decisions of her politically-appointed Board of Governors?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, if what he wants is a judicial inquiry, he should be quite pleased with the fact that all of the facts related to the decisions and the concerns, will be dealt with in the best judicial forum and that is in the courts.

Careerstart - jobs

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Employment and Economic Services. I wonder, is the Minister prepared to spell out and advise this House and the business community, farmers, businesswomen and others who have applied under Careerstart and have been turned down, if they can expect some other thrust or some other new program during the months ahead, to employ all these young people who are out there looking for jobs. These employers are ready to hire them and they're waiting for the Minister now. Is there something that the Minister has in mind for the months ahead?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to advise the honourable member that, indeed, we have certain initiatives that will be announced later this year for young people and for others in our community who may need some assistance in finding employment, and there are several programs that will be announced.

I'd also like to take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, of noting the excellent news, the report that the rate of economic growth in Manitoba is the second highest in Canada which — (Interjection) — and I can advise honourable members that economic growth does translate into new job development, that is a fact.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I want to be realistic. Unfortunately interest rates are going up and it may have a negative effect on the economy across Canada. But, having said that, Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased that there are more jobs than ever before being created in the good Province of Manitoba.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the young people out in the province today will be really happy about the statement by this Minister. — (Interjection) — Talking about the Conference Board statistics which have been debated in this House for years, a new thrust. Can I ask the Minister when these programs for these young people will be announced that he's talking about?

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, we would hope in the next two or three months we would be in a position to announce additional programs.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, that's going to be helpful to these young people in the next three or four months, so they're not going to be working this summer.

Can I ask the Minister, then, can these employers, these businessmen, businesswomen, farmers and others, can they get on the same bandwagon with the Minister in his Jobs Fund and share some of those dollars to employ these young people out in my constituency and across this province? There's a highly sophisticated advertising program about the Jobs Fund. Can employers and businessmen across this province jump on the same bandwagon and get the same praise and some of those dollars to hire these young people?

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, even though we do have the second lowest rate of unemployment in Canada,

indeed last month the lowest, and we expect to remain either the lowest or the second lowest in Canada throughout the year, I agree if you're unemployed it doesn't do you much good, it doesn't give you much comfort. But the fact is, relatively speaking, compared to the rest of Canada, we are indeed in an excellent position.

With respect to assistance to employers, Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the honourable member is aware, but this is the thrust of the Careerstart Program, where two-thirds of the money — (Interjection) — well, I want to mention something, Mr. Speaker. Two-thirds of the money goes to business enterprises; one-third of the money is dedicated to non-profit organizations.

Well, there were a lot of people rejected, Mr. Speaker, simply because we have a certain amount of money available and we're always being preached at by the members opposite about spending too much money and how we have to be careful, and so on. So within the budget that we have available, I think we've done an excellent job in providing thousands of jobs - as a matter of fact it looks as though it will be well over 6,000 jobs created this summer.

A MEMBER: You're kidding!

Fires in Manitoba

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. Given the fact that we now have some 14 fires burning in the Province of Manitoba and we're coming up to the Victoria Day long weekend - in the Manigotogan area we have a fire that is still burning out of control, I understand - would the Minister give us an update on that fire and the situation in that area; and is he considering, or would he consider, any potential of closing down the forest in that part of the province for this long weekend, whereas the opposition, a couple of years ago, did not do that in 1980 and we had a fire in the Alkens Lake area that destroyed over 100,000 . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. The question period is not a time of debate. The members should not put forward their own suggestions in the form of a question.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, there is a very serious problem in this province in respect to fires. We have indicated our concern in many ways about that and I regret to say that the serious fire that we do have burning in the Manigotogan area was caused by human negligence or some human cause.

The first started adjacent to an old logging road about 10 miles south of Manigotogan at approximately 7:00 p.m. on May 15th. Members can appreciate the difficulty we've encountered because of the high winds. The size of the fire has increased to about 4,000 acres, it spread another 500 acres yesterday and our efforts are continuing to suppress it. There are two CL-215 water bombers involved, four helicopters and 100 firefighters.

The honourable member asked whether or not it may be appropriate to ban open fires in the area, or parts of the province. Certainly that's a suggestion that we'll have to consider, in view of the fact that our forests are drying out. We haven't had a great deal of precipitation in the last several weeks in the forested area and we have high winds, it's something we will have to look at and I'll discuss that with my staff.

MR. D. SCOTT: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Given that this same weekend three years ago a fire started, was caused by men, burned over 100,000 acres of prime forest, would he consider not just shutting down open fires, but even the possibility of shutting the forest down so that we do not have a recurrence — (Interjection) — shutting down access to the forest, yes.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we had the opposition hollering that it's a long weekend. Would the Minister at least consider closing the forest through access this weekend in that area, thus preventing a potential large forest fire which would have been prevented three or four years ago had the government done the same thing?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The House is interested in hearing the answer to the question.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, unlike some members of this House, I take the concerns of the Honourable Member for Inkster in connection with the protection of our forests to be a serious matter, and in light of the fact that we're making enormous investments as a province in respect to rehabilitation of our forests, we should not take lightly concerns in respect to protection of our forests from wasteful fire. So, the honourable member has some very legitimate concerns. I recognize them and I've indicated that I will discuss those concerns with my staff.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it on a point of order?

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I know it may come as a surprise to you, but I did detect a question that the Member for Inkster did place in all of that preamble. Now, I'm not really concerned about the Member for Inkster's concern or his attitude toward forestry. He asked the Minister of Natural Resources a question, whether or not he would consider some further restrictions, I assume, shutting down the forest as the Member for Inkster has said and I want to hear what the Minister has to say. Is he going to shut the forest down or stop or prevent travel over the weekend? I agree with him, it is a serious question. But let him not follow suit in the same manner as the Member of Inkster who obviously has a difficulty. Let's try and get an answer from the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: I also would like to hear the answer from the Minister.

The Honourable Minister for Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I would not consider shutting down the Honourable Member for Lakeside in his unusual - I shouldn't say unusual - in his customary

false points of order. There is a legitimate concern in respect to the condition of the forests now. I will have to discuss with staff whether or not it is vital that we restrict movement, transportation into the forested area, because of the fact that with these high winds, if there is a fire, it becomes extremely difficult to arrest the spread of that fire. It is a legitimate concern, I will discuss it with my staff very shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Highways. I wonder if he can inform the House if the road restrictions have been lifted yet?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I signed the order yesterday and it will take effect Monday or Tuesday.

Premier's trip overseas

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines. In his capacity as Minister responsible for Hydro, can he indicate whether the Chairman of Manitoba Hydro or any other senior official of Manitoba Hydro has joined Premier Pawley and the Minister of Finance in Europe?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister of Finance, who is also on the board of Manitoba Hydro, I presume is accompanying the Minister of Finance and the Premier in Europe. As far as I know, no one else is accompanying the Premier and the Minister of Finance.

Hospital overcrowding

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health. In view of the fact that there continues to be a shortage of accommodation for people in Manitoba to get the health services needed, and I have received a copy of a letter which the Minister received from a constituent of mine who applied for ultrasound testing in Brandon as of the 4th of May and indicated that the earliest that test would be able to take place is the 31st of July, dealing with abdominal pains, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health take immediate action to speed up the kinds of crucial testing in the medical system that are required to maintain the system that they inherited, as they indicated, following our term of office?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the honourable member who just spoke - and he

was away on business the last few days - read Hansard of yesterday. I think one of the answers that he was interested in was in it. Now, if he's going to bring in any specific case, I would like to make sure that I know which one he's talking about and we would investigate it. I suspect that the case he's talking about has been dealt with between the Member for Turtle Mountain and myself. I'll talk to him after to see if that is the same case he's talking about.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If members wish to ask a question, would they stand up and wait to be recognized.

The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

Premier's trip overseas

HON. M. SMITH: I just wanted to clarify the comments made by my colleague, the Minister of Energy and Mines, and to say that in line with the whole trade promotion thrust of the Premier's visit to West Germany that he is accompanied by the Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and by the development officer from that branch, Reg Ebbeling.

Hospital accreditation

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a further question. The Minister makes reference to a question answered yesterday. If he'd like a few more specifics, the case to which I'm referring is the one - well, he can check and I'll ask him if he would check - that the doctor made reference to, the one where if action wasn't taken, it would be referred to further standards in the Committee of Accreditation for Hospitals in Manitoba. That's the case I'm referring to and if he would look into it, I think it would be appreciated.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I certainly will, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to make a suggestion that when there is a case like this, it should be brought to my attention not necessarily in the House until we've had a chance to check. Many times there is a suggestion and accusation made that is not fair to those who are providing this service.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON RULES OF THE HOUSE - BELL RINGING

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the referral motion for the report of the Rules Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed motion of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, referral resolution, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Morris, who has 37 minutes remaining.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, in opening my address on this referral motion, I was commenting on some of the remarks that were made by the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister seemed to be trying to make the point that Parliament was in jeopardy because, using his words, "the tail was wagging the dog." I found that comment very strange, Sir, because I suppose it depends on one's view as to what parliamentary democracy is all about as to how one then would determine the real meaning behind his comment.

I have listened to much of the debate, Mr. Speaker, on the referral motion and I've had the opportunity to hear most of the comments made by members on our side and I think all of them have been very very reasonable and with a great deal of substance. I can see where the journalist, Frances Russell, also felt that some of our remarks were worthy of comment. She paid some credit to our justice critic, Mr. Mercier, as he spent considerable time indicating how important it is that a consensus be reached on the change of any rule within this House.

Mr. Speaker, I don't really care what House it is that you're in, whether it's one of a parliamentary nature like this, whether it's a business, or whether it's in a house proper where you have family members all working and living under that same roof, you're not going to have harmonious relationships unless consensus rules. I think that members opposite, particularly the Government House Leader, would be very wise to take the comments of, not only the members of our caucus who were party to the committee that brought forward the referral motion, but also members and my colleagues who have addressed this very same question. Consensus is very very important.

Just like I can't expect my younger son to take over my older son's bicycle within my home unless everybody agrees, I would say that the analogy is strong in this case. Everybody has to agree if there's to be harmony.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think one of the best presentations that has been made from our side has been offered by the Member for Pembina. I had an opportunity to peruse his comments and he broke his contribution into three or four areas where he indicated, by way of his argument, that it was very important that this rule change not proceed unless the consensus is there.

I would like to dwell on one of his points and that is, Sir, it places you or your successor in a very untenable position, given the rule that the government is indicating they would like to see passed at this time. How does the Speaker of the Day decide what issue is so important that the 15-minute time limit be waived? Sir, how does the Speaker of the Day decide whether the Attorney-General's salary is such an important issue that the 15-minute time limit should be moved to 24 hours? How does any human being, sitting within that lofted Chair of the Speaker, make that determination?

Would one do it on the basis that an individual's salary represents his livelihood and therefore is of

critical personal and government importance? Does one make the decision that represents an embarrassment to the government in power? Does one make that decision on the basis that because the Speaker of the Day, before becoming Speaker, is an elected member of the ruling party? Sir, all those factors have to come into play. So how does a Speaker make that determination? I believe it places an horrendous degree of responsibility on any Speaker who has to sit and rule under those circumstances. Really I'm quite shocked that the government would feel that they could bring forward an amendment to the rules that would put that much pressure on an individual who has enough pressure, to be the umpire within this House. So, Mr. Speaker, I again ask the members opposite to reconsider that particular aspect and result of any proposed rule change in that regard.

I'd just like to make reference again to something the Minister of Agriculture said yesterday in his remarks. He has access to the list of rules that are available, I suppose, in the other Parliaments within this nation, the Parliament and the other Legislatures. Maybe members of ours that were on the committee also have access to those - I haven't seen them - but he indicated that in the Commons in Ottawa there's a 15-minute limit for votes on Supply, on the Budget Speech and also on the Throne Speech. I can accept that I suppose, Mr. Speaker, but yet he made no reference whatsoever to there being bell-ringing limits on bills and also no limits as to any constitutional changes that come up within the Commons.

Of course, that's our claim from our side. That's the argument. We've said from Day One that we could never really justify allowing bells to ring on an issue that the government not only had the mandate to bring forward, but also represented a change in law or the bringing forth of a new law, a statutory change. We said that that had to be separated from a constitutional change, through a constitutional alteration. I notice, even by the Minister of Agriculture's own remarks, that in Ottawa in the Commons there is no limit, there is no bell-ringing limit, to any constitutional change that comes forward there. I think that should be highlighted, Mr. Speaker.

He also talked about most other provinces having rules limiting bell ringing. I can accept that, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know what each province has, specifically - the Minister read out a number of the rules that apply in various provinces - but I asked him every time he read out specifically what occurred within a province, I asked him to read out whether that was reached unanimously or not, reached with consensus, and of course he didn't answer that because my best bet - I'd lay a bottom dollar on it - that in fact they were all reached with consensus, and that's the difference, Mr. Speaker.

We have just gone through, within this Legislature and within the province, a situation of disagreement that will be - in my view at least - will be written about in our history books. So there is an awful lot of mistrust as to why a government would want to change rules, want to change rules after they, in their wisdom, decided not to proceed during last Session.

Mr. Speaker, there are many many Manitobans that are again asking, what is the hidden goal, what is the wish of this government in changing the rules? Because,

Sir, I don't care in what walk of life you're in, I don't care what your occupation is, that there's nothing that is distrusted more than somebody who will change the rules so as to win. Nothing causes greater, not only greater consternation, but greater concern, greater dislike and contempt than somebody changing the rules to favour their goal and make their course to victory easier. That's what people within the province are asking us and that's why people are asking us to be very very careful as to what element of the change in rules that we are prepared to accept.

If I could digress for a second, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney-General said at the beginning of the first Session, or early into the first Session, he indicated that property rights, an amendment to the Constitution involving property rights would somewhere be included. As a matter of fact, our member who is prepared to bring forward a resolution dealing with that, was asked to postpone that because the government of the day was thinking of including it; that would have worked towards a constitutional change. That has not occurred, Mr. Speaker. There are many many Manitobans that are waiting for this Legislature to deal with that problem.

So on one hand they see where a government is afraid to deal with the whole area of property rights and yet they see where a government is willing to change the rules to bring along another constitutional change which 80 percent of the people in various forms and by various voting techniques have indicated that they oppose; then can you wonder why they ask, what is the hidden agenda? What is this government going to do? Are they going to spring in their fourth - and I dare say most people hope their last - Session within this 32nd Legislature. They're wondering what is coming in 1985 by way of constitutional change that is again going to attempt to increase rights for one favoured group within our society.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think these are legitimate questions and ones that of course are going to continue to push us to push the government to deal with the question and to separate the fact that a constitutional change is something much different than passing bills or passing changes in the statutes. I think we've said on many occasions, none of us and certainly none of my colleagues were particularly proud of the events as they unfolded through last summer and through the beginning of 1984. But the reality was, as I've said on many occasions, the people demanded that we stop this government and the weapon is at our disposal. The weapons that we were given, as you know, were very few and the people again demanded we use whatever weapon was necessary. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader says we were never given that one. The people of this province say it's their rules just as much as it is theirs or ours. It's their rule also because that is their support.

Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader again asks, do I believe that? I believe that if a ruling party comes to a place of governing and if they take to heart the word "govern" they will not bring in something that 80 percent of the people do not want. That's my point, Mr. Speaker, and when the members opposite realize that, then I think it will change, not only their direction in this whole matter, but also they'll possibly change their amendment to the rules.

Something the Minister of Agriculture said yesterday was very interesting. He said, what will happen if - if

I'm wrong I would apologize, but I think I captured his thoughts - he says what will happen if we change these rules? And he asked the rhetorical questions; will the walls come tumbling down? Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't have the answer to that question. But in a political sense — (Interjection) — well, the Minister of Government Services says, that's not what he said. I won't differ with him because I didn't quite capture totally his thoughts, but I'm pretty sure that's what he meant.

Mr. Speaker, in a political sense, if those bells had not rung last year, the walls would have come tumbling down. That's what the members opposite do not understand, not the physical walls surrounding this building, but the walls of a very stable province in every fashion. The members opposite are only so happy to read to us what the Conference Board is predicting. They're only happy to - and if they haven't yet they will be, I'm sure - offering us the remarks of the three economists that were hired by the Conference Board to look into the stability of Manitoba's economical make-up. Pardon me, I stand corrected, it was the Economic Council of Canada. What do they say about this province in a manufacturing sense? Of course they said, well other provinces to the west I believe could take a lesson from Manitoba because it has such a stable economy dwelling and based very much on the diversification of small and light manufacturing. Of course, anybody that's lived in this province for a number of years, knows that that's an axiom of truth, Mr. Speaker, that's the reality.

But just as that's a reality of stability, Mr. Speaker, had those bells not rung last year, had this rule been in effect, I believe the walls, the political stability within this province, would have come tumbling down. That's I suppose, what I can't really understand is how the members opposite don't know enough about this province and the make up of it, and it's history that they would not see that fact. — (Interjection) — Well, you're right. One of my colleagues says they don't care, and I'm almost of the opinion that as sincere as they appear to be, that really they don't care.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture also said that we were holding this Chamber to ransom. We've had other comments from members opposite - I don't imagine they're on the record - but they indicated that while we've cashed all our cheques, our salary that we received during that time and obviously we can't feel good about that either. But the point is, Mr. Speaker, how did we hold this Chamber to ransom? When one remembers that the language issue was not even discussed during the election of '81; when one remembers that the dialogue within this House and anybody that wants to read Hansard, they'll see that the debate was kept at an extremely high plane. The Government House Leader shows some surprise at that. It's funny, does he not remember the words of the Attorney-General who complimented the level of debate on the subject, specifically through the summer on the referral motion and whatever summer debate there was - I forget - there were various motions on the main motion at that time and, Sir, you can see that.

So what does the Minister of Agriculture mean that we held this Chamber to ransom? We're not the ones that brought in closure. How do you define closure? Is that a form of ransom, Mr. Speaker? In my mind it

is. Well, it's just a technique, but to me that's holding the people of this province to ransom when you bring about a major constitutional change that our whole society will be expected to alter because of that change, then Sir, when you bring in closure you're being held to ransom.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's very unfortunate the government today feels obliged to bring forward a change in rules. I know the sentiment on this side is that there's a genuine willpower, at least from my understanding of it, to work together in a lot of legislation that's going to come forward.

Like I said, we're not particularly happy with what's happened. We're well aware of some of the things that are happening and there's a common goal on our side to work towards the ending of a peaceful Session. But, Mr. Speaker, why won't the members opposite realize that to bring in a rule change now opens up the whole subject again? Why will they not realize that?

And, in closing, I just ask them to again bring nothing in unless they have the consensus and the shared support of all the members of this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was not my intention to speak on this particular matter at this present time. However, upon listening to some of the debate and some of the rather facetious arguments put forward by members of the opposition, I felt that those arguments, those statements, could not go unchallenged.

I would like to review, today, some of the background of this resolution and also some of the arguments put forward by members of the opposition. Well, let's look at the background of it. Is a limit on the ringing of bells a new precedent in Canada or, for that matter, anywhere? Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, it clearly it's not. We have limits in various provinces at the present time. Prince Edward Island has a limit of five minutes; Alberta eight minutes; New Brunswick five minutes; Newfoundland 10 minutes; Nova Scotia has a limit of up to one hour, a reasonable time; and in Quebec there is provision for the Speaker to call a vote. So, limits on bell ringing are not unusual, Mr. Speaker.

From what I understand, there is no distinction made between any particular motion or act or any vote. Those limits apply to all of them, and that's the first facetious argument put forward by members opposite, the suggestion that somehow there is a difference, Mr. Speaker, in voting on a constitutional amendment or any other resolution. As far as the Legislatures are concerned, as far as the Parliament of Canada is concerned, a vote is a vote. There are different categories; there are votes which represent a vote of non-confidence in the government and there are others that aren't. We have several different categories of votes, Mr. Speaker, but a vote is basically a vote.

So that's the first thing I think that needs to be said, that limits have been set in various other provinces, various other jurisdictions. The reason is obvious, Mr. Speaker, as to why that has been done. It's necessary for efficiency, to make sure that votes are held with

dispatch and that the business of the Legislature is not held up pending a lengthy bell ringing session. It's also there to prevent parliamentary paralysis, because that is what happens when bell ringing is taken to the extreme and that is what happened in this province several months ago when bell ringing was taken against this extreme.

Now let's examine some of the arguments that members opposite are put up against the matter before us today, the proposal to put a limit on bell ringing. There have been some who have chosen to argue on questions of substance. The Member for Virden, for example, did raise some concern about a 15-minute limit and how it would come into effect if the Speaker was not at the Chair and not in the building, as is the case sometimes during our sittings. I think that's worth looking at.

Other members have indicated some question and concern about the 24-hour limit and how that would have effect. That's something that we can talk about. I certainly would like to hear what other proposals members opposite could put forward in that regard, and I think that is worth discussing. But, you know, that is only a very brief argument they've put up. They, immediately after getting down to the question of substance, bring up this whole argument about constitutional amendments.

Well, let's look at that argument carefully. Their argument is that somehow constitutional amendments should be treated differently when it comes to a vote in this Assembly, now based on what? As I said previously, votes are votes. There are different categories of votes, but a vote is basically a vote. If the members opposite were to propose a different formula for handling constitutional amendments, I think that would be perhaps more legitimate, but they're not. They're saying, in essence, that we should have the same procedure but there should be allowance for an opposition, if it feels that it does not like the constitutional amendment, to ring the bells indefinitely and paralyze the Legislature, thereby preventing its passage. Well really, Mr. Speaker, how absurd can one get?

Now this government did follow the prescribed procedure for constitutional amendments. It's outlined in the Constitution of Canada. We followed that procedure, there would have been various other procedures that would have come after that. That is the constitutional procedure that is outlined for changing our constitution; we followed that procedure. The more consistent argument for members opposite would be not to argue in favour of bell ringing on constitutional amendments, but to argue for a change in the process of reaching constitutional amendments. That would have been the consistent argument, but that is not what we're getting from them.

So let's go one step further, let's try and rationalize why they're putting up this rather facetious argument. Well their argument, as I understand it, is based on the will of the majority. They have said that they have the right to ring the bells on a constitutional amendment and that they should have that right in the future based on their perception, their argument that, in that case, they had majority support, and that in the future they might also have it. Well, let's look at that.

In our parliamentary system, do we have any provision for that? Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to

you quite the opposite. For, not only on particular issues is there no requirement that there be a referendum or a plebiscite or even general support as indicated by any mechanism, such as a Gallop poll or whatever, but the very basis of government itself is not based on that principle. Those members opposite should be aware of that because their party came to power federally in 1979; they came to power because they had the largest number of seats in the House of Commons. They were just short of a majority.

Did they have the majority support of people in this country? No, as a matter of fact, the Progressive Conservative Party in the election of 1979 gathered less popular support than the Liberals - 4 percent less, as my colleague points out. Yet, because of our parliamentary tradition, the Conservatives formed the government, they had the most seats. Now some may say, well, that was a minority government, that was a different situation.

There were other precedents in Canada of a similar nature. For example, in Quebec in the 1960s the Union Nationale formed the government in Quebec. They replaced the Liberals who were then in government. The Liberals had 46 percent of the vote in that election; the Union Nationale had 40 percent. Why did the Union Nationale form the government, because they had the majority of seats, a clear majority of seats in the National Assembly. That is what our system of government is based on. It's not based on opinion polls, it's not even based on popular vote; it's based on the party which receives the most seats in the Legislature and in the House of Commons.

Now some will say that shouldn't happen and I must say that I personally question how democratic that system is when it involves that kind of result. I question how democratic our system can be when a party which receives less votes is selected as government. But the approach I would take to that would be to suggest various parliamentary reforms. There have been a number suggested, such things as a different approach, the first past-the-post system that we have now, the individual constituency approach, that has been suggested. There have been also other suggestions about reforming our Senate, for example, to make that more democratic. But that is the approach to follow surely.

You know, if we were to accept the argument of members opposite on this constitutional amendment excepting that, because it is somehow of greater importance than other issues before this Assembly, that they would have the right to bell ringing, I would say it would only be logical that the single most important decision made by the electorate, that is who their government should also be subject to the same bell ringing.

I would argue that if they are to take their argument to its logical conclusion, that the Liberals in 1979 in the House of Commons in Ottawa would have rung the bells and said, we have the majority support, we should be the government. They should have said, the Conservative Party has no right to form the government. They should have said, we're going to ring the bells because we have majority support and we will not let that party govern. Of course, they didn't, Mr. Speaker. They didn't do that in Quebec and what was the reason? It's because our parliamentary system is based on the

principle that the party that has the most seats is the party that forms the government, not the party that has the most in terms of popular vote.

If you look at it, the decision of who is the government is not even based on that principle, so it's somewhat inconsistent to argue that other decisions should be based on it as well. But let's talk about those members opposite and their great concern for the will of the majority.

They have jumped on this particular issue as indicating that somehow they have the great support of the majority. They have somehow created the impression that this government is not concerned about that. Let's look at that. There are all sorts of issues that I could list which are part of that party's platform, which are not supported by the majority of people in this province.

Let's take an good example, rent controls. I ran a constituency survey recently; 80 percent of people supported rent controls. That's 80 percent of the people in my constituency, not just tenants, supported rent controls. Those figures, I think, are fairly consistent, they have been in recent years, and yet when that party was in government they removed rent controls. According to statements made by their leader in this House earlier this year, they would do so again if re-elected, so where's the concern about the will of the majority?

Let's take their whole scenario to another leap in logic here. Let's assume that they were back in government and they did remove rent controls. What would there be to stop an opposition from ringing the bells, from paralyzing this Legislature? They would have 80 percent support of the public - I've heard that figure before from others - and if they would suggest to me that that's otherwise, I'd be very interested to hear it, but I would suggest it was at least 80 percent of this province is for its rent controls.

So you can see the kind of situation one gets oneself into if one takes the argument of the members opposite and takes it further down the road. One ends up with a situation where you can have bell ringing on anything, according to their argument, where a majority has indicated, by what? By an opinion poll? They've thrown those sort of things out. By a civic referendum? You could use almost any basis to paralyze the Legislature. Well clearly, that would be ridiculous.

Let's look further at their rationale. Let's really look at how illogical it is. They're basically saying that we should use what I would suggest is an unconstitutional act, it's bell ringing, because it has no place in our constitutional rules. There's no provision at all for unlimited bell ringing. It's a loophole. They know it, we know it, the members of the public know it's a loophole, and so long as an opposition did not use that loophole, it went unnoticed, but it's clearly a loophole. So they want to use an unconstitutional act to establish a process for amending a Constitution which is without precedent. I know of no jurisdiction that allows bell ringing and parliamentary paralysis in terms of amending its Constitution. It's also totally inappropriate.

As I said before, if they're concerned about our procedures for amending the Constitution, let them propose improved procedures. Let them propose amending the Constitution by referendum if they so wish, because that has been proposed by some. That would

be at least a consistent argument, but they're not proposing that. I didn't hear their former leader propose that as Premier of this province. In fact, even when the Civic referenda was on he made it quite clear that he didn't believe in referenda. If other members across the way are consistent with the traditions of their party, I'm sure they do not believe in government by referendum as well, because that has been parliamentary process and it's the parliamentary tradition.

It's also, supposedly, the Conservative Party tradition, a tradition that they seem to have abandoned rather quickly on this particular matter, so what is the bottom line then of the argument of members opposite? There's really a number of scenarios one could create and one is, that they're so blinded by their own arguments they actually believe what they're saying. They actually believe that there is a place for bell ringing in this province, but I would suspect that isn't the case.

I think the situation is that they're caught in a bit of a bind of their own making on this. — (Interjection) — They laugh, Mr. Speaker, but let's look at that. They proclaim to this House that they are going to be the government after the next election. We'll see about that, but let's assume that they are. Do they really want the opposition to have the same brute power that they've had toward the bell ringing? Do they really want the opposition to be able to ring the bells on rent controls or any other issue they try to bring in?

What say, for example, they decided to go the route of British Columbia with its cutbacks, its elimination of the Human Rights Department, its savaging of the social services, its antilabour legislation. Let's assume for one minute that they were going to adopt that here in Manitoba. Would they want the opposition to have the power to ring the bells, to paralyze the Legislature? Would they want that power to be in the hands of the opposition? Well, I suspect not.

Of course, they have eight months of statements to live up to. They have eight months of statements saying they were going to ring the bells and ring the bells indefinitely on the issue of French Language Services in Manitoba. They have those eight months of speeches that come back to them to haunt them so they have to rationalize and their rationalization is yes, we want it on most things but not if its on a constitutional amendment. That sounds fairly reasonable, I'm sure, to members opposite because they could then go back to those people who they whipped up into a frenzy in February and say, we're going to ring the bells and ring the bells forever and they can say, look, we're being consistent, we're not giving up that power, we're going to continue it.

But there's one basic flaw in their argument - one basic flaw - which goes beyond any of my suggestions about what should be the case. There's a flaw in their own argument. Their argument is based on the will of the majority, that they had majority support in their actions against what the government had proposed for that eight-month period; but talk to people and find out what they think about bell ringing.

There was a poll. They like to talk about polls and public opinion. There was a poll that showed that a large number of people in this province were concerned about what the government was doing, but did that poll show that 80 percent of the people of this province were in favour of bell ringing? No, Mr. Speaker, it

showed that they were split down the middle. In fact, I would suggest to members opposite the majority of people are not in favour of bell ringing. The majority of people are not in favour of bell ringing.

At a time when this issue had reached its height in terms of public opinion and awareness of it; at the time when people were most concerned about this issue they still didn't have majority support for ringing the bells, and I can confirm it from my own experience in my own constituency. I've had people I've spoken to who did not agree with what the government was doing. They were quite emphatic about not agreeing with what the government was doing, but they also told me they did not agree with the opposition ringing bells.

A MEMBER: How did they think they were to stop the government from what they're doing?

MR. S. ASHTON: They did not agree with what the government was doing. I hear members opposite say, how do they think we're going to stop the government from what it's doing? There are a lot of people out there who believe in the parliamentary system, who believe in our system of elections. They would quite gladly, in the next election, have considered that issue along with the other issues and if they felt so, would have voted this government out of office on that basis. They felt that that was their democratic right. They felt that was what democracy was all about, our parliamentary democracy of elections, Mr. Speaker, of the public deciding at that point in time, but they did not agree with the minority party in this Legislature, the opposition party deciding what would pass and what would not pass.

This is, as I said, coming not just from people that supported the government but from people who opposed it. Members of this House, members on this side have made reference to a number of them, former leaders of theirs - a former leader, for example, Sid Spivak - who pointed out quite rightly there was a similar precedent in the early 1970s, Autopac. Let them not try and split hairs now; let them read some of their own statements in that debate. Let them read about how that was described as a black day for Manitoba, that's right, a black day for Manitoba, the day that Autopac was passed by this Legislature. They wore black arm bands into the House. A number of the members on that side will remember that because they were here. They called it a black day for democracy but they didn't ring bells.

As the member points out, they said they had done everything they could do to stop it, but they set a limit on it. Let's look at it. In those days there were 10,000 people on the steps of the Legislature. There was delegation after delegation in committee. There was incredible pressure put on members of the government. Surely that is . . .

One member opposite says, well, you were elected on that basis. The members of the opposition at that time did not say that they fought tooth and nail against Autopac.

A MEMBER: Of course you did.

MR. S. ASHTON: They said it was a black day for Manitoba; they did not ring bells. That is the way a

parliamentary system should operate. That is the way that I always thought it would operate. That is the way, I think, a good number of people today feel it should operate. And the fact that during the time when this debate on French Language Services was at its height, that the majority of people clearly did not support bell ringing, I think, is an indication that the majority of the people of this province are concerned about more than just one issue. They are concerned about our parliamentary system itself.

Let's not underestimate the extent to which people have gone in their statements, and I have had people speak to me who are not NDP at all, who have said that they are concerned because this kind of thing leads to dictatorship, this bell ringing. They said that this is what led to the rise of Mussolini and Hitler. These are older people, perhaps, who remember that experience, but they remember that the first thing that happened in these countries was that democracy was turned in on itself.

I hesitate to use that example because I know what happens when you refer to that. The immediate reaction on behalf of members opposite is to say that's not us, you know, and I say that's right. It isn't them, but it's the same question really, it's the same bottom line, preservation of our system - democracy, or parliamentary democracy.

I think it goes just beyond the traditionalists in our population. I think really if you want to get down to the level that it's at you have to talk to some of the young people that perhaps don't have the background in tradition. Talk to them about how cynical they get about the political process. I have talked to a lot of people, they say all they ever hear from the Legislature or the House of Commons is a big racket; they hear Mr. Speaker this, Mr. Speaker that; they hear bell ringing. They hear the noise, Mr. Speaker, they don't see what is attempting to be done in this process.

Where does bell ringing fit into that? Does that help improve the perception or system? No, it doesn't; clearly it doesn't. Talk to people, talk to young people about their perception of the system. It's being eroded very rapidly by tactics such as this, tactics such as bell ringing.

So when we are talking about preserving our system, we are talking about doing it at two levels. That basic tradition that is there, the basic parliamentary tradition, we have to preserve that, but we also have to preserve the system itself as a functioning system, a system that gives people some faith that our system can work and can operate and can achieve its goals. So long as this loophole, as I said previously, of unlimited bell ringing is there we cannot do that; we cannot preserve the parliamentary system, we cannot regain the confidence of the many people who have lost it.

I just want to say, in completing my remarks, that I personally believe that we need to reform that parliamentary system in a number of important ways. We need to improve the amount of participation that people have in our system. I see it every time I go out and talk to my constituents. There is a sense of alienation from the system that is pretty widespread. We have to get people participating more.

I will be one who will say that I believe that plebiscites and referendums can form an important part of that. I am not opposed to plebiscites or a referendum, in

principle. I think they can be a positive thing for democracy, I really do. So I want to make that clear. I also want to make it clear, too, that I am not arguing against the fact that governments and oppositions have to be concerned about the will of the majority of people because surely that is the essence of democracy. There are other aspects, too, that have to be, I think, recognized, for example, the protection of minority rights; that's one thing.

But in any system in the world that we have, any democratic system, I think the one thing that has to be recognized as being the most important for maintaining that democratic system is its set of traditions and its set of rules, because a system that does not have a clear set of traditions intact is a system that is founded on a base of sand; a system that does not have a clear set of rules that allows for the efficient operation of that system is a system that can be turned in on itself. That is why I raised the example of Italy and Germany; not to say, well, those members opposite were doing the same kind of thing deliberately or accidentally or whatever. I am not trying to tarnish them at all with that brush.

Some would say I am too kind. I'm really not trying to tarnish them with that brush because I think people make their own judgments on the motives of the members of the opposition and the members of the government. But what I am arguing for, in fact, what I am pleading for is a recognition that we do have a gaping hole in our rules. It's not just the hole that can hurt this government, it's a hole that can hurt many other governments. It can hurt not just the NDP, but the Conservatives and whatever successive parties come into office.

My argument is that it would not only hurt those governments; it would hurt our system as well. We need a functioning system, and that system functions on the basis of reaching decisions based on the elected members of this Legislature and the people of this province having the right to re-elect or throw out that group of legislators. That's what it is based on, it is not based on parliamentary paralysis; it is not based on a loophole; it is not based on the rhetoric of a heated, emotional debate as we faced the last eight months.

Let's take one step back. Now that we are a couple of months away from that, let's take a step back and look at it. Surely, all members in this House could recognize the heated rhetoric that was involved, the great deal of emotion that was involved in that thing; but surely we could put that to one side as being part of that particular issue and recognize that there was a separate issue totally in this particular case. That issue is the functioning and the very survival of our parliamentary system and the democratic traditions that are involved with that.

For that reason, I would really urge members opposite to separate this debate entirely from the debate that we faced in the last eight months; look at this issue, make constructive suggestions. If not 15 minutes, let's hear some other suggestion; if a 24-hour allowance, which would account for people such as myself, for example, who might be snowed in in my constituency, or other rural members, I would gladly like to hear that, but let's not try and create an artificial argument based on the experience of an issue, a very emotional issue,

certainly a very political issue that is still before us in some ways, let's not try and turn that into a way of continuing a dangerous loophole in our rules in this Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: The Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened with some interest to the last couple of speakers and also to the Member for Thompson, in particular.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was pointed out to me once a few weeks ago, and I hadn't recognized this similarity, but someone mentioned to me one day that the Member for Thompson looked like a young Stanley Knowles. I must say today, as I listened to him and watched him, I certainly could see the physical resemblance to the great Stanley Knowles, but he doesn't talk like Stanley Knowles and he, of course, doesn't argue in the same way as Mr. Knowles does.

So I might say to the Honourable Member for Ellice that in his campaign for the nomination in North Centre he would be well-advised to take the young Member for Thompson with him from door-to-door and somehow or other link up the association. Perhaps with a little makeup on the Member for Thompson, it would look like the Member for Winnipeg North Centre is in fact supporting the Member for Ellice.

A MEMBER: Don't let him speak.

MR. R. DOERN: Right, don't let him speak, don't let him open his mouth, just stand at the sidewalk and nod his smiling benign approval of the Member for Ellice and I think it will be worth a couple of hundred votes.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Member for Thompson looks like the Member for North Centre, but he doesn't talk like the Member for North Centre. I want to tell you what the Member for North Centre said about closure in the great pipeline debate that went on in Ottawa some 25 to 30 years ago, I guess about 1956. I want to quote what Mr. Knowles said against closure at that time, the very position being supported by the Member for Thompson, the Member for Ellice, and the members of the New Democratic Party, a very shocking turnabout of circumstances for a party that was so proud of opposing what was being done by the government of the day, the St. Laurent Government.

Mr. Knowles said, for example, in that debate - I don't have the exact date here, I think it was May 30, 1956, according to what appears to come before this page of a House of Commons Hansard, Page 4470. He said, "Mr. Chairman, I believe the day will come when posterity will bless the pertinacity of those of us in this House who believe that Parliament is still free and that we are not called upon to bow our necks to the tyranny of a despotic government." And then he said, "I support the challenge given by my leader that the Prime Minister take this matter to the country." Then at the end of his remarks, he said, "Closure is not a blow at the opposition of the House, it is a blow at the rights of the Canadian people. When closure is imposed in this way by the moving of a motion that is

out of order, it is a blow that strikes at the very heart of our democratic system." That's what he said in 1956.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Thompson said some contradictory things - I didn't quite get the end of his speech - but he said at the beginning that he doesn't believe in government by referendums or government by referenda. Well, I'm not sure anybody does. The question is, do you believe that there are issues that sometimes are so significant that they should not be proceeded with unless there is a referendum? Do you believe that there are times and circumstances when some issue is so important, so crucial, such as a constitutional amendment, such as something that could be divisive, something that is new and major and controversial, that the government could go to the people and ask their approval of that particular approach?

I will argue, Mr. Speaker, without question that there are times that there is a place for the referendum and/or the plebiscite in our society. Now maybe we haven't used it up to now. Maybe it's only been used rarely, maybe it should only be used rarely, but I suggest that there are times when a referendum and/or a plebiscite should be used. — (Interjection) — Well, you said that perhaps at the very end, but at the very beginning you were arguing against what you called "government by referendum."

Mr. Speaker, it's difficult for members of the government to believe in public opinion. It's difficult for them to believe in polls that show their not doing very well, by letters and petitions and all sorts of examples by the public, that they are not in support of a government position. These are not positions against the NDP. The people aren't saying, we're against the NDP; they're saying we're against certain policies and programs instituted by the New Democratic Government and that's where the government is having a problem. They can't see the difference. They're taking a position that the people are against this or the polls are against this. Well on certain portions of their program, the public is overwhelmingly opposed. There is, I think, a great tendency within the government to avoid and explain away the truth and the facts of the matter. There is a great tendency to hide from the public.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of the government's actions on the French language issue, yes, in a way bell ringing has been brought into question. Bell ringing has been brought into question - people are asking questions about it - but closure has also been brought into question. People are asking, why the government take a poll on what people think of closure. You think a lot of people are against bell ringing, right, ask them what they think of closure. Ask them what they think of the French-language question and the government's approach to it; ask them what they think of that. Then put those questions in juxtaposition and have different combinations and you will see what people like and don't like and what they're afraid of and what price they're willing to pay to stop something that they regard as an unpopular measure.

I'll tell you something else that's been brought into question, Mr. Speaker, the party system itself. Go and ask people what they think of the fact that the Whips were on, on the government, on this particular issue and whether they would have liked to have had a free vote or whether they think that there are times when

members should buck their own party or separate themselves on an issue if not permanently. Ask them what they think about that because a lot of people have said to me and one person in particular said to me, he thinks it would be beneficial for any Legislature to have six or eight independents. Why did he say that? I know why he said it. He said it because he felt that the government was ramming through legislation, coercing their members to support it and that this, in effect, called the whole party system into question and it's true. Some people have raised questions about that tradition as well.

Mr. Speaker, I listened as well to the Member for Morris and he had some hesitancy, as do other members in the House and members in the Conservative Party, about what went on in the last year. He was somewhat apologetic for the fact that bell ringing had to be resorted to and other tactics and techniques in the parliamentary system had to be resorted to. He was almost apologetic about what had happened. Mr. Speaker, I have never been apologetic for what has happened. I'm proud of what has happened. I believe the Conservatives were right in walking out of this House and ringing the bells and so does the public. So do the people of Manitoba.

If you ask them about bell ringing in isolation, the people will say well we don't want this bell ringing, get back to work. If you say that the bells were rung to prevent the French-language package from being imposed on the people of Manitoba, then the average Manitoban will say, let them ring until hell freezes over. That is the opinion of the average Manitoban. Let the bells ring and that was the opinion of thousands and thousands and thousands of people. And because of that position, Mr. Speaker, the government was afraid to stop the bells from ringing and take the vote.

If they had been on another issue, if they hadn't had to be confronted by the public who was aroused and emotionally concerned about this issue, they would have cut the bells. They would have tried to cut the bells. But they were afraid and they had good reason to be afraid as well. So I say that what went on in Manitoba in the last year and it's been - right now I think, Mr. Speaker, when I think back, it's almost one year to the day that this issue came into the NDP caucus. It was on the 15th or 16th or 17th of May when the Attorney-General came in with his proposals which were signed, sealed and delivered and agreed to by the Franco-Manitoban Society.

What they said counted. What that SFM said in a general meeting counted. What those 225,000 people said in the plebiscite, well you know maybe it was interesting, maybe it wasn't, but what 500 or 600 people said was crucial but what the 175,000 against said, and the 50,000 for, well that was one of them there plebiscites or one of those referendums and we don't believe in government by referendums. Mr. Speaker, I say that it was a victory for the people. It was a victory for the democratic process and the public spoke loud and clear on that particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, he had a concern. He spoke yesterday and he's a pretty good speaker. I've never seen him speak on the stump at election time, but I'll wager that he's a good speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, a good stump orator and he was worried about the tail wagging the dog. He said,

the tail was wagging the dog. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would simply say what Churchill once said in another context, "some tail, some dog". I'm paraphrasing, Harry, I'm paraphrasing.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP isn't the dog. The Conservative Opposition isn't the tail. The government is simply the flea on the dog. It's the temporary government of the day which should reflect what the people think. It's the flea on the body politic and it should be reflecting and responding to what people think.

I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, that when 80 percent of the public want to fling off the flea, then they better pay attention. When they don't have the support of more than 20-odd percent of the community, they would be well advised to think carefully about proceeding because they would proceed then at their own peril.

Mr. Speaker, now we're confronted with this 15-minute bell ringing maximum and one of the problems here is that the opposition and the people of Manitoba don't trust the government. They are worried that if this go through that it will only be a matter of days or weeks or months before somehow or other this constitutional package will come back and the government will try to ram it through now that they have a new weapon in their arsenal, a 15-minute maximum on bell ringing.

Mr. Speaker, we don't trust the government. The public doesn't trust the government; they don't trust them on what they've done up to now and they will not trust them on having the wisdom to apply that 15-minute bell ringing maximum.

Mr. Speaker, I have sat in this House for 18 years and I have seen the best House leaders in the business and the worst. The best ones in my opinion were Sterling Lyon and Sidney Green. In my judgment, historically, I consider them to be the two finest. And I have seen the two worst, the Attorney-General and the present House Leader; they are the worst.

Mr. Speaker, aside from the fact of the personality of the present House Leader, which I don't care to discuss, aside from the fact that he is not a very likeable person, I don't trust him. I remember very well one of the sneakiest and trickiest things that he ever pulled in this Chamber was when the House Leader - here he is - ran outside one day when there was a proposal by the Conservatives and he described the Conservative language amendment as a major turnaround. Remember that? I remember how all of us were rather thunderstruck, including me. I thought, well the Conservative amendment made sense; the House Leader says it's a great idea, there's something wrong here. I became very nervous, maybe the Conservatives had set a trap and fallen into it; but, no.

What happened was the House Leader simply decided to be very tricky that day. He took a very slippery position; he went out into the Chamber and he made the point to the press that the Tories had made a major reversal, a major turnaround, that what was happening in effect was that they were somehow or other supporting the government and all of us went out and scratched our heads on that. We really couldn't figure out what was wrong with the proposal. But all that the House Leader was doing was he was pulling a fast one.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, we don't trust the House Leader. We don't consider what he says sometime to be a reflection of what is going to happen. Mr. Speaker,

we also know that the House Leader is not only unpopular in this House, he's unpopular in his own constituency and we know what happened when his own constituents came here to see him that time; they had to have a bodyguard. The Minister of Health was called upon and someone else and they had to take him through the public and sneak him in the caucus room, and the Minister of Health, who is probably still the strongest man in the House, he tried to crush this poor constituent's foot in the NDP caucus door. Here was this poor lady sticking her high heel in the door and the 250 or 260 lb. Minister of Health - 275, I stand corrected - was trying to crush her - Larry the Crusher. It sounds like one of the wrestlers on Channel 13, and Mad Dog Vachon whoever was the other Minister with him trying to ram through the little House Leader into the caucus room because the people were out there trying to grab and throttle the House Leader.

Mr. Speaker, the House Leader — (Interjection) — No, what I'm saying is if you would have put that legislation through you would have had civil disorder in this province. You would have had that in this particular province.

Mr. Speaker, I say that unless the government is prepared to bring in a new procedure of amending the constitution, I could never support that particular proposal, no way. I will vote against it; I intend to vote against it.

I also into to bring in a resolution suggesting a new procedure of constitutional amendment. — (Interjection) — Well, I'd have to consult my colleague on that. But I say you cannot separate out bell ringing from constitutional amendments. We all agree on that point, that it's because of the lack of assurance we're not prepared to consider bell ringing in isolation. If it's part of a package, then it will be given serious thought, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the government was desperate a few months ago. I think that's the hallmark of this government - desperation. Henry David Thoreau said that most men leads lives of quiet desperation. Mr. Speaker, this government leads a life of quiet desperation.

Mr. Speaker, the government was prepared to violate a number of traditions in this House. They invoked closure which had not been used for some 50 years in this House. Can you imagine people saying, how did you get approval for your constitutional amendment at a conference? And the House Leader says, well we rammed it through with closure, as opposed to going out and selling it and gaining widespread popular support for such a significant measure. They considered cutting off the bells; they considered violating a tradition of this House, which is, that both Whips signal the Speaker that they are ready to vote, they were going to violate that. They considered putting the Deputy Speaker in the Chair when the Speaker wasn't here and allowing him to conduct the vote. So, Mr. Speaker, they had a lot of problems.

Mr. Speaker, what stopped them? Well, a couple of things stopped them. One problem was the staff. If the Speaker wasn't here and the staff wasn't here, they had a problem.

Mr. Speaker, tradition was another problem, but the biggest problem was public opinion. They would have cut off the bells, they would have conducted the vote.

But it was because of the fact that there was so much opposition in the public, hundreds of people clamouring in this building; thousands clamouring at the Convention Centre; 225,000 voting in a plebiscite; 50,000 sending coupons to Grassroots; 20,000 and more sending them to me; 100s of phone calls to Ministers; 100s of people trying to come into this building, and the Member for Riel was one of them who knows what people in her constituency thought. Mr. Speaker, that's what stopped them. Mr. Speaker, I almost got my leg broken there, but imagine that poor woman. I'm a lot bigger than her, but imagine that poor woman with her foot in the door.

Mr. Speaker, in the last analysis they tried to pressure you and I will read you some of the headlines that came out of that period, lest anyone forget. Here's one from the Free Press on February 4th: "NDP expects Walding to break French impasse." Another one in the Sun, February 6th, "For whom the bells toll," saying of the Speaker, "He's the right man for the job." One, Under the Dome column, saying, "The Speaker's Chair turns out to be a hot seat." And one in the Winnipeg Sun on February 22nd, "Pawley lashes Speaker."

Mr. Speaker, we know what went on in an unprecedented way. A letter was sent by the Premier to the Speaker and it was an ultimatum, it was coercion, and the Speaker had the intelligence and the courage to immediately respond. Mr. Speaker, I know what the game was at that time, too, I can figure it out.

The game was that everyday the government would come and sit in the House at 2:00 p.m. and wait for the opposition, and the pressure would build, and it would build, and it would build, and it would build on you, Sir. What happened was, of course, that the First Minister sent a note, a letter, on February 21st, with copies to the Press Gallery and said, in effect, that he was going to be there at 2:00 p.m. ready to vote.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to quote your response to him and then to conclude my remarks. When the Speaker said in his letter, immediately, that he required fairness and impartiality, and he concluded his letter in the following way: "Since the House is close to effecting a change in its rules I am surprised that you would request that I contravene the existing rules and procedures at this time. Any unilateral action on my part could only be a betrayal of the impartiality of the Chair and would seriously undermine the integrity of the Speakership. In view of the foregoing, I cannot accede to your request to contravene our Rules and Procedures." Signed D. James Walding, Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the last analysis, they attempted to intimidate and coerce the Speaker by offering him an ultimatum. Mr. Speaker, I simply say that this is a desperate government, it's a government that we do not trust, and it's a government that should only consider limiting the use of the bells if it will give us the assurance that it will not then attempt, again, to ram in their French language proposals, however moderate, however watered down they may be, and that they should give us the assurance that a new procedure will be introduced into this House as part of a package for constitutional amendments. Then, and only then, should the opposition and the people of Manitoba consider limiting the use of the bells.

MR. SPEAKER, J. Walding: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Swan River, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, I believe there will be an inclination to go into Supply now to consider the Estimates of the Department of Government Services in committee, and Education in the House. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce one change in Estimates order at the request of the Minister of Health and the opposition health critic, the Member for Fort Garry.

It's been agreed that the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture will follow the Estimates of the Minister of Education, perhaps some time next week when those Estimates are complete, rather than the Estimates in the Department of Health.

So, Mr. Speaker, I also believe there may be an inclination on the part of members opposite to forgo Private Members' Hour today and subject, Sir, then to leave for that, I would move, by leave, seconded by the Minister of Business Development and Tourism, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and that that committee sit through Private Members' Hour.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for River East in the Chair for the Department of Education; and the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Government Services.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Government Services.

We shall begin with a statement from the Honourable Minister responsible for the department.

Mr. Minister.

HON. A. ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Before introducing my department's 1984-85 Estimates, I would like to comment briefly on the role and purpose of the Department of Government Services.

Government Services is a Central Service Agency within the Manitoba Government. The department is responsible for providing a wide range of central support services to all departments and some agencies, boards and commissions. These services are categorized as Property Services and Supply Services.

Property Services entail the planning, design, acquisition, construction and management of

government-owned or leased property. They include such services as project management, design, land acquisition, accommodation planning, maintenance and operation, construction, security and parking, employee housing, contract services, energy management and the operation of the Gimli Industrial Park.

Supply Services entail the acquisition, supply and management of common government commodities and services. They include such things as fleet vehicles, purchasing, inventory management, office equipment, telecommunications and postal services.

As the provider of these common services, the department attempts to offer a cost-effective service to plan departments, a service which, if delivered by departments themselves, would not be as uniform nor cost-effective to the government as a whole. Having said that, I will now highlight some of my department's major accomplishments during this past fiscal year.

The Department of Government Services is committed to an operating philosophy that embraces services as its foremost concern. Recognition of and response to our clients' needs form an integral part of the department's operation. In order to continually improve our clients' relations, the department has embarked on several initiatives.

An annual meeting between senior management of Government Services and client departments has been held to discuss and resolve policy and service concerns. A number of visits with client groups at the working level have also been made to address policy and service issues applicable to selected programs.

We have developed an easy-to-follow guide on how to do business with Government Services, called a Client Service Manual, and have distributed this manual to over 600 clients.

We have also planned and designed a Client-Relations Training Program to help our staff improve their client-relation skills.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could supply me with a copy of this report?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage wants a copy of the Minister's opening remarks.

HON. A. ADAM: No, I don't have a copy.

MR. L. HYDE: That's a poor start, Mr. Chairman. However, we'll overlook it for the time being. I trust you will have a copy for me in the very near future.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure whether it's common practice for the Minister's comments to be distributed. I don't find anything wrong with that. May I continue, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has the floor.

HON. A. ADAM: We have also planned and designed a Client-Relation Training Program to help our staff improve their client-relations skills. Many of these initiatives will be continued and further enhanced through 1984-85.

The human resources of the department are considered to be our most valuable asset in providing

good service. As such, human resource development in both the professional and technical areas has been an ongoing concern of the department.

This year a staff training and development survey was administered to departmental staff in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission and the Manitoba Institute of Management. The survey identified a number of training needs and led to the development of training programs to meet those needs.

Turning now to Management Information Systems, the department has begun several system development projects to automate work processes and decision systems. The department is now into the second year of a five-year project to develop a property management system. When completed this system will automate most of our property management functions. We hope to integrate them into a total information system with other divisions at some later date.

The system is comprised of commitment, accounting, space management, police management, parking control, financial modelling, job costing, work order control, inventory control and personnel modules. A Fleet Management Information System has been developed to provide cost data on each vehicle unit and a data base for establishing vehicle-use rates by department. Since April, 1983, the system has provided vehicle cost and utilization information to assist clients in better managing their vehicle assignments and in controlling their transportation costs.

Another automated system which became operational this past year was the Common Material Identification System. This system ensures that all government inventory supply items are consistently classified and numerically catalogued, thereby facilitating efficient inventory management and stock replenishment. The system is a precursor to a comprehensive purchasing information system.

In the area of telecommunications, the department has co-ordinated the implementation of Centrex Telephone Services for the government's use in Winnipeg. Centrex is a computerized system capable of integrating voice, data, text and high speed facsimile within a unified communication operation. The Centrex Service has a number of implications for improving telecommunications, service and reducing cost which will be increasingly evident as the system becomes fully operational in 1984-1985. I should also mention that during this past year an INWATS telephone system was implemented to permit the general public in rural areas to contact their MLAs in their Winnipeg offices toll free.

Again, in order to assist the general public and improve its accessibility to the government, the blue pages of the MTS Winnipeg Directory were revised to provide an alphabetical functional listing of government programs and services.

In conjunction with Translation Services, bilingual listings were prepared for the blue pages of the 1983-1984 Winnipeg and Provincial directories.

Through the application of numerous innovative and proven energy conservation techniques, Government Services is continuing to achieve a 20 to 25 percent reduction in energy consumption in the operation of government buildings. Relative to the 1979-1980 base year, a cost avoidance of approximately \$1.5 million was achieved in 1983-84. We expect a similar cost avoidance for 1984-1985.

An example of one of the measures we've taken to reduce energy costs is the closing of the three provincial community colleges during the 10-day winter break. In 1982-83, this resulted in a \$15,900 gross energy cost avoidance. With increased fuel and utility rates, the cost avoidance was \$18,000 this past fiscal year. The department has also continued to conserve energy and reduce cost with the vehicle fleet. It operates on behalf of the government by acquiring the smallest and the most economical vehicles for the job. Compacts now comprise over 40 percent of the approximately 2,500 vehicles in the fleet, more than double the proportion in 1979-80; 94 percent of the sedans are presently either compact or sub-compacts. This resulted in a 250,000 litre reduction in fleet fuel consumption.

Turning now to land acquisition, my department has negotiated a number of land purchase agreements under the Winnipeg Core Initiative Program. This has involved property on Portage Avenue, Logan Avenue, the Canadian National Railway East Yards and the new Air Canada Administrative Centre.

If the North Portage project should proceed, the North Portage Development Program is also expected to generate a substantial amount of activity for our Land Acquisition Branch in the coming fiscal year.

In the next year, land acquisition involving multiple land owners should become more equitable as a result of a change to the expropriation procedures that became effective on April 1, 1984. The change has the effect of setting a common date for assessing property values to make the acquisition equitable for land owners who settle on a price with the province by mutual agreement.

In 1983-84, the department continued its fire safety upgrading initiative from previous years. Major upgrading is either planned or in progress for the Manitoba School for Retardates, the Selkirk Mental Health Centre, Brandon Mental Health Centre, Seven Oaks Centre for Youth, Dauphin Court House and Correctional Institution, Headingley Correctional Institution and Manitoba School for the Deaf.

We spent approximately \$4,500,000 on these projects in 1983-84 and have budgeted \$4 million for further fire and safety upgrading in 1984-85.

One initiative that we are particularly proud of was the development of a new Manitoba emergency plan. This comprehensive plan delineates the provincial emergency response structure for civil disasters and departmental and municipal roles and responsibilities.

Guidelines have also been developed for response to recurring emergencies such as floods, health threats, dangerous good accidents and forest fires. This master plan is supported by specific municipal emergency plans and, in 1983-84, our Emergency Measures Organization assisted in developing 20 first-time plans and in updating 39 existing plans. In 1984-85, we expect to help an additional 20 municipalities prepare emergency plans.

Currently there are 77 municipalities with completed emergency plans, 41 are developing plans and a further 26 who have indicated an interest in planning; the 109 of Manitoba's 253 municipalities have shown no interest, to date, in developing emergency plans.

More and more communities are beginning to realize the value of emergency planning and I think this has been achieved in large part because of the emergency

preparedness-awareness seminars that we've been presenting in co-operation with other federal and provincial agencies. EMO presented five emergency preparedness seminars outside of Winnipeg in 1982-83, 11 last year, and will continue with these seminars in 1984-85.

I would personally like to thank all those communities who have developed, or are in the process of developing emergency plans. It certainly makes our job easier and is in the best interest of the community and its residents. The value of emergency preparedness planning was demonstrated by the province's response to last summer's Western equine encephalitis health emergency. Largely due to a co-ordinated response by the involved departments, the health emergency was handled with dispatch while maintaining effective communications.

Lastly, I would like to mention my department's continuing efforts to achieve greater financial accountability. A pilot project in comprehensive auditing in Government Services and an internal audit function have been established in the department. A four-year audit cycle is being formulated which will see audits conducted in each program area over that time period.

In the 1984-1985 Estimates, Government Services took seriously the challenge we were faced with to repriorize our programs and curb government spending. In light of rising costs and increasing demands for services, I am pleased to report that my department's 1984-1985 budget represents a 2 percent increase over last year. There is an increase this year over last year of \$1,579,800.00.

In the area of Operating Expenditures, there were a number of reductions made to our 1984-85 budget. There has been a saving associated with efficient monitoring of the new Centrex telephone system in the amount of \$206,500; a \$129,000 reduction in our energy consumption budget as a result of the application of various energy conservation techniques and a \$100,000 reduction by extending our painting and major repair cycles.

In the 1984-85 fiscal year, the Department of Government Services will be undertaking a number of new program initiatives. I will share with you a few of the more major thrusts.

The Governments of Canada and Manitoba have recently signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with respect to emergency preparedness. The agreement also contains a five-year funding clause and cost-sharing formula being negotiated between the two governments. This agreement, for the first time, sets out a clear framework for co-operative planning between the two groups and encourages both governments to conduct more training, education and public information programs to support emergency preparedness.

Our Emergency Measures Organization has a number of commitments under this agreement, and an increased amount of emergency planning and response activity will be recurring during this fiscal year.

Another program area which we feel will have a lot of potential in the department is our new Equal Employment Opportunities Program. The department employs nearly 1,200 workers in both unskilled and highly-skilled jobs. This year we will be attempting to improve the opportunities and accessibility of women,

Natives and the handicapped to the vacant positions we have and establish programs to assist the integration of these target groups within the department.

I mentioned earlier the cost savings and the improved service advantages of the new Centrex telephone system that has been extended to government offices in Winnipeg. In 1984-85, the department intends to conduct a study of the detailed requirements and financial implications of Centrex expansion to urban centres outside of Winnipeg.

In the systems area we will be developing an automated information system to support the government's procurement program in 1984-85. The Purchasing Branch information system, which is already being reviewed, would give the government easily accessible data to assist management decision making. This data retrieval system will provide statistics on such things as the frequency and value of purchases made in various Manitoba communities; the value and type of commodities purchased from Manitoba sources versus out-of-province suppliers; price differential between Manitoba produced goods and out-of-province produced goods and the amount of business awarded to individual suppliers; the acquisition of the necessary hardware and development of the necessary software to run this system should take place hopefully this year.

I would like to mention that one of our largest construction projects, the new Law Courts building should be completed by December of 1984 and ready for occupancy by February or March of 1985. I understand that construction is on schedule and budget. The new court facility should greatly expedite the processing of court cases.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank each and every member of my staff for their helpful support and dedication. I am proud of what they have attained this past year and very hopeful for our 1984-85 plans.

While there are many other areas I would like to highlight at this time, I feel that this introduction will suffice for my honourable colleagues and the critic for the opposition, and I recommend to you the Estimates of the Department of Government Services.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. In pursuance with past practice in this committee, the Chairperson now calls upon the leading opposition critic to give his reply to the Minister's opening statement if the critic so desires.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to thank you, Mr. Minister for I'd say your lengthy report, but I am disappointed that you are not following the customary actions of previous Ministers with not supplying a copy of your remarks. I would hope, Sir, that you will give every consideration to supply me with a copy before the afternoon is out, because it was lengthy, as I say, and very difficult to follow.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we'll want to go right into the Estimates very shortly because we have several questions. Of I should miss some of the questions that I want brought to the attention of the Minister, I'm sure that I have colleagues here that will be interested in bringing some of the questions out.

Mr. Chairman, I was going to enquire of the display that the Minister has on his jacket. I am aware of the

fact that there should not be any displays in a committee room and I wonder if he could explain just what has he got on his jacket lapel.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, it looks like Progressive Conservative colours. Somebody touched me down in the dining room for - "Sign up for peace," it says.

MR. L. HYDE: Sign up for peace.

HON. A. ADAM: Yes. I left it on because I thought we would have a peaceful discussion during the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, we'll accept that explanation and we hope that he will not bring forth any further displays to our committee.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest with those few remarks that we proceed with the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we do, the Chairperson now calls upon the members of the staff of the Department of Government Services to kindly take their respective places.

With respect to the copies of the Minister's opening statement being distributed, there are no rules in this committee. It depends on the judgment of the Minister whether he would like to share his copy with the opposition or not.

The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, on that particular point, I think it has been a common courtesy that has been established over time to provide members of the opposition, through the last many years have done it, in our term of government and I know that many of his colleagues have and it's just a general courtesy to do it so that it is public record and can be followed as one goes through the opening statement. I would have thought this Minister, having the experience he's had, would have tried to live up to some tradition and co-operate with the committee.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I have not objection to passing out a copy of what I said, with one caveat, that I didn't follow my text exactly word for word.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that's precisely why we wanted it provided, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The remarks of the Minister will appear in Hansard tomorrow. There is no compulsion for him to provide it if, in his judgment, it will not help, especially if he departs too much from his prepared text.

The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that's the point I was trying to make is this government have not come clean with the people from Manitoba and have deviated, in many cases, from what would be prepared, and they try to not always fully explain or put on the record what it actually is. That's the point we're trying to make. We've made it and we're satisfied, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will be on the record.
The Honourable Minister.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the official comments that I made are the ones that will appear in Hansard, those are the official ones. What you are receiving now is almost verbatim of what I said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, before we proceed, the Minister knows very well that within five minutes he could have a copy made of that report that he has given to us and let us have an opportunity to review it as we go along because there's information that he put out this afternoon there in the lengthy report. I think it's his duty to see that we have a copy.

HON. A. ADAM: There will be a copy coming up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now begin the deliberation on Item 1.(b)(1) and 1.(b)(2) Administration and Finance - Executive Support, Salaries and Other Expenditures - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you. Well, my first question to the Minister, Mr. Chairman, is could he explain the increase in Salaries on Executive Support, please.

HON. A. ADAM: The Executive Support?

MR. L. HYDE: Yes.

HON. A. ADAM: There is an increase due to a \$20,000 increase for one term SY transferred into the Executive Support. There was a reduction of \$4,000; provision for merit increases and general salary increases is offset by a reduction in a number of pay periods, as you are aware. As you go down the line, you will see that in the cases where there's a reduction in Salaries, it is because there is one pay period less this year than there was last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, from that Other Expenditures, what have we got, an overall increase of, I think it's 2.6 percent on the overall expenditures, could the Minister explain just what has taken place there, please?

HON. A. ADAM: There is a net decrease of \$8,500 on the Other Expenditures.

MR. L. HYDE: What was that figure?

HON. A. ADAM: There's a decrease of \$8,500 and that is due to a reduction in out-of-province travel, an increase in vehicle cost due to provisions for depreciation in the 1984-85 vehicle rates; and a \$1,500 increase in provisions for printing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, still on the Executive Support: Salaries, there's only an increase of \$16,000,

and you said there's an increase of one more person hired into that section? Is that correct?

HON. A. ADAM: Yes, that was offset by the decreases in the one pay period less than last year. There were 27 pay periods last year and this year there's only 26, so there's a reduction there. The increase was \$20,000.00.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, would there not be normal increases in increments there? It just doesn't seem to add up to me. So there's one pay period less.

HON. A. ADAM: The general salary increase is offset by a reduction in the number of pay periods. In 1983-84, it made provisions for 27 pay periods; whereas in 1984-85, we're back to 26 instead of 27, so that's where the difference is.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I guess that could make . . .

HON. A. ADAM: You'll find that all the way through the Estimates. I might point out that the recovery of depreciation costs for depreciation on the vehicles will change the recoveries and will also increase our expenditures in some cases, so we have to take that into consideration. Those will be the main differences from last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1) Executive Support: Salaries—pass; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(c)(1) Research and Planning: Salaries, 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, there is a considerable increase there and I wonder if the Minister can explain this, it's a 1.7 percent increase. I expect possibly this is due to the inflationary reaction that has taken place. Would he verify that?

HON. A. ADAM: Research and Planning, the 1983-84 shows \$170,500; the 1984-85 is \$173,400.00 There's an increase of \$2,900.00. There's only a \$2,900 increase there and that increase is based on the merit increase and is offset, as well, by the 27th pay period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(c)(1)—pass; Research and Planning: Salaries. 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, on Other Expenditures, I'd like to bring forward the question on this general health questionnaire that the Minister put out under the direction of the First Minister or the Minister of Government Services.

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if we could discuss that at this time?

HON. A. ADAM: Pardon? Would you repeat that?

MR. L. HYDE: I would like to put some question to you, Mr. Minister, regarding the general health questionnaire that was distributed throughout the building and I would suggest, to the entire staff in the government.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the questionnaire that went out was a result of complaints from some people in the building who were complaining of eye irritation and other ailments and, as a result of that, the Workplace Safety and Health people distributed that questionnaire in order to determine whether there was a pattern of discomforts or irritations healthwise, if they could develop a pattern, if there was a pattern that maybe eye irritations might have been caused by the ducts in the building and whatever.

MR. L. HYDE: Ducks in the building?

HON. A. ADAM: Air ducts.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister would inform this committee as to who asked for this information to be gathered.

HON. A. ADAM: People occupying the building and people working in the building.

MR. L. HYDE: Would the Minister not indicate the names of some of these people who wished this information be gathered?

HON. A. ADAM: I'm not aware of who . . . I know some of them but I don't know all of them. There were some - it appeared that the complaints were coming from the east side of the building and, because it appeared to be all from one side of the building, it was felt that we should maybe send a circular around to see what kind of a pattern there was in the building. I haven't seen the reports. They were sent back and went to Workplace Safety and Health.

MR. L. HYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated that the complaint was coming from the east side of the building. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that that is from the government side of the building, not the west side of the building that the opposition is in.

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister would not give us a few of the names that were requesting this.

HON. A. ADAM: I really don't have those names. They would be in the Workplace Health and Safety . . .

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, the Minister just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister is to be asked information that is within his jurisdiction.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, there may be people, seven to eight people that may have complained of a certain irritation in the building. I'm not sure if the honourable member or the people involved would want to have their particular private problems exposed in the records. I don't think the honourable member would want to do that.

MR. L. HYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister would agree with us that it must have come from the government side of the building.

HON. A. ADAM: There may have been some, yes. I can't verify or deny that.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the question: What is going to happen to anyone who should refuse to fill out that questionnaire and forward it to his office? I am assured that there are several who have not filled out that form.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure what the rules are insofar as Workplace Health and Safety. People were asked if they wanted to fill out the forms. If they didn't have any ailments or anything bothering them, they didn't have to send them back. It was just purely voluntary.

MR. L. HYDE: It's nice to know that we have something that's voluntary.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder, will these results be kept confidential.

HON. A. ADAM: They will be in the files of the Workplace Safety and Health. By the way, the respondents did not have to put their names on, so we would not know why. The majority of them probably did not have any names on.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, when all this information has been gathered and put together, who is going to diagnose the results of this here question that was put forward? Is the Minister of Government Services or Mr. Lecuyer, who is the Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, just who is going to be in charge of all this information?

HON. A. ADAM: It would be in the Department of the Minister responsible for the Environment and Workplace Safety and Health. If they were able to determine a cause for a pattern of problems or irritations in any part of the building, we would be so advised and we would be responsible for trying to rectify whether there was any dust coming in or whether the air ducts need to be cleaned out or vacuumed or whatever. I understand that they are doing some vacuuming now and trying to determine whether there was any cement or something to do with construction anyway.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I'm a little concerned that this questionnaire was handled the way it was. I wonder if the Minister could indicate to me whether the medical profession is going to be asked to analyze this information . . .

HON. A. ADAM: I think that the Workplace Safety and Health, those people who have repeated problems, I understand some of them had when they came and stayed in the building for three or four hours, got eye irritations and, after they left the building, it disappeared. So apparently it seemed to be associated with the workplace safety of the employees. That is the reason why we should be concerned about our people in the building if there's anything wrong with the building itself, physical building, that it should be rectified if it's causing problems to the people who are occupying this building.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister could guarantee me and the members of the committee that

this information will not get into the hands of insurance companies and that if these here companies were to get hold of this information if I, for one, or any other person had difficulties, that it could affect the premiums of my insurance in the future.

Are you going to be careful that this doesn't get in the hands of such people as insurance companies?

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that the records, most of them, I understand, were not signed; they were sent back. We were trying to determine whether or not there's a pattern in the building that was causing problems. I'm sure that those files are kept confidential and will not be made public. It is strictly for the environment people and they will, if there's any problems or if they can determine that there is a pattern for ailments in the building, that we will receive instructions from that group as to what we should be doing to rectify the problem.

MR. L. HYDE: One final question in regard to this here questionnaire that went out. Mr. Chairman, this could get to where it will even affect our privilege of driving cars. The cost of licence, the cost of insurance can go up. I'm a little concerned about this and I hope that you will see that this information is kept confidential and that it does not get into the hands of such people as insurance companies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has already spoken to the point.

1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(d)(1) Financial and Administrative Services: Salaries—pass; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

1.(e)(1) Personnel and Payroll Services: Salaries, 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, as I say, there is something like a 15.5 percent increase on that Salaries. I wonder if the Minister could explain that increase, please.

HON. A. ADAM: Yes, there was an increase of two SYs. The increase is due to an addition of one new SY, a classification officer, and one SY redeployed from another appropriation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(e)(1) Personnel and Payroll Services: Salaries—pass; 1.(e)(2) Personnel and Payroll Services: Other Expenditures—pass.

1.(f)(1) Computer and Systems Development Services: Salaries, 1.(f)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to know what has happened in this. Are we just that much more proficient in the computer systems this year than we were last year in light of the fact that we've got about a \$48,000 decrease?

HON. A. ADAM: Well, there is a decrease in the Other Expenditures and it's a result of the activities of the Computer and System Branch being accountable for co-ordinating system planning and development in support of department management's effort to meet program objectives and this involves conducting system

feasibility studies, in developing and implementing and maintaining both manual and automated information systems. Typical duties performed by staff of this section includes system project management system analysis and design programming, hardware, software and evaluation systems of contract administration and systems of planning and budgeting.

MR. R. NORDMAN: So that gives us the purpose of that particular service, but Salaries are down. There again, I assume that there has been no changes in personnel and again the change will be with regard to the differential in the number of pay periods in the year. Is that not so?

HON. A. ADAM: Yes, there is a reduction in the Salaries as a result of the pay periods.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(f)(1) Computer and Systems Development Services: Salaries—pass; 1.(f)(2) Computer and Systems Development Services: Other Expenditures—pass.

Moving on Item No. 2.(a)(1), 2.(a)(2) Field Services - Executive Administration: Salaries, 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, on Item 2, there is plus 20 percent increase in that expenditure, as I see it. I wonder if the Minister would just explain that increase at this time.

HON. A. ADAM: On the Salaries?

MR. L. HYDE: No, on Other Expenditures.

HON. A. ADAM: The net increase in operating is mainly due to operating costs of automated services, property management accounting system. That's where that increase comes from.

MR. L. HYDE: On the Salaries, what is there, another SY there?

HON. A. ADAM: There is one addition, yes. This is a transfer into I believe a management position, 1 SY, and that's offset by a decrease in the pay period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(1)—pass; 2.(a)(2)—pass.

2.(b)(1) Physical Plant: Salaries, 2.(b)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(b)(3) Preventative Maintenance; 2.(b)(4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, this shows only a small increase of 1 percent across the board. I believe that can be acceptable, it's understandable.

Mr. Chairman, I believe there is a noticeable improvement in the general tidiness in the housekeeping of this building. I want to comment on that. I believe there is improvement in the condition of the building since this time last year. But I can't help but feel that there could be an improvement at times on the maintenance of the grounds surrounding this building of ours. I am referring mainly about the papers and trash that is left lying around, and I realize, Mr.

Chairman, that the winds will have a lot to do with it and possibly tomorrow morning at this time if the winds should recede that there'll be many articles that will be lying around that are very disgraceful as far as the general tradition of our grounds.

We have visitors coming and going into this building and on our grounds and I do hope that the method of tidying up our grounds and to keep the papers gathered up will be improved.

While I'm speaking on that subject, you know, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that the visitors who are often around as I said, they'll be wondering just whether we are keeping a zoo here or just what. I noticed this morning when I approached the grounds, there were two little rabbits who dashed out from under the shrubs and I'm wondering just what on earth are we keeping. Are we starting a zoo here or what is it? You know, I love little animals and all that, but my goodness, it's unusual, I would say, to have wild rabbits dashing out and around from under cars in the middle of a city.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister wants to respond on this question of the rabbits.

HON. A. ADAM: I saw one rabbit this year and I was really happy that we could accommodate what I consider to be one of the finest legislative grounds maybe in Canada. We certainly get a lot of compliments on our Legislature and the surrounding grounds. We are doing some work this year on the grounds of Government House and I'm not sure whether they will be ready on time for the visit of Her Majesty, I doubt very much, but there is a good start on it and certainly that'll be a nice improvement to the grounds there. I would not want to begrudge two little rabbits, Mr. Chairman, to come and . . .

A MEMBER: Feed on our dandelions.

HON. A. ADAM: . . . I would really hope that they stay around and I hope the Member for Portage la Prairie is not going to ask our staff to chase them away.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, as I said I'm a lover of little animals. But I wonder, though, if these little creatures were to follow the patterns of rabbits, we might be overburdened in numbers before the Queen and Prince Philip were to get here.

HON. A. ADAM: In response to that, when the Honourable Member for Portage indicated that we were turning the grounds into a zoo, I always thought the zoo was in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hope we stay relevant to the item under discussion.

The Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, there is one more concern that I have. We are talking about wild animals, and we have wild characters that seemingly delight in harassing the grounds of our lovely building and the grounds surrounding it when it gets dark, the two-footed characters, and I am wondering if the Minister is going to endeavour to control this activity that seems to take

place each sundown. I think, Mr. Chairman, that in the past the Ministers in charge have made every effort to keep them under control by putting up barriers on the east gates, the approaching gates to the grounds, to control the traffic because they whip around here mightily fast sometimes. I think, Mr. Chairman, that it would be wise on the Minister's part to control this activity.

HON. A. ADAM: I thank the member for his question. As a matter of fact, I issued instructions yesterday that the east, west and south gates be closed around 10:30, 11:00 at night. That is a time when they usually are closed, between 10 and 11 o'clock, and we hadn't started yet, but I have now issued instructions yesterday that that be done. It will be done.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Chairman, the concern I have is that Mr. McKenzie is going to bring in one of those pigeons again into the House. I come in the front door like almost everyone and every time you get there, you just are grateful that cows don't fly. I don't know what the answer is. Should we be doctoring the feed or something? I think it's an awful mess on the front doorstep to see all those pigeon droppings there and I think we should be able to control it. Are there any plans?

MR. H. GRAHAM: They are presently doing that, aren't they?

HON. A. ADAM: No, we haven't any plans at the moment. I think your colleague, as you mentioned, the Member for, at that time, Roblin, now the Member for Roblin-Russell, brought in a dead pigeon and he was really upset that we had somehow fed the pigeons food that didn't agree with them and he was resentful of the fact that we were destroying the pigeons. Now we have the Member for Assiniboia requesting that we remove some. I don't know how we can do it without getting someone to doctor their feed or to have them liquidated some other way. We'll take that under advisement and if the problem gets too serious, we will see if anything can be done.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I would suggest then, Mr. Minister, that it's your problem and you will have to contend with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(b)(1) Physical Plant - the Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, dealing with security around this building and Government House, is there any electronic surveillance of any kind in effect at the present time?

HON. A. ADAM: Only in the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The member will notice that there is an item on (f) on Security Services.

HON. A. ADAM: We are now, Mr. Chairman, dealing with maintenance of buildings and that sort of thing, not the security end of it. There is a line for the security end. I can discuss it now; I have no problem with that as long as we don't have to go over it. I am really amenable whichever way you want.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, when you talk about electronic surveillance, I believe you are talking about part of the physical plant. Is there any built-in system of electronic surveillance within the physical plant here and the Government House?

HON. A. ADAM: Not in this building, but there is in Government House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(b)(1) Physical Plant: Salaries—pass; 2.(b)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 2.(b)(3) Preventative Maintenance—pass; 2.(b)(4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations—pass.

2.(c)(1) Workshop/Renovations Branch: (1) Salaries and Wages, 2.(c)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(c)(3) Workshop Minor Projects; 2.(c)(4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations - the Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I can see a plus of 15.7 percent increase on Other Expenditures. Could the Minister explain just how this comes about, please?

HON. A. ADAM: The increase is again due to the vehicle costs which are now added to the expenditures, that's depreciation. You see them in every department; that is where that comes in. There is \$48,900 in vehicle costs to make provision for depreciation on the 1984-85 vehicle rates, and there is a reduction in the size of the fleet resulting from the review and that amounts to \$12,500; so the difference is 36. All that increase is depreciation in the automobiles.

MR. R. NORDMAN: On the Salaries there is a great reduction. I know where we're dealing with the one pay period less, but \$178,600 is a great reduction. I think that's more than one pay period. How many SYs has this department been reduced by?

HON. A. ADAM: Seven.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, when the Minister indicates - I think he is taking a depreciation now on vehicles as a depreciation allowance. I think he said 48,000 in this particular case, was it?

HON. A. ADAM: In this particular workshop division, just in that.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Is that a new policy in government?

HON. A. ADAM: This is the first year that this comes into effect. That gives us a better picture of actually what our vehicle costs are and the replacement costs. The way we have it set up now, the full recovery cost should be brought back.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I know in Public Accounts and dealing with the Provincial Auditor's report over the years, there have been various debates as to whether or not government property should be depreciated and we're seeing it now occurring. Is it only occurring in the automobiles or is it appearing in other aspects as well?

HON. A. ADAM: I would point out, Mr. Chairman, that it was done this way in previous years and it was changed and we're going back to that system. As far as I know, it's only done, as far as our department is concerned, in Motor Vehicles.

MR. H. GRAHAM: It's only in Motor Vehicles?

HON. A. ADAM: Yes.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(c)(1) Salaries and Wages—pass; 2.(c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 2.(c)(3) Workshop Minor Projects—pass; 2.(c)(4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations—pass.

The time being 5:30, what is the pleasure of the committee?

The Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Just before we finish . . .

HON. A. ADAM: Just let him finish.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I'm sorry. This \$1.3 million, where is it recoverable from, CMHC or . . .

HON. A. ADAM: No.

MR. R. NORDMAN: . . . other departments?

HON. A. ADAM: Yes.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I see.

HON. A. ADAM: It comes back from other departments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (c)(4)—pass.

It's now 5:30. Do the members of the committee want to continue or want to have a break? We will have to interrupt the proceedings of this committee and come back at 8:00 p.m.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. EYLER: Committee, come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Education, Item 4.(a) Program Development Support Services - the Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the Minister could indicate whether there is any change in staff complement under 4.(a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam Minister.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman, in our entire department, Program Development and Support Services, we have an additional six people and because they show up in the variety of branches, I thought I would just summarize where the additional people come.

We have one as a consultant in Computer Education; in the Native Education Branch we have a consultant in Native language, and an additional secretary, and an education liaison officer to the Native community; in the Manitoba School for the Deaf, we have one psychologist that works in the assessment centre, Diagnostic Centre for Hearing Impaired Students for the province; and one additional person in the Department of Education Library. So those are the six people; we'll come to them as we go through.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4.(a)(1)—pass; 4.(a)(2)—pass.
4.(b)(1) - the Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's our intention to spend a fair amount of time within the Curriculum Development area, as I made reference in my opening statement, that we would be posing a number of questions specifically in the area of trying to determine the quality of education that is being offered to students within our public school system.

Mr. Chairman, I am very happy that the Minister has seen fit to send over one of the research reports. I think her office sent over a total of five or six. At another time I would ask her - I notice the series numbers break down and there seems to be a large number missing but, nevertheless, I want to thank her very much for the five or six that she did send. I will be using one rather extensively over the next few minutes, particularly the one dealing with public attitudes to education.

This, Mr. Chairman, was the survey that the Minister has quoted from on numerous occasions, and I think she indicated, when we were covering the Research and Planning Branch, that the contents of this report were not any more extensive than she had led us to believe by way of her comments on public platforms. I have had the opportunity to skim this report, and I suppose I beg to differ with her in some respects. There is some very very interesting information and I, in reading this, feel that it provides the perfect opportunity to launch into a major discussion as to the quality of education that's being afforded again to our students within this province.

So with that beginning, Mr. Chairman, I would like then to begin to go through and put on the record certain parts of the findings of this report. I would, first of all, refer to Page 4 under the heading, Grading the Educational System and I believe the question posed was, students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and F to denote the quality of their work. Suppose that schools were graded in the same way, what grade would you give to the schools in Manitoba?

The schools are broken into four categories, the elementary schools, high schools, colleges, trade schools, and universities. Elementary schools were given, in the A and B category combining those two results, a grade of 60 percent, roughly 60 percent falling into the A and B categories. That comes probably as no surprise because remarks made generally by

educators and, I believe, by parents who have children within elementary school, and other programs that have dwelt on this subject, seemed to indicate that the elementary schools in the nation and within the province are doing a most satisfactory job in instructing our young people.

The second category though is that of high schools. I may have missed it, but I've never heard the Minister make reference specifically to the grading of high schools as was done by this report. It may be of surprise to you, Mr. Chairman, that of those two top grades, again, the question was put a grade on the job that high schools are doing within the province. The total combination of scores in the A and B class was 42 percent. That means that a full 58 percent felt that high schools within our public school system was doing a C or poorer job in a grade sense. Those numbers bounced back very significantly for both colleges and trade schools and also for universities.

Mr. Chairman, I guess what I'm trying to say is that the emphasis of our remarks when we're talking about quality of education will be directed toward the program and the curriculum and many other factors that are available to our students in high school.

Continuing through the report, and there's some commentary through here, and I will pick and choose, and if the Minister feels I'm picking and choosing out of context, no doubt, she will want to rebut some of the statements that I make. But the bottom paragraph, this comment is made: "Teachers gave substantially higher grades to their own schools. However, teachers made quite accurate predictions about how the public would grade elementary and secondary schools." I find that remark interesting. Teachers in their own mind had felt that the public as a whole would downgrade the school system and I don't know what interpretation to take of that. Maybe the Minister can help me with that. It says that the teachers themselves gave their own schools a grade of 75 percent falling to A and B, but they weren't surprised that the parents and non-teachers afforded a grade much lower.

Well, continuing on, it makes comment that the post-secondary institutions were fairly well accepted. There was another section comparing schools between provinces and I think the general tenor of those remarks were that they didn't feel Manitoba schools were any poorer or any better than any other provincial schools within the nation.

Their next question was comparing elementary and high schools of today with those that were available when you went to school. Would you say that education and schools are now - and these are the questions - are now much improved, somewhat improved, about the same, somewhat worse, much worse? Surprisingly, I think only 55 percent thought that schools were improved either much more so or somewhat. This was obviously a very analytical survey because it's broken down further. The author indicates that 60 percent of non-Winnipeg residents saw an improvement versus only 52 percent of Winnipeggers saw an improvement in the public school system today compared to whenever they went to school.

Now, just so that people don't feel that while these are all 55-year-old people who remember some time in the past, this is one of the most interesting aspects. Respondents with more education were less likely to

see improvement. Of those with less than full secondary education, 62 percent rated the school as improved - and here's the key - while only 50 percent of those with post-secondary education did so.

That means, Mr. Chairman, that what we have here by virtue of this survey, those people that have just gone through or completed public schools and those people who have gone on to higher forms of learning are the ones that are most critical, or at least passed the most negative judgment upon the public school system. What are they talking about, Mr. Chairman? I think they're talking about the quality of education that's afforded in high school.

Well, let's go on. There's a third heading called, The Role of High Schools. The question is, "In your opinion, how well are the high schools doing in providing," - and the areas are - "a good general education, preparation for university, preparation for work." The responses were very well, adequately and poorly and the conclusions were, that the high schools were doing a more-than-adequate job in offering a good general education.

Preparation for university is good too. I believe 67 percent of the respondents felt that high school was doing a very good or an adequate job. Preparation for work, only 10 percent of respondents thought the high school was doing a decent job; 42 percent thought they were doing an adequate; and 48 percent of the respondents felt that high school was doing a very poor job of preparing graduates for work.

Do you remember, Mr. Chairman, a year ago - and I don't want to quote Hansard - but do you remember the statistics that the Minister of Education was so proud to use? She said in her day - and she used them again - 11 percent graduated. I said well, in my day I think it was 18 percent graduated - a little younger - and now it's 75 percent. That was her measurement of the job they were doing. If she can remember my reply, I said I don't really understand what your argument is, because in my day, as I said - and I would dare say in her day which is older than mine - (Interjection) - just replying, you didn't hear the comment, Mr. Minister. You didn't hear the comment. I don't comment until I feel in some sense obliged.

Mr. Chairman, the comment that I made was I felt that the people that maybe didn't attain a Grade 12 standing or a Grade 11 standing were prepared for the work world. That's what I said. Today, when people are questioned, the general public does not accept that.

Well, moving on, Mr. Chairman, and again for all three aspects - here's again a very telling comment - respondents with more education tended to be less favourable in their assessments, a very very telling comment. And I'll read on, on the bottom of Page 8, "None of the functions is seen as being particularly well performed. Each had more ratings of poor than very well. However," - and this is the key - "the more recent contact respondents had with education, that is, the younger and the more educated, the more critical they tended to be of the high school."

Moving on to Page 9, "It is known from other research, however, that preparation for work is not ranked highly in importance as an educational goal by educators", and I think the author is trying to explain away the poor result as to why people within our

province feel that high school graduates are poorly prepared for work.

We'll leave funding of education, we've covered that. Of course, impact of funding, and I know the Minister hasn't used this section, and the question was: If schools were given more tax dollars students would get a better education? How many people believe that? And it was broken down into - strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. If schools were given more tax dollars student would get a better education. Mr. Chairman, 65 percent of the respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly; 33 percent agreed somewhat or agreed strongly. I think that's the comment that many of us have been saying, that dollars per se, and I know it's the government approach in many cases that dollars can resolve every problem. I think the people of Manitoba don't and will not accept that argument.

Willingness to pay, that's another area. I think I just have on more, Mr. Chairman. No, I'll end it right there, but I'd like to - I don't know how much time I have left - ask some specific questions with that background. Maybe I'll give the Minister an opportunity, first of all, to reply to my opening statement because I will be posing some specific questions related to, not only the new health curriculum, but the proposed English curriculum and some other curricula changes.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I did want an opportunity to make a few comments about the Member for Morris' opening remarks. I guess the first comment I would like to make is that I'm really glad that he is, not only paying attention, but talking about the quality of the research that was done because, I think - I don't know if it came from him - but initially it was well, you know, you research things from your own department and sometimes. . . No, it didn't come from you, I'm trying to think of where it came from. The point is it was a good research, it was well done and it is providing good information and, of course, that's exactly the reason why shortly after it came into my hands I started talking about it publicly. I mean, this was not a matter where we had information that showed there was some public concern and some perception that there weren't different concerns in different areas that we sort of sat on and said, well, this statistic is for our eyes only, you know, we'll just keep this to ourselves.

I went public on that immediately and I did it for a number of reasons. I went on two major platforms - the MTS Annual Meeting and the Trustees Annual Meeting. And I do believe, although I've made several speeches on this matter and it is hard to remember exactly where you make what points in what speech. I do know that I have made reference publicly on more than one occasion to the different levels of support and confidence in the high school program where I can remember talking about the 59 percent, or the percentage overall, and saying it's not that good in our high schools, that we have a reasonable level of confidence in our elementary, our colleges, universities and significantly lower in the high schools, and indicated that was important for us to know, that was an important message.

I also spent quite a bit of time talking about, and I combined - if the Member for Morris will remember -

I said that it was taking a number of these pieces of information and putting them together that made it a very important message for us. One was that 80 percent of the public wanted more involvement in their child's education and in the public education system and that the percentage of confidence was about 59 percent, and with the high schools it was lower, in the 40 percent range. I added one more additional piece of information and that was related to the funding where, given the five categories, if you had additional money, where would you put it? They said, "employment." It didn't surprise me at all that jobs were No. 1, but then you went into housing - I'm just trying to remember because I don't have it here in front of me - but we had housing, energy and one other thing ahead of it. Oh, health, that didn't surprise me either. Health, you can understand that, a high priority of the public, but found that both housing and energy had a higher priority for additional money if it was around than did education.

And further, went public and said: "They do not believe that just throwing more money at it or putting more money into education necessarily equates to an improvement in quality." I said that, but there is one additional thing that you didn't mention. They did say that they would put money in if it was demonstrated that it would improve. In other words, they said, they think education is getting about what it should. They don't think it should be cut drastically, that's important for us to know too, and they don't think it should be getting a lot more money. They don't place it high on the list of an area to get more money if its around, and they don't necessarily equate throwing more money at it with improved quality, but they do say that if it can be demonstrated that it will make an improvement that they would be prepared to have more money go into education.

So what I say to the people who share the responsibility for education is that it's important for us to know that because it means, when we're going to do new things and we're going to correct inequities or deficiencies that are in the system, we've got to do a better job of telling them what we're doing and why it's going to improve the education for their children so they will support us, so they will understand and support us.

One of the other things that came out in the study that is important to know, and I think I mentioned it before, is that they don't know what's going on in the schools and so part of the question of confidence, when I'm talking to teachers and trustees and principals and other people who share the responsibility with me, is that we have a two-fold problem. One is that they may not think that the quality is that good and we do have some areas where we have to improve but, secondly, at least part of the problem is that they don't know what's being done and they don't know of the improvements that have taken place. An excellent example of that is the fact that we have \$34 million in Special Needs Programs in almost every school in the province and yet about 70 percent of the respondents said they didn't know if their school had programs for handicapped or special need children.

So we do have two problems: one is improving the deficiencies in the areas in dealing with the problems we have; and the second one is getting more information out to parents in community about what is being done.

My message to them was we have to attack both of those. So this is not something we're trying to hide and, when he stands and says, my goodness, this is very interesting and this is a reasonably important message, that's what I said a month ago when I went and stood on those public platforms. This is an important message for us to receive and to look at and decide what we're going to do with. That's No. 1.

No. 2. I want to make a few points about the high schools. First of all, I will admit and have admitted that a lot of the effort in the last eight years or so has been at the elementary level. There is no question about that, that a very concentrated effort by school divisions and the department to revise curriculum and improve curriculum and make changes has been at the elementary level, and we're presently at the end of an eight years - I think about eight years - of development of curriculum that's been going on since 1976 and the K-6 and the 7-9 programs now in place are recognized as being excellent programs and I think probably demonstrated by the higher level of public confidence.

We have work to do at the high school level and I don't say that just because the percentage is a little lower of the public perception. In fact, what's clear is that both teachers teaching in the system and the public both rate the high schools lower than they do the other levels of education. So both the professionals - I think the teachers didn't think kids were being challenged adequately in the high schools, although they did in the elementary schools - so even their perception is a clear message.

The public is very concerned about not just jobs. What is clear is that they're concerned about jobs for the future for themselves and their children, and there is more of an interest and a wish to look at our educational programs, not just to train people to run out there and get a job but certainly to address more of the education, particularly at the high school and college level, to make sure that it does end in work opportunities.

We are now looking at the question of reviewing the high school program and have I think just completed some reviews and changes in curriculum where the changes have been made and they're now out into the field. We have spent a lot of time on elementary and have recognized the senior high as the area we have to move into, have begun that process by reviewing curriculum and making changes and putting it out into the field and still I think have to look at specific areas in the high school program.

One of them would be the vocational program because we have to make sure that our vocational program, whose purpose is to train people for business and industry, actually has an effect on their ability to get jobs. I think the vocational program in our high school, and it's related to the whole question of transition and work, is one that we have identified as a program that we're going to be looking at.

We have a Work Transition Program at the Grade 12 level and it's in place in 10 school divisions, and that's fairly new. We also have our Co-operative Vocational Educational Program. I don't want to, and I know he's got specific questions, so I think we should get to them.

My main point is this: The reason we did the survey was to get information that helped us confirm what we

either believed or knew, or at least give us information about where the public was at in terms of their perception about the job that was being done, and to pay serious attention to it; and (2), we have already identified the high school program as the one that we have begun to work on and that we need to do more work on, and we've begun that process.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

Before proceeding, I would like to direct attention of members to the gallery where we have 53 Grade 4 students from Mary Montgomery School under the direction of Mrs. Mary-Ellen Roach. The students are from the constituency of the Honourable Member for Virden.

On behalf of all members, I would like to welcome you here today.

SUPPLY - EDUCATION, CONT'D.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, before we move to some detailed questions, I'd just like to rebut a couple of things the Minister said. She said, somewhere in the survey, the question was posed that if the quality of education increased, would parents and taxpayers be prepared to pay more. I haven't been able to find that question in this survey. As close as I can come - would you approve or disapprove improving education even if it means raising property taxes - that's a lot different than putting a supposition to them with a qualification given that educational quality improved. So maybe I missed it or maybe she isn't quite right when she makes that assertion.

Specifically, to the listing of education coming fifth, the point I was trying to make for the Member for Wolseley, who challenged me when I said extra money is available, this government sometimes believes that if you spend more, it'll work. I quote from the Manitoban the Minister's words, and she goes through the reporter and she ranks the position by way of this report, and she says, yes, jobs, 1; housing, 2; health, 3; energy, 4; education - you know, I think it should be higher, and this is for spending additional amounts of money. So I say that the Minister does believe that education should have a much higher ranking when it comes to spending additional money. That's the point I was trying to make; in her own words, she said so.

My other comment, Mr. Chairman, is that the Minister has indicated she's made some reference to high school. I've heard her on two of those platforms. I never heard and I've never seen in print anywhere a concern as to what people in our province feel as to the quality level being offered in high schools. So I don't quite accept the Minister's words that she's highlighted that to the same degree that she did the others. Yes, and she did highlight four or five areas, I fully acknowledge that, but certainly not the perceived shortcomings by people in our province as to the quality of education offered in high school. I dare say that had she made that public, that would have become very much a major issue.

My fourth and final comment, Mr. Chairman, the Minister says in her own words that I don't think that 50-59 percent who think we are doing a good to very good job is really high enough, and I've heard the Minister say that. I don't disagree with that; it should be higher. How then, are we going to increase that? Are we just going to use a public relations effort to attempt to convince people that they should have a better perception of the quality of education offered in high school? (2) Are we going to move into some meaningful changes in curricula where shortcomings are apparent? And I think the Minister has already made some reference to areas where changes are coming. Or, (3), do we begin ultimately to move back to a system which the Minister, in many comments, publicly abhors?

All I can do, Sir, in leading into this, is I happened to listen quite by accident, I heard the Journal article, the Journal Report, March 22, 1984. I was working in another occupation, cleaning seed grain late one night, and I had a television amongst all the dust and the grime out there, and I happened to see the Journal article on Back to the Basics. There were TV interviews, and talked to the Ministers of Education I think in Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec and, for once, I finally had the basics defined to me - I haven't heard that term for years - but finally it was defined to me. For the record, the way it was defined that night - again, I'm sure that it could be anybody's definition - back to the basics means, firstly, a behaviour code which is now coming into being in Alberta and British Columbia and Ontario, value courses in the five provinces, curriculum changes in all provinces at the high school level but two - Manitoba being one of those as indicated on the TV show that night, maybe it's wrong - reductions of options in all provinces but Manitoba, and standardized exams - Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and some of the other provinces looking at going back to them. That was finally the definition that was given to me, Mr. Chairman, and again this is the first time I had an opportunity to see that and so I found that interesting.

In view of that, plus the news report, as to the poor inner city test results sparks calls for more core teachers. I would like to ask the Minister what is the system of grading used to compare, to measure the quality of education province versus province? Is there in effect a measure? I know that there are various tests, but I don't know that much about them. I was wondering if the Minister could lead me through a discussion as to how quality is objectively measured vis-a-vis our other provinces in Manitoba and where we stand on the basis of those results.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Chairman, first of all before I get to - I think that the Member for Morris made a lot of points and then brought in a question that didn't deal with a lot of the points that he made earlier, so I want to go back to some of those things that were said.

I think I'll start with the program because I too just happened to see it - I don't watch a lot of television but I just happened to see it that night - and I watched as a Minister of Education, absolutely dumbfounded at a program that was apparently a program about schools across the country. In fact, I talked about this

in my speech too where there were suggestions being made, by the way the program was presented, that this was a national problem, that it was a crisis - we had a crisis problem of national proportion - and that there were a few provinces that were doing something about it; and those provinces that were had their lights go on and the suggestion was without actually saying it, was that if your light didn't go on, you weren't doing anything about this national very serious critical problem. So I want to put a few things on the record.

No. 1 - they did not talk to us and I think that's very very serious, when they present it as a national program. Actually that's not quite true. They did talk to us a little bit and they talked to us, I believe, not me as a Minister. I mean they had Betty out in full form, I believe because Betty was saying what they wanted the program to show. Terrible crisis. We're making major moves and major change so it fitted into the thrust and what they wanted the program to demonstrate. Ours did not. Ours did not and they knew that from the information that they got from some of my staff in the department where they spent enough time talking to the Director of Curriculum and other people to know, we did not have the problem to the same degree as the other provinces did; had never moved away from basics in the same way they had and had been moving over the last five or six years to make changes so that we were not in the same position that they were in.

Having found that out, I think they didn't want to say that. I mean that didn't fit in with the message, did it, of a crisis in the country of having to go back to basics. Now what I want to say and we can demonstrate this: first of all, we never went as far as other provinces did in moving away from required programs into the balance between required and optional. We never went as far. So we didn't get on the bandwagon and go to such extremes. Maybe Manitoba is not an extreme sort of province, maybe it's sort of moderate and we don't go to the extremes and the swings that other provinces do. But we did not go to the extremes that other provinces went to. When they're talking about moving back to the basics, you know what they're doing? They're talking about moving to where we are now. They're talking about moving and getting the balance of options to required courses to what we have been doing for the last six or seven years. We have always had - I think it's about a 50 percent of the courses they take are required programs.

In terms of the provinces over the last few years, I think we have had the most required - and this isn't very good English which isn't saying much for me - but we've had the heaviest requirement for required programs that any province has had. We are one of the few provinces who requires and mandates English right up to Grade 12. It isn't optional that they can only take English to Grade 10. They have to take English right up until Grade 12. So that's the first point I want to make. We never ever moved away and all these changes, rah, rah big announcement productions that they're doing in Calgary because I was there and talked to them - I wish I had it with me because I asked for information on what programs they had available in their high schools. My God, I got three pages. I mean I got three pages of lists of nothing but programs and courses and about 60 or 70 percent of them are

optional. I mean they have hundreds. This is no exaggeration, they have hundreds of optional courses in Calgary. They're now talking about removing a large number of them and moving back into the proportion of optional courses and required programs that we have been in all along. That's No. 1.

No. 2, we have been making quietly curriculum changes and revisions in programs over the last four or five years. So we don't have to go into this - you know just throwing up our hands and talking about this crisis because we never went as far as they did and we've been quietly working to improve the system that we had over the last four or five years so we don't have to go into this. Why would we sound like they do in the States, or why we would sound like Calgary when their system isn't like our system at all.

I think that probably we have completed the curriculum revisions at the senior high levels and this has been going on for a number of years. We only have, I think, English, Language Arts Grade 12 and Social Studies Grade 12 are the only two courses in the high school that remain to have the curriculum revision. So we have been doing the rest and working on it quietly for the last four or five years. So I get concerned when the education critic watches a program that is about what's going on in the nation and sort of takes things that they're saying and espouses them. I don't know if that's fair but sort of assumes that they're accurate and says, you know, what's the problem, what are you going to do about the things they said on that program the other night?

That program was totally inaccurate and had nothing to do with Manitoba and was about the worse piece of reporting - and I said that publicly. Did you hear that? You see then, maybe you missed the whole thing. Maybe that was also the speech where I talked about the quality of high schools because I know that in some of my speeches I referred specifically to the poorer, lower quality of high schools. — (Interjection) — Listen, since most of my speeches are done off the top of my head, my press releases never have about 90 percent of what I say in my speeches.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Wolseley.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I'd also like to ask the Minister about the action being taken in terms of direction of quality education in the high school because what I've heard so far this afternoon and the direction that the opposition critic seems to be taking, seems to be saying that education should be more tailored to assure that people have job skills when they graduate.

I don't totally disagree with that although it brings up the debate that has been going on both at the high school level and the post-secondary level about education versus training. Perhaps we can forgive the Member for Morris for not having made the distinct analysis that you just made about that program . . .

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, my soul has been cleansed.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: . . . considering he probably had his ears full of grain dust from his description of where

he was watching the program. We'll take that into account and forgive him for his interpretation or lack of it.

MR. C. MANNES: That's what you think of farmers, too.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Perhaps he should have rinsed them out in the meantime however.

The dilemma that I find in terms of criticism of the high school program has to do with the dichotomy between people's expectations for education versus training and trying to find that balance of when you talk about basics being education in the traditional, classic sense, over job skills. There is, because of our changing labour force, a very real need for those basics to include the life skills necessary to be able to make the transition from occupation to occupation or being open to retraining. I would hope that when one is evaluating the high school curriculum that there is a heavy emphasis put on the basic kind of life skills one needs in a well-rounded education program that doesn't then pin one person into a particular occupation which may or may not be there for their job lifetime. I think that it's always fine to look back on what education was, what it has been in the last decade or so, but I think what we should be doing at this point in the evolution of our education system is being aware of what the future needs are, not just in the immediate future when that child graduates from Grade 12, but giving that individual the skills that they can then carry with them as they move from a long variety of career changes, based on the present assessments of tech change and different kinds of skills one will need to get them through their work life that may not necessarily be so caught into the training model, but is more in the overall educational model.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my ears may have had some grain dust in them, but I would hope the member's ears would hear well my next statement. That was I didn't pass judgment; I never did pass judgment. I was sort of alarmed. The member can read whatever inference she wishes into my remarks. I can't argue with whatever conclusion she comes to. I say that I wasn't passing judgment.

I do say, though, that the only people so far that have passed judgment are the people that have been surveyed in that analysis. That's the only analytical group of people that have passed judgment. Now what the Minister tells me is that we haven't strayed off the path like other provinces have, that we really, if we just update our courses, will be actually leading the provinces towards this goal which is obscure at times of quality of education, that all we have to do is change a few courses. Obviously, then the parents in the other provinces, if they were interviewed, must have even a lower regard for their educational quality within the high schools.

So the Minister can't have it both ways, Mr. Chairman. She can't tell me, on one hand, that we haven't strayed off the path and therefore people should be happier with the system; and, on the other hand, tell us that yes, people are unhappy and were making these changes to try and make them happier so they have

a fuller and better understanding of what the goals are. That's why I go back to my question, we could argue words and some antics here for days and really go nowhere, but how, today, does one objectively measure the performance and the capabilities and therefore to me the basic quality of education in our province vis-a-vis other provinces in the land?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I didn't say that we don't have a problem or that all we have to do is clean up a few courses. I was giving facts that are true about how we have handled our education and it has not been the same as it has been in the other provinces. I want to make two points on this. One is that I'm not sure the people know that and it isn't just a PR exercise, but you know, we tend to see a lot of information in the press about what's happening in the States and in other areas. I can tell you that I think people often think that means automatically that's what's happening here, and that's true, because we get calls. You know, there was a great big hoopla about the horrible education system in the States and they were going to have merit pay, remember that? Did you happen to be in and see any of that?

A MEMBER: He was seeding that day.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: He was seeding that day. For a couple of weeks, there really was, on all stations, a lot of information about how terrible the education system was in the States and that they were taking all sorts of exceptionally extreme measures. We actually had people believing and saying, my goodness, that's awful. I went out at conferences and organizations and heard educators in Manitoba repeat it and sort of said, my God. I said to them, for goodness sakes let's be very careful that we don't add to what may already be a misunderstanding or belief and that is that whatever they hear about education or read about it is not the reality of what's going on here. It is not just a matter of adding a couple of courses.

I said the high school program was the program where we had to do the most work. I said that we've done more in elementary than we have in high school. I admitted that and I said we were moving on the high school program. I think we should look at the credit system; I think we should look at the vocational programs; I think we should look at the program that's going into place, the transition program between work and school and that we have a fair amount of work to do. While I'm prepared to say that on the one hand, I'm not prepared to accept general statements about education system that don't suit us.

In terms of evaluating between different provinces, there are tests that are done and that are available and that I think almost all school divisions, certainly in large numbers in the province use, that do measure their students against national norms, so there are tests that are being done. In fact, if there's one criticism I hear, it's not that we're not testing enough, it's that we're testing too much because everybody's testing, the province is testing, the school divisions are testing and teachers are testing in the classrooms. Sometimes we forget to add up the total amount of testing that's been done on these poor kids all at once.

Anyway, there are a variety of tests, some of them are done by us, some of them are done by the school division and some of them are done by the teacher and they do compare us to national norms and where they do, we come out - and this is a general statement because I don't have a lot of statistics - where we're tested against the national norms we do fairly well.

A MEMBER: Well, what do you expect them to do, say no.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: No, I expect them to tell me . . . We don't spend a lot of time and a lot of money testing to see how we do compared to Calgary, because the Calgary program isn't the same as ours. That would be absolutely useless. I mean they've got 100 courses in there that we don't even have. Why on earth would we set up a system that would try and compare what our kids are doing compared to theirs?

We do test so that we know that our curriculum is good curriculum. We do test at the school division level against national norms and teachers' test, and I think this is the best testing of all personally, that the teachers who are teaching the child test that child's knowledge and skills and is in the best position to measure it and a heck of a lot better than anybody down in the Department of Education for that child, not for the program, not for the system, not for the ability to determine provincial capability, but for the child, is best done by that teacher.

When we talk about standardized testing, I don't know if the Member for Morris was suggesting that we go back to standardized testing, because I don't know if you were suggesting or wondering or thinking that we should go back to standardized testing. You mentioned some other provinces were doing it and I don't want to assume that that meant you thought that was the solution to the problem. — (Interjection) — It was, okay. — (Interjection) — That's wise, not to assume. Okay, then I'm not going to assume that just because you said four other provinces are doing it that you're suggesting that that which is a very simplistic solution would be the solution to fixing our standards and making sure we have standards for our education system, because I can tell you it doesn't and that's why we got out of it eight to 10 years ago, because of the deficiencies in that program and I want to tell you what some of them were.

First of all, that program, the standardized testing program in the Department of Education, had built-in failure, a terrible terrible thing to do. It had built-in failure. It had a bell curve so that automatically a certain number of children had to fail; I mean had to fail. Can you believe it? It didn't really matter how well they did. The testing and the recording of the marks built-in through the bell curve required failure of a certain percentage of the children writing that test. Now I think that's terrible, I think that's terrible. No, they took it away because, one, teachers got into the habit of just teaching to a test, just pushing information, statistics and facts into a kid's head that they thought were going to show on the paper, which is not the same as teaching reason or teaching understanding or teaching people to learn. They were teaching by rote. We have so much information today that we can't possibly give it all to

our kids, we can't possibly. We have to do a better job of teaching them how to get information and how to learn and how to reason themselves because we can't stuff it all into their heads even if we doubled the years that we were teaching them; so it had that built into it and teachers knew it.

They would teach statistics just so that the kids would do well on that exam, which did nothing to prove what they knew, often even in that subject didn't prove what they knew in that subject. Add to that the bell curve and the deficiencies and the danger - and I think this is the biggest one - of taking information like that based on a standardized test across the province that does nothing to recognize the differences in children or in programs in different communities across the province, and I can give you some information that will describe how great those differences are, and on that basis made assumptions about the abilities of that child and closed doors to them, literally - and I believe this - closed doors to children being able to go on or continue their studies because of a very narrow extreme and too great a dependency on one test that was done provincially that measured the intelligence and the ability of that child.

What we're doing instead is that we're testing at two levels and we're letting the school divisions, teachers and professionals there be the main determiners and measurers of the child's knowledge and ability; and we are testing at the provincial level for the content of our curriculum to know that our curriculum is good and to know that there aren't any provincial problems or deficiencies or general problems in learning across the province, which we will then address provincially.

It isn't without its problems. It isn't a perfect system, but I can tell you I believe it's a lot better system and has a lot less deficiencies and a lot less negative impact on children and their ability to learn and go on than does that provincial standardized testing. It's simplistic, it's narrow, it limits and I would hate to see us become as dependent on it as we were previously for determining a child's intelligence.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for giving me a general overview as to how people within our department, people that are heading our whole educational area are attempting to measure us as a province and our quality of education within this province, vis-a-vis other provincial jurisdictions.

I would ask if the Minister could provide for me - not today - a listing of all those school divisions that use a general educational development test. Which divisions? I'm wondering if she would also provide to me after that what specifically the department does and I know they've run some tests, but I've talked to principals who indicated that certain students will be approached and they can decide to write the exam or not, trying to determine the general state. I'd like to know the methodology and specifically how that works, but once you have the results, and I'm talking again to the department as a whole, how you use them and how you build, in an objective manner, a grade for our high school system so as to allow it to be compared to other jurisdictions; because in spite of everything the Minister has just told me, she cannot in any way

deny what the people think is happening out there and the vast majority of parents and citizens are not happy with what's happening in high school.

Elementary school, they're pleased, and I'm generalizing and that's all I can do, but they're not happy with what's happening in high school. The Minister has said, by her own very words, we've had most curriculum changes. There's only two areas left. Is she saying that those two areas in themselves will make people happy? And the Minister is saying, well, we're making sure the curriculum is being taught, well maybe the problem isn't the curriculum. I say this most candidly to the Minister, maybe the problem isn't the curriculum. So how do parents and citizens of this province reach their conclusion as to whether high school is doing a good job or not?

Obviously we have no real measure, as the Minister has indicated, certainly none that's public, so all of a sudden a press release comes out saying that within the inner core, by the results of some test, there are problems within that school division at some level. Secondly, this is what parents that talk to me see. They see where - and I'm generalizing - their children do not have the same language skills, including they do not have the same ability to communicate and to write as parents or people that have come through school 10 years ago feel that they had when they graduated and what the student should have now. That is one of the factors.

They feel that much less time is being allocated of course to the teaching of Math and Science. Now Math hasn't change an awful lot in 2,000 years and I don't think there has been a decrease in the time spent on Math myself, but people think that; but there's no way the Minister can't tell me or will make me believe that there aren't ways of determining, particularly in Math, the purest form of logic that we have, that there aren't ways of finding out very quickly the competence of our graduates within that subject, Science to a lesser degree.

People are also concerned about what they view as a breakdown of discipline and order in the schools and that's nothing more than a reflection of society as a whole. In many cases, it's the same thing that's happening within their own homes and I readily acknowledge that, but they're very concerned also - the people who talk to me - about the decreasing load of homework through the high school levels. As a parent, my children, as they went through elementary school, are probably doing just as much homework as they are through high school, and all these factors, very subjective in nature, have caused a vast majority of our people within the province to say they are not happy with the quality of education that's being offered in high school.

The Minister can talk about, well, we're doing it better than some provinces in here and we're going to make these changes here and all that, but I guess the point I'm trying to lead to, unless we've got some way of objectively measuring, how do we really know what we are doing?

That was my lead-in to this whole area, Mr. Chairman, and the Minister may wish to reply, after which time I will ask some specific questions on programs.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: I'll just give a very quick reply. I think that you and I could spend a long time talking

about, both philosophical and other ideas, as everybody could in education, because I don't know of any other field that generates as much interest or as much discussion or as much involvement or as much criticism as does the field of education and I don't say that to ignore the concerns that are raised, but I want to make a few points.

One is that - and I said this before - I could take statements that were read and I could read them to you now and they would sound exactly like the comments that the Member for Morris is getting from people in the community and they are statements that were made 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago because, in fact, the adults of every generation are always critical of the school system and for some reason, and it may be that as you get older your memory fades and things that were behind you, you remember only the good things, but they tend to think things were better in the old days and that's a general comment. It happens with every generation where they say, kids aren't as well behaved. They always think that kids aren't as good, they're not as well behaved, they're not learning as much and the school system isn't as disciplined and isn't doing as much as they used to do.

I am glad to hear the Member for Morris comment on the inner city results. Not because, the results are news that we're glad to hear about; because it demonstrates clearly why we've made some of the changes that we have in funding and in programs. When he has concern about compensatory and I recognize the points that were made about that fact that it's a new program and how are you going to bring it into place. It clearly is brought into place - those and others recognizing that places like the inner city that are coping with large numbers and high percentages of high-risk kids need additional support and help in the education system because too many of those other things interfere with the child's ability to learn.

Some day I'm going to talk to him and I don't know if now is the appropriate time about some comparison and some census data that show comparisons between Logan, Morris and Tuxedo. It's interesting because it shows the differences in the population, in their income, and in their makeup, that clearly demonstrates why we have different programs and different needs and different problems with our children in different communities.

When you say that they're giving less time to - was it Science or Math people? - the fact is we're not giving less time. No, but we're not giving less time in the basics, and so one of our problems is that in a lot of cases they think there's been taking away of the time in basic programs and there hasn't, so we have to do a better job. They may still want us to change. There may be still some problems we have to deal with, but they should at least know the reality, at least know what is true today, what the basics are and what the time requirements are because they have not changed a great deal in the past.

I think that one other point is that people - we didn't make two points - when they are tested, and it doesn't show in this survey, but when they are surveyed, related to their own child's school and I made this point before, the public tends to be more critical in surveys that are general surveys about the education system than they are in terms of specific surveys about their child's

education. So that when they're being asked specific questions about something about which they know, which is what their child is getting in their school, they tend to be more positive and feel better and have a better response. So they will say that the education system in general is going to hell in a bread basket, or it isn't so great, or there are some problems with it, but my child's school is pretty good. I think we have to realize too that these are general questions about their perception of the education system and where you go specifically to parents it improves, it is better.

Also, in terms of this survey, they may be concerned about quality and they are, but there's a general agreement that the schools in Manitoba are at least as good as most schools elsewhere. So we don't want to exaggerate the concerns that are coming through. It's an important message. I said that. It's useful information, we're going to look at it and use it. If not, I mean I wouldn't have gone public on it would I? Lots of people have done surveys in departments and have never said one word about the results of the survey. I have made this a public issue, because I think it's an important message that we have to pay attention to and deal with.

MR. C. MANNESS: Just a final comment, Mr. Chairman. The Minister says that most people feel their school is doing a better job than the average level of education being offered throughout the system. I don't disagree with that, but we discussed in detail on Tuesday private schools and I would make the submission that more people are going to private schools and it's just not for religious reasons, it's for other reasons also. So again, that's a specific comment.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to discuss now the curriculum change that is being considered within the English and Language Arts area. I had a call and I guess it's been in the wind for more than a few months, probably the best part of a year or so or maybe longer. I have some indication that some smaller schools will be able or - I don't imagine they'll be forced - be able to offer a Grade 12 English course that will be a combination of 300 and 301. I would like to know specifically what is the intent of any revision within that curriculum?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Chairman, can I just respond to one point that the member made before he got into his specific question and that was that more and more people are going to private schools because they're concerned about the public school system. And while I don't have the numbers here in front of me, the percentage of the population is stable. It's staying about the same, it's about 4 percent and it is not increasing dramatically, although there is a reasonable increase in the numbers of schools, the percentage of the school age population is pretty well staying stable and has for quite a number of years.

The point about the English program in some of the small schools - we have gotten ourselves into a system where we are streaming kids and where we have two different programs that kids are streamed into, where they take either 00 programs or 01 programs and the Member for Morris is frowning so I hope I'm answering the question he's asking.

MR. C. MANNESS: You are.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Okay.

MR. C. MANNESS: I'm looking for something I think I left downstairs.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Okay. Because what is happening is that the curriculum guide that has gone out is combining the 00 and the 01 in a new interim guide that's gone out. So they've taken the teacher guides that were previously in two guides and put them into one guide. That's going out to the schools in September.

A couple of important things: one, the material hasn't been watered down. It's more demanding than the previous two guides and the teachers and the people in the schools select the appropriate strategies in learning materials for the students. In other words, the material is there, it's a more challenging guide which is one of the things he seems to have been suggesting we should be doing. It's a more challenging guide than before. It contains all of the things that were in the two programs and they have the option and the choice of determining which it is that is appropriate for the classes or the children that they're teaching. Now there may be some concerns about it out in the field. I think as long as they know that they haven't lost the option to choose, that's very important, that they can still select what they think is appropriate material. One of the advantages I would say that has is it takes away from something that is a disadvantage to having the two streams.

Something that has concerned me quite a bit and we've been talking about it ourselves for awhile is the problem of predetermining or putting kids into streams and having them go into that stream and be locked forever more into that stream. Now that wasn't the intention when those were designed in the first place. We didn't intend to do that to kids. It was supposed to take material for different levels of kids' abilities and direct them into the level that they could deal with, but they were also supposed to be able to go from one to the other. You know, they were supposed to not get locked in and they were supposed to, if they started out in the 00 course - it's 01 that's the top, isn't it? Okay, it's 00 that's the top and 01 that's the lower one. If they started out in the lower one, because their skills or their knowledge wasn't quite as good as it could be to take on the requirements of the top program, they were supposed to have a chance to upgrade and reach the other level and then move into the other one when they achieved it, and do you know that doesn't happen. I mean I hate to say it because I think it may be one of the greatest criticisms that I personally would bring to bear on that high school program and that is that there does not seem to be mobility between the two and that our kids, although we didn't design it, we didn't intend it and we don't want it to happen, seem to be being locked in to one stream or the other. You know, once you get in there, the perception is that that's where you belong. That's a terrible thing to do to kids.

So the one thing that the tying these two guides together from the two programs is that I think it allows, and I think it will help take away from that narrow

streaming and allow kids access to all of the material that's in the entire program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The time is 5:30, time for the supper recess. I'm leaving the Chair and will return at 8:00 p.m.