

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 16 April, 1985.

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 . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

SPEAKER'S RULING

MR. SPEAKER: Prior to Oral Questions, I have a statement for the House.

On Monday, April 15th, the Honourable Attorney-General rose in his place to raise a point of order regarding words spoken in debate by the Honourable Member for Elmwood. The Honourable Attorney-General alleged that the words constituted a charge of misleading the House. In order to review the actual words used, as printed in Hansard, I took the matter under advisement.

Hansard shows that the Honourable Member for Elmwood said, "Mr. Speaker, we'll have an opportunity to debate whether or not the Attorney-General is properly carrying out his functions. I intend to argue in his Estimates that he is not, and I will also raise some points on succeeding days to see whether or not some of the information the Attorney-General has provided in this House is accurate or not, or misleading or not. So, we will have a chance to debate that."

The words do not constitute a direct or hypothetical accusation, they merely indicate an intent on the part of the Honourable Member for Elmwood to discuss certain matters during future Estimates debate.

There is therefore no point of order.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Life insurance and pension management field - government entry into

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and it follows upon the revelation yesterday of the leaked Cabinet document that is a strategy plan of action for this administration in its forthcoming years of government. Mr. Speaker, the document refers to a commitment that all new non-economic issues, programs and legislation and all non-controversial issues be deferred for three years.

My question to the Premier is: is this the reason why his government has decided to put off entering the life insurance and pension management field for the present time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat interesting that the Leader of the Opposition has raised this question because - I guess we haven't done too good a job of following our overall strategy - it seems to me that just about every piece of legislation we've introduced in the past year-and-a-half has been controversial in the minds of honourable members across the way. I can't recall very many pieces of legislation that we have introduced that honourable members have said was not controversial, whether it be the labour legislation, the big black cloud legislation that honourable members referred to last June, whether indeed it was the French Language debate that continued after September 15, 1983.

Mr. Speaker, I think in response to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that obviously we haven't done too good a job in following our major strategy that I think all Manitobans would support; that it's time that all governments in this country ensure that their main focus be on job creation, job preservation, the economic issues that are confronting and concerning Canadians as a whole, and that should be our top priority as government.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, in case the Premier wasn't aware, it's the public who took great issue with the French language proposal of the government and in fact the labour legislation, it's not just the opposition. Mr. Speaker, following upon that, I wonder if the Premier could indicate, in addition to the topic of the life insurance and pension management, if that Cabinet document in strategy is the reason why his administration isn't proceeding with assessment reform at the present time.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition is posing these questions to me because it gives me a chance of repeating what I've been saying for the last year-and-a-half as to the major focuses and attention of this government. The first point, Mr. Speaker, on the government strategy - maybe we can get some better publicity now as to the government's main focus of attention - that the top priority for government action over the next three years be improving economic opportunities — (Interjection) — I know honourable members don't want to hear that . . . and dealing authoritatively with job creation and job preservation.

And Mr. Speaker, as we've indicated in Item No. 4, unfortunately, and I regret this, we don't have the monies for a lot of new expensive programming at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I remind the honourable member that a question should not be an expression of opinion, of representation, an argument or a debate.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Well, Mr. Speaker, if indeed that is the government's direction and concern, why is it that

the direction and concern is limited to only certain key constituent groups who should benefit from their programs and policies?

HON. H. PAWLEY: I don't consider farmers, small business people, labour, the young people of this province, the senior citizens of this province, the women, and on and on as only a few key constituent groups. The people of Manitoba are the constituency groups in this province. Mr. Speaker, this New Democratic Party, unlike the Conservative Party across the way that cater primarily to the banks and the large financial institutions of this province, those are not the principal concerns of this government.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, it's evident that the Premier only listens to and is only concerned with certain people and wants to govern by dividing people rather than being responsible to all the people of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, is this Cabinet document the reason why this administration is not proceeding with amendments to human rights legislation at the present time?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I remind members that questions should seek information and not to make arguments.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, this administration has on the record many indications of where it really stands, commitments to anti-scab legislation, passed it in New Democratic Party meetings.

We want to know, is that the hidden agenda, is that what this government really is going to do at the end of the three-year period talked about in this Cabinet document?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has conceded the next election.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, when I spoke about this government's intentions after the next three years, they might have any intentions when they are in opposition, but we are concerned about what they do when they are in government. We want to know what the hidden agenda is for this administration.

Mr. Speaker, when will this Premier tell the public what he is going to do with these major issues that he is now putting under the table? When will they surface? When can we expect to see the New Democratic Party in government, or otherwise, in opposition, bring forward these platforms that are on the back burner?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think that indeed if we were concerned about contentious issues we wouldn't need moving under the auspices of the Minister of Municipal Affairs on assessment reform. I can't think of any particular subject that would be more

contentious. Mr. Speaker, this is our plan of strategy; I am proud of this plan of strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to table his documents disclosing the Tory hidden strategy for the Province of Manitoba.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. If members can contain their exuberance, then perhaps we can proceed with question period.

Potash Development - state of

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

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of questions, or maybe three, to the Honourable First Minister regarding this governmental strategy and plan of action for the next three years.

Can I ask the First Minister, was the potash development shelved before or after this Cabinet meeting was held at Gimli?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell advising me that the potash development in the Province of Manitoba, as we are attempting to achieve, is a contentious item and should be shelved? If that is what the honourable member is telling us, let him be clear by way of his question to us.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I feel sorry for the First Minister. He has days when he acts as silly as he did today.

Can I ask the First Minister, does potash development in our province fall under Category 8 which says that a timetable for all public announcements will be set now for the next three years and that the timetable include adequate time for preparation of effective communications, or does it fall under Category 4 which says that all new non-economic issues, programs, legislation, with the exception of outstanding election commitments, which do not meet the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: . . . test of importance to a key group? Which category does the potash development fall into, Mr. Speaker?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell, representing an area where I think we have the best potential potash mine that can be found anywhere in Canada, would ask this question. Mr. Speaker, it clearly fits under priority No. 1, that the top priority for government action over the next three years be improving economic opportunities and dealing authoritatively with job creation and job preservation.

Mr. Speaker, that is the priority. Potash development fits in clearly, Member for Roblin with that priority, Mr.

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Speaker, and I am surprised that the honourable member appears to be bad-mouthing potential potash development in Roblin-Russell by referring to it as non-economic.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.
The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to irritate the First Minister, I apologize if I irritated him. Can I ask the First Minister, regarding these so-called key groups that are referred to in this document, are there any people in western Manitoba that are involved in these key groups? Is there anybody that is known in western Manitoba in the potash industry, are any of those people from the area where the potash is part of this key group that's talked about in this document?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, let me assure the honourable members that there is no \$1,000 payment for the ears of the Premier of the Province of Manitoba, as indeed has been the case in the past in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I thought western Manitoba, indeed, was populated by farmers, and small businesspeople, and senior citizens, and young people, and women, and other Manitobans. If I'm wrong, then . . .

MR. W. MCKENZIE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the First Minister didn't answer my question. Who from western Manitoba is on one of these key groups regarding potash development for our province?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether I heard the last word or two of the honourable member. Did he refer to potash, again?

A MEMBER: Yes.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm simply amazed, because I thought potash development in western Manitoba was beneficial to the entire population of western Manitoba, the farmers, the business people, the workers, the young people and the senior citizens and all other people in western Manitoba. If the honourable member wants again to rise in his place and indicate he's opposed to potash development that doesn't serve the interests of the Manitobans in the western part of this province, then let him so indicate.

Morgentaler Clinic Proceeding with prosecution

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Attorney-General with respect to the proceedings against Dr. Morgentaler. Is it the intention, Mr. Speaker, of this Attorney-General to interfere with the announced decision of Senior Crown Attorney Wayne Myshkowsky to use the Ontario Court of Appeal decision only as a guide to the prosecution, but definitely to proceed with the prosecution against Dr. Morgentaler in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: The Member for St. Norbert does a disservice to the administration of law in this province by suggesting that there is some conflict or a dichotomy between the Attorney-General and his Crown Attorneys. Crown Attorneys acting as agents for the Attorney-General speak with the voice of the Attorney-General when they speak in court. What Senior Crown Prosecutor Wayne Myshkowsky had to say is not at all inconsistent with things that I have said right from the beginning when, for very acceptable and usual reasons, it was decided, with respect to when the Morgentaler charges would be tried, that we would await the outcome of constitutional and legal challenges presently before the Ontario Court of Appeal. Because, as I noted at that time, there is a possibility - and I said no more than that - that some of the challenges raised, in light of the Charter, which is not applicable, and other aspects of the Constitution, might indeed be sustained, in which case the legal substratum of the charges would disappear. On the other hand, it might not, in which case the legal substratum of the charges would still be there, and we would then proceed to try the factual issues which juries are preeminently capable of trying.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I raised the question because the Attorney-General has interfered in the past.

Defamation suits -Government Ministers

MR. G. MERCIER: A question for the First Minister, Mr. Speaker. Could the First Minister indicate whether the outstanding defamation suits against himself and the Minister of Health have been settled?

HON. H. PAWLEY: For myself, no.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I would then ask the Minister who sits immediately to his right, the Minister of Health, whether the outstanding defamation suits against him have been settled?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Which one? I think I've got four or five, I've lost count.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. G. MERCIER: That's exactly what concerns members of this House, Mr. Speaker, they have already established a precedent by settling a defamation suit against the Attorney-General for \$5,000 of the taxpayers' money. Could the Premier advise the House, and inform the House, as to whether taxpayers' funds are being used to finance the legal defence of the First Minister and the Minister of Health?

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

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The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I asked the First Minister whether he could inform the House whether taxpayers' funds are being used to finance the defence of these defamation actions against the Premier and the Minister of Health, and will taxpayers' funds be used, once again, to settle defamation actions against Ministers of this government?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, that question was asked and answered last year.

MR. G. MERCIER: I ask the First Minister, again, Mr. Speaker, will he inform the House whether taxpayers' funds are being used to finance the defence of these defamation actions?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed that honourable members can't do research from one year to the next, but the Attorney-General will respond to the question in order to help the honourable member with his research.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: The Government of Manitoba, like all governments, is covered by an insurance policy with respect to the action of various members and officials and employees of government when acting in their capacity as such, and whether or not the insurers, through their solicitors, are called upon to defend one or a hundred actions makes no difference at all to the general premium which is paid.

Morgentaler Clinic - charges possibly dropped

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Attorney-General. Given that the Crown has adjourned Dr. Morgentaler's case for another two months, and given that the doctor has indicated that he will be reopening his clinic soon, did the Crown agree to reconsider and possibly drop its charges if the acquittal is upheld?

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to deal with any hypothetical as to what might happen "if," but what indeed the Crown Attorney agreed to in fact is a matter of public record. The Crown Attorney did not agree to anything. The Crown Attorney said for the record - and it's on the record and I suspect that the honourable member knows that it's on the record, because he gets his information from the papers and it's in the papers; indeed, it was in all the papers - that the matters will be tried. So there's his answer.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I also obtain some of my information from lawyers which is more than the Attorney-General does.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask the Attorney-General whether he is prepared to wait an unlimited period of time before proceeding with charges, because of the possibility that the appeal in Ontario may go to the Supreme Court which may take a year or more before a final decision is rendered.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is hypothetical. Would the honourable member wish to rephrase his question.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Attorney-General whether his patience is unlimited with Dr. Morgentaler, whether he has any final date upon which he will then order the case to proceed?

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, my patience is unlimited with just about anybody, including the Member for Elmwood. Indeed, that has to be unlimited patience.

Mr. Speaker, as a matter of law, when a constitutional challenge is raised to a law under which someone is being charged and ultimately may be tried, then it is the usual course to await the outcome of that constitutional challenge. It may in fact be definitively addressed by the Ontario Court of Appeal.

You were quite right, Sir, in noting the hypothetical nature of the question. We will not know until the Ontario Court of Appeal renders its judgment as to whether it is rendered with finality in that case or not. At that time, advised by my senior officials, advised by the nature of the judgment itself, advised by the state of the law in this period, a decision will be made.

It's not a question of my patience at all, Sir, it's a question of the way in which the law operates. The way in which the law operates in this instance as in most others is quite rational, and it would be so to most reasonable people.

Morgentaler Clinic Condition of bail

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to also ask the Attorney-General whether he is willing to allow Dr. Morgentaler to continually break or violate normal conditions of bail? Is it not a fact that in granting bail one of the conditions is that the law not be continually broken, and in this case that the clinic not be reopened?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe the question is argumentative. Would the honourable member wish to rephrase his question.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'll attempt to reword it, and simply ask the Attorney-General whether it is not the case that Dr. Morgentaler is violating his conditions of bail by breaking the existing law?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question asks for an opinion. Would the honourable member wish to ask a question for information?

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: I'll try once more, Mr. Speaker. I would simply ask the Attorney-General whether it is not a

condition of bail for Dr. Morgentaler or anyone else to continue to uphold rather than break the law?

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, it is the most fundamental rule of the criminal justice system which we derive from England that one golden thread runs through the fabric of that law, and that is that every person is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in a court of law by a jury of his or her peers. That fundamental rule of law persists and must always persist in the eyes of right-thinking persons, No. 1.

No. 2, that issue was in fact addressed in this case by a court of competent jurisdiction. Judge Sam Minuk of the Provincial Judges Court on the 27th day of June, 1983, addressed that question and gave judgment on that question, and though conditions of bail, somewhat similar to the type proposed by the member, had in fact been placed by the bail magistrate the night before upon the arrest of the accused, the provincial court judge, into whose jurisdiction it then came in a judgment, which is a matter of record and which I have said, looking at the presumption of innocence which as a judge he would do, that he did not think that kind of condition of bail was legally appropriate; and that judgment stands. I am not going to usurp my function and purport to act as a judge, or purport to act as a jury; that is not my function and it will never be my function.

Import tariff - Manitoba hogs

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the First Minister. In view of the fact that approximately two weeks ago the First Minister of this province, Mr. Speaker, misled this Chamber and the people of Manitoba in his response to . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member knows that he should not make that sort of accusation against another member of the House. If the honourable member has a question, would he please pose it.

The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that two or three weeks ago, approximately two weeks ago, the First Minister indicated to the Chamber and the people of Manitoba that he had contacted the federal Minister of Agriculture dealing with the imposition of U.S. hog tariff and, in fact, today is again playing politics with the issue in not coming to grips with the fact that the hog producers are losing thousands and millions of dollars because of the tariff, will the First Minister instruct the Minister of Agriculture to prepare a case for the hog producers of Manitoba and be prepared to present it to the International Commerce Department when they either come to this province, or have it done in Ottawa and, as well, present the case to Washington when in fact that is the kind of positive action that could be taken by this Minister? Will he do that?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, again let me repeat, in case there be any misunderstanding. What I said two weeks ago was correct; I have raised the matter of possible hog importation restrictions with the Minister of Agriculture for Canada at the meeting that I had dealing with a wide range of agricultural issues. Let there be no misunderstanding or distortion of that fact, Mr. Speaker.

Secondly, I do not consider it to be playing politics. Honourable members may feel it is politics to be speaking up for the hog producers of this province, Mr. Speaker, to call upon the Prime Minister of this country who has just completed the Shamrock Conference with the President of the United States, to call upon the President of the United States to live up to the spirit of that Shamrock Conference and to remove the restrictions in respect to importation of hogs from Canada into the United States.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that it is costing, in his own figures, or I believe I heard them correctly, some \$16 million to \$18 million to the hog producers of Manitoba, will he and his government prove to the hog producers of Manitoba that he's not playing politics with them and provide in the hog stabilization sufficient funds to cover that shortfall?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture will answer the specifics of that question, but let me assure the honourable members he may not be aware, but the hog producers of this province know that this New Democratic Party government is serving and working for the hog producers of this province, and the Minister of Agriculture will give the specifics.

Dairy farming regulations - possible change

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that the dairy policy, Mr. Speaker, that is in the Province of Manitoba, recently been introduced, is blowing opposite to what the dairy producers want - the Minister is restricting them from selling their dairy herds or portions of their quotas to operate to maximum efficiency - is the Minister of Agriculture, after meeting with thousands of dairy producers, prepared to change that policy and revert back to one of common sense which is in agreement with the dairy producers?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to indicate to the honourable member that we are, and intend to stick with our hog producers of this province. We will continue to support them. The Stabilization Program that we put in this province is long term, not short term as was the case when they were in office, Mr. Speaker, a one-shot deal and that was the end of the assistance to the hog producers. Mr. Speaker, we are sticking with the hog producers of this province.

Sir, with respect to the dairy policy that the honourable member raises, I find their position, or at least as put forward by the Honourable Member for Arthur, totally

a flip-flop from when they were in office. I don't know what he is getting at, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the position of the government. The position of this government continues to be that there is great difficulty, and producers will see over a period of time the difficulty that there is if they move to the area of, in fact, placing value for quota.

Mr. Speaker, we would not have gotten into the difficulty that we're in had he enforced the policy that he enunciated to the board in 1978 to allow partial transfers of quotas, and that quotas, in fact, if they had gained value should have been cancelled. Well, Mr. Speaker, there was a dereliction of duties clearly by the Conservative Government of the Day.

Hecla Island and Grand Beach Provincial Parks - May opening

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier of the province. After a long Manitoba winter, people of Manitoba look forward to the first long summer weekend in May, can the First Minister assure Manitobans that the Hecla Island Provincial Park and the Grand Beach Provincial Park are going to be open on the May long weekend?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice. I indeed hope that they will be, but we'll take that question as notice.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: To the Premier then, if the Premier is hoping that those two parks will be open, can he assure Manitobans that all provincial parks will be open on the long May weekend coming up?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, it would have been helpful if the honourable member had, since he's anxious and properly anxious to know the answer to this question, send me a note a few minutes before question period so I could have double-checked, in view of the fact that the Minister of Natural Resources is not with us today. Mr. Speaker, I'll gladly accept that question as notice to what is a very important question.

Casino - provision of vouchers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Culture.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had taken as notice a couple of questions from the Member for La Verendrye over the last few days. One was in regard to the Manitoba Lottery Foundation wherein he asked whether or not the Lotteries Foundation, in the operation of a casino, was providing vouchers for early patrons of the one casino. I can confirm that that indeed did take place and was done in co-operation, in consultation with the Manitoba Community Education Association that was the volunteer organization running that casino. I have suggested to the Foundation that they review any other future promotional activities, with

respect to casinos, with the charitable organizations that are involved with the running of those casinos.

I would also just comment, Mr. Speaker, that the suggestion that was made in the Free Press by the member that the casinos have scantily-clad women offering free drinks will not be entertained at all by the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Flyer Industries - Visit to Ontario bus mfg.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: The second question was with respect to Flyer Industries requesting information with respect to a meeting of some representatives of the Flyer union and Ontario Bus Industries. I can confirm that there was a meeting held at the request of Ontario Bus Industries, and that a number of representatives of the union did meet with them, the costs of which were borne by Flyer Industries.

Casino - provision of vouchers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could assure the people of Manitoba that the practice of paying people \$5 to attend the casino at 11 o'clock in the morning will not be tolerated by the government.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, I have suggested to the Lotteries Foundation that they review any and all of their promotional activities with respect to casinos with the charitable organizations that are involved. The responsibilities of the Foundation is to work with the charitable organizations to ensure that they receive maximum returns from the operation of casinos in the province, and we want to ensure that that is the case. However, it's my view that any promotional activities should be in keeping with the overall approach of that organization and I have suggested that they review such promotional practices.

MR. R. BANMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wish the Minister would tell the Lotteries Board that that is not an acceptable practice and they should not continue to do that.

Casinos - hours of operation

MR. R. BANMAN: I would also ask the Minister if he has asked the Lotteries Commission to review the changes in hours which now allow the gambling to start at 11 o'clock, rather than in the afternoon.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: No, Mr. Speaker.

The Highway Traffic Act - Amendments to

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Honourable Minister responsible for Highways and The Highway Traffic Act.

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In view of Judge Ferg's recent decision in the Court of Queen's Bench that two sections of The Highway Traffic Act are now unconstitutional, will the Minister be bringing in amendments to that legislation this Session to correct that situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously, that question is premature at this time. I will want to consult with my colleague, the Attorney-General, on that decision as to whether it will be appealed.

The procedure that has been in place allows for notification of suspension by certified or registered mail. The department was completely within the bounds of the act, it has been the case for the last nine years that this process was in place, and they are following the procedures consistent with the act. However, we will have to review the implications with the Attorney-General's Department to determine if changes have to be made.

MR. D. BLAKE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There were some changes in The Summaries Conviction Act, I think, that maybe departed somewhat from the procedure that had been followed in the past; but I am sure the Minister will appreciate, and he has had different cases brought to his attention by now, I am sure, that merely by mailing out a registered letter is not a guarantee that person has received the letter, and that is causing a great deal of hardship in certain cases. I think the Minister, when he amends the legislation, if he would bring in legislation that the notification of a suspension of driving privileges must be done personally . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. If the honourable member has a question, would he please place it and not make a statement to the House.

The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: I just got to my question, Mr. Speaker. I said, will the Minister assure the House and the people of Manitoba that when a motor vehicle driver is suspended, has his driving privileges suspended, will he be notified personally rather than by mail?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the question is very interesting because the costs of doing that, of course, would be enormous. That procedure has been in place, in terms of mailing of notices, for the last nine years.

What the member is suggesting is that every one be hand delivered. Currently the department sends out about 2,500 notices of suspension per month, that is a large number - about 24,500 last year, in the year. So it would mean a great deal of additional human resources and we are evaluating what those would be, what the requirements would be to indeed do that. It is one of great concern to me; one that we would have to consider very carefully, Mr. Speaker.

Life insurance and pension mgmt study Government entry into

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday I took a number of questions as notice from the Leader of the Opposition. One was whether or not staff at MPIC had met with Mr. J.J. Brown. I can confirm that no staff had met with Mr. Brown - I am sorry, that was the Member for Turtle Mountain.

Rent increases by landlords

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Another question that was raised last Thursday was in respect to the report on the Core Area Initiative. I would like to take this opportunity just to correct the assumptions that were incorrect that were made by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Core Area Home Repair Program is an enhancement of the federal program, the RAP Program, which allows up to \$3,500 in grants to landlords within the core area providing that they match that amount, or it could be a lesser amount, but the extent of the grant will not be more than the landlord's contribution. As part of this program, it is a requirement that the landlord has to agree to a regime of controlled rents approved by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. In this respect, the allowable rent increase permitted by Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation is calculated to reflect only that portion of the expenditure brought about by the landlord's investment, not the grant part. So, in fact, public funds are not being used to increase rents for the tenants.

In addition, there is a requirement that the landlord notify his tenants of the upgrading that is to take place, to advise them of the anticipated increase, and to provide them with information of the various shelter allowance programs that are available to the tenants to offset the increased costs. This is consistent with our Rent Regulation Act. Just as provision was made for an exemption period of five years for new construction to provide incentive to the private sector, so this particular way of dealing with increases to exempt landlords making major improvements to their facilities as an incentive, they are exempted for a given period of time, and the increases have to be agreed to by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can indicate then that he is satisfied that the assertion in the article, or in the Core Area Initiatives Report, that there was a 27 percent increase in one year, on average, under these programs, if that's correct and if it meets the guidelines; and secondly, if he would indicate whether or not the landlords who were referred to in the report did indeed meet the requirements of notifying the tenants ahead of time and estimating the increase in rent that would accrue as a result of the improvements.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: I think the Leader of the Opposition didn't quite hear me. I said that when landlords in the core take advantage of this program,

they are not subject to the provincial rent increase guidelines, that the rents must be approved by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. In fact, there may well have been increases of 27 percent or so, but they have been offset by the provincial Shelter Allowance Program so that the tenant is probably in no worse off situation after the building has been rehabed than previous. As to whether or not the actual work was done, that would be a responsibility of Canada Mortgage and Housing who approves that particular increase.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery. We have 15 adult students from the Riverton Adult Day Care School under the direction of Mrs. Mockman. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

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

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request leave of the House to give a non-political announcement.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave? (Agreed)

The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: At this time I would like to congratulate the Carberry Classique Precision Skating Team who won the Silver Medal in the Western Canada Division of the Precision Skating Championships which were held in Thunder Bay on the Easter weekend.

The team, coached by Kathy Cairney, won the medal despite stiff competition by 22 other novice teams. I am sure that I speak for all Manitobans when I say how proud I am of this hard working group of girls who are worthy representatives of this province.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It would be my intention to move into Supply, but I wish first to call the Second Reading, standing in the name of the Minister of Finance, on Bill 21, and then I will be asking for Supply.

SECOND READING BILL NO. 21 - THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

HON. V. SCHROEDER presented Bill No. 21, An Act to amend The Financial Administration Act, for Second Reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Thank you. The amendments are relatively few and technical in nature. Some are related and pertain to accounting for revenue earned during the fiscal year but not received until after the end of the year. There is another amendment providing for the establishment of an additional parameter when the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council establishes parameters for borrowing. The repeal of one portion and the amendment to another are related in that the new section will permit retention periods for documents to be established and changed by regulation rather than by statute. When the bill reaches committee stage, I can provide a more detailed explanation for the information . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: I'd like to ask the Minister a question of clarification. No. 1, is it his intention that this amendment will be put into force this year, and what would he estimate that the impact would be in shifting revenue? How much revenue would be involved in that last 15 days if they went from 15 to 30 days?

HON. V. SCHROEDER: I don't have the answer to that. I'll take that as notice and get back to the member as quickly as possible.

MR. B. RANSOM: I move then, seconded by the Member for Sturgeon Creek, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, I believe there may be a predisposition to dispense with Private Members' Hour, by leave. If there is, I will move the motion to that effect.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there leave to dispense with Private Members' Hour today? There appears to be leave. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

And that such committee sit, by leave, through Private Members' Hour.

MOTION presented.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

Tuesday, 16 April, 1985

MR. B. RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I intend to avail myself of the opportunity to have that once per Session grievance that each member of the Legislature is entitled to, and the subject matter that I intend to grieve over is the government's announced intention to close the Land Titles Office in Boissevain which of course is in my constituency.

By way of background, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that the land titles system in the year that we're going into, in the fiscal year that we are into now, is expected to make a profit of \$5,655,400.00. That's an excess of revenues over expenditures that amounts to approximately \$40,000 per employee in the land titles office system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a little bit of background with respect to the Boissevain Land Titles Office. I point out, for the information of the members, that the office in Boissevain was opened in 1903. The present building that houses the Land Titles Office was built in that year for some \$12,000, by the way, and opened in 1903. Since that period of time, for 82 years, that office has been providing service to the people of southwestern Manitoba. It also, of course, has been providing employment to varying numbers of people in that area.

At the moment, there are five full-time positions associated with the Land Titles Office, one part-time position and of course the janitorial services that are required for the building. The Land Titles Office being located in that area, of course, keeps revenues in the region. Revenues that are generated in the region to some extent at least stay there as a consequence of the salaries paid to people who work there.

In 1984, I expect that the revenue will exceed expenditures in that office by approximately \$40,000.00. Now, we have had some difficulty in getting information that is completely consistent although the Minister's department has provided us with some information. I guess one of the difficulties in this matter is that the Attorney-General's Department does not file an annual report, hence there is no annual report that deals with the land titles system.

The one further matter of history is that under a previous Attorney-General, I think it was in 1976, that the present First Minister was serving as Attorney-General, that a preliminary decision, at least, was made at that time to close the office. I give the First Minister credit that he listened to the arguments that were put forward at the time and realized that it would not be either good public policy or good politics for the Government of the Day to close that office, and so the decision was reversed and the office has stayed there. Of course, it has gone on to do more business in recent years than it has done for a long time.

Unfortunately, the present Attorney-General has accepted advice, or on his own, decided to proceed with the closing of this office, and unfortunately it was done in a very abrupt and off-hand manner because it was only at the beginning of February of this year that staff, employees of the office, local government, users of the facility and myself, as Member of the Legislature representing the area, learned that the Land Titles Office was to be closed on April 26th, just 10 days from now. A facility that had been in that area since 1903 was to be closed very abruptly; the decision was never discussed publicly. There was never any discussion with the users of the facility or with the local

government or to my knowledge with the people who work there.

Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, this came as a great shock to the people who work there and as shock to the people who live in the area because of the impact that has taken five full-time employees and two part-time employees out of the work force in a town the size of Boissevain has. The equivalent of that with respect to Winnipeg would be to remove a work force of approximately 2,100 people from Winnipeg. That would be a similar impact to what this closure of this office in Boissevain will have on that community.

The question that comes to my mind and the question that comes to the mind of all of the people in the area who are so deeply concerned about this is why? Why is the government proceeding to close the Land Titles Office? The best indication that we get is from a statement made by the First Minister in this House on the 14th of March, it appears on Page 116 of Hansard, and the First Minister said, "Mr. Speaker, the recommendation that originates with the department is to the effect that there are sound, good reasons as to why the Boissevain Land Titles Office ought to be closed in the interests of economy." So what we have here from the First Minister then is an indication that the recommendation has come forward from staff to close the office because it makes economic sense to do so.

Well, what we don't know, Mr. Speaker, is exactly how will that be achieved? How are these savings going to be recognized by closing this office? Are there going to be staff cuts? Will there be fewer people working in the land titles office system because we know, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a contract signed that doesn't allow for any layoffs. There may be people retire and leave some vacancies that way, but I want to know are there going to be staff reductions that will account for this saving, which I believe I'm correct to say, that the Attorney-General has used the figure that the saving would be well in excess of \$100,000.00?

I want to know where are the savings with respect to space costs, for housing land titles when they move it to Brandon? Is the present space going to be adequate in Brandon? Is the present staff going to be adequate in Brandon? Because the present staff in Boissevain, the four people below the registrar and the part-time help that's available for microfilming, those people are fully engaged. Is all of that work simply going to be transferred to the Brandon office and the people in Brandon are expected to pick that up? Or can we expect that a year from now, or two years from now, that the people in the Brandon Land Titles Office are going to say we simply can't handle the load and we've got to have more staff - and all that will have been accomplished. Well, is that the office will have been moved from Boissevain to Brandon and that the department is going to end up with the same costs down the road? Or is there going to be computerization? Is there some change here that is going to allow for this magnitude of saving? Because if the Attorney-General is right when he talks about savings in excess of \$100,000, I would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that for the most recent year for which information is available, 1983-84, the total cost of operating the Boissevain Land Titles Office was \$192,846.00.

It defies its strange credibility as to how it is going to be possible to save over 50 percent of the cost of

operating that office by moving it to Brandon. I really have to see that kind of justification. I have to see those figures in black and white as to exactly how it's going to be done before I can accept that. What's the government going to do about the existing building? That building has been there since 1903.

I believe I'm correct to say that within the last two years the government has spent approximately \$200,000 renovating that building, basically, for the Land Titles Office because they were concerned about maintaining the quality of the records. I know there's a part-time court which serves as a courthouse as well, Mr. Speaker, but that's only one day every week or every two weeks. It's basically a Land Titles Office and that's the reason the money was spent for the renovation of it, so I want to know what they're going to do with the building. Does it mean that the government might, in fact, be now moving some other government staff with Highways, for instance, out of the Civic Centre in Boissevain and into this building which will mean if they do that that the local government then is going to have empty space on its hands, and it will be a cost to the local government? Is there in fact a possibility, as one of my colleagues has mentioned, that this building might indeed be designated as an historical government because it was built in 1903 and there really is no other building to my knowledge in southwestern Manitoba that is more tied in with the development of that part of the province than the Land Titles Office? I mean that was fundamental. Before the development of that area could begin by European settlers, they had to have a system of dealing with land titles, and since 1903 that's been housed in Boissevain.

I would like to know what are the other cost options that the department has examined before they proceeded with this decision? For instance, I know from information available in the Public Accounts that for fiscal 1981-82 the salaries for people in the Boissevain Land Titles Office totalled \$86,265.00. By 1982-83 that figure had gone to \$152,912, so the salary costs associated with that office in one year went from \$86,265 to \$152,912.00. The reason was, primarily, that the office had been operating without a full-time registrar, and it was operating quite well, quite effectively, quite efficiently, and obviously the costs were under control. But when they put a full-time registrar in, that automatically added over \$50,000 to the salary costs of running that office, and he's not needed. That's the one position that is not needed on anything close to a full-time basis in that office, and there could be substantial savings as a consequence of rationalization on that aspect alone.

I don't know how closely they looked at revenues, but a lot of the activity that has been taking place through that office has to do with the oil industry. It only costs, as I understand, \$15 a flat fee to file a caveat with respect to mineral leases. I'm told by people who work there that amount of money is not proportional to the effort that is required to file that, and it's not proportional to what's charged with respect to mortgages and some of the other functions that the office performs. So there is that possibility that fee might be somewhat higher and that the office would have a better financial balance than it presently has, but it presently shows an excess of profits over expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, I would also ask if there are savings to be made in that office, savings of over \$100,000, what about the Dauphin office? Because the Dauphin office in 1984-85 did fewer registrations than the Boissevain Land Titles Office. I have this information that is provided for me through the Minister's Office from the general manager of the Land Titles Office. This is information that has been provided and I thank them for it, but it shows that in fiscal year '84-85 the total registrations through the Dauphin Land Titles Office were 5,610. The total registration through the Boissevain office were 5,886. I also would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Dauphin Land Titles Office has one more full-time position than the Boissevain Land Titles Office has.

So there we have a situation where they have more staff, but did fewer registrations. Now, they did take in more revenue in total than the Boissevain office did, but not per staff. The information that I have been provided with is for fiscal '83-84 and '84-85. If one combines those figures and divides them by the number of staff that are in those offices, then we find that for those two years each employee in the Dauphin office generated \$39,964 of revenue. Each employee in the Boissevain office generated \$43,958. So there we have \$4,000 more per employee being generated by employees of the Boissevain office than we do in Dauphin.

Now, I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker, did the staff of the Attorney-General's Department, on the basis of this kind of information, recommend that the Boissevain Land Titles Office be closed and the Dauphin Land Titles Office be kept open? I would like to see that, and I would hope that, consistent with the answer that the Attorney-General gave me in the House to provide justification, he would provide us with the specific recommendations that were made by the staff. I would hope that the First Minister at least would avail himself of that information.

What is different about Dauphin? What is it that would see that office have some reason for being maintained with higher staff and lower registrations and lower revenues per employee? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what is it about the Dauphin office that is different than about the Boissevain office or about the Neepawa office? What are the government's plans? Can the Attorney-General say that all of these actions, the closing of the Boissevain office, the keeping open of the Dauphin office, the plans for the Neepawa office, all of that stems directly from the recommendation of his staff and that he has no further plans with respect to those other offices as well?

Now, let's assume just for the sake of argument, Mr. Speaker, that there is a saving to be made. I certainly remain to be convinced as to whether there is any saving. I have to be convinced of that, because I really don't think it's there in anything like the proportion that the Minister has indicated, but suppose there is a saving. Is it good public policy, No. 1, to have made this decision without any consultation, to have made this decision in secret by passing an Order-in-Council?

I mean this is a service that has been in the area since 1903, in that same building since 1903. It's been as much a part of that community as the churches of that community have. It is the one thing that has prevailed over that period of time. The government

came in and passed an Order-in-Council without a word of consultation to close it. Now, Mr. Speaker, if the argument is sound, why would they not have gone to the local council and gone to the users and laid it out and said, here it is? For economic reasons, we have to close this down. For this reason, we have to close this one but we're not closing Dauphin even though this one actually generates more revenue per employee than Dauphin and explain it to them. Would that not have been better public policy?

Is it good public policy to remove six or seven people from the region where the fees are generated? This is a situation where the fees relative to these transactions really are generated in that area. By taking these employees out of that area, we are now going to take all of the money out of the area. Now that's colonialism on a very small scale. That's taking all - well, the Government House Leader laughs. That's what it is. He is taking revenues that are generated in that area and taking them completely out and putting them into another area. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether that is good public policy for the government to do that?

I want to know, Mr. Speaker, whether it's good public policy to consolidate government services into larger centres. Does it really make sense in terms of serving the public to consolidate services into larger centres rather than having the services out there close to the people that they serve? I don't think that's good public policy, but I raise the question.

Is it good public policy to hit a small town like Boissevain with the loss of public sector jobs while at the same time, at exactly the same time, the government is spending tens of thousands of dollars - indeed, I think it's fair to say hundreds of thousands of dollars - within that town on Main Street Manitoba to help create jobs. What we're doing, and I say this without hesitation because I know that the mayor of the town, the council and many other people, will read my remarks and I say without hesitation, that is not the kind of priority that I would pursue to go into a town and spend \$240,000 to tear up concrete sidewalks that are quite serviceable and to replace them with something that admittedly looks nice.

It is not good public policy to tear down steel lamp standards that were only put in in 1972, and replace them with lamp standards that give a better ambiance to the Main Street. For this, the government spends \$240,000, while it's closing down a service that has been in that area since 1903. What kind of public policy is that, to be spending money on job creation and improving the ambiance of the area, while at the same time they're pulling out staff who generate more revenue than it costs to have them there?

Is it good public policy for the government to proceed to close this office upon the basis of savings when they appear not to be willing to pick up similar savings that are available at another office? If I'm wrong on that question, I would hope that the Attorney-General would show me the facts that indicate that I'm wrong when I say that the Boissevain Land Titles Office generates more revenue per employee than the Dauphin office, and that they took more registrations, they did more registrations in 1984-85 in Boissevain than they did in Dauphin.

I don't think the Attorney-General was here when I referred to this earlier. I thank him for providing some

information to me through his office, and this is one of the facts shown in this information, that the total registrations in the Dauphin office in fiscal 1984-85 were \$5,610; in the Boissevain office they're \$5,886. For the two-year period, there's more revenue generated by the Boissevain office per employee than there is in the Dauphin office. Now, if there is over \$100,000 to be saved in Boissevain, why isn't there over \$100,000 to be saved in Dauphin, and if there is why isn't the government proceeding to close Dauphin? Is that good public policy to justify the closing of one office on the basis of savings and not to proceed to save the taxpayers' money on the other office? Mr. Speaker, does it make sense for the government to rail against the private sector for closing down businesses, non-economic businesses, at the same time as the government closes down an office that's making a profit? Do you recall, Mr. Speaker, how in past years, when Swift's closed, when Maple Leaf Mills closed . . .

A MEMBER: Safeway store.

MR. B. RANSOM: . . . or a Safeway store, the members opposite were among the first to condemn them and to demand to see their books? They wanted to see the books. Let's open those books and see whether this plant should really be closed. What kind of public policy is it then for the government themselves to proceed to close an office that's making a profit? And based on the increase in the land titles fees, the revenue from that office in 1985-86 is expected to be close to \$300,000, and the costs will be in the range of \$200,000, so that we can expect that office, left where it is, would make a profit in the range of \$100,000.00.

Is it good public policy for the government to offload costs onto the users? We hear the government opposite talk about the Federal Government, condemn the Federal Government, for offloading costs, whether it's onto farmers for inspection of their potatoes, whether it's the Federal Government cutting back in payments to the province in some area. The province argues, and rightly so, don't control your deficit simply by loading it onto the province; and what the province is doing here is exactly that, they're going to put additional costs onto the users.

Now, the Attorney-General has pointed out that approximately 80 percent of the work is conducted by mail. Fine, but 20 percent of it isn't. For a lot of users, it's now going to mean travelling further to an office in Brandon than they're going to have to travel to the office in Boissevain. A lot of the activity that takes place in that office now relates to the oil industry, and we all know that's located in southwestern Manitoba. It's a lot closer to Boissevain than it is to Brandon. So there is no question that any saving that the government makes here is to some extent going to simply result in greater costs to the user of that facility. Is that good public policy?

Is it good public policy - I come back to a question I raised earlier - to depopulate the rural areas? And again we hear the members opposite condemn the Federal Government for any moves that they've made with respect to Gimli, or whether it's with respect to Churchill, and now the government turns around and

does the same thing without even having the benefit of being able to say that this is a dead weight cost on the taxpayer. This is not a dead weight cost on the taxpayer; these people earn revenue for the taxpayers of Manitoba. The whole system is going to earn about \$40,000 profit in the fiscal year that we're in if the Minister's projections for revenue and expenses are correct.

Is it good public policy to be closing down government jobs in an area like that while the government in another department has a program where they'll make grants of taxpayers' money to any individual who is prepared to start a business and create new jobs? Does that really make sense as a matter of public policy?

Does it make good sense to raise the fees while the service is being lowered? The fees to the land titles system, since this government was in office, in 1981-82, the revenue was \$5,204,000; in 1985-86, it's projected to be \$10 million. That's virtually a doubling of the revenue generated essentially from an increase in fees, but the people who use that office are going to have poorer quality service than they had before.

I must say that I received a letter from the Attorney-General that could have been written by a PR man for the CPR because we — (Interjection) — well, you may have because it appears that the Attorney-General is having some difficulty in the present situation. But, nevertheless, I would like to read this. "I am writing at this time to inform you that the Provincial Government will be transferring services presently provided by the Boissevain Land Titles Office to the Brandon District Office as of April 26, 1985." That's the sort of notice that people in our rural communities used to get from the CPR and indeed the CNR when they shut down stations.

Then he goes on and he says, "This change is among a number of changes to be implemented by this department and is part of the long-term objectives to improve the efficiency of services provided by the Attorney-General's Department as a whole." We've all heard that when they shut down the stations, when the railway shut the stations. Somehow by taking people out of the community, they said they were going to improve the efficiency. Then he said, "Well, the physical loss of this office may impact upon your constituency. Let me assure you that the service delivery through the Brandon office to Boissevain and district will be a high priority. To that end the Land Titles staff will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition at a level of service commensurate with the experience."

Trying to tell those people there that by moving this service out of their town that really they're going to be better served, and I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the Attorney-General, when he leaves here after the next election, should go to the CPR and maybe he could get a job writing justifications for some of the reductions in service at the railways. I shouldn't single out just the CPR, the CNR has done exactly the same kind of thing.

That's a matter of public policy, but I'll ask the members opposite, is it a matter of good political policy to go against the people, to go against the employees, to go against the users, to go against the local governments in a massive way, in an absolutely massive way? Let me just make reference - do I have about six minutes left, Mr. Speaker?

I have quite a number of letters, Mr. Speaker, letters that have come to the government protesting what they're doing. I'll just quickly go through some. Here's one from the Rural Municipality of Brenda. They are located quite some distance. They're the second municipality removed from it, and they say that the Provincial Government should have consulted the local councils beforehand, the lost employment in families will hurt the local economy. The services provided from Brandon will not be more efficient. Additional inconvenience for transactions resulting from oil related activities in the southwest oil patch will occur.

Then another one from the village of Waskada protesting the closure, from Dunrea with the Municipality of Riverside, the Killarney Credit Union. Let me read a paragraph from this letter from the Killarney Credit Union: "I feel that I must, on behalf of our credit union, express the concern we have for not being able to continue to receive the very excellent service we've enjoyed from the Boissevain Land Titles Office. Our many credit union members and communities know that we will no longer be able to effect our many mortgage and other land transactions within the time frames we have become accustomed to. This also means dollars to all of us in many different ways, be it interest on mortgage loans transactions, cost of travel to Brandon for rush transactions, or loss of revenue to our immediate area, Boissevain, through job loss, and people further drawn to patronizing Brandon, rather than a rural community. This is Killarney; this isn't Boissevain writing, it's the Killarney Credit Union.

Another one from Mehan Haddad and Company talking about the efficient prompt and courteous service that they get. I wish I had time to read all these into the record, but I don't. But he says, "I'm also concerned about the general tendency to centralize functions and, thereby, deprive smaller communities of elements vital to their continued existence." That runs through all of these letters, and can't the members opposite see what that means from a political perspective, when they are the party that is seen as taking services out of communities, of consolidating services. Don't they see that that means from a political point of view?

Souris-Glenwood Civic Association, opposed to the centralization of government offices, there it is again. The Town of Boissevain, of course, wrote as one would expect them to protest this kind of move. There's a letter from Mrs. Carol Kentner, just a private citizen, private individual, took it on herself to write to the government and protest, and she says among other things: "It seems to me we're being punished for not sending an NDP member to the Legislature. I hope I'm naive enough to believe that a political decision such as this can be reversed without loss of face, especially as it seems to be a hasty decision without special thought being given to the residents in areas concerned. An Order-in-Council may be rescinded, I sincerely hope you will do this." That's just an individual, unsolicited, writing in that case to the Premier.

Another letter from McInnis-Burbridge that says: "In the last five to six years, there's been considerable benefit to the Province of Manitoba from the new oil developments which are serviced, to a large degree, through the Boissevain Land Titles Office. It appears to us that closing the Boissevain Land Title Office will reduce the quality of service available to those oil

companies which have been contributing considerably to the increase in government revenues from the oil and gas business, as well as directly through the payment of land titles fees." There are others.

A letter from Brock Lee, a barrister in Carman; another from the Manitoba Real Estate Association; from Dome Petroleum Limited; from S.E. Sym and Associates, Land Consultants Limited; from Omega Hydrocarbons; from Andex Oil Company Limited. And there's one quotation from Andex: "While the majority of our activity is in the Boissevain Land Titles district, we are active in the Brandon district as well. When we compare the two offices, we are convinced that this move will lead to a very serious deterioration of service. Our service problems in Brandon are chronic." This is Andex Oil Company Limited writing, in this case, to the honourable Attorney-General. You just have a massive number of people who are opposed. They are warning what the government is going to do, that there's going to be a deterioration of services. Why do it? Why do it when it's making a profit?

Another letter from Tundra Exploration Company as well protesting. — (Interjection) — Yes, and some of these even conduct business with the government. I urge the Attorney-General and his First Minister, you know, it's tempting to ask, don't they care about the ordinary people in southwestern Manitoba? Don't they care about the ordinary people? Don't they listen? Don't they listen to all of these ordinary people that are making this request to the government? And I make a final plea to the Attorney-General and to the First Minister to make the decision to keep this office open, because it makes sense in public policy; it makes sense economically, and our party is committed that, when we go back in government, we will re-open that office, because we believe in decentralizing government services, not in centralizing them. We have a record, Mr. Speaker, of decentralizing services in Municipal Planning, in Natural Resources, in the Water Services Board area; we have a record of decentralizing. We care about communities, even if this government doesn't.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, rising on the grievance. There are a number of matters I would like to place on the record. I don't think that they will be persuasive with respect to the Member for Turtle Mountain, or perhaps any of his colleagues, since it's always the case that in the abstracts we can all of us support, and indeed in times such as the ones that we're now experiencing and will likely in a sense experience for a long long time, times when one has to look at issues of restraint and constraint, it will always be the case that when economies are sought and effected, everybody will support that in the abstract. But the moment it affects a particular locality, a particular locality, a particular office, and particular employees, those whose ox is being gored will, quite naturally, and I'm not at all unsympathetic, feel hurt and look at other ways in which such savings could be effected - not me, you; not us, them. That will be a natural response.

Now I'm just, for example, in order to put aside, I'll deal with that if the member can contain his volatile

temper. I will deal with the question of what savings in a moment, but I just want to place on the record, to put aside so that, indeed, the Member for Turtle Mountain - if the Member for Sturgeon Creek doesn't want to listen, that's typical, but the Member for Turtle Mountain at least may listen to me as I listened to him - to put aside the notion that this is a political decision.

I'll deal only with my own department. In my own department, after looking at a whole number of options in which to try to operate at at least a reasonable level of service, there were, I think at the moment, only two offices, as such, in particular communities which were closed down. One, as it happens, is in a Conservative constituency; the other is in an NDP constituency. One is the Land Titles Office in Boissevain, and the other is the Legal Aid Lasem Office in St. Boniface. Now tell me about political decisions when we're struggling hard to make honourable decisions.

Now, as a matter of fact, the number of people employed in each office is about identical. The overall global budget in about each office is identical. Now, with respect to Boissevain, much talk has been made about profit. First of all, none of that profit - and I prefer to use the word "revenue" because that's really what we're talking about - not a penny of that revenue will be lost because every land titles transaction which must be made will be made now in Brandon, rather than in Boissevain. So that, indeed, Mr. Speaker, it's not a question of a loss of revenue.

The savings, indeed, are real because the staff positions totalling, in terms of annual salaries in '85-'86 dollars, about \$108,000, are simply made throughout the whole system by attrition; that is, people who are being transferred are being transferred to vacant positions. Now let me just use one example so that the member, who I know to be intelligent, will at least know that we started off from logical premises. He may not accept that the conclusions are logical, or ones that he would support, but I do want him to understand that this was made at least with a modicum of reason, and I think a great deal of reason.

The senior district registrar, a lawyer, in Boissevain is being transferred to Winnipeg as a replacement for the deputy district registrar in Winnipeg, who is being transferred to Dauphin where there is a retirement. So three legal positions are reduced to two, but no incumbent is being fired or terminated; we are shrinking the system.

What really is involved here is that - and I'll expand on that notion of some shrinking in the system - management consultants, Kellogg, Thorne and Stevenson, I believe is the name of the firm - I will verify it - working with our land titles system over a lengthy period of time have determined, indeed, that over a lengthy period of time we must more and more move to computerization. Indeed, in terms of being able to give better and more efficient and more reliable service through computerization and, to safeguard the records through computerization, because the records are very much at risk in the way in which they have been kept in traditional ways, that there is a logical reason for, in fact, centralizing everything ultimately 10, 15 years down the line in one major land titles office in Winnipeg.

That was presented by the registrar-general on his own motion, as it were, as an option open to

government, an option which was not accepted. But, nevertheless, looking in that area overall and at the impact of computerization which is taking place in the Winnipeg Land Titles Office, the result of computerization which is taking place in the Winnipeg Land Titles Office of the general registry and other components in the Winnipeg Land Titles Office, we, in presenting that program through Treasury Board a couple of years ago, indicated that there would be a shrinkage in the system as a whole of some 25 employees over a five-year period. Indeed, that is what is happening in the land titles system as a whole as a result of the beginnings of computerization beginning, again let me say, Mr. Speaker, in the Winnipeg Land Titles Office. So, as a result of that, there are vacancies which can be filled as we shrink the system down. It may not be only in this area that that happens.

But why Boissevain? Okay, first of all, Mr. Speaker, it was not a political question and I have just given the evidence for that. But, in terms of looking at the figures, Boissevain, in terms of net revenue - now the Member for Turtle Mountain chose to present the issue as revenue, he used the term "profit per employee" - I think the bottom line figure is the net revenue, and the net revenue in Boissevain year in and year out, going back to '80-'81, '81-'82, '82-'83, '83-'84, '84-'85, is at the bottom of the list. Indeed, for the years which he selects for his particular method of analysis, and I will take '83-'84, the last full year, the net revenue from Boissevain - that is the fees less the operating costs, including salaries - was \$4,854 - .2 percent of the whole system. The next highest was Dauphin with some \$27,000 - 1.1 percent of the system. So if one looks at the '84-'85, Dauphin showed some 85,000 of net revenue, 1.6 percent of the system; Boissevain, 41,000 - .8 percent. So, in terms of net revenue, Boissevain was at the lowest end of the spectrum.

But there is another factor that has to be taken into account. The Minister of Municipal Affairs adverted to that in a remark he made from his seat. If one looks at the geography, you have in close proximity - members will be more familiar than I am with the exact number of kilometres - Neepawa, Morden, Portage, Brandon and Boissevain clustered in a relatively small cluster in the southwestern part of this province. That is, clearly, if you are being responsible in government in terms of the delivery of service, far more than is needed in terms of a land titles office.

Dauphin is not part of that cluster; it's clearly in a distinct economic and geographical zone from that group of offices, so that the answer to the question of "why Boissevain?" Let me sum up to this point certainly it's not political; certainly, the figures show that in terms of activity - and I will come to that in a moment - and net revenue, it has been at the bottom of the heap for many years. Again, in answer to that same question, "why Boissevain and not Dauphin?" It is that Boissevain is not only at the bottom of the heap in terms of activity and revenue, but it is part of a cluster of land titles offices which clearly are servicing the same general geographic, economic and social zone.

In terms of the figures used by the Member for Turtle Mountain, he takes a look at activity, Dauphin and Boissevain, in figures which were provided through my office. The key figure which I would like to place before the House and before the member is that the major

transactions - transfers and mortgages - 2,553 in '84-'85 in Dauphin, 1,467 in Boissevain; certificates of title issued: 2,034 in Dauphin, 1,280 in Boissevain. Where there is more activity in Boissevain is in the registration of cavaets having to do with the oil activity, the vast majority of which are registered by mail and quite often from law offices in Calgary where the head offices of some of those companies are. So that activity, which really stems out of the head offices of oil firms in Calgary, or at least a significant part of it, accounts for where there is some busyness, if you will, in the Boissevain Land Titles Office, but you can just as easily mail a letter from Calgary to Brandon, perhaps easier, than you can from Calgary to Boissevain.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Turtle Mountain appropriately asks, where does this recommendation come from? It comes from staff in the Land Titles Office. I received a proposal from the registrar-general over a year ago, in the last fiscal year, of the kind that I described dealing with the computerization of the system as a whole. It did not seem to me to be anything more than a general forecast of what might happen in the system 10, 15, 20 or 25 years from now, but I am not so sure that, indeed, is the inevitable result of computerization. I do know and, therefore, that is the only premise I used, that computerization that has already taken place and started in the Winnipeg Land Titles Office over the five-year span of its implementation has already produced some vacancies and gives us some means to shrink the system and therefore shrink costs.

It's been asked what is the public policy issues here. Well, there are many and we could debate them in the abstract for a long long time, but surely one central issue of public policy is that where it is possible for a government to save money and to be able, in doing so, to do as much as a government can, working in and with the private sector to generate private sector employment, it should do so. That I think is a fairly sound aspect of public policy and ought not to be denigrated.

Certainly, the members opposite have vociferously and loudly called for the saving of money and they will do so throughout this period of the Estimates. But, in doing so, they will address targets which to them seem more appropriate as targets, but they will still be talking the language of saving money. What they are criticizing is the particular way in which, in this instance, money is being saved. They say, well, you might save at least as much and probably a lot more if you didn't advertise as much. But, Mr. Speaker, addressing that, because it has been raised, what is really described as advertising by the members opposite is, if one analyzes it in full measure, the communication of vital information to the public about programs about which they should be aware.

Well, there is some giggling by members opposite who are sometimes prone to giggle as school children will.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, a right is not a right if it is unknown; a program is not a program if it cannot be taken advantage of by those to whom it is addressed; and the workings of government and what it can deliver and the parameters within which it delivers and how government might be accessed is an important aspect of an intelligent public policy in my view. Therefore, we

make no apology for spending the money necessary to communicate to the public the availability of governmental programs. That's an aspect of public policy.

They may decide that as a matter of public policy they don't want to spend a penny in that area. That of course has never been true of a Conservative Government. Conservative Governments of every stripe, from red to blue, spend money in communicating what it deems to be important information to the public.

It is said that the decision here was made in secret. No, Mr. Speaker, the decision was not made in secret, although I have said this to the delegation that called upon me from Boissevain and surrounding areas and from lawyers practising in the area, I do apologize for not more fully consulting the people in the area. But officials in the Land Titles Office have been working with the employees in Land Titles Offices throughout the system along with the consultants in looking at future prospects for the land titles system in Manitoba. It was not secret, Mr. Speaker. It was not as well communicated and there was not as much consultation as there should have been. I will be the first to admit that and I apologize for it, but it was not a secret decision and there were no hidden agendas. It was not an undercover operation.

It was one that was arrived at on the basis of recommendations of staff in a genuine effort to find the money in order to sustain the existing programs of the Department of the Attorney-General as close as we could to the operational levels of previous years and, where necessary, to make some enrichment.

For example, and again I make no apologies about it, we knew that there was an increasing backlog in dealing with complaints to the Human Rights Commission, because we were short one or two human rights officers and indeed one that should be in Brandon. We were able through the Estimates exercise, and this will come up in my Estimates, to provide some small additional support but significant additional support to the Human Rights Commission.

So one makes those judgments. Sometimes one is right; sometimes one is wrong. And it may be that in the long run it will prove to be an error in judgment with respect to Boissevain. I don't think so. It's clear that here, given what is happening throughout the system as a whole, and I repeat because it must be repeated, there was the possibility of some shrinking in the system without any loss of service, I emphasize; without any loss of revenue, I emphasize; but certainly with a saving to the public purse, a saving that could be reprioritized in other areas where there was palpably a need to deliver better service.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to provide that information to the member and members opposite, to the House, to make it clear that there was and remains a rational basis for making the decision, that indeed there is a genuine saving in ongoing dollars of something in the vicinity of \$95,677 a year which is not an insignificant amount of money. That would be in 1985-86 dollars. I would be pleased to document it for the Member for Turtle Mountain at any time, provide him with the same figures that I had used that have been provided to me in arriving at that decision. I will provide him with all of the figures which have been provided to me with respect to the revenue and net revenue position of the

respective Land Titles Offices over the preceding years. He will see that, even though he might not agree with the decision, it was not a decision loosely made or irrationally arrived at.

One final comment that has to do with the question of users travelling to Brandon, it has been pointed out, and I don't think the Member for Turtle Mountain disagreed, that over 80 percent of the service is by mail, that is, is requested by mail and delivered by mail. As I said, the mails run just as efficiently to Brandon, perhaps more so than it does to Boissevain. Indeed, with respect to those transactions which are best handled not through mail but by a lawyer or someone from a law office going down to the Land Titles Office - lawyers from Boissevain regularly go to Brandon for all kinds of legal work associated with their practices - and there is no particular problem, I think, associated with doing that land titles work in Brandon.

You know, some remark was made about the service from the Brandon office. I have in my possession just as an example an unsolicited letter, not sent to me but sent to the district registrar of the Brandon Land Titles Office from the law firm of Pitblado and Hoskin which — (Interjection) — the Member for Turtle Mountain has read a letter into the record, let me read this one.

"This letter is to thank your office and, in particular, Messrs." - so and so and so and so, that's employees - "for their co-operation in providing the writer upon one day's notice with photocopies of approximately 25 caveats, two mortgages, postponements and ground leases. There was a great deal of urgency in having this documentation in Toronto immediately, and this could not have been accomplished without the assistance of your office."

The employees of the land titles system in Brandon are just as efficient and conscientious as the employees of the Land Titles Office in Boissevain or indeed throughout our system. They have indeed, when something has been drawn to their attention by a registrant in Winnipeg or wherever that it's a matter of urgency, they have and they do respond. The turnaround time in Brandon is approximately the same as the turnaround time in Boissevain, so there will be no loss of efficiency in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, I close. I don't want to take up too much time of the House. I thought it was important that I do address the concerns raised by the Member for Turtle Mountain by pointing out in summary the following. The possibility existed in the land titles system for a significant saving. It would have been in my view irresponsible not to make that saving, particularly when they were priority areas in terms of human services that needed some influx of resources, both in terms of staff years and money, and the money had to be found within a very marginal increase in the Estimates of the Department of the Attorney-General, as will be seen when we move into my Estimates.

Secondly, there was nothing political about the decision. The Boissevain Land Titles Office in terms of net revenue, year in and year out, has been very significantly at the bottom of the heap. That seemed a logical place to make that kind of a saving within the land titles system.

Thirdly, there will be no loss of efficiency. The Brandon Land Titles Office stands fully ready and able to deliver the service.

But in conclusion, I do want to say that I regret - of course, I do. It's difficult to make these kinds of decisions. There is a human component to these decisions, a very real and significant human component to these decisions. I know that there are some of the employees who are not happy about having to move, even though their moving costs are being assumed by government in the course of this transition, but I don't see how governments can operate without taking the hard decisions when they have to be made. How else could we as government meet the expectations of the citizens who pay the taxes who are asking us to operate as economically and efficiently as we can in these times?

I think that when one looks particularly at the last two Budgets of the Minister of Finance and notices that we have not imposed any significant tax increases on the citizens of Manitoba, one of the reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, is that we have in the last two, three years in particular operated a very lean and efficient governmental apparatus. Sometimes that hurts and I regret that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: I wonder if the Attorney-General would entertain a question.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. B. RANSOM: Can the Attorney-General advise me whether the savings of \$95,677 is directly attributable to closing down the Boissevain office, or is it an overall saving within the system accruing as a consequence of other actions taken such as not filling the deputy registrar's position in Neepawa?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: No. The \$95,677 is directly attributable to the Boissevain closing.

QUESTION put, MOTION 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 Health, and the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Highways and Transportation.

And, by leave, committee sit through Private Members' Hour today.

of what his department has undertaken in the way of Transportation Policy and Research, what action has been taken regarding the branch line situation and the rail transportation in the north. I imagine that comes under this program, and then maybe, if any questions arise from that, we can take it from there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of studies under way, under the subagreements that we have put in place with the Government of Canada, both the transportation subagreement, as well as the Churchill subagreement, and the member asked specifically about one dealing with rail line abandonment. There is a study, the terms of reference have been drawn up, and I believe it has been awarded and is in progress under the subagreements dealing with the whole issue of rail line abandonment and what effect the rail line abandonment has had on the highway system, both provincially and municipally, in terms of the extra costs to the provincial jurisdiction.

As the member may be aware, there was a study done in 1980 on the effects of rail line abandonment which, at that time, yielded the results that there was approximately \$52 million additional cost to the province as a result of rail line abandonments that had been abandoned or were in the progress of being considered for abandonment by the CTC.

The Federal Government has not accepted the basis, those figures, and necessarily the terms of reference that we used for that study and that is why it's necessary, under the subagreements, to go one step further and to define a study further that would be acceptable to both the Provincial and Federal Governments, and we hope that we can follow upon that study with some tangible results from the Federal Government with regard to the costs that are associated with rail line abandonment. Hopefully, there will be a responsibility recognized by the railways, as well as the Federal level of government, to compensate municipalities in the Provincial Government so that we don't have to bear the full costs of rail line abandonment in the province. So that study is under way under the subagreements and is continuing.

There are a number of others dealing with the transportation in Northern Manitoba. For example, there is a Northern Manitoba Passenger and Freight study to examine the number of interlocking transportation concerns and examine potential investment tradeoffs, and a working group has been formed with representation from the Highways and Transportation Department, Northern Affairs, Natural Resources and Transport Canada. Terms of reference have been drafted and consultation on them is continuing, and the gathering of data has begun as well.

There is a study on the orderly and rational development of regional airports in the province; a feasibility study for the potential for intercommunity rural bus services, including interlining with mainline facilities; and trade-offs with other government expenditures is being undertaken; a definition study for transportation monitoring on an analysis and planning system; a study of the potential uses of computerized transportation networks in a wide range

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: This committee will please come to order. This committee is considering Item No. 5.(a) Salaries, Transportation Policy and Research; 5.(b) Other Expenditures; 5.(c) Rural Transportation Grants for the Mobility Disadvantaged.

The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe if the Minister could just give us a quick thumbnail sketch

of applications in the Manitoba Transportation System; a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a multi-modal terminal for the intercity bus, rail, local bus and transit services with the existing CN station being considered as a possible site; there is a study to assess the impact on carriers and shippers and the consequences for freight transportation services in Manitoba resulting from changes in the regulatory environment for the motor carrier industry. There are a number that will be undertaken by the Transportation Institute as well.

We're also following up with a number of studies on the season extension at the Port of Churchill under the subagreements, others being done on the testing of permafrost impact on the rail line, and ways of improving the stability of the rail line to Churchill. The Churchill studies involve season extension, alternate commodities that can be used and the economic advantages of shipping through the Port of Churchill.

So those are some of the studies that are being undertaken under the subagreements. They are all in various stages of progress at the present time.

MR. D. BLAKE: I think the Minister will agree that we now have a Federal Transport Minister that is probably one of the most conscientious and capable understanding Transportation Ministers we've had for some time. I am sure that the Minister will find that he'll co-operate very well with the Honourable Don Mazankowski, especially on the stand that he has taken since acquiring that portfolio on rail line abandonment. He is certainly taking another look at it.

I wonder if the Minister might enlarge a bit on what has been done to encourage and increase the traffic through the Port of Churchill.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We have undertaken a number of initiatives to bolster the role of the Port of Churchill, to expand its use to become a major port for Canada and in that, of course, are continuing to make efforts to have the Government of Saskatchewan, which would benefit the most from increased utilization because the catchment area for Churchill is largely in the Province of Saskatchewan, as well as some benefits to Alberta. So we're continuing to dialogue with those provinces and the Federal Government.

Under the subagreements the development of the light-weight rail car should have a tremendous beneficial effect on the utilization of the port in the future, because it will mean a more efficient means of transportation, rather than using the old boxcars that have been used in the past to service the port. That car is currently under development at Transcona, and should be ready for testing by July of this year. If everything goes well, we hope to go forward with the production of that car and utilize the funds that have been budgeted for that purpose under the subagreement of some \$38 million.

We have also taken the position, in some disagreement with the Federal Government at the present time, that there should be a run of boxcar rehabilitation done at Transcona to ensure that there is adequate rolling stock until that new light-weight rail car is on-track, and also to protect some of the jobs at Transcona and prevent some of the layoffs. So we've been in a dialogue with the Federal Minister on that issue, as well as with CN.

The provision of the new transmission line to provide permanent power at a reasonable cost to Churchill is a rather important step for that community, and to ensure the long-term potential is realized, the benefits to Churchill are realized to our province of an increased use of the Port of Churchill.

As well, there are studies, and not only studies, practical experiments, geotechnical experiments being undertaken on the line to determine ways to stabilize the line in the permafrost. Those are continuing under the subagreement with a contract that will be let and could go forward in the coming winter.

As well, we are going to, under the subagreements, the development of the new tug, 2,600 horsepower, to service the port is going forward. The contract should be ready to be let in the very near future. The design work, I believe, is almost complete on it. We hope that it will be built in Manitoba under the subagreement's provisions.

There are a number of important improvements to the air infrastructure at the Port of Churchill with regard to the terminal.

As well, dredging will take place this coming year to ensure that larger ships that will be loaded will not ground out when they're being loaded. So that's an important development in terms of the depth of the berths there.

The dust collection facilities, removal of asbestos for healthier working conditions for the employees there is an important factor.

In the meantime, we're undertaking five or six specific studies that should be completed by August under the auspices of the subagreements; one dealing with the maximum utilization of the existing facilities at the port; another dealing with the potential for the season extension. I can say that, while that study is going forward, we are also planning for a season extension, including the provision of icebreaker support that would be required for a 40-day extension to the end of November and, at the same time, lining up possible shipments through that time of the year to add to the season. It's important that part of the season, the season extension, would operate in the black if at all possible, even if it's done on a demonstration basis, although we're prepared to go ahead this first year to demonstrate that it can be done.

As well, there are a number of other studies, the potential for import and export of commodities other than grain, and we're looking at such things as urea fertilizer the Soviets have indicated they have in plentiful supply and that could be imported through the Port of Churchill. Of course, that's a possibility. Urea is - although it would compete with maybe Simplot up at Brandon, but we have to determine whether there are sufficient supplies at the present time, whether we are importing and, if we are, why shouldn't it come through Churchill - in pellet form and would be an excellent two-way traffic commodity.

In addition, there are liquor and vehicles, machinery, things like that that could be imported through the port, and we're also exploring other exports through there, including dried corn from the northern United States as a possibility that hasn't existed in the past - just generally, a greater utilization in terms of grain at the present time.

The studies I hope will determine whether there are other commodities that can be identified, that can be

economically shipped, either exported or imported through the port. But our customers, the purchasers of Canadian grains, have a great deal to say about what port is used in terms of where they receive their exports, their grain from when they purchase it, and so we are talking with those countries to determine whether there are ways that we can entice them, encourage them to use the port to a greater extent.

The Soviets indicated to us that the sailing distance, sailing time from the Soviet Union to Churchill is about eight days less than from Thunder Bay, eight days at \$15,000 a day, each way, eight days, that's sixteen days, that's \$240,000 saving to them on one trip because of the shorter sailing distance. Of course, they have indicated that they are favourably disposed to utilizing the port to a greater extent, but they would like to see some tradeoffs of some kind and, if we purchase something from them, or if we can utilize their expertise in the area of permafrost or ice control at the Port or something like that, that would go a long way to yielding results for us in terms of the amount of grain they purchase through the port.

So we think there are some possibilities for productive results of those discussions, and we want to talk to other countries that import grain from the Port of Churchill, and we're actively working on that.

The other studies that are going on as well are the potential for resupply operations at Churchill; the potential for expanded tourism; and the area of marine insurance, ways that we can reduce the cost of insurance there based on experience, not on theoretical conditions. Certainly those countries that are experienced in operating through the Hudson Strait into Churchill are much less risk than those that don't have a great deal of experience, and there should be lower insurance premiums and we are exploring ways to do that.

Those are the kinds of things that we are undertaking through the subagreements and actively working with other countries to see whether we can have them cooperate in extending the currencies and greater utilization of the port. We are also looking at CIDA grains, as well, that are shipped as foreign aid and feel that there is no reason why a few shipments of those couldn't be made through Churchill. Each time we add a little bit to the shipments. Of course, it makes a big difference in the viability of the port getting it up towards a million tonnes a year which would make a tremendous difference in its economic viability.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, maybe we could use some of the surplus Soviet missiles to remove some of the icebergs out of the Hudson Strait to make shipping a little easier through there without the disadvantages that that presents in the particular season of the year.

I am sure the Minister will agree that to use the facility of that port to its full advantage is going to require two-way traffic through the port, and to do that is going to require some extensive warehousing facilities at the Port of Churchill. Has there anything been done to provide warehousing facilities at the port?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, not at the present time under the subagreement, but that is a natural follow-up to

some of the short-term studies that we are indicating are under way at the present time in terms of the physical requirements at the port. If they bear out to be positive, we are certainly going to be prepared to discuss that aspect with the Federal Government as well in terms of putting in place the infrastructure that is required. There are obviously limitations to the port's facilities at the present time, but that doesn't mean with some relatively minor expenditures that there could be a tremendous difference in the cost benefit of utilizing the port for the customers as well as for Manitoba and for Saskatchewan producers.

I think that we have to recognize there are limitations, but there are also cost benefits even with one-way traffic with grain at the present time, depending on where it's going, and we should be taking advantage of the benefits that are there and then build from that over a period of time to get in place other infrastructure that is required to handle other commodities over a period of time.

We think that the matter of a season extension has a great deal of promise for the viability of the port because if grain from the current year's crop can be shipped through instead of having to be held over, if it can be shipped through the port, and that in the latter part of October and November would be the case, that would make a big difference in the potential for the port and the amount of business that we can do through the port, even on one-way traffic. But it is desirable to have two-way traffic, I agree, and that will mean for certain kinds of two-way traffic some improved infrastructure at the port. However, things like machinery, cars, it wouldn't be significant improvements necessary because they have been brought through the port previously.

MR. D. BLAKE: Item 3, under the Other Activities, the Transportation Division, the Urban Bus Industrial Development Agreement for \$50 million to establish Winnipeg as a national centre for the development and manufacture of advanced technology urban buses. In view of the situation with Flyer Bus Manufacturing plant now, Mr. Chairman, what is happening, or what is the situation with this forward thrust?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I understand that there are discussions going forward between the Minister for Industry, Trade and Technology and the federal Ministers regarding this subagreement. It is not administered through my department so I am not directly involved with it.

MR. D. BLAKE: What is happening with the rail bus transportation system in the Northern areas?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The rail bus has been developed and experimented on, has been tested for a number of months on the Winnipeg rail line, the Greater Winnipeg Water District rail line, and those tests are going ahead. We expect, within the next couple of weeks to a month, to be transferring the rail bus to Thompson for further testing there on the Info line.

There are some problems that have developed with regard to its certification by CTC and requirements as to whether it would operate as a train or a bus. There

are a lot of details in that area that have to be worked out before it can be operating on a rail line owned by CN or CP. But certainly progress has been made in the development, and we're encouraged with the potential that the rail bus has for servicing particularly Northern communities, particularly where roads are not available.

It has been well received by the Federal Minister, as well. We've had detailed discussions on all of these areas with Federal Minister Don Mazankowski, and he as well has indicated his preference for development of new technology that can assist us in providing adequate transportation services in Northern areas. So it has potential, I think, for all provinces in the future, but it's a matter of working through the initial stages which are quite complicated. We have representatives on the working committee from CN to provide the kind of technical advice, engineering advice, as we work through this. It's not progressing quite as quickly as we had hoped, but we understand now that, within the next month, it will be moved up to the Thompson site for further testing.

MR. D. BLAKE: Are we the only province that is testing or researching this mode of transportation?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. There are other developments in this area. This particular development, using a regular highway bus technology, is not being carried on in other areas of the country at this time. There has, of course, been experience with the British Leland bus built for rail, and it is being brought over by Transport Canada to be tested in Eastern Canada as well.

But, we're very hopeful, and we'll continue to press for any developments with regard to this particular technology being retained here in the province and that any production of this particular model in the future would take place here in Manitoba, as opposed to Eastern Canada. Of course, that's one of the matters that we have to constantly struggle with when we're looking at something like this. We like to see all the jobs in the manufacturing take place here in the province, and working with industry, trade and technology in developing and identifying companies that would have the capability once this is to the stage that it can be into production.

MR. D. BLAKE: This bus body that's being used on the rail, is that manufactured here at Flyer?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The current one is an old Flyer inter-city bus body, but we're hoping in the second phase to use an MCI bus, inter-city bus, as the body for this project.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I'd like to ask the Minister. He has indicated he has carried out a lot of studies. How does he allocate the studies? Is all that work tendered out?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, some of them are tendered by Transport Canada under the subagreements and some of them are done by the Provincial Government depending who is the implementing agency.

MR. J. DOWNEY: But they are all tendered?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, we put out proposal calls for all of those.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Will all those studies be made available to members of the Legislature; will they be made public; and how many of them are complete, or are available now?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, none of the studies that are being undertaken are completed at this point. Most of them are in progress, and it would have to be a decision by both levels of government, a joint decision, as to the dispensation and action that would be taken on those studies, as to whether they would be made public, or in what form they would be made public; that is a matter that would have to be considered by the Joint Management Committee.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, I'd like to know what the Minister's policy would be, Mr. Chairman, or is, as it relates to those kinds of studies; does he not feel with the use of taxpayers' money that they should be made available to the public?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I certainly wouldn't feel that there would be any difficulty. I think it would be a great advantage to have the members of the opposition receive some of that valuable advice and have them supportive of some of the undertakings that are in progress. So, I think it would be advantageous to share that information as much as is possible, but, certainly we'd have to consider that with Don Mazankowski, the Federal Minister.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in reference to the Port of Churchill and the activity along the Churchill line, the organization known as Hudson Bay Route Association, which I believe had their meeting yesterday in Swan River, have for many years now put a lot of effort forward and tried to continue to promote the use of the Port of Churchill. In any of the study activity and the work being done at looking at options for the use of the Port of Churchill on the Churchill line, have the Hudson Bay Route Association been hired to do any of the work that is being carried out, or membership of that Hudson Bay Route Association, are they being used to make recommendations, and as a part of the overall study work that's taking place?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: They certainly do not have the staff or the resources to undertake the studies in a formal way, but they have been very closely involved and informed with the work that's going on. As a matter of fact, I was at the Hudson Bay Route Association annual meeting last night in Swan River and spoke there and provided the latest information. I might mention that the member's colleague, the Member for Swan River, was there as well last evening, and we had an excellent meeting and certainly recognized the long-standing experience of the members of the Hudson Bay Route Association, and we'll undertake to continue to provide them with information that we are undertaking and asking, as I did last night, for their

input into all of these studies, and their comments on them as we go along so that we take advantage of their expertise.

Over the last while we've received a number of letters from various members who have suggestions, and we encourage that. I certainly encouraged that last evening.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, dealing with the - maybe not quite within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Transportation, but he has been carrying the responsibility apparently for some of the policy on grain transportation and that type of activity. Has the Minister been involved in or involved with changes, or proposed changes, the review that is taking place with The Western Canada Transportation Act? What involvement has he had, or what policies has he been putting forward to them, or has he been putting anything forward?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We have been encouraging the Federal Government to provide a forum where we will be able to have direct input into the changes that are being made, and generally are taking a very strong position that in the future any changes that are made would encourage the payments, first of all, in the Crow benefit, in that area, to be continued to be made to the railways because we feel strongly that, if this is changed, there will be a rather wholesale abandonment of rail lines in the future, and there has been no provision made for compensation or consideration of municipalities and certainly for the province and communities in that area. Of course, in the other area of variable rates, we've taken a strong stand that the variable rates should not be allowed in any changes that are made under The Western Grain Transportation Act and we will continue to do that.

MR. J. DOWNEY: What research or what work has the government done in regard to the payment of Crow benefit to the railroad versus the farm community? What background material has he got, or can he make available, for which he has come to that conclusion?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Our staff in transportation, and also in agriculture, have worked together in putting together a proposal for the committee dealing with the Crow benefit, and I can make the brief available to the member. It was made, I believe, last fall, public information, and we've utilized, through the staff, all of the existing information that was put together by various levels of government, other governments, and various organizations to determine a position on that and, as a result of all of that information, have come up with our position that the benefit really must continue to be paid to the railways to ensure that it is a transportation subsidy and not another kind of subsidy that therefore could lose its permanence in the future. We see some rather large pitfalls in moving away from the payment to the railways as a transportation subsidy, particularly a transportation subsidy for export of grain.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well I'm just trying to get from the Minister what documentation he has available or what work he has done to come up with that position. Has he got numbers or any factual information that would support the position that he is putting forward?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We have, as I indicated, a large number of previous studies that have been done on this issue. As the member knows, this is not a new matter. The Crow was around for a long time, and there was a lot of study and a lot of debate on it. As I indicated, our staff in consultation with the Department of Agriculture staff have worked together in putting together the facts and figures on the benefits to Manitoba producers of continuing to pay the benefit to the railways and feel that, if we were to change from that system, we would have a tremendous economic loss to the province through discouragement to use the railway system, the railway mode, more use of trucking, as I've indicated, greater cost to the highway system, greater cost to individual producers to transport their grain. Certainly the smaller producers would have a great deal of difficulty in trucking longer distances, because they would encounter additional costs in purchasing the kind of equipment that would be necessary.

So we have weighed all of the pros and cons of it, and feel that the detrimental effects to a great degree would be felt here in Manitoba. We have a different situation, as the member knows, us and Saskatchewan, with regard to the branch line network than Alberta does. So they have obviously taken a different position, because they don't stand to lose in the way this province would. For that reason, we have to take a very different position than they do in terms of protecting the infrastructure in the small communities and small producers throughout the province.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I haven't heard any substantive evidence to support the Minister's statements. He makes a statement that Manitoba is somewhat different than Alberta. I would wonder what kind of difference he is able to point out.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I don't have the exact number of miles of branch lines in Manitoba compared to Alberta, but there is no doubt that Alberta does not have the elaborate branch line system that Manitoba and Saskatchewan have. Therefore, our communities who are served by those branch lines throughout the province stand to lose much more. When there is a deterioration in service to those lines and the closure of the many elevators on those branch lines resulting in a drop-off in business because of the change in the payment, we would end up having a large number of these branch lines and elevators closing, and a large number of communities affected and individual producers.

MR. J. DOWNEY: In other words, what the Minister is saying is that it would have an impact on some of the smaller communities. We would lose business. We'd lose services which, of course, as my colleague for Turtle Mountain pointed out in his grievance, is certainly a concern of ours, the services to small communities.

In that particular area, the government is obviously not carrying through with that kind of policy where they have some control when one looks at the loss of jobs and services at the Land Titles Office in Bosissevain closing, a direct policy decision by the Minister's colleague, the Attorney-General. Now he makes a lot

of political noise about trying to save communities where, in fact, there's a Cabinet colleague of his, through a decision of his, closing down the Land Titles Office in Boissevain, taking service away from the total southwest community and job opportunities. Here the Minister is now trying to make a lot to do about saving communities. He is not very consistent, and somewhat hypocritical in his approach.

I ask the Minister what kind of a forum he foresees being set up. Has he made any direct contact? Has he got any letters or documentation to the Federal Government asking for participation in that kind of a forum to have influence or have input to the Western Grain Transportation changes or the proposed changes that may come about during the review?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, just briefly first of all, I think our government has been very strong in both administrations, during the Schreyer Government and certainly during the present government, in supporting and increasing services to rural areas. We only have to look as far as the Minister of Agriculture and the number of programs that he has put in place to assist the rural communities and the local farmers whose economic viability is based on agriculture. They have received more assistance and support through this government and this Minister of Agriculture than any government that has been in place in this province.

So certainly the member cannot say and leave on the record that his party and his previous government would support or come even close to supporting rural Manitobans to the extent that this government has. We've instituted a number of programs to assist rural communities, such as the Manitoba Community Assets Program, that has helped a great deal in rural Manitoba to increase the services there, continue to provide nursing homes, senior citizens' homes, hospital development in rural communities and schools. We have put a great deal of emphasis on support for rural communities throughout the province, and the list could go on.

With regard to the specific matter of a forum, at the recent Ministers' Conference, the Ministers from across Canada indicated strongly, particularly from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, that we would have a provision and an opportunity to provide direct input into the considerations with regard to The Western Grain Transportation Act. We have a commitment from the Federal Government, at least verbally, that that would be the case. I would expect that direct meetings with the governments, with agricultural organizations that would be directly affected, would be certainly held to gain all of the input from those organizations, perhaps hearings in our province to give us an opportunity to have direct input.

Once the proposals have come forward by the federal Minister, we will certainly be reacting to those, but he realizes that we want an opportunity for direct input and we have indicated that to him.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, I don't think the Minister can present us with any written letter of request or any of that type of thing. I think this is the first time it's probably been talked about publicly in Manitoba. I just have asked him if he, in any documentation form, has made

that request. As well, Mr. Chairman, I feel that there should be considerably more farm representation on the Senior Transportation Committee.

Has the Minister of Transportation or Highways, who is responsible for this role, has he taken a look at the composition of the Senior Transportation Committee, and would he not support the farm community in asking for greater involvement directly from the farm community and farm representation because of the impact that it does have on the farm community? It's made up, as you are aware, of some of the senior grains people even though they are representing the Pools and the grain companies. I ask him if he doesn't think that farmers could as well be represented in a little more direct way with more farmer involvement on that committee, and will he press for that to the Federal Minister?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, certainly anything that will provide for a greater input from the people that are directly affected is a positive step. We are certainly inclined to agree that if there is not sufficient representation at the present time, I will ask my staff to review that and follow up on that suggestion if I see that it will be indicated that it would be a fruitful way to proceed. I believe that there is some merit to it.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, I am pleased to hear the Minister say he believes there is some merit in it because I don't have to refer to my staff. I can tell you right now that I would like to see greater farm representation on the Senior Transportation Committee, and I would hope that there are some issues and some matters of policy that he can deal with himself without having to run to his staff all the time to get the answers. He has the responsibility as the Minister; surely to goodness he could come forward with a policy statement. It's really strange that he can't speak on behalf of his own department without running to the staff.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(a)—pass. 5.(b) - the Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, while we are dealing with this particular issue, I believe the Minister has not given us any indication yet on what his intentions are with deregulation in the trucking industry.

I would like to indicate at this time that I am sure the Minister is aware that he has received correspondence from some of the municipal corporations in my constituency, and I would just like to refer to one letter. It was dated April 2nd and addressed to him from the Rural Municipality of Hamiota. Just to keep it short, I won't go through the whole letter, but the closing paragraph: "The council is concerned that this trucking service, including on-farm delivery, would be lost if the industry was to be deregulated. The council realizes that you fought against rail line abandonment and you fought against telephone deregulation and, therefore, the council expects that you will fight just as hard against trucking deregulation."

Has the Minister replied to that letter from the Rural Municipality of Hamiota?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I have received a delegation, a meeting we had, I believe it was shortly after that date, with a large number of small rural carriers in addition to several meetings that we have had with the Manitoba Trucking Association and other agricultural groups in this province during the process of consultation that we have undertaken. There was a large number there, there were more letters than there were people there, certainly, and I have not therefore had an opportunity to draft a response to that particular one. But we are considering the views of rural communities; it is one of our major concerns.

Deregulation is sort of a catch word that a lot of people use but not too many people understand all the ramifications or details associated with the word. There are so many aspects of it. It's easy to say in a general way that we are deregulating. I think that what we are attempting to do in this province, unlike what's happening in many other provinces, is to reform the regulations to have them meet the requirements today as opposed to the 1930s when most of those regulations were put in place and a lot of anomalies and difficulties associated with enforcing and dealing with the regulations and statutes that are in place.

So we have to move to update those to recognize the current situation and we hope that in the process, and that's the reason for the extensive consultation that has taken place, that we won't upset the apple cart, that we won't make it difficult for rural carriers, that we will expand their opportunities instead of making it more difficult for them to operate. So there are provisions taken in context of the whole package that we are looking at that will expand the authorities and opportunities for rural carriers and not do the opposite.

But they were concerned about a number of points that were raised in the task force's report that I received last September and so they came forward and expressed those concerns. I think we have met most of the concerns in the way we are thinking about the changes that we are intending to table in a White Paper for the Legislature. We haven't got that finalized yet, but we are considering most of the areas that they raised and I think have gone some distance to meeting their concerns.

So I am not certain that the people that wrote those letters of support necessarily had all of the information about the changes that were contemplated before them. They may have had representation made to them by a local carrier who said hey, I am going to be negatively affected by this, I might go out of business, write me a letter of support. So we received letters from a lot of different businesses and so on in various communities throughout the province. So it's important that once we have considered all of that and taken a position, that we effectively communicate exactly what we feel the implications of those changes will be so people can understand them. As the member knows, it's a very complicated and difficult area to deal with. Because it is largely misunderstood, we will never be absolutely certain that the changes that we make will not affect some people negatively.

But as a rural person in this province, I am primarily concerned with service to rural communities to protect the rural communities in terms of their transportation services. That is not necessarily completely synonymous with protecting the interests of every rural carrier

though. Of course, there is a little difference there. They may have better service with more opportunities for other carriers to be involved, not necessarily with the present carrier in a way that they have operated for many years. It depends on the situation, and we have to, as I said, provide opportunities in the rural areas and hope that we put in place as well the necessary requirements to keep the existing carriers healthy.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister has said they have had their task force. When they have a task force, naturally, people become a little uneasy. There has been considerable time go past. There have even been rumours that the Minister is bringing forward some minor changes in legislation, and we still haven't seen a White Paper.

Mr. Chairman, it's one thing to deal with a particular industry and the Minister can deal with it very callously if he wishes to, but I say this to the Minister that, when you start to get communities and another level of government expressing their concern - and this is from the Rural Municipality of Hamiota - it's a recognized level of government, and there are others too, I would hope that the Minister would communicate with them as quickly as possible to either allay their concerns or indicate to the various local governments what the direction of government is going to be. Because as long as that feeling of uncertainty exists and confusion, it will reflect very negatively on the Minister and on his government.

I'm trying to offer the Minister good political advice that he should bring forward his White Paper as quickly as possible but, whatever he does, please keep in touch with your local governments, and advise them of what you intend to do because, if you don't, the feeling of uncertainty and unrest is going to grow in rural Manitoba and it will reflect very adversely on whatever the Minister does. Whether he moves forward or whether he adopts a hands-off attitude, the uncertainty and the period of uncertainty is not going to reflect well on him at all.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I appreciate that advice, and certainly I'm aware that is the case. I think that, whenever there are changes made and it's uncertain as to how they will affect the existing situation, there will always be concerns raised, and they're legitimate. We will attempt to provide as much information to those communities.

As I said earlier, I'm not certain as to what advice or what information they were reacting to when they passed the resolution, because they did not mention the report itself and all of the details of it in terms of specific recommendations and why those specific recommendations, they felt, would impact in the way they were saying. So it's difficult from that, whether they were just reacting to a delegation of people in the area who might have first presented their views of what they thought was going to happen, and whether that led to the resolution.

As I indicated earlier, there were many more letters brought in by a group of rural truckers that I met with. They had obviously gone out and talked to people about it, and got some letters of support. So even though we were able to discuss clearly and allay, I believe,

most of the concerns of the people at the meeting, we weren't necessarily able to convey that to all of the people who wrote letters that they brought with them. We will attempt to do that as quickly as possible.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, the Rural Municipality of Hamiota has every reason to be concerned, because I believe they are one of the three or four municipalities in this province that have been adversely affected by transportation policy when they've had rail line abandonment take place, not once, but twice. When you get two rail lines abandoned in their community, they have every reason to be concerned about what happens to the trucking industry, because they are now entirely dependent on the trucking industry.

So I would hope that the Minister would communicate with them as quickly as possible, because their concerns are real and legitimate.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm not so certain that they're legitimate, Mr. Chairman, based on our intended proposals, but they certainly are real and we should react to them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wondered, the Minister hasn't given any indication of when these White Paper proposals may be coming down or when it may be available to us so as we might know what direction he's taking in the matter of deregulation or regulations regarding the trucking industry.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: At the present time, I believe we've got the final draft. It's a matter of getting it approved and presented through Cabinet. Then it would be ready for release. So it shouldn't be a long time before it's available, within the next few weeks, I would hope.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, there will be some time for input and consultation with the various firms that could be affected or may be affected or will be affected by the changes. Because as you know, in my particular area, there have been some great problems with the smaller trucking firms, larger franchises being bought out. Two or three of the local, smaller trucking firms in my area have banded together to present their case. When smaller groups like that have to hire lawyers to fight the giants, it's extremely costly to them. They have spent thousands and thousands of dollars now on legal advice in presenting their case to the Motor Transport Board. It becomes very very costly, and it's difficult for them to fight some of the larger trucking giants. So the sooner that the air is cleared and they know exactly where they stand, I think it will be very very worthwhile and will relieve their anxiety to some degree.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There are really three areas of change. One is in the board's rules and procedures that a lot of this can be accomplished to streamline the process so that it's not as encumbering and complicated. A second area is in regulations, changes in regulations, and others are changes that have to be made in the act itself.

We are trying to move slowly so there are transitional periods. We are also undertaking some direct studies

associated with this to determine exactly what the present rural truck traffic is carrying, so that we can have an idea of what kind of an impact any changes might have there. We're looking at phasing any changes that we bring in over a period of time, so there is time to adjust, so the trucking industry has time to adjust and the shipping public has a chance to adjust to any changes that are made. So it doesn't happen overnight, as was the case in I believe the United States, with the deregulation that took place.

That's why we look at it more as a reform of regulations, as opposed to a deliberate move to totally deregulate the system with all of the consequences that might have for service to rural areas. I think there would be a lot of difficulties there with many small carriers perhaps just totally going out of business, and larger carriers coming in and not offering the same kind of local, personalized service. That's the kind of thing that I am concerned about. I think the moves that we're going to make will certainly not lead to that, and that's what we are attempting to determine ahead of time, the implications of the moves that we intend to make, so we know it's going to happen, and that's the difficulty in this kind of an area. It's like assessment reform in some ways. So we're not going to move holsbolus quickly with major changes. When it does come out, you're going to see a phased approach to the whole area.

I might mention that the Ontario Government took five to ten years to come through with their review. So, they took a lot of time on it, and as I indicated, it's a very complicated area.

MR. D. BLAKE: Has the Minister a firm policy now on the tag axle and load lengths that has caused some concern in the past? Is there a firm policy now on the requirements of tag-axle vehicles or is this going to be covered in the White Paper on deregulation as well?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, the matter of tag axles is entirely separate. There was a change in policy announced, I believe, in 1982 by the previous Minister, my colleague, at that time, to come into effect for 1987, and, in effect, it would ban all tag axles that do not conform to the ability to transfer the weight on a walking beam type of arrangement.

If there are other systems out there that can do that, that can be shown can adequately distribute the weight on a 60-40 basis or 50-50 basis, whatever combination, if they can do that, if they can demonstrate to the inspectors that they can accomplish that with their system that's in place, then they will be allowed to continue to operate with those.

However, if they are unable to do that and if they can be put into place from the cab, which enables them to operate them from inside the cab while they're driving, then they will not be accepted either. We want to discontinue that practice, because it enables them to put them in place only when they're required to, when they're coming into a weigh scale and not otherwise. Therefore, the term "cheater axles" became known and those are the type of tag axles that we're trying to eliminate with the change in the policy.

We don't intend at this time to grandfather existing operations equipment that would be illegal after 1987;

we intend, instead, to use the other way of phasing something like this in, and that was to give five years notice, that there would be a period of time when the operators could adjust their equipment and could ensure that when they purchase new equipment that they do not get the kind that don't conform. There is always a difficulty in communicating this kind of thing, certainly, and we're reacting to specific requests. I think it's becoming known out there that there is something going on and we encourage people to come forward and ask for advice on their particular equipment so that we ensure that they do not get the wrong advice or have the wrong idea about what is happening.

So they can contact our inspection area, and I've indicated that by letter to a number of people that have raised concerns to do just that, to have their equipment evaluated to see whether it would conform.

MR. D. BLAKE: I'm sure there are some of my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, who are far more familiar with that type of vehicle and the tag axles and the problems that have been presented and will obviously still crop up even after the time period has expired, but if some of them who aren't here, if they have questions, we can probably touch on them later under Licensing or one of those other items before we finish the Estimates.

But, with that, Mr. Chairman, I have nothing more. We could maybe move down to No.6.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(b)—pass; 5.(c)—pass.

Resolution No. 95: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,221,200 for Highways and Transportation, Transportation Policy and Research for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1986—pass.

Item No. 6.(a)(1) Driver and Vehicle Licensing, Management Services: Salaries; 6.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of my colleagues who want to bring up particular items under here and we may spend a little time on this. The first thing that I would like the Minister maybe to clarify for us under the Licence Suspension Appeal section is what is the position of his former executive assistant, Mr. Ken Shewchuk, who was the subject of some newspaper comment a while ago, and some comments from the Manitoba Government Employees Association where there was a woman clerk, apparently who had been filling the job, demoted to a clerk typist and the job filled by his former executive assistant on a six-month term basis. I just wonder if he could tell us what the position was there now with that individual?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, as I recall, the detail is not quite correct as printed. There was a death of the secretary for the Highway Traffic Board, and when that occurred, the assistant secretary was moved up to acting secretary of the Traffic Board and one of the clerks was moved up to acting assistant secretary. That was obviously on a temporary basis to fill the situation because of the death.

The Licence Suspension Appeal Board - there were some personnel problems with one of the secretaries

there, so we had transferred the one secretary from the Licence Suspension Appeal Board over to the Traffic Board as an assistant secretary there, and the acting secretary became the secretary there, the person who transferred over from the Licence Suspension Appeal Board became the assistant secretary and the person who was acting in that position for a short period of time at the Traffic Board went back to her old position. When we transferred the person from the Licence Suspension Appeal Board, there was an opening there and my former assistant was placed in that position on a term basis for a period of up to six months. After three months, the job has now been bulletined and there will be a competition for that position.

MR. D. BLAKE: It would seem there is a difference in salary, according to the report, of some \$8,000.00. I'm just wondering what the Minister's position is with the affirmative action thrust where they are replacing people who have been doing the job with those of where it's politically expedient to place them. I'm happy to hear that the board position has been bulletined. This may clear up some of the unfavourable publicity that that particular action has created, and we'll look forward with interest to when that position is filled on a permanent basis.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the difference in salary was not nearly the amount that was quoted in there. It was much less than half of it as I understand. Certainly there was some difference in salary, but it was only on an acting basis because of the death of the secretary as I indicated. Those things happen from time to time, that when there is a vacancy created for whatever reason that until those positions can be filled, people are in an acting status. That does not commit them to the job. It does not mean that they will get those particular jobs. However, when competitions come open, as there is now, that person will have an opportunity because of her experience and advantage, I would think, because of the experience she gained during that acting status in applying for jobs of that nature. So it was an advantage to her to have that period of time where she gained some of those skills. I would look at it as a positive development, certainly, in that there is never a commitment under those circumstances that because you act in a position for a period of time that you are automatically going to fill that position permanently.

MR. D. BLAKE: I have a number of questions, Mr. Chairman, but some of my colleagues, I know, want to question here and it may not be convenient for them to be here at all times, so I think the Member for Kirkfield Park . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do have two or three questions about this.

Has the Highways Department implemented an Affirmative Action Program?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, we have information on that program. We were one of the first ones to apply to

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implement an Affirmative Action Program in the government actually. There was an affirmative action officer that was hired that looks at a number of disadvantaged or minority groups that should be more fully represented in the department, particularly Native people. We have been very successful through that program in improving the situation for Native people within the department. During that period of time, in the fiscal year '84-85, a total of 92 Native persons were employed through contractors in the department and approximately 34 under the department itself in that area.

Now if the member is asking specifically about the affirmative action with regard to women, that's another issue. I am not certain that that is what she is asking about.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: That's where I am heading, Mr. Chairman. The person that was acting in that position was a woman.

My question is: Why was it given in a term position when there was somebody in it as an acting position, and why wasn't she kept in that position?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, the member did not listen very carefully as I explained the situation that developed. It involved two boards.

The position that my former assistant was placed in on a term basis was with the Licence Suspension Appeal Board. The person that the member is referring to was with the Traffic Board. When the transfer was made from the Licence Suspension Appeal Board to the Traffic Board, because of personnel problems at the Licence Suspension Appeal Board, one of the secretaries was transferred to the Traffic Board to take the assistant secretarial position there. That's when the woman in the acting position went back to her original position. So that transfer was necessary in order to solve the personnel problems that were developing, and it had developed for some time, at the Licence Suspension Appeal Board.

Then the assistant secretary at the Licence Suspension Appeal Board was elevated to the secretarial position and through competition since then has been appointed to that position as secretary. So there was a case of a woman who was elevated to a higher position all approximately at the same time, so there was no move to not consider those requirements and needs.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Was the woman ever in the acting position of the administrative officer with the Licence Suspension Appeal Board?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, she was with the Highway Traffic Board as an acting assistant, which was an administrative officer position.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Is that an equivalent position in the Licence Suspension Board?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Very close. It was in the administrative officer position; it wasn't the same level, I don't believe. There are several levels in administrative officer. Close.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Was this woman given the opportunity to act in this position in the administrative office?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: She had worked in that position of administrative officer in an acting position for the Traffic Board, but she was not offered the position to move to the Licence Suspension Appeal Board at that time. She has that opportunity once it is bulletined, which is now, but she was not offered to be transferred to the other board at that particular time.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: How long has Mr. Shewchuk been acting in that position?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Since the new year - January, February and March.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In the Free Press article, the spokesman for the Minister has indicated that when a position is filled on a term basis, a Civil Service competition is not required.

Now is this how the Minister and the government plans to circumvent the affirmative action program when it comes to women? There has been a lot of talk in this government about affirmative action. Yet what happens when we see a woman not given the opportunity to act in that job and yet we have a political person who is just shot right in? Now that really is not going to give very much comfort to the women in Civil Service when this type of thing happens in a government. When you are saying that you had the first Affirmative Action Program in government and talking about how well you are doing with Natives, which is wonderful, but what I would like to see is what's happening with the women there. When I see a political person put into that position and put in on a term basis so that they don't have to go through the Civil Service, which gives him the opportunity to get the experience in that job that this woman could have had, it makes me wonder about the Minister's commitment to affirmative action. I feel that this was a very cynical thing that happened and it's going to be very hard on the basis of this type of treatment to convince women in Manitoba and women in the Civil Service that this government is serious about affirmative action when it comes to women.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, there are two things. First of all, I did mention that the person who was acting assistant secretary with the Suspension Appeal Board was elevated to the secretarial position and subsequently through competition has received that appointment. Certainly, that is a positive move in terms of affirmative action. I'm certainly pleased that through that competition process she was able to obtain that particular position.

Now in terms of the assistant's position, the woman in the Traffic Board was elevated to the assistant secretarial position for a period of time where she gained a great deal of experience, and that will serve her well certainly when the competition comes up and other similar positions come up within the department for other similar positions within the boards or in other areas of the department. She is certainly being encouraged to apply for those positions in the future.

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MRS. G. HAMMOND: Why was the Minister's former executive assistant given that job on a term basis? What qualifications did he have for the job?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, first of all, some of the positions where women have been hired in the last year or so in the department - the communications co-ordinator is a woman, the secretary to the Licence Suspension Appeal Board that I mentioned earlier, the deputy minister's administrative officer is a woman. The chief reviewing officer for the Motor Vehicle Branch is a woman and, of course, many of the board members that we have appointed over the last couple of years have been women, so we certainly have kept that in mind in terms of the hiring balance.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: That just doesn't answer the question as to why someone was put in from the outside, why a political person - which is what an executive assistant certainly is - would be put into a job circumventing the Civil Service competition and put into that job and not someone that was currently in the department.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That person was employed by the department for a period of a year and a half or so before that transfer. Although being a political person, when that person was hired, it does not mean that a political person doesn't have any abilities. It seems to be the indication from the member that, because a person has some political affiliations that are on the surface, that are admitted, somehow they don't have any qualifications to do any other job.

My former assistant was considered for that position as being suitable after discussions that I had with staff in the department, with personnel. It certainly is one of the best locations for a person with that kind of background and qualifications, dealing with the public. He certainly had the experience that would serve him well in the position of assistant secretary. So I think that person was relatively well-qualified for the position.

We'll certainly find out whether he was when the competition is up, but this is not the first time - I know that the member can act indignant when she refers to this issue in order to attempt to score some political points, but she knows very well that this kind of thing has happened in many instances, particularly under the previous government. I'm certain I could dig up all kinds of examples if the member wanted me to.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I would suggest that the Minister go ahead. But one of the things that I want to point out is that for the Minister to suggest that I try to make political points on women getting ahead is just the very basis of what I am talking about. I have a very fundamental abhorrence to the type of thing that was done here, and I don't care if it's political or if it's not political.

What you have done is you have taken a political aide, qualified or unqualified, and jumped the Civil Service Commission. You didn't go through that way and you made it a term position. You have circumvented the whole system to get someone that you wanted in there and, at the same time, you put a woman in a position of not being able to get that job. Now you

have backed yourself in a corner, where the Minister is going to have to hire that person in the job, but we'll watch and see.

In the meantime, I think this is crass politics, and it certainly doesn't serve this government well when they are trying to promote affirmative action in this government.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I think that I have provided a lot of detail in the answers. I know that we will continue to make every effort, as we have in the past, to provide positions of management certainly in the Department of Highways as we've done in the past. I certainly will be continuing to persevere in that area to ensure that that's the case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what the cost-sharing arrangements are now with the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation and the Motor Vehicle Branch, the sharing of fees or expenses, whatever the case may be. What formula are they working on, and what is the amount involved?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have to say that we have a major study. It was looked at in the past year with no arrival at a mutual decision there. We are undertaking another more elaborate study of the area to determine what is fair in terms of the distribution of the costs, so we haven't arrived at a final decision with regard to that.

MR. D. BLAKE: I want to wish the Minister lots of luck in his negotiations with the MPIC.

Could he tell me what he has received in the past year or the year under review? What amount was received from MPIC in this area?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I believe we paid over the previous year approximately \$2 million - was it? - \$2.3 million this past year, but that is not necessarily representative of what a final settlement would be. If there is a need to increase that or decrease it, that will have to be done in subsequent years. But that represents a payment that was made from the Motor Vehicle Branch to the MPIC. That's right.

MR. D. BLAKE: I wonder, maybe after the evening break, if he could give me the figures for the past two or three years on that particular item.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That will represent a reduction in the costs from previous years. Certainly there has been agreement on some savings, but there hasn't been total agreement on all of the aspects of the cost-sharing arrangement. Until we finalize that, we're going to have to deal with that issue by Special Warrant or whatever the case may be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour is now 5:30. The committee shall return at 8:00 p.m. this evening.

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SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. Eyler: The committee will come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Health, Item 2.(k) Environmental Health. 2.(k)(1) - the Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Orchard, our Health critic, will be here shortly. In the meantime, perhaps the Minister could indicate to the House, in the field of Environmental Health, is there involvement in it with the current health and environmental concern with respect to PCBs? Is there any involvement at all on the part of the Department of Health?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Chairman, to avoid the situation which is about to present itself, could we just recess until the Member for Pembina arrives?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreeable to recess until the Member for Pembina arrives.
The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I think members of the House, those present, would be interested in knowing what the particular section that we're dealing with, Environmental Health, contains.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm sending a sheet to the critic, the official opposition, for one of the questions that was asked yesterday. He could look at it under the Canada Assistance Plan on the left column, that's the salary of homemakers, the question he asked me yesterday. Then he can go to the very last column, he'll see the total of \$15,779,000; now that is applicable only to clients over 65, that's 68.6 percent, and that's the 12.4. Then, further, this is applicable only to those who are receiving the GIS and that's 53.4 percent of that, or the 6.6 million and the federal portion is 50 percent of that for \$3.3 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I was going over my notes last night and I neglected to ask the Minister a question or two on Dental Services and the question was whether one of the vacancies was the director, which is now filled on an acting basis - is the director's position filled on an acting basis in Dental Services now? Will that be bulletined, or is it the intention of the government to simply confirm him as the director?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Give me the other question too.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And, also, it's my understanding that the Dental Services division has been setting up a computerized system as well, I think it's an in-house system with MDS, and I wonder if the Minister might

be able to indicate the cost of the system, the anticipated charges of computer time from MDS, whether the system is operational, and whether it is coming in on budget.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The computer will be handled by the Commission. It's part of the contract that we covered earlier through MTS - oh, no, we haven't covered that. It's the Manitoba Health Services Commission contract with MDS. Yes, I said we covered it already, but we haven't. It'll be at the Commission and we can handle it within our contract now. Yes, that position will be posted, I'm talking about the director of the Dental Program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is the computer system operational and the program developed and come in on budget without growing pains, I guess is what they use in the computer industry?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, it's been in force since April 1st.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On budget?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, so far. It's only April 15th.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we're on Environmental Health now, I take it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, are all the staff positions here filled? Are any filled on an acting basis?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the co-operation of my honourable friend to give me a number of questions. I think we're getting up and down a little too much. Yes, they're permanent positions and they're all filled.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, is this the area where one could discuss the co-ordination of hazardous chemicals, etc., etc., and the departmental's — (Interjection) — Well, I'm not going to ask for PCBs. Is this the area of the department where they theoretically co-ordinate health hazards from I suppose, hazardous chemicals, as well as presumably equine encephalitis and other potential medical threats? Is this the area where we can discuss that?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, yes, as far as this department is concerned, but the Minister responsible overall, of course, is the Minister of the Environment. What we do under this directorate is provide health expertise to the Minister who is responsible for the environment. But as far as the Health is concerned, yes.

Now, as far as the encephalitis, the situation is that the Minister of Health would be responsible to declare an emergency if there was one now. I gather in the past that the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health have decided on what should be done, should they be spraying and so on. Of course, the Minister of the Environment is involved in that once

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the Minister of Health has declared an emergency, and of course when the decision has been made, the Minister of Government Services is brought in because he's responsible for the operation through EMO.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, is it the environmental health group that with equine encephalitis assures that the chicken flocks are maintained throughout the province to get your vector count and that sort of thing, is this the division that establishes that monitoring?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This would be under preventative medicine that we passed already, but if there is a question, we haven't got all the staff here, we can take it some other group could answer, and if not, we can take it as notice because — (Interjection) — Communicable Diseases which we passed. But if there are any questions, we can try to . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the issue I really wanted to discuss here was the reporting procedure and the liaison between the Department of Health and the Department of the Environment in terms of environmental spills and that sort of problem.

Now I don't know whether this is the right place to be discussing it, but in the chemical spill in Carman, or the discovery of the chemical problem in Carman, the Carman Town Council, when this problem was reported, contacted the regional or the local Department of Health employee who was - and I'm searching for the title - I guess he was the public health inspector, is the fellow that they first contacted. He came and took a look at this problem at Carman, and decided that it was a serious enough problem that they should undertake some cleanup effort.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As clearly as I can, the act comes under my jurisdiction, but as it was and there has been no change now since the previous government, there is a Minister of the Environment and Workplace who has the responsibility of co-ordinating all that.

Now the medical expertise that works more or less at the request of the Minister of the Environment is in this department, because we're the Department of Health, and we co-operate with them 100 percent, but the co-ordinating of the programs, the responsibility of the cleaning up and so on, often of course with the advice - especially when the health of Manitobans is in danger - of our medical staff, this will be taken over and done by the Minister under the jurisdiction of the Minister of the Environment. So I think it would be better discussed at that time. It's strictly, purely medical input that we do in that. We haven't got the responsibility for those . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: I think there is some environmental spill over there.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's pollution.

MR. D. ORCHARD: A little air pollution too. Mr. Chairman, I full well appreciate what the Minister is saying, that the Minister of the Environment has the staffpeople who are to respond to environmental spills.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The inspectors.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But now in this particular case, it was the public health inspector, I guess. Is he in your department?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: All inspectors are under my honourable friend. The only thing is the medical advice that, at their request, we work with them and work with the inspectors, but the inspectors are under jurisdiction of my colleague.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. So then, if I'm talking about the fellow that was first on the scene, he's your employee not the Department of Health?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Shucks — (Interjection) — Yeah, I should have just stuck with the PCB's.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(k) Environmental Health.
The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Just before we pass the Other Expenditures, what are the Other Expenditures?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh, the increase, you . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: You've added 400 percent roughly.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The increase is, there is more demand for information on environmental issues and increased participation by this directorate on environmental issues resulting in increased expenditures, in other words, more demand, more need - the same staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(k)(1)—pass; 2.(k)(2)—pass.
2.(m) Mental Health Directorate - Mr. Minister.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I wonder, Mr. Chairman - Dr. Toews is not here - I wonder if I could ask the members of the committee if they would agree to keep 2.(m) Mental Health Directorate at the top of the page, and to wait until we get just before 3.(b), Regional Services. Then we could deal with all Mental Health. That would be at the top of the page, 2.(m) Mental Health Directorate and then 3.(b) Regional Services, to be followed by Brandon and Selkirk. Then we'd have it all while the staff is here. If we could go now to Health Information Resources, 2.(n) as in Norman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable?
The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I don't have any problem with that if that would fit better. I guess the only question I'd have with the Minister is: why was that not laid out in the manner he described in the Estimate Book with the change in reporting procedures that obviously must come from the suggestion of the perusal of the Estimates that he's made? Does this mean that the Director of the Mental Health Directorate reports to the ADM in Community Health Operations,

not the ADM in Community Health Program or the Director of Community Health Programming?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, I would agree with the honourable friend. The section here is that the directorates are under one ADM, and the Community Operation is under another ADM and they work very closely together. We'll have to have a look at that, and I would think it would flow easier. Well I guess it's because it is a different ADM, but we'll look at that to see if that should be changed or could be changed. Anyway, the same staff that I would like to have here should be available for 2.(m), 3.(b), (c) and (d), and we would cover all the Mental Health together. They will be here this evening for sure.

MR. D. ORCHARD: We'll deal with it as the Minister suggested. I suppose we'd better deal with the next item, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(n) Health Information Resources - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Are we breaking for Private Members' Hour this afternoon?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MR. D. ORCHARD: We're not? We're going straight through? Okay.

Mr. Chairman, just let me check my numbers here. Are all the positions filled, or are there any vacancies or any filled on an acting basis in this Information Resource Centre?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There is one vacancy, a Clerk II.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And I take from that, there are no positions filled on an acting basis?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we got into this discussion on this section sort of obliquely when we discussed Maternal and Child Health, when we started talking about the information base, particularly in terms of methods of birth control and that sort of information; at least I thought we were. This is where your department provides a full range of lifestyle films, presumably films which would promote healthier lifestyles, exercise, proper heart care, the benefits of not smoking or drinking or using drugs or overeating or all of the lifestyle-related promotions that the department from time to time goes into.

As well, I presume, and the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong, that school libraries could obtain from this Information Resource Centre any materials that they wanted to stock in their libraries to give information on birth control, information on adolescent lifestyles as well. Is that a fair assumption?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, all the pamphlets, the books and the audio-visual tapes that we have, everything is in this, including child care and so on, everything is in this directorate.

To give you an example of some of the things that we have, I can give you the '83-84 and then nine months in '84-85. That's the best I can do. First of all, the full year '83-84, and the second one that I will call is nine months in '84-85. Now the books processed, there were 726 and 447; the books catalogued, 348 and 281; literature searches, 216 and 133; and the reference questions, 3,967 to 2,028; that's the health library. The circulation, there is 3,808 and 2,013; pamphlets borrowed, 284 and 136; journals routed, 3,639 for 2,594; journals borrowed, 647 and 310; U.S. documents borrowed, 10,653; Canadian documents borrowed, 7,423; cassettes, 10 and I haven't got it for the nine months; inter-library loans, 1,323 and 1,096; articles, photocopies, 3,055 and 2,438; visitors and readers, 1,595 and 970; new borrowers, 289 and 180; total publications distributed, 507,500 and 315,500; total films and resources loaned, 12,731 and 7,041. It gives you an idea of what we have in stock and what is being used and done. I think we have about 10,000 pamphlets, different pamphlets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(n)(1)—pass; 2.(n)(2)—pass.
2.(p) Manitoba Health Research Council - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this obviously must be administered by the ADM department or the ADM's office since there is no staffing involved here.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: If my honourable friend remembers the committee, remember this was started and was in the mail by the former Minister. I must give him credit. Then we passed an act in the first Session here creating the Manitoba Research Council and they have their board and all it is a grant and we are out of it completely. Whatever funds that should come in for medical research, it is their responsibility. But I might say also that I think we started - what was the first amount - 200 to 300 three years ago and now we are at this amount of money.

There has been changes in the lottery revenues and they will be getting quite a bit of money, but this year, because of the slow time that it took to get organized, about \$800,000 more, and that's 45 percent of an umbrella group, but eventually when there has been some allowance for a few years of something for capital - like St. Boniface Hospital Research Foundation are practically finished - then there will be a couple of thousand dollars or a few million dollars, I should say, to go to the Health Sciences Centre to put into other research. It is capital, but for research at a building at the university on the Health Sciences Centre campus. Then there will be something for the university also. That is 45 percent of the total revenue which should be in excess of \$1 million a year, and the other 45 percent or so will go for the Research Foundation and eventually they would have it all after that's finished. Things can be changed, but that's the intent now, the commitment we made to this group.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Does some of the \$787,000 budgeted here represent funding of ongoing research projects, or are these all new projects that would be determined on an annual basis for funding of projects which would last less than a year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's all determined by the foundation but, of course, they could decide to have a project that will go for more than one year. Technically, I guess it's on a year-to-year basis. Some of it, like this amount that you have in front of you which technically is the only thing we are voting on at this time, this has to be approved. The rest depends on the revenue from the lottery. It could go down or up.

I think they were anticipating a little more this year, because it took a while to make the changes. I think what should have been done, they should have kept that money a year ahead of time and then it would be easier, but they will have to adjust that and maybe do it as a number of years and hold back a certain amount of money or something.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Through what vehicle does the lotteries money flow to research? Do I follow from the Minister's answer that it would still be the Research Council that receives the additional lotteries money and dedicates it to whatever research project?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes. Well, the best place to discuss the total amount - all I was saying was the amount in front of you is what we are voting on - but it should be in the Department of Health, the same thing as the funds coming in from Sports up to a certain point, but the overall responsibility, of course, is my honourable friend, the Minister of Culture, who has the responsibility for — (Interjection) — you are getting all the fun; you are getting all the casinos and all the dancing girls. I never had that. This is the place to discuss research.

MR. D. ORCHARD: There is a substantial effort in cancer research going on in Manitoba. Can the Minister give an indication? Okay, first of all, you have got \$787,000 that we are working on here and there is an indeterminate amount that may flow from lottery revenues.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This year it should be at least another 800.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. I guess that always provides some problem for the researcher to know what the flow of funds are going to be. But could the Minister give to the committee today an approximation - I don't need it down to the last dollar - but an approximation of the research areas being funded here with this amount of money that we are approving out of Health Department funding, and, as well, research activities which would be supplemented by the lotteries money. Can you provide the breakdown in rough figures?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I don't have this here, but I will do better than that. I will get exactly what was given last year. I don't know ahead of time. The next year it is strictly in the hands of that committee - there is no interference from us at all - but it is mostly to try to keep the researchers here and encourage younger researchers. I don't think that most of the money will go, for instance, where we would normally think, maybe heart research. I am not saying there is none, but you know that's all over the country and all over the world;

also in cancer and so on, there is certainly something for that. But the main purpose is to encourage young researchers and keep these people here because it reflects on the kind of medical care that we have also.

It promotes mostly clinical and applied research related to health in Manitoba. The council welcomes applications during its grants competitions from all fields of the health sciences and provides grants in aid of research projects, equipment purchases, personal support awards, studentship and fellowship to successful applicants. Grant applications are carefully reviewed and prioritized by a team of health experts.

A variety of research areas are supported by these grants, including cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer, birth defects, inherited metabolic disorders, immunological diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, diabetes, stress disorders, bone marrow transplants, palliative care, infertility and other aspects of science and medicine.

In addition to the grant from the province, the Manitoba Health Research Council receives money from the lottery.

Now I might as well get this information here. There has been one concern, and that is the mental health research. There is an act and so on, and they have been receiving some grants. In the past, they have been receiving \$15,000 or so.

The recommendation of the medical profession is that everything should be in there and let the experts decide. There has been some concern from the research, so the suggestion - and I have met with them on at least two occasions and staff has met with them, my deputy minister has met with them also - was to get them prepared to make these applications of a good quality to be considered, I suggested that we would, for a number of years, keep on with this grant, but then make sure - not dictate, not say a certain amount must go to mental health; that has to be all judged on its merits, or we are taking over from the medical profession, the experts, I would say. So they would have to make their application that would have to be of good quality.

I just received a letter from them just a couple of days ago. I wanted to discuss it with my deputy minister. The suggestion would be that probably we would see that they would be represented on the board of directors also, so that will be discussed. That was the idea when we started the Health Research Foundation, to say that the people of Manitoba through their government decide that this is the amount of money that they'll put aside for research. Now you do it the best way.

They report to us. They have that responsibility, and they give us all the amounts. They have a press release once a year or so to say who has qualified, who has received it. This is the information that I'll endeavour to get for the members of the committee.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Did your last answer indicate that mental health research is to be phased out of funding from the Research Council over a period of a couple years?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Not quite. Our grants will be phased out, but then they will participate fully, like all the other groups. It would be part of that. What I say

is we would keep on, because I think they're probably a bit in arrears. It's a newer science. There is an awful lot to learn in this to make the proper application and so on. It is felt that there is still not 100 percent acceptance from the medical profession as such. So to help that process, we want to discuss without interfering with this group, but to say that there is at least somebody that understands their concerns.

But in order to be able to do that and give them the time to get familiar and to make their point, we would keep on paying the grant for three years or so. During that time, they would still qualify for any help or any scholarship or anything that they can get through the Research Foundation.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So that we're talking two separate sources of funding. You're talking about funding which may well appear in (m), when we get into the discussion of (m).

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It would be under Mental Health, maybe Grants to Outside Agencies, wherever. That will come up, and I'll point it out if my honourable friend wants at that time.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, last night when we were discussing the dental Estimates, the \$1.5 million that was budgeted for last year and not spent.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'll give you that during Mental Health.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, that's what I wanted to make sure of.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we can pass (p) and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(p)—pass; 2.(q) Northern Health - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this appears to be a new program. There was no funding last year for it. There is no Salaries. Is it a fair question to ask how you're going to deliver programs without salaries, without people to deliver the programs? How does the Minister intend to accomplish expending this 48.5, and for what purposes will it be spent?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Obviously, Mr. Chairman, it is starting very modestly. It's a new directorate, more or less to emphasize the need in the Northern area in the health, try to promote this. Seeing that it's new, I should give some information.

It's a new initiative for the North Health Services. The responsibility to provide health services in Northern Manitoba is presently divided between the Manitoba Department of Health and Medical Services and Health and Welfare Canada in accordance with a 1964 Memorandum of Agreement.

The agreement designates: (a) communities with a majority Treaty population is federal jurisdiction for the provision of clinical and community health services; and (b) communities with a majority non-Treaty population is provincial jurisdiction for the provision of clinical and community health services.

It is an exchange. If they're predominant, their responsibility, Treaty Indians; they deliver the service

for everybody in the area, and we do the same thing when they might be non-Treaty Indians with other Manitobans.

Manitoba Health will intensify services directed to residents of Northern Manitoba with the objective of preventing disease and promoting healthy lifestyles. Early diagnosis, treatment and following up of disease will be undertaken through primary care clinics, 24-hour emergency first aid service, referral to physicians where indicated. Comprehensive public health services will be provided in maternal and child care promotion and communicable disease programs including home visiting clinics, individuals and group teaching and counselling.

The staffing complement is being increased by 9.5 staff years to allow for program expansion to implement the new initiatives in health prevention and promotion. That would be in that directive of health prevention. That comes under Dr. Wilt.

They are to provide 24-hour emergency first aid service in three Parkland communities where service currently is non-existent, that is Camperville, Duck Bay, Pelican Rapids, and to provide backup relief support for staff who will provide 24-hour emergency first aid service. The addition of staff would allow for rotation of after-hours duty.

Plans for the future include development of local health committees in each community to facilitate community response for and active involvement in decisions related to the overall level of health and well-being in the Northern and hard-to-access communities, implementation of a program of ongoing in-service training to improve competency in primary care and public health skills with professional staff required to function independently in difficult-to-access communities.

So there is no staff as such. It is more or less the equivalent of a directorate, but that's serviced through the - what is it? - Health Services Prevention Directorate. That might grow, mind you, but it is to emphasize and to make sure that that part of it, the North, who, it's quite obvious are way behind the rest of Manitoba in receiving care that this be rectified somewhat.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister mentioned, unless I misunderstood what he said, he indicated that this service was going to be accomplished by, I think he said, 9.5 new staff positions under - and I have to tell him I missed what he said, but I thought he might have indicated under Health Promotion, under Dr. Wilt's shop. Did I hear the Minister correctly in that there are 9.5 staff positions approved or whatever?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I want to make a correction. I did say 9.5, but it is 7.5. That will be covered in the regional. It's the regional staff, and the salaries of the 7.5, if we're going to look at the whole thing, and I should give you that. Working in the north is 153,600; for the operation it's 93.4 and Other Expenditures - this is only Other Expenditures that you see in front of you now at this time. It is more or less the directorate, but working through the regional people that we'll come to a little later on.

The press release that we have on that, and that might help clarify things, it's a \$295,600 initiative which

will provide for the expansion of Health Services to Northern Manitoba communities. The expansion of health care to the north will focus on maternal and child care, prevention of communicable disease and the promotion of positive lifestyle habits - prevention in other words. The addition of seven new staff positions will provide for the community based delivery of a comprehensive range of services to northern residents. This includes early diagnosis, treatment and follow-up through primary care clinics, 24-hour emergency first-aid service referrals to positions when necessary.

Community involvement in health care decision making is being considered through the establishment of community health committees in areas where there is access to medical services is limited, and that, I would imagine, come under this directorate at this time.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Once again, the layout of the Estimates is, to say the least, confusing. The Minister is indicating that they are enhancing health opportunities for Northern Manitobans in this particular instance. They've got a line in the Estimates which indicates expenditures of \$48,500.00. To deliver that they've got at a later line in the Estimates part of some 49.5 new staff positions, 7 or 7.5 of them will deliver this program. My question would be, why would you separate out a particular line for northern health when all of your staffing, and I believe the Minister referred to additional funding beyond the 48.5, I think some \$290,000, if I heard him correctly, is still in Regional Services. Why would you not simply leave the entire amount in Description and Regional Services rather than establish a new northern health line in the Estimates without staff and only with a portion of the monies in that section?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I agree that it is a bit confusing and we'll have to look at that; but what has been done, it is the reorganization, the organization and the reporting way, that under Community Health Programs, under one ADM, these are mostly the directorate, this is where the programs are worked, are operated from that, but they then are delivered through the regions or through the next . . . for instance, we cover that on the Mental Health and they would be then covered under (3), Community Health Operations with another ADM. It's functioning well; here it is a bit confusing.

We could, I suppose, take Mental Health and say, okay, this is the directorate and we'd have to explain that this reports to this Minister, the ADM that's responsible for the programming, the expertise and the expert in that department for those programs and then we would say okay. Now it's delivered and you'll see much of it under Community Health Operations (b) Regional Services and that is the people in the region.

I think my honourable friend might remember, we started with the intent of having a single unit delivery, that the people in the regions would then, of course, be responsible and they have the expertise available for their own responsibility for their program but then they work together. They have a regional director who could be a public health nurse, who could be a social worker and they work as a team.

I think there's a lot of duplication. We were told at one time there were so many social workers and so

on. There probably is still duplication between Community Services and our department, but that is a possibility. So we'll have a good look at that, if it is confusing, or at least maybe we should have a better word of operation but I hope that with this explanation my honourable friend understands that the . . . is the directorate, the expertise and then the program delivery are under Community Health Operations. I think it says it all. Community Health Operations is also responsible for Brandon and Selkirk Mental Hospitals.

There is a possibility, as we go on with research and so on, it is a possibility as I've said, that we might want to institute a kind of a pilot project where we will try to get the community more involved. I think that my honourable friend heard me mention that before. I'm not saying it's government policy but it is a possibility; and of course then it would be somewhat different. If that is the case, in most instances, the communities would have the responsibility for what is now regional staff of the department. In other words, there would be a possibility that there could be - we could try that out, that there would be a kind of an umbrella group or board and that would work with the - they would accept the responsibility, the need in the area, such as acute hospital, personal care homes and so on and I think we'd have a better idea what the needs really are.

The government would always be responsible for the standards, for the financing, something like the school divisions do now. Of course anybody has the right to spend more money if they want, over and above what the government would do in a universal way; but there could be flexibility, whereas in an area where they have an aging population, they might say we need more home care, we need more specialized services for the elderly, we need more palliative care, we need more personal care home; whereas another area might say no, we've got a young population and we need maternal and child care. So this is the possibility that this might be changed again, but this is an organization that's been done not too long ago. We're very pleased with what's going on. We have two excellent ADMs. We have one in charge of the community needs, the services and so on - he's sitting in front of me - and Dr. Wilt is more with the directorate and they're working very closely together.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, would it be possible that next year when we approach the Estimates, assuming that next year when we approach the Estimates that there hasn't been an election and maybe there'll be a role reversal, would it be fair to assume that under Northern Health that we would find ourselves with a director and a staff complement in the program section and doing planning and research and doing the policy development for delivery of Northern Health Programs and still have the staff and most of the budget under Regional Services; because the Minister's indicated that is a possibility. Is that a fair speculation for what the Minister's intention and the government's intention is on Northern Health?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, not really. Of course, everything is possible; but the staff is now working with the Department of Finance and probably in the view

of maybe . . . the situation would be that both the programs, the possibility that there would only be . . . the programs and that would be what we now talked about, the directorate and then in the regional place. It could be just by programs. It could be aligned by programs, dental, home care and mental health and so on. I've been informed that various discussions with the Department of Finance at this time. I certainly can envision more staff for this directorate except the staff that's presently there now, but it has to be more or less a directorate in its own to specialize on this areas, but they will draw from different areas.

Now, we can talk about the planning. The Planning and Research group that we've covered so well before - my friend probably knows that now - but they're doing a lot of the working together with these groups but the programs, they're also always working together.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, now just let me get it straight that this Northern Health and with the additional staff that we will be discussing, hopefully, later on this evening under Regional Services, that this is going to be delivering new programming — (Interjection) —

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Not deliver. No, they don't deliver programs. It's like the directorate.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . of services — (Interjection) — But, Mr. Chairman, the Minister may be didn't hear the preamble to my question. We've got this line in the Estimates called Northern Health with some \$48,500 to spend. The Minister has indicated that the salaries to deliver the program are contained within - I think it's 7.5 staff years of - a request for some 49.5 staff under Regional Services. What I'm trying to establish here, and I think the Minister has already indicated this, is that this represents a new level of program delivery to certain communities in Northern Manitoba. I think he mentioned Duck Bay and Cormorant and a few other communities like that. Is that a proper assumption of what the Minister's been saying?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The line that we have now is just the responsibility for the program, of developing the programs. Now, it could be that for that, staff could be taken from other areas for that particular thing. It's to zero in and has a responsibility for this program, and then it is delivered, but through the Northern region.

I'll give you an example of what we intend to do, for instance, with this 48. Now, there'll be community health committees that'll be approximately \$5,000; the in-service training for 14 existing community health workers at \$6,000; program consultation, \$2,000; medication, books, publications, \$12,500; funding assisting to the Public Health Nurse to pursue baccalaureate education, we return a service commitment in the North. Now, that's the \$48,500.00. Of course, the service, as I say, is delivered the 153 salary range in the Northern region and the operating of this is 93.5 for a total of 295.

Now, for instance, what we want to do and what we're asking, we'll have the funds for that. In 1985-86, we want to establish health committees in Wabowden, Thicket Portage, Ilford, Grand Rapids,

Easterville, Cormorant, Moose Lake, Sherridon, Bissett, Manigotagan, Pikwitonei. In 1986-88, we would then establish in Princess Harbour, Pine Dock, Matheson Island, Loon Straits, Camperville, Duck Bay, Pelican Rapids, Pine Creek, Bacon Ridge, Crane River, and Waterhen . . . That is the health committees and I already said that we were establishing a station and so on. Nursing Stations would be under the Commission, that would work together.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Ms. M. Phillips: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Now, these health committees that the Minister is indicating will be established - given that you have a health committee in Wabowden - will that health committee be then given the global budget dollars over which they will presumably determine the greatest need in the community wherein those dollars will be spent? If they're not given a global budget then will they be recommending to the Department of Health through two regional services that we need more home care, or here are the programs we need? What's going to be the rules of these regional health committees?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think I've helped confuse my honourable friend. I was talking the possibility of changes. What we're looking at for the whole program in all the regions, not just the North. I said a possibility that the people in the community would be involved. If that is done and what be developed as a pilot project would be the first part. That is that these people that would have the responsibility of a certain amount. Of course, that would be the same as hospitals and that would have to be agreed by government to make sure that there are certain standards and some services would have to be done. That would be a little different.

Now, these are only advisory committees at this stage in the North. They would do exactly the same thing; consult the government and say here this is what we need. We would be in a position to consult and hear their views of what they need. It would be a little different that it would be an advisory committee only. Later on, it might be a functioning committee - something like the board of a hospital or a board of other services with the staff now presently in the region - if that is developed, either as a pilot project or later on if it becomes . . . that now would work for the community in that area, be no longer employees of the government.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Chairman, that is an interesting new direction that the Minister supports.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Well, it's not a direction. It could be a pilot project.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, that's right. It could well be a pilot project. It would seem as if as the Minister is describing today . . . gently being established that I would think that it would be the intent or the direction of the government to move in this direction. Whether they accomplish it or not, I don't know.

Can the Minister indicate in the communities that he mentioned, and I, of course, didn't have time to write

them all down, whether there is any - paralleling, I guess is the word - of Federal Government funding responsibilities because these communities are the home to a number of Treaty Indians? If this were the case, I think the Minister can see a potential area of future negotiation with the Federal Government and maybe these communities that are potential communities for the implementation of this program won't fit the mold.

Just hypothetically, if you have a community that has a substantial population of Treaty Indians and the Provincial Government provides a level of service and a level of funding to that community, would it be fair for me to make the position to the Minister today that that is bailing the Federal Government out of a financial obligation that they have now and for the foreseeable future, always will have? That is the question that I'd like to put to the Minister is, are we, by advancing on this program going to find ourselves more and more in the position as a Provincial Government of funding programming which traditionally and legislatively is the responsibility of the Federal Government in providing service to Treaty Indians?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'll start with the last question. No, this is something that has been going on for quite awhile. I think I mentioned the year when this was first started, the agreements with the feds. If it is predominately in an area where there is predominately, let's say, Treaty Indians, but there are some non-Treaty and some white people, the Federal Government takes over the responsibility of caring for everybody at their cost and then it's kind of a co-operation. Now if it is mostly non-Treaty Indian, such as the place that I mentioned, we accept this responsibility of taking care of the non-Treaty Indian, the white people, but also the Treaty Indian that would be in that area, instead of duplicating everything.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And is there a recovery from the feds under that system?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, the recovery is the exchange of co-operating. You take care of these people here, because you have to have a hospital anyway, so we have a few non-Treaty Indians and white people. On the other side, we'll take care of the Treaty Indians in that area and it seems to be working quite well. I think, if anything, we're probably winning on that.

Now I want to make it clear that I'm not announcing any government policy at this time. I've got 16, 17 committees working at this. I'm saying that there's a possibility to look at and it would be ridiculous to start a policy without trying anything out, I would think. That's my view now.

There's a lot of work to be done before that. We would, in working with committees and so on, try different options or different pilot projects to see if it works to start with. It might be an area that might volunteer. In that area all you would do, and it seems reasonable - you know how many times we're told, well, you're imposing this, this government is imposing that - we would know the amount of money we would spend in an area and we might say, okay, well then, it's a little more. It's an advisory committee. We would not

just surrender all responsibility or just pass the buck, that's not what I'm saying.

We would have certain responsibilities, but the area is a bit like what's happening in the school division now. If they want something a little more than that, they raise the money. They do it, so they would be assured of some equal share. As I say again, that's not government policy, but it could be that sometime in the not too distant future that we try to develop - maybe not exactly like I said - but some kind of a pilot project with a community that's ready to try it, and so on, to see if it works.

In other words, we are getting the community more involved if we did that. It would be the same funding. It's not all of a sudden because the cost is prohibitive or getting out of control that we're saying, now here - and that has to be understood by the community here - you have the responsibility. It's not that at all. We're not trying to get away from the financing. That will always be the responsibility of the Provincial Government, but it is involving them more in the planning and in the decision-making - about the same as the board of the hospital does now - but enlarge that.

You see one of the reasons why I say that and one of the reasons that I think we should try that - it's not a commitment at this time - is this. Some people are saying there seems to be a tendency of getting away from institutions in the health field. They say institutions are a costly way. You've got to go for prevention; you've got to go for that. And the people think okay, you're going to go in the community, it'll be community help. Some I think - I don't know if it's wishful thinking or not having being exposed to the problems that we feel in the health field - it might be done from one day to the next, you just take so much money from the hospital and give it to the community. Well, it doesn't work like that and initially it would probably be more costly.

I would hope, I've made presentation to discuss that further with the Federal Minister, who said that they want to explore the possibility of what an aging population will do in Canada, in certain provinces mostly, what prevention could do.

Now the situation if you did that - let's say that you named a government, reorganize and they set up two Ministers, and that has been talked about. In fact I think that was tried — (Interjection) — Yes, I know at least one province that had a Minister of Health Institutions, or hospitals let's say, and another one would have community health, all the other health. Then I think - and those are strictly my own views - that you're setting up a kind of a confrontation between two individuals who will start fighting for their own, vying for the health dollar. I think that you're going to have a fight, unless you have a very weak Minister and a strong one and the strong one gets the lion share of it. You're going to have difficulty and then that's going to be carried on by the people; in other words, the people that are responsible for home care, for day care for the elderly, and those kind of preventative things, we'll be fighting for the people in the hospitals. The hospital will be worried, will be wanting to protect their empire.

I don't think that there's anything better, but to say to these people, well, here get together, the government is going to finance at the same rate and higher than

they were doing before, but you're going to play a role. And this way it won't be just saying well, we're only interested in the hospital and give us and give us and give us, and then the people in the community are saying, you see that mental health also. You know the fact that we should try to reduce the population of Selkirk and Brandon and go to the community. I'm sure you've heard that, that's that same policy. I think that all of us in this House can say at least that we favour institutions as the last resort, the mental institution, the mentally retarded, acute hospital, and so on.

So the possibility that you would have a group - it might be an advisory committee, but it could be maybe just an advisory committee to the government - who say in this area - you know they'd be representatives from the board - that is far from determined, even if we do go with that. We'd have to work with them on that, but the situation, if that is done, then these people could either advise government or it may be a little more than that. They would say, okay here, there's so much money for this area, we want to put so much in the hospitals, we want to put so much here and so much here, and then we would go along with them. They would have the responsibility in the region also, and this way you would not have people working independently, one than the other. You would not work at the hospital maybe just getting rid of people because they need the beds. You would now have people in the community who would say, well, let's get rid of them, we can't deliver home care or something, let's try to get them in a hospital and then they could take care if it, it's their responsibility. They could be panelled and so on.

These are some of the concerns that people would work together to see what is more important and what is the priority of their communities. That's what I'm saying, why I think this is worth trying. I'm not making an announcement at this time. I'm telling you some of my thinking and the thinking of some of our people in the department and the Commission that were developing something to bring forward - kind of a White Paper. This is where I had invited my friend before, if he wanted to participate with some of the other groups in those kind of things, to see where we're going with these programs.

You know we've been told by the former Health Critic of the opposition last year and so on that we needed changes. Now we all agreed with that and something had to be done. We were told by the Member for Turtle Mountain, I think, who was also saying the same thing, to look at the problems that we have, because they are problems that we've never faced before. They're coming and I still say we have probably the best system in the world, or one of the best, but that system is in danger. We can't keep on, just adding forever and a day, or creating false expectancy. I think that the motivation of the people, the providers of services, the people in the community might be changed, so we're suggesting that we enlist the support of the communities to tell us what they think is better for them or they think that we should specialize in and that's a possibility.

Now if we did that, of course, it would not be government policy. They'd first accept all responsibility for instituting, if that is done, a pilot project. We would work with volunteers and I would hope to try these things that could benefit other provinces, especially because of our aging population.

Things are changing so much. You know, we're admitting way less people in personal care homes. They live longer. There are less people that are dying now than there have been before. This is what we're looking for. Why with more beds and the same population that, all of a sudden - well not all of a sudden - but gradually, the waiting list is increasing. So there are a number of things, and that is what we've got to look at.

Now if that is the case, we're not going to start closing beds and hospitals, but eventually as you go along you might not have to build acute beds, you might have more personal care beds. In other words, we've many people now that should be, that are being panelled to go to personal care beds, who are occupying beds in an acute hospital. It would be kind of crazy at this time to say we're going to build more acute beds in the hospital. That would be wrong. First of all, let's get the people out of the hospitals that don't belong there, and if by that, you have to build more personal care homes, that's what we should do.

But then again, then we look at personal care homes. It might be the same thing. It might be that more people could be kept at personal care homes with some kind of an enriched services in senior citizens' homes, in other programs such as home care. Home care are keeping a lot of people out of personal care homes.

I think we have to start, first of all, to keep the people in their home as long as possible. Of course, I feel that we'll always need hospitals for mental patients. I don't subscribe to the fact that we could completely close these institutions. They might vary a bit. They might be psycho-geriatric hospitals as such or personal care homes. It's the same thing.

I think we'll always need personal care homes, but the point is to try to get as many people living at home with the assistance, if they need some assistance, to be able to get people out of institutions maybe faster. I'm not just talking about the aged, I'm talking about population after surgery, for instance, but with help in the home. Then of course, the next thing in the institutions it's less costly and that is appropriate for that. It's not the same kind of care. It is not better care in the hospital because it's more costly, not necessarily better care for that individual who should be in a personal care home, because he doesn't require the same thing.

So these are the things that I say will have to be done. There will be some tough decisions to make, but I think it would be utterly nonsense to panic at this time and, for instance, start building all kinds of acute beds until we know where we're going. I think everything has to be done pretty well together.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The membership on the 16 or 17, I believe, committees the Minister indicated were currently in existence, is appointment to the board by election or by appointment by the government?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Which board was that?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Your community-based boards, the 16 or 17 of them you mentioned. Are they appointed by the Minister of Health?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This is not a fait accompli. These groups are just in consultation with the people

in the area. These boards are just being established now. There are no boards that are named yet, so that will be in consultation. I don't know exactly, at this time, how it will be done. I'm sure that it will be in consultation with the people in the area, and try to make it as representative as possible.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Did the Minister not, earlier on this afternoon, indicate that there were some \$5,000 available to the boards that are in place?

Like, it seems to me that the Minister has indicated that there is going to be some funding here for establishment of these community-based boards. Now he seems to indicate that there are no boards yet, but they're coming. I guess the question I'm trying to get from the Minister is: how does a person become a member of one of these community-based boards that presumably are going to work with a number of communities in Northern Manitoba and liaise with the Department of Health in program delivery? How does one get on these boards?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: What I did say, and remember that we haven't got that money yet, this is exactly what we have in front of us. I think my honourable friend would be the first one to say why are you here. It's something new. It's new money.

Now I am suggesting that there should be \$5,000 for community health committees just to start. Now the communities' responsibility for an active involvement in health-related decisions, I'm saying, will be facilitated by the establishment of health committees as follows in the areas that I mentioned. Now that is just in the process of being done, and recommendations will be made to me as to how this will be done. This will go ahead. That has not been defined or finalized yet. Certainly it would be in discussion with the people affected in the area, and that would be the first thing that I'd want, and also to make sure that it is as representative as possible from the people delivering the service and the people receiving the service.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then do I take from the Minister's answer that he envisions the board structure to be composed of . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's a committee, not a board.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, the committee structure to be made up of Department of Health personnel, who may be Regional Services staff in the area?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then who are the people that are delivering the services that are going to be on these boards.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As I say, there will be recommendations coming to me. This is something that we would want to study before we set it up, but I could say without any hesitation, it's not going to be composed of all workers, it could be that the regional director might be on. It could be that there will be some, but it will be mostly people in the area. It is people in the

area who we want to tell us what they feel that they need and so on, as an advisory committee - it's not a board, it's an advisory committee. So it would be the people in the area that are either involved and so on, people in the delivery of service it could be, and also the people themselves, probably the leaders in the community.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then will the government be making the appointment of the people to these advisory committees?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That is usually the way it's done, but I have got an open mind on that. It could be a mixture. It could be that the government will name someone, or it could be from a list submitted by the groups representing them. That is still open at this time. We will do what we think in getting all the recommendations and discussing with them, what we want is the best possible people who can best advise us as to the needs of that particular community.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Do these community advisory committees require any legislative mandate or any amendment to any acts? The Minister has the authority right now to structure them, set them up, and to appoint people to them?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Anybody can set up an advisory committee.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicates that anybody can set up the advisory committee.

The Minister hasn't necessarily got the answers that we're seeking yet, because this appears to be a fairly . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Not the detail.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . new type program. But, Mr. Chairman, this may well be a very fine idea to involve people in the community in terms of planning delivery of the Department of Health's services in the area.

Mr. Chairman, it would appear from the outside, and the Minister can correct me if my thoughts to date are wrong, and I know he will, but most of these communities are in areas that are currently represented by the government, by and large. I think that would be a fair assessment, at least from the list he's gone through. Now that committee structure, if I follow from what the Minister is saying, has really no authority, no formal powers as envisioned right now to demand of the government to perform given services, to increase funding in given areas.

The Minister says this is an evolving plan that may well happen or may be part of the planning for delivery of services that comes in the future; but I can see an ideal purpose in these after the next election, in that the Minister and the current government have the ability to appoint the people to these committees . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, you're mixing two things; it's my fault.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Minister should clarify here.

Tuesday, 16 April, 1985

HON. L. DESJARDINS: My honourable friend is mixing two things up. I think I see what he's driving at.

Could we forget what I said about the possibility of a pilot project? I wasn't talking about the North and that is something that would have to be developed. It's far from developed and if that goes through, it would have to be developed with committees to look at it and if there's a pilot project, certainly that is a different way to set up. That could be a little more than an advisory committee and it could be that these people will be chosen by some kind of an election or a representative of the council and so on. Would you please forget that I ever said that? That's something else; that shouldn't have been mentioned at this time at all and that's my fault.

Now this is an advisory committee that we will work. It could be certainly a recommendation that we'll take and we'll set it up. I accept the responsibility for that and I'm not going to get involved in a debate as if it'll be people that are card-carrying NDP because the members that want to believe me will believe me and those that don't, won't.

I just want to point to my record as Minister of Health and the people that I set up including the Council on Aging and the advisory committee and I think that should speak for itself. I'm going to advise the people to set up the way to get the possible people that will be the most representative and would have the confidence of people in their community to advise us on that. It's not a big thing; they're not going to get paid. It's not going to be anything like that. It's people that would be the leaders and I can assure you that I'll never ask anybody if they're a card-carrying member of any party when I set this thing up.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Then can the Minister indicate that under the funding and program development for this fiscal year, how many community committees does he expect to have set up at the end of the year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I named that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is it the 16 or 17 that he was indicating earlier on?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Ten - and nine of those have a Northern station at this time. The others, that's one of the reasons we're starting with them, and for '86-'88, what is projected - this is for this year - 10; another 10 and none of them have Northern stations at this time. That might come or they might be smaller areas, but right now we're talking about the areas where they have Northern stations and I don't remember exactly, I think we built three last year and the year before and we might have some in our five-year program also this year - or some repairs and modernizing and so on. So these are the areas that I mention, just the first column, the first 10 that I mentioned.

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. Eyler: 2.(q)—pass. The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I understand that probably we're going to deal with (m) after we get into Community Health Operations, which would mean that we wouldn't be able to pass your resolution as you indicate; but before we get there . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Did we pass Northern Health?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we've only got a few minutes left and there's probably no sense moving staff in to deal with Mental Health.

The other day when we were discussing, I think, Planning and Research, I left the Minister with - I don't know how good my French translation was - but does the Minister have the indication as to which numbers were correct?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, I'd forgotten about that. I guess we've been a little busy also, like my honourable friend, and we haven't had a chance to . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, we've all been busy reading and studying.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm pleased that you reminded us.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You're going to provide me with that information at some point in time?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, yes, staff of course hear these words and that'll be fine. If it's the wish of this committee, I would suggest that we call it 5:30 and when we come back we'll start with Community Health Operations (a), which is not Mental Health; it's the whole thing and then we would go to Mental Health Directorate (2)(m) and then Regional Services (3)(b) and (c) and (d). So we would do the Community Health Operations - Operations Support first and then we'd go to Mental Health.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable? (Agreed) The time being 5:30, I'm leaving the Chair and will return at 8:00 p.m.

ERRATUM

On Page 842 of Hansard the motion should read as follows:

Motion to go into Committee of the Whole House was not proceeded with as leave was not granted.