

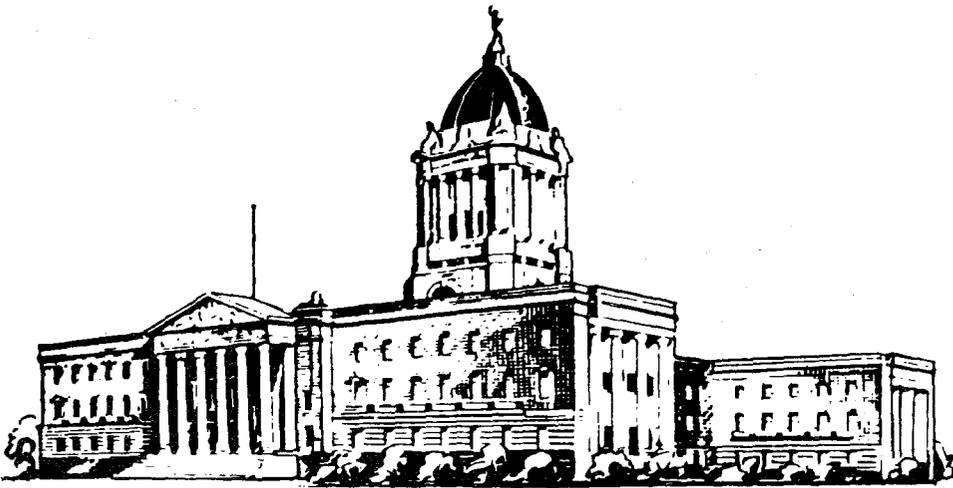


**First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(HANSARD)**

37 Elizabeth II

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-Fourth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
<b>ALCOCK, Reg</b>	Osborne	LIBERAL
<b>ANGUS, John</b>	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
<b>ASHTON, Steve</b>	Thompson	NDP
<b>BURRELL, Parker</b>	Swan River	PC
<b>CARR, James</b>	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
<b>CARSTAIRS, Sharon</b>	River Heights	LIBERAL
<b>CHARLES, Gwen</b>	Selkirk	LIBERAL
<b>CHEEMA, Gulzar</b>	Kildonan	LIBERAL
<b>CHORNOPYSKI, William</b>	Burrows	LIBERAL
<b>CONNERY, Edward Hon.</b>	Portage la Prairie	PC
<b>COWAN, Jay</b>	Churchill	NDP
<b>CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.</b>	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
<b>DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.</b>	Roblin-Russell	PC
<b>DOER, Gary</b>	Concordia	NDP
<b>DOWNEY, James Hon.</b>	Arthur	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.</b>	Emerson	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Herold, L.</b>	Niakwa	LIBERAL
<b>DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.</b>	Riel	PC
<b>EDWARDS, Paul</b>	St. James	LIBERAL
<b>ENNS, Harry</b>	Lakeside	PC
<b>ERNST, Jim, Hon.</b>	Charleswood	PC
<b>EVANS, Laurie</b>	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
<b>EVANS, Leonard</b>	Brandon East	NDP
<b>FILMON, Gary, Hon.</b>	Tuxedo	PC
<b>FINDLAY, Glen Hon.</b>	Virden	PC
<b>GAUDRY, Neil</b>	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
<b>GILLESHAMMER, Harold</b>	Minnedosa	PC
<b>GRAY, Avis</b>	Ellice	LIBERAL
<b>HAMMOND, Gerrie</b>	Kirkfield Park	PC
<b>HARAPIAK, Harry</b>	The Pas	NDP
<b>HARPER, Elijah</b>	Rupertsländ	NDP
<b>HELWER, Edward R.</b>	Gimli	PC
<b>HEMPHILL, Maureen</b>	Logan	NDP
<b>KOZAK, Richard, J.</b>	Transcona	LIBERAL
<b>LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.</b>	Inkster	LIBERAL
<b>MALOWAY, Jim</b>	Elmwood	NDP
<b>MANDRAKE, Ed</b>	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
<b>MANNES, Clayton, Hon.</b>	Morris	PC
<b>McCRAE, James Hon.</b>	Brandon West	PC
<b>MINENKO, Mark</b>	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
<b>MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.</b>	River East	PC
<b>NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.</b>	Rossmere	PC
<b>OLESON, Charlotte Hon.</b>	Gladstone	PC
<b>ORCHARD, Donald Hon.</b>	Pembina	PC
<b>PANKRATZ, Helmut</b>	La Verendrye	PC
<b>PATTERSON, Allan</b>	Radisson	LIBERAL
<b>PENNER, Jack, Hon.</b>	Rhineland	PC
<b>PLOHMAN, John</b>	Dauphin	NDP
<b>PRAZNIK, Darren</b>	Lac du Bonnet	PC
<b>ROCAN, Denis, Hon.</b>	Turtle Mountain	PC
<b>ROCH, Gilles</b>	Springfield	LIBERAL
<b>ROSE, Bob</b>	St. Vital	LIBERAL
<b>STORIE, Jerry</b>	Flin Flon	NDP
<b>TAYLOR, Harold</b>	Wolseley	LIBERAL
<b>URUSKI, Bill</b>	Interlake	NDP
<b>WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy</b>	St. Johns	NDP
<b>YEO, Iva</b>	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 12, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

## PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye):** I beg to present the Third Report of the Committee on Economic Development.

**Mr. Clerk, William Remnant:** Your Standing Committee on Economic Development presents the following as their Third Report:

Your Committee met on Thursday, December 8, 1988, at 10 a.m., to consider the Annual Report of the Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation.

Messrs. Jim Osborne, Chairman, John Sadler, President, and Ken Neufeld, Controller, provided such information as was requested in respect to the Annual Report and the business of the Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation.

Your Committee considered the Annual Report of the Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation for the fiscal year ended December 31, 1987, and adopted the same as presented.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

**Mr. Pankratz:** I move, seconded by the Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the public gallery where we have, from the Ste. Rose Collegiate, thirty-two Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Larry Menek. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings).

We also have with us today, from Sisler High School, twenty-five Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Mike Gartner. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

We also have with us in the public gallery, from Wanipigow School, twenty Grades 9 and 11 students under the direction of Mr. Ralph Paul. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Seven Regions Health Centre Arbitration Refusal

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). As the Minister knows, problems of long standing, involving the Seven Regions Health Centre, are still unresolved. It has come to our attention that the Seven Regions Board of Directors has turned down the Minister's offer, a most positive offer we believe, to have the parties select an arbitrator. These problems have been left unresolved and a solution must be found to restore full community support and confidence in this health care facility. My question to the Minister is, what reasons did the board give for refusing to have this matter settled by arbitration?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** As my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), has indicated, the sometime controversial difficulties surrounding the Seven Regions Health District are a long-standing issue. In an attempt to settle that, we did offer the services of an independent arbitrator on some fairly stringent conditions, namely, being that the decision would be binding on both parties so that we could hopefully put behind the area, the kind of dispute.

That offer was turned down by the board of Seven Regions and replaced with the initiative by the board that the services throughout Seven Regions receive accreditation by the Canadian Hospital Accreditation Association. It is the board's considered opinion that the accreditation will allay the difficulties that have, from time to time, caused difficulties within Seven Regions.

\* (1335)

### Accreditation

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** It is true that they are seeking this outside review of some of their procedures but there still remain questions that must be addressed. Has the Minister had any discussions recently with the Town of Gladstone and the Seven Regions Board in an attempt to solve those problems that are outside of the accreditation field?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** That was exactly the reason that I offered, in consultation with my colleague from the area and with staff at the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the offer of an independent conciliator, because it was our opinion that only someone with impeccable credentials and impartiality could consider the whole range of issues that are before the board and the communities. It is with regret that offer was rejected and, although I can

indicate that we would still make the services of an independent arbitrator available to Seven Regions, I am hopeful indeed that the accreditation review will contribute to resolution of this long-standing problem.

### Physician Shortage

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** With a final supplementary to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), like many communities, the Seven Regions Health Centre is also desperately now short of doctors and many in the community feel that there is a direct relationship between that lack of doctors and the inability to solve the problems between the board and the health centre. Can the Minister give us an assurance today that he will actively continue to look for a solution to this ongoing problem in this region?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Yes.

### Klinic Community Health Centre New Facilities

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** With a new question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), unfortunately, we have not yet received from this Government the long-awaited commitment to community health services. That is long overdue in the Province of Manitoba.

In spite of a number of reputable health workers and experts that the Minister appointed to the Advisory Network, I must admit that we were disappointed that there were so few who had experience in the community-based model of health care delivery as opposed to the institutional model of health care delivery. This lack of commitment, however, on the part of the Minister cannot be any more evident than in his refusal to construct a new building for Klinic. My question to the Minister, why did he feel it was necessary to go back on an earlier commitment to build this facility?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** I want to briefly indicate to my honourable friend that we went back on no commitment. There is a range of \$900 million to \$1 billion worth of capital projects that are placed before Government in any particular year. Klinic was first given approval to proceed to construction in 1985. Three years later, in 1988, that construction is still unable to be completed.

I would like to, in seven months, resolve every capital construction issue that is before Government but, unfortunately, I have neither the financial resources nor the ability to do that. The commitment to Klinic is the same as to all other groups who have facilities proposed for construction who did not get inclusion in this year's capital budget, that they will be part of the review and ongoing commitment to capital in the future because we cannot, as Government, and no Government has been able to accede to the entire capital budget in any particular year.

### Tour

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** A supplementary question to the Minister, will the Minister at least accept the invitation of the Klinic Board to tour the facilities to see for himself the intolerable conditions that the patients and the staff must cope with on a daily basis?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I realize that my honourable friend wishes to lobby on behalf of Klinic in the Legislature, but there are a hundred other boards who were disappointed that their facility did not proceed to construction. Will my Honourable friend lobby for each of those individually, one by one, until she receives a commitment from Government that we construct immediately all \$900 million worth of capital? I have indicated to her and I have indicated to others that I and this Government would be the most popular Government in the Province of Manitoba if we acceded to commit to \$900 million worth of construction. That popularity would continue until the bills come in to pay for it.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** But the question is a question of priority and the question is also a question of whether this Government is committed to a community-based model of health care delivery.

\* (1340)

### Health Advisory Network Klinic Review

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Can the Minister tell us why, when all of the studies have been done, that it is now necessary to submit Klinic to the Health Advisory Network for review, when indeed all of the studies indicated that it is providing an essential service, but it is a service that is not maximizing its potential because of its lack of physical plant?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, it is with some regret that I have to correct my honourable friend. Klinic's construction is not being referred to the Health Advisory Network. I do not know where that incorrect impression came from. Klinic is not being referred to the Health Advisory Network for a decision as to its scheduling and construction. It is one of many projects that will be decided upon in terms of its advancement to construction as a number of other facilities included in the \$900 million of capital request. The Health Advisory Network is not to deal with Klinic as a specific issue.

Mr. Speaker, I categorically deny the inference by the Leader of the Liberal Party that somehow, by not proceeding with Klinic after the previous Government had frozen Klinic's capital budget in August of last year, that we are somehow not committed to community health. That is false, Mr. Speaker.

## Announcement

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have some late-breaking news for this Chamber. The Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis), a Member in this Chamber, has given birth to a seven pound, six and-a-half ounce baby boy, named Joseph Harry, which I believe is the first birth of a child for a sitting MLA in the history of the Manitoba Legislature—I believe so. Joseph Harry—I think it is more after the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) than the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) but I do not want to put any interpretation on that name.

## Health Action Centre Status

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very serious question for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Last Wednesday, we raised the issue of Klinik which has again been raised today in terms of the preventative health care system in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, we are also very distressed that the capital budget that was released by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is, quite frankly, totally inconsistent with the Speech from the Throne that was presented by the present Government, in terms of community-based preventative health care.

My question to the Minister of Health is, the Health Action Centre is a core area health care facility that is operating with Native people and immigrant people in our core area. It is a program that deals with northern people in our health care system, as opposed to hospitalizing many people in our Health Sciences Centre. It works very closely with the Health Sciences Centre.

Why, Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Health moved this project down on the priority list from where it was under the previous Government for expansion, down to the last page of its capital program, and the last project, in other words, totally moved to the bottom in terms of the priorities of this Government?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the status of that project has not changed from previous capital budgets, with the exception that the freeze put on by the just questioner's Government in Cabinet has been lifted.

**Mr. Doer:** Perhaps the Minister of Health should talk to the very important community-based facilities. They had approval to proceed with the expansion. In fact, the lease, Mr. Speaker, was approved by our Government, a 10-year lease. And now they have no capital costs under this Government. Did he consult with the facility and the program to identify the explosion, in terms of usage, in that hospital by people in the core area and people from northern Manitoba? Did he consult, in terms of his decision, in terms of putting it down at the bottom of the list in terms of capital expansion?

\* (1345)

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, my honourable friends in the New Democratic Party have a wonder word now

called "consult," and they ask on every issue that they believe is important, did we consult. I would like to know how much consultation and how much the NDP were to consult with all of those capital projects that they froze in August of 1987, including the one he has just mentioned, including Klinik, which they approved in 1985 for capital construction and, for some reason beyond explanation, in two-and-a-half years were unable to proceed with, but yet believe in the haste of seven months of Government that the brick and mortar should be flying.

Consultation is a wonderful word and I want to tell you that we have done more consultation with health care providers in this Province of Manitoba than has been done in the last seven years of NDP Government in the first seven months of our Government.

**Mr. Doer:** The Member well knows the land was bought for the Klinik in 1985 and the architectural drawings were completed in 1987. The architectural drawings were completed for the Health Action Centre and the go-ahead was given for the expansion. The facts speak for themselves.

## Health Care Community-Based Clinics

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). If he is doing such a good job with the community preventative health care system, why did all the community health centres meet on Friday and lament the fact that this Government has a bias against preventative community-based health and they are not proceeding with any of the needed projects because of their Minister of Health's bias, which is contrary to the Premier's Speech from the Throne which was presented in this Chamber seven months ago?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the only thing in that one-sided diatribe from my honourable friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), was his lapse of memory wherein he forgot to tell Manitobans that they froze the capital budget in 1987 as an NDP Cabinet, as an NDP Government.

Now, let us be perfectly honest with the people of Manitoba. These projects have priority. These projects are amongst many which Government must decide upon for construction approval. Some of the projects that have gone ahead for approval to construct have been on the books approved for construction for eight and nine years. I need only remind my honourable friend that seven of those eight or nine years were years of his Government, where those needs could rightfully be said to have been ignored. We never made such accusation, and I think it is rather unfair that after seven months my honourable friend would attempt to do the same.—(Interjection)—

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

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves in terms of the approval dates of those capital

expansions and construction, and certainly the volunteers and the members of the staff are well aware of those facts and have made those statements very public in terms of our action with them.

### Health Care Cost Review

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is, will he instruct his department to do a cost-effective study on the effect of his freezes in terms of the effect it will have on our high-cost institutional beds in this city and this province with his freezing of the many preventative programs and the result that the patients are going to end up in the high-cost end of our health care system rather than the community-based end, which is where allegedly we should all be going in terms of the Speech from the Throne and where we were going as a Government previously?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, that is actually a somewhat reasonable suggestion, although I hesitate to commit staff time to because, to offer a fair analysis of the cost of the freeze, I would have to go back and ask the department to determine the cost of the NDP's freezing of the capital budget in 1987.

### AIDS Pamphlet French Language Distribution

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (Saint-Boniface):** M. le Président, ma question est pour le Premier Ministre. Chaque fois que l'on s'interroge sur la lenteur que ce gouvernement met à déposer ses rapports, on se fait dire que le document se fait traduire. Il y a quelques jours, j'ai demandé que l'on publie le dépliant sur le SIDA en français. Le ministre de la Santé a indiqué qu'il n'y avait même pas pensé. C'est fort étonnant qu'un document à l'intention de tous les Manitobains et particulièrement tous les jeunes de notre province, ne soit pas disponible dans les deux langues, et qu'il soit nécessaire d'en faire la demande. Ma question au Premier Ministre: Il est inacceptable qu'un Ministre de la Santé ait négligé de faire imprimer la version française vu que jusqu'à présent son ministère a toujours fourni aux écoles françaises, en français, les informations sur les questions de santé. Y a-t-il eu un changement de politique en ce qui concerne la disponibilité de ressources pour les écoles françaises?

(Translation)

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. Each time that we wonder about the slowness of this Government in tabling its reports, we are told that the document is being translated. Some days ago, I asked for the brochure on AIDS in French. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) indicated that he had not even thought of this. It is extremely surprising that a document intended for all Manitobans and particularly all the young people of our province is not available in the two languages and that it is necessary to ask for this. My question is to the First Minister. It is unacceptable

that the Minister of Health would have neglected to publish the French version, given that up to this time his department has always provided in French to French schools information regarding health questions. Has there been a change of policy concerning the availability of resources for French schools?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** M. le président, no, there has not been a change of policy. The fact of the matter is that particular brochure was not printed by the previous administration in French. As a result, the department did not think to print it in French this time in reproducing it. As was indicated by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), in responding to the question by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), he felt that was a good suggestion and he would proceed to have his department review that matter and see whether or not one could be produced quickly and effectively to meet that need.

### Government Documents French Language Distribution

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (Saint-Boniface):** Ma question supplémentaire au Premier Ministre: Quel système est en place dans chaque ministère pour assurer la traduction des documents?

(Translation)

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface):** My supplementary question to the First Minister, what system is in place in each department to ensure translation of documents?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, we are following previous practices, by and large, along with our commitment to ensure that major documents and reports that are of interest to people throughout the province are provided in both French and English. As the Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) knows, in fact, the preamble to his initial question indicated that we have said on numerous occasions as various reports, the report of the MPIC, the Kopstein Report, the report on the High School Review, many other major documents that our Government's departments have been producing, have been translated into French so that they are available throughout the province to people who have an interest in all of these subjects.

That, I would think, is a strong indication of our desire to ensure that all Manitobans, whether they be French-speaking or English-speaking, are aware of the major initiatives of this Government.

**Mr. Gaudry:** M. le Président, ma dernière question, quelles sont les politiques de son gouvernement en matière de traduction de documents à l'intention du public?

(Translation)

**Mr. Gaudry:** Mr. Speaker, my last question, what is the policy of this Government in regard to the translation of documents intended for the public?

\* (1350)

**Mr. Filmon:** First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, we will be in compliance with all of the requirements of the Supreme Court decision vis-a-vis Manitoba's legal necessity to provide translation for various pieces of information for public consumption.

Over and above that, because we believe that it is important to provide documents that will have widespread readership throughout the province that will be utilized by people in various areas of the province for policy development or other initiatives, we are undertaking to translate major documents of importance to people throughout the Province of Manitoba. I gave some example of ones that we have indicated within the last few months that we have translated. I would say that the departments are making those judgments based on previous practice and our desire to ensure that all Manitobans are informed of necessary information and valuable information from Government departments.

If the Member for St. Boniface has other suggestions, other than the AIDS pamphlets, of material that should be translated into French, we would be happy to have those suggestions and proceed to review the requirements for them.

### Court Facilities Backlog Reduction

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** My question is for the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). Mr. Speaker, a key element of justice for Manitobans is speedy prosecution to trial, and the fact is that the vast majority of Manitobans who come into contact with the provincial court.

The present provincial court backlog, as with all interested parties and I believe the Attorney-General will agree, is simply intolerable. In the Speech from the Throne, this Government promised: "... that steps will be taken to reduce dramatically the current backlog of criminal cases before our courts." Coincidentally, the Crown Attorneys and the judges met last week and decided that enough was enough and they came out publicly and asked the Attorney-General to act swiftly. The Attorney-General now says, coincidentally again, that he is close to a solution. Well, Mr. Speaker, my question is, given that he referenced this specifically five months ago, could he tell the public of Manitoba and this House just what is his plan, how much is it going to cost, and when will it be implemented?

\* (1355)

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General):** Here again, Mr. Speaker, we seem to be near what might be the end of a Session, and the Honourable Member is again using the newspapers as his research aid.

Just while we are on that, I see in, I think it was, yesterday's newspaper, the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is concerned about a lot of people but in this particular order: lawyers and judges, witnesses and then the accused. In no instance does he mention the victims of crime in his concerns. One of my first concerns would be speedy justice on behalf

of victims and their families as well. But the Honourable Member should be aware that my department is setting up a monitoring system to evaluate the usage that court rooms are being put to. The Government, my Cabinet colleagues and I are actively considering steps that can be taken to assist in bringing the backlog into an acceptable range. Certainly the unification of the Family Court, announced by me a week and a few days ago, will have the effect of freeing up some provincial court judges in our province.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James attempts to leave the impression that little is being done. Let me tell him that, as in the past on other issues that he has raised at the last moment, much is being done by this Government to show that the commitment is there, to recognize that the only kind of justice that really works is speedy justice.

**Mr. Edwards:** Far from following the newspaper, the Attorney-General can take notice that in the Saturday paper, I was quoted, not the Attorney-General.

This problem was referenced five months ago by this Attorney-General. He referenced it specifically. He said he was going to come up with solutions. When the Crown Attorneys and the judges hit the roof, that is when he decides to make a statement to the press—that he somehow got some solutions, but he will not release the specifics. Well, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Melanie Lott—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Does the Honourable Member have a question?

**Mr. Edwards:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. My question is—

### Backlog Report

**Mr. Speaker:** Would you kindly put your question now?

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Ms. Melanie Lott has recently written a report dealing specifically with this problem. My question is, has the Attorney-General received this report and read it? Is he prepared to at least make public this report so that the public can have some confidence that concrete steps will be taken to reduce the backlog and so that all Members can join in reading this very important report on this very important problem?

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General):** I would remind the Honourable Member that this backlog problem that we have in the provincial court is not a new problem and stems from the starvation diet that court services have received over the last number of years at the hands of another Government, not this Government.

The Honourable Member is aware of steps that have been taken by the Department of Attorney-General since the new Government took over. In some cases, he has lauded those changes. So I suggest the Honourable Member watch for the developments. I should remind the Honourable Member that when he talks about himself being quoted in the newspaper and

not me, I would prefer to be quoted, Mr. Speaker, when I have something to say, not when something just enters my head and it is a good time to blurt it out.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please!

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Backlog Reduction

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for St. James, with a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Enough to say that he called him up pretty quickly to get another story.

My final supplementary to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), the Attorney-General has correctly pointed out that defence counsel—and I will ask my question, Mr. Speaker—cannot predict pleas of guilty before trials. However, will he not at least immediately implement a plan whereby defence counsel be required to estimate the duration of Traffic Court trials, as they presently do in civil cases, so that citizen witnesses and subpoenaed police officers do not spend hours and hours sitting in Traffic Court, as they do every day in this province, and many judges have shown frustration sitting in Traffic Court, and simply get the dockets working effectively for the people of Manitoba?

\* (1400)

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General):** Now the Honourable Member is getting close, Mr. Speaker, to some of the things that I have been looking at for the past several weeks and months. So, the Honourable Member is getting on track now when he discusses concrete discussions which have been going on.

I should remind the Honourable Member that I raised this matter last week, last Thursday, with the Crown attorneys when I addressed them at their annual meeting and when I addressed the judges on this matter at their annual meeting. The stories that we have been reading in the newspapers tend to flow out of those meetings. The Honourable Member is catching on to those stories and reacting to them. So I would like to make it plain, Mr. Speaker, it was I who raised these problems with the judges, with the Crown attorneys. I raised the problems with the Chief of Police, and I will be raising the problem as well with the defence Bar in an effort to try to get some cooperation from all the players in the piece. But I think the Honourable Member is coming close to doing what his colleague from Kildonan was doing with respect to psychiatrists and services—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

### Bill No. 41 Final Offer Selection

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Speaker, throughout this Session, when the New Democratic Party has been raising our concern in this Legislature about the anti-labour agenda of this Government, we have seen the cuts to the Labour Education Centre, the cuts to the Unemployed Help Centre, and most recently the introduction of Bill No. 41.

Mr. Speaker, increasing numbers of Manitobans are calling on this Government to not proceed with Bill No. 41 and give final offer selection a chance. In fact, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) has received a letter from the Manitoba Medical Association which states quite clearly that their position is that final offer selection should be maintained in the public interest and further calls on the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) to withdraw Bill No. 41, which they state is quite clearly contrary to the public interest.

I would like to ask the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) whether he will meet with the Manitoba Medical Association and meet with the many other Manitobans who have expressed their feeling that Bill No. 41 should be put on hold and that final offer selection should be given a chance?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to meet with any group—and it does not have to be over FOS—any union group or any employer group on any piece of legislation that is before the House or is in place. Mr. Speaker, we will also meet with those who are opposed to FOS, and there are many who have also indicated appreciation for withdrawing the FOS.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Speaker, I suppose some of the big business supporters might have appreciated the move by the Government, but many other Manitobans want to see final offer selection maintained. My supplementary is also based on the concerns expressed by the MMA in which they point out that there is a distinct contradiction between the move by this Government and the statement by the then Leader of the Opposition, the current Premier (Mr. Filmon), that under no circumstances should the delivery of health care services be threatened—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. Does the Honourable Member have a question?

### Health Care Profession Final Offer Selection

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I most definitely do have a question. My question is to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery). Will he meet with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to work out the contradiction between the stated commitment of the Premier to work towards preventing strikes in the health care sector and the fact that removing final offer selection will do quite the opposite, will take away one of the major options available to Manitobans, to have an option to strikes.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, it is our opinion and the opinion of many unions

that made representation last year when final offer selection was introduced, none of those unions made use of final offer selection in the ones that were opposed to it, Mr. Speaker. I have had many, many reports and letters and calls from all sides of the issue that they are in favour of FOS being withdrawn. It was a piece of legislation that we think led to long and protracted strikes because they had to wait for the 60 days before they got down to serious negotiating. It was a one-sided piece of legislation that allowed the employee's side, the union side, to bow out but would not give that same freedom to the management side.

### Final Offer Selection Labour Consultation

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister clearly does not know what has been happening with final offer selection, will he now commit himself and his Government to studying what has been happening with final offer selection, will he now commit himself and his Government to studying what has been happening with the final offer selection and to actually talk to people, because all we hear from this Minister is what happened a year ago? Why is he not talking to Manitobans now about the fact that many want final offer selection be maintained in legislation?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I am getting an update on the various applications for FOS and how they have been dispensed with. Some of them have gone to the final offer selection, but very few, very few. Most of them waited until the 60 days and then settled down and negotiated and, Mr. Speaker, that is there on the fact sheet and the Member, if he would go and count, which I doubt he can, he would find out.

### Deputy Minister Education Appointment

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister of Education submitted his resignation some time ago. Being that the deadline for the receipt of applications was October 24, I would ask the Minister of Education when might the House expect the announcement of the new Deputy Minister of Education.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** Well, Mr. Speaker, a new Deputy Minister has not been selected at this point in time and, when one is selected, we would be very pleased to make that announcement.

### Staff Overlap

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** A supplementary to the same Minister, in many situations, such as a position as crucial as this one, some overlapping time is most beneficial. Will the Minister provide the incoming Deputy Minister with a significant period of time to work with and learn from Dr. Glenn Nicholls?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

### Deputy Minister Education Retirement Date

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** Could the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) please tell the House today when the last working date is for the current Deputy Minister of Education?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister, Dr. Nicholls, has submitted his resignation to us. He has indicated some flexibility in terms of retiring, and certainly is more than prepared to assist the new Deputy Minister who will be coming in to provide him with all the kind of overlap and the kind of information that a new Deputy Minister should have in coming into a position of this importance.

### Ruttan Mine—Leaf Rapids Worker Rights

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** My question is to the Minister of Environment, Workplace Safety and Health (Mr. Connery). Now that, hopefully, the fire is under control and should be out in the near future, the matter of whether or not the workers who refused to work under The Workplace, Safety and Health Act will be paid their wages is an extremely important one and one which should occupy the attention of the Minister.

The Minister has indicated in the past that he has not sought a legal opinion as to whether or not wages were owing to these workers because of their right to refuse unsafe work. I did seek legal opinion from the Legislative Counsel, and that opinion states very clearly that the question, therefore, is whether or not the workers were laid off by HBM&S because of their refusal to work or, alternately, because the mine was unsafe and could no longer be worked. HBM&S has said the mine was safe, the Minister has said the mine was safe, the workers were exercising their right to refuse what they believed to be unsafe work, and it would seem very clear to me that they do have their wages owing to them as a result of that refusal.

I would ask the Minister if he can now commit to supporting the workers fully in their quest to ensure that they are not penalized for exercising their rights under an Act for which he has authority.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** Mr. Speaker, there is some misinformation put on the record that I would like to see withdrawn. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says I did not seek legal advice. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday morning, I asked our department to seek legal advice through the negotiated contract, and as far as legislation is concerned. For some reason, Mr. Speaker, it never got to the legal office until Friday morning. I have talked to the legal people this morning, Marjorie Webb, and she hoped some time today or tomorrow to have the legal opinion for me.

**Mr. Cowan:** Just another example of how the mishandling of this situation by the Minister (Mr. Connery) has created more confusion and more

uncertainty. The fact is, when I called Legislative Counsel, they had not been asked for that opinion.

I would ask the Minister, is he now prepared to stand by his comments of over a week ago in this House, that he will support the workers and clearly commit, without any prevarication, without any uncertainty, that he is behind the workers and he will support their right to obtain their wages under The Workplace Safety and Health Act.

**Mr. Connery:** If the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) would read Hansard, he will find that I said that I would follow the letter of the law to support the workers at HBM&S at the mine, Mr. Speaker. But let not the Member think that we did not act in haste to ensure the safety of the workers. We flew on Wednesday to the mine site; we met with the Workplace Safety Committee. I met with management, I met with the union, and I met with Mayor of the Town of Leaf Rapids. The Workplace Safety Committee worked out a plan of action that they felt was safe for the miners to go down into the mine. I satisfied myself by visiting the site that the safety plan was a good plan.

Late Friday afternoon, I phoned Mr. Mike Lysohirka and suggested that if the workers were ready to go down the mine that I was prepared to lift the order. He agreed that it was maybe time for the workers to go down and that it was safe and then he agreed—and I have got witnesses to that fact, because we had it on a speaker phone and I have got witnesses to the fact that—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

\* (1410)

**Mr. Cowan:** I too have been in contact not only with Mr. Lysohirka but with other members of the union and other workers in the community and they tell me that they never said that it was safe, that is not a decision for them to take. They said that it was up to the Minister to determine whether or not he should lift the order; it was his order. But they never, and let there be no—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

### Worker Safety

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** I would ask the question of the Minister directly. Will he state categorically in this House that Mr. Lysohirka said that it was safe for miners to go underground to work under conditions which still existed on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, knowing that what he says is very clearly on the record?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** I asked Mr. Lysohirka, after some discussion, if he was prepared for me to lift that workplace order and he said, yes. We discussed

the safety of it. I discussed it with Mr. Kirby. He was not opposed to lifting that work force order. The Workplace Safety Committee, which is made up of half employees and half from the management side, went through all of it with Mr. Ron Glassford, who is the director. I will have to go back over that one and get the final, exact words for you if I can do that. Mr. Speaker, I can do that.

### CN Rail Layoffs Future Job Losses

**Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, in the Canadian National Railway Long-Term Planning Report of July 1988, it indicates that 113 positions will be abolished in Manitoba. During the months of October, November and December, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) has indicated that he had or will be having discussions with CN. My question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation is, can he inform this House why 113 positions have been abolished, and is there any hope of these jobs being restored?

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I would like to indicate to the House to and the Member that I met with the vice-president of CN just two weeks ago and had a discussion about the impact of the paper that was tabled by one federal candidate at that time, indicating the amount of layoffs that was supposed to take place in Canada over a period of time from CN.

He assured me and showed me figures of what has happened in the past and what they are projecting for the future and gave me the assurance that there would be no layoffs as such, that any jobs that would be terminated would be jobs by attrition.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Assiniboia will have time for one final supplementary question.

**Mr. Mandrake:** Mr. Speaker, I am not talking about layoffs, I am talking about jobs that are being abolished. In this same report, figures show that an additional 13 positions will be lost during January, February and March, 16 during April, May and June. My question to the same Minister, has he discussed these additional 19 positions with CN and are they going to be permanent job abolishments?

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I have said in the past here, that I would be very concerned if there was job loss at CN, any jobs that are affected for the people of Manitoba. Based on the information that the Member has, I will reassure myself again that there will be no unnecessary layoffs or jobs that will be terminated. I certainly appreciate that the Member can give me the information that he has, which indicates that there are layoffs pending or job terminations, and I would certainly look into that.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

## NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** Mr. Speaker, if I might be permitted a non-political statement?

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Honourable Member for Flin Flon have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Members of this Chamber, and I know Manitobans and Canadians were saddened and disturbed by the recent events in Armenia, the Soviet Republic that has experienced probably one of the most massive earthquakes in this century, with the second-largest loss of life throughout recorded history. The tens of thousands of people who have died as a result of this tragedy are going to be missed by tens of thousands of people in the Republic of Armenia and across the USSR, but they are going to be missed as well by the many friends and relatives in Canada and in Manitoba.

I would like to, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, and I hope Members of this Legislature pass along our sympathies to those Manitobans who have lost relatives in the Armenian earthquake. I think it needs to be said that the Canadian Government's response, which has just been enhanced by the Minister of External Affairs to some \$5 million, is an appropriate response to a tragedy of this sort. I believe that the response of many countries has been overwhelming to the crisis that exists in communities, such as Spitak in Armenia which has been virtually wiped off the face of the globe. I hope that Manitobans, I hope that Members of this Chamber can lend their support in whatever way to assist the victims, the survivors of this tragedy, to assist the hundreds of thousands of people who are left homeless as a result of this. I hope as Canadians, as we approach the Christmas season, we will be able to respond in a generous and humane fashion as we have in the past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** I wonder if I might have leave to make a non-political statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Honourable Member for St. James have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

**Mr. Edwards:** I simply want to add the comments of the Official Opposition to those of my honourable friend from Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) with respect to the tragedy, which we are just starting to get pictures back in this country, which has befallen the people of Armenia. I think the world has rarely seen a tragedy of this magnitude and the scale of the disaster and the after-effects are truly horrific.

I think all of us can share in the sentiments of sympathy for those in Armenia, those Armenians around the world, those Armenians in Canada and in Manitoba, and I would simply add from the Official Opposition our sympathies to those people and our congratulations to the Government for going forward with aid money. We can only hope that if the tragedy proves to be greater than we now know that monies will be added to that aid money.

Our best wishes go with the Canadians who have gone over to Armenia yesterday and today, and I understand more are going in the next week to help with the rescue efforts to get those who may still be alive from the rubble, and our best wishes to the Armenian community in Canada and Manitoba for their efforts. I add to the comments of the Member for Flin Flon, the hope that all Members in this Chamber will do anything they can to help with the effort to help those people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I wonder if I might have leave to make a non-political statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Honourable Minister have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to complement the comments that have been made by the two Members previously in terms of the tragedy that has taken place in Armenia. I think it is something that this kind of tragedy sort of pulls everybody together when you consider not that many years ago there was a confrontational attitude with people in that area, that now when a tragedy happens people from all over the world are combining and supporting in terms of helping, in terms of money, in terms of goods, in terms of people.

I would like to indicate that the Mennonite Disaster Service is sending people over there as well which shows that in a time of tragedy that there is a lot of humanity left in this world. I think we should all try, by whatever means possible, to support the tragedy there and the people who are affected by it. Thank you.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Clerk (Mr. Remnant) for reminding me that the Honourable Members, I think, will all agree that we can waive Private Members' Hour today.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that agreed? (Agreed)

**Mr. McCrae:** I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), 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.

\* (1420)

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Seniors Directorate; and the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair for the Department of Employment Services and Economic Security, and the Department of Northern Affairs.

\* (1430)

## CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—SENIORS DIRECTORATE

**Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer:** Are there any further questions?

**Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows):** I have no further questions, except one and I guess that is maybe the most important question to the Minister, maybe not. I do not see on this one page in these Estimates anything about salary. While I am on the subject of salary—I should not laugh, it is not a funny thing. Perhaps the reason for that is that really nothing has been done so far and the salary matches the Directorate—

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors):** In the Christmas spirit, Mr. Chairman, I am contributing my time to the Directorate.

**Mr. Chairman:** Shall the item pass? The Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** When we last met, we were talking about the priorities of the Directorate and how the Minister was going to develop those priorities. He mentioned off-handedly that there was a Cabinet committee on Seniors. I had asked him whether the Cabinet committee had met. He indicated, no it had not met. I am wondering whether anyone is preparing or has prepared an agenda for this committee, if it should meet some time in the future and, if it has an agenda, what that agenda might be.

**Mr. Neufeld:** The staff is preparing an agenda for just such a meeting and we will be meeting as soon as we do have the time. The areas that we will cover are areas of importance to seniors as they are reflected in the various departments of the Ministers on the committee, for an example, Housing. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) will have probably something to bring to the table, and the Seniors Directorate will undoubtedly have some questions and concerns for seniors with respect to Housing, similarly in Health and the other areas.

**Mr. Storie:** Well, the Minister's response, I think, just reinforces the concern that I have expressed on many occasions, that his involvement in this Seniors Directorate in the department is very passive. Has the Minister corresponded with any department to lay out his concerns and the concerns of staff when it comes to seniors' issues?

Has the Minister written to the Department of Housing, the Minister of Housing, expressing concern about the Shelter Allowance for Elderly Renters, the Rural and Northern Housing Program, the cost-shared program with CMHC, with the Critical Home Repair Program? Has the Minister written a letter to the Department of Energy and Mines to talk about energy costs for people on fixed incomes? Has the Minister done any of that?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I have not written letters, but I have had consultations, I have had discussions with the Minister

of Health (Mr. Orchard). I have had discussions with the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), specifically with concerns of seniors' housing. I will continue to have discussions with them. I do not think it is necessary to write a letter to show my concern for the seniors. As projects come up or as requests come in, we will be taking up with the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Health the concerns that are out there. Those are specific concerns and we will deal with them on a one-by-one basis.

**Mr. Storie:** The Minister says that he will deal with those projects as they come up. Am I to understand from that the responsibility lies with the line departments to propose amendments to existing programs or to bring forward new initiatives with respect to seniors? Is that the Minister's understanding of the process for change to seniors' programming?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The concerns come from the public. After they come to us from the public, we take them up with the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) and have taken up for the Minister of Housing, not that the concerns have come from the Minister of Housing. They have come from the public who have made requests of our departments. I have arranged meetings with the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Health and the concerned citizens.

**Mr. Storie:** So if we can understand your role then, it is a clearing house. Concerns are expressed, the Minister says, oh, there is a concern and he sets up a meeting with the Minister of Housing. Is that the Minister's role?

**Mr. Neufeld:** That is one part of our role, Mr. Chairman. Another part of our role is to initiate ourselves where we see shortcomings in existing programs, or where we see programs that are not being delivered. We will, as time permits, be initiating meetings with the other Ministers to request various programs or changes in programs.

**Mr. Storie:** Can the Minister cite one example of an initiative of the new Directorate?

**Mr. Neufeld:** You mean as far as a new program is concerned or a change in a program? No, we have not initiated a program as such to this point in time. That will come as we have time and as we become more familiar with our work. We will not initiate programs, we will not suggest programs for the sake of suggesting programs so we can come to this meeting and say, yes, we have done this or done another thing. I think we are going to act more responsible than that. We are going to act only as and when we have become familiar enough with our positions that we can act responsibly.

\* (1440)

**Mr. Storie:** Then I am sure the committee will be anxious to know what areas you are currently studying to become familiar with the problems. What areas are currently being investigated by your staff, by the Directorate?

**Mr. Neufeld:** One of our first priorities, of course, is the Paper on Elder Abuse, and our staff is working on that. But they are reviewing any number of programs that are being offered now by the Department of Health and the Department of Housing.

**Mr. Storie:** The elder abuse one that the Minister said the staff is reviewing that. The Minister is aware that legislation had been drafted on elder abuse. Is the Minister suggesting that there will be a new approach? Are we likely to see in the next Session of the Legislature the proposal prepared by the previous administration?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I will not commit myself, Mr. Chairman, to any legislation at all until we have studied all the aspects of the issues surrounding elder abuse. I think it would be foolhardy of me to come up with suggestions or changes at a time when we are not thoroughly familiar with all the issues and every issue that is involved in elder abuse.

**Mr. Storie:** My colleague has some questions. Further, I was wondering if we could know who is doing the study on elder abuse. Who is reviewing existing legislation or the existing draft legislation? Who is reviewing the alternatives open to Government in terms of elder abuse?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We will not be reviewing the draft legislation until we have reviewed the papers that were written in '84 and '86. Again, we will take one step at a time. To review legislation that had been drafted by another administration, I think, is putting the cart before the horse. We must first consider the problems and the nature of the problem that is out there before we recommend any legislation.

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister share with us his view of the existing problem? What are the existing problems when it comes to the question of elder abuse?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The problems are numerous and, I think again, it would be foolhardy for me to come up with a preconceived idea of what the abuses are. That is why we are studying the issues. We do not want to come up with what we consider to be only our thoughts of the problem. We want to come up with the difficulties faced by the elders, as seen through the eyes of the elders.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** The Minister has indicated in his comments on Thursday and also his comments on other occasions that he sees the primary role or at least one of the primary roles for the Seniors Directorate to be one of consultation. Can he please give us some detail as to how he expects to structure that consultation?

**Mr. Neufeld:** As we have indicated already, Mr. Chairman, we will start by meeting with the Cabinet committee that has been set up. That is where the consultations will start. Where they go to from there, we will have to wait and see.

**Mr. Cowan:** Will the Cabinet committee be meeting with different seniors' groups directly?

**Mr. Neufeld:** That is not something that we have given any thought to at this point, but we do have people who meet with seniors' organizations on a regular basis. If it is deemed necessary, the Cabinet committee will meet with the seniors' organizations. This Cabinet as a whole has in the past met with at least one of the seniors' organizations so I see no difficulty in setting up meetings with the Cabinet committee, if it is deemed necessary.

**Mr. Cowan:** Maybe the Minister can explain what he means by the words, "deemed necessary"?

**Mr. Neufeld:** If I think it is necessary, we will meet.

**Mr. Cowan:** The Minister then suggests that he will making a value judgment as to whether or not the Cabinet committee should meet with seniors' organizations. He would then recommend it and then the Cabinet committee would meet. What criteria will he be using to make that value judgment?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Those are judgment calls, and it will be a judgment call. We cannot have hard and fast rules under which we will allow ourselves to be led. We have to be flexible enough to make changes or make judgments as we go along, and I will make those judgments.

**Mr. Cowan:** But on what criteria?

**Mr. Neufeld:** As problems come up and if I think it is necessary, I will call the committee and suggest to them that they meet. I do not think I need criteria for that. It is a judgment call.

**Mr. Cowan:** I assume we may have moved off into a different field here, but is the Minister saying that the Cabinet committee will not meet on a regular basis but will meet upon call of the chairperson, which would be himself?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Initially, it will meet on the call of the chair. If it is again deemed necessary, it will meet on a regular basis. But initially, at least, they will meet as I call them together, yes.

**Mr. Cowan:** The Minister has not thought this out very well, has he?

**Mr. Neufeld:** That is a matter of opinion. I thought I had.

**Mr. Cowan:** Then perhaps he can change opinion by indicating to us what exactly he has in mind for this Cabinet committee. That would include when it will meet, with whom it will meet with respect to outside groups, what its mandate will be, what its terms of reference will be, how it will judge its own progress and how it will evaluate its effectiveness over time.

**Mr. Neufeld:** We are meeting primarily to discuss programs initiated by the various departments of Government. We are meeting to discuss with them existing programs, meeting with them to discuss

programs they have planned for the future. We are meeting with them to discuss areas where they may have thoughts of discontinuing programs as they affect seniors. That will be the purpose of our meeting so we can coordinate better the planning of Government as a whole with respect to the senior citizens.

**Mr. Cowan:** The Government is cutting back on the Home Care Program, specifically the homemaker's portion of the program. That has a tremendous impact on seniors and I can tell the Minister that I have had numerous phone calls from seniors complaining about cutbacks in service. I am certain other MLAs have and I am certain the Minister has. Given that program is now being cut back, has the Minister made any appeal to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) for a meeting of the Cabinet committee to discuss the impact of those cutbacks on senior citizens?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We do not believe that the services have been cut back. We believe that the services to senior citizens are going to be as good or better than it ever was. We will be monitoring it and, yes, we have discussed it with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and we will continue to discuss with the Minister of Health if we think there is a cutback in service. We do not think there has been a cutback in service and I have not had a single phone call from a senior citizen suggesting to me that there has been a decrease or a cutback or deterioration of service to the senior citizens.

**Mr. Cowan:** How is the Minister's Directorate monitoring that situation? He says they will be monitoring it. What criteria will they be using to monitor it?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The staff will be discussing with staff in the various departments, and the Ministers will be discussing with the Ministers of various departments the programs they are delivering. We will, I am certain, get calls from concerned citizens if there is a need that is seen by the citizens out there. If there is a deterioration of service by the citizens out there, I am certain that we will be getting phone calls advising us of such deterioration and we will then take that up with the other Ministers. I am certain there will be no lack of information flow to us in order for us to monitor the services that are being provided to seniors.

\* (1450)

**Mr. Cowan:** I can tell the Minister that I have received phone calls with respect to cutbacks in Home Care Programs by seniors who complain about the effect of those cutbacks on seniors. I can tell the Minister that I spoke to one person just today who said that she was speaking out on behalf of other individuals, because she felt that they would not come forward and she felt the cutbacks were affecting them as well.

I can tell the Minister that there is a widespread perception and a growing perception in the community that the Homemaker Program is being cut back by the Government, and that is impacting on seniors. I would

ask the Minister, given that information, and there are other Members who have the same information and I am certain other Ministers who have been advised of the same information, can the Minister indicate what plans he will immediately put in place to monitor changes that are taking place with the homemaker service and the home care service to ensure that it does not negatively impact on seniors? What are the specific details of his plan of action to put that monitoring in place?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I would be happy to talk to anyone who believes the services to him or her have been negatively impacted. I cannot put into place any strategies until such a time as I know what the problems are. I would be glad if the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) would advise me of people who would like to discuss the problem with me, to give me their phone number, and I will certainly call them.

**Mr. Cowan:** Perhaps we will work it the other way and I will suggest that those people call the Minister. I will tell him why I do that and it is a very important problem that we are having difficulty dealing with. People who are on home care are among the most vulnerable in our society. They really do depend upon home care. They depend upon it to keep them independent; they depend upon it to keep them in their house. Their family is dependent upon it to make certain that they are kept out of personal care homes and they do not want to see them, nor do they think there is any need for them to be put into a personal care home at that particular time, although circumstances may change and that may be an option that would be considered later on.

When I asked a lot of the people who called, do you mind if I give your name to the Minister—in this instance, it was more the Minister of the Health (Mr. Orchard) than the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld), but I will ask him the same question with respect to the Minister responsible for Seniors. They say, no, because I am concerned about vindictiveness. I am concerned about my home care being cut off even further. I am concerned about being labelled a troublemaker. In all fairness to the Minister, they are not particularly concerned that the Minister will be vindictive. But they know that once those complaints get into the system that sometimes they create responses which are negative on the part of individuals who have to deliver the programs. Sometimes they create negative responses on the part of the politicians, and that has happened from time to time in other areas. They have seen that happen and they are quite concerned. So they say, no, please do not give my name but please take this up on our behalf.

I say to him, well, you put us in a very difficult position because, if we cannot give the Government your name, they cannot deal with your specific problem. Do you care to leave your name, and we can offer you assurance that your home care will not be cut because of your providing information to us. If it is cut because you are providing information to us, we will take up your cause in the most stringent and vocal way possible. They still refuse because they are concerned about what the Government, either at the political level but more likely

at the bureaucratic level, will do in response to their complaints.

So I can tell the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) that I will encourage people to call him directly. They may or may not want to leave their names. That is their choice. But as far as offering names and numbers to him, we have given some to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). When he has checked those complaints out, he has come to the House and said, yes, there were cutbacks in services. They were for this and this and this reason. He tried to rationalize the cutbacks but the cutbacks in every instance existed nonetheless. The program is being cut back. Seniors are being affected. I am telling that to the Minister today. I think the Liberal critic has told it to the Minister previously, or at least I see him shaking his head that he has received the same sort of phone calls.

**An Honourable Member:** Maybe I will tell him yet.

**Mr. Cowan:** Or maybe he will tell him yet. I will certainly turn the mike over to allow him to do so. But I would like the Government to put in place an independent evaluation of the cutbacks in the Home Care Program through the Seniors Directorate and their impact on senior citizens. I will tell him why it has to be somewhat independent. It is not a matter of the Minister sitting down with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and saying, they tell me you are not doing things right. Are you? That is, in essence, what the question will be. Of course, the Minister of Health is going to come back, just as he did in the House, and rationalize everything he wants to do.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), being a colleague of the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld), is going to have some impact on the way in which this problem is perceived by the Minister responsible for Seniors. I am not saying that in a derogatory sense. That is human nature. It is not enough for bureaucrats to talk to bureaucrats or staff to talk to staff. I think they have a role to play but, unless they have clear direction from the Government that the evaluation is supposed to be constructively critical, then you are putting them in a difficult position to ask them to just go in and fish around, to determine whether or not the program is being cut back. You have good staff supporting you. The rest of Government has good staff supporting them. You do not want to put them in that sort of untenable position. So what I am requesting the Minister to do is to develop a firm criteria for monitoring, which he said he does, the Government programs specific to homemaker and the Home Care Program and its impact on seniors and the cutbacks in that program. Can he give a commitment to do that in that sort of structured and formal fashion?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I want to assure the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that I am a firm believer in maintaining our elderly people in their own environment as long as is possible. I have a mother and six uncles and aunts, all in their eighties who are being maintained in their home atmosphere, in the home environment they have lived in for a good number of years. I am a firm believer in the program. If it is necessary to bring in help for

the people in their own homes, I am a firm believer in that.

\* (1450)

I want to also ensure the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that I will not sit back idly if I believe there is a flaw in the delivery of the program that we have. I will not sit by idly and accept a cursory reply from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), as the Minister of Health well knows that I have in the past, followed up where we have received a letter from his staff advising us that no changes can be made. I have followed it up personally with the Minister to make certain that he either has full knowledge of the incident or he will obtain full knowledge of the incident, and make a decision on the basis of that knowledge and on the basis of the suggestions or the recommendations he has received from his staff. So I can assure the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that we will not sit idly by and watch services deteriorate. If that means we include in our review a survey of the particular program, this program or any other program, we will do so.

**Mr. Chornopyski:** While we are on the subject of home care, I just want to, by way of advice or information, pass on to the Minister some of the complaints that I have received and not necessarily that much about cutbacks, but a great many, the quality of home care is the big complaint. The calibre of people who are hired to provide this home care, I am advised some of them know nothing or very little about home care. I wondered whether there is any instruction at all when they send out these people to other people's places.

The other complaint that I receive from time to time is that the homemaker will come in and, in a four-hour period, there will be about three coffee breaks and four cigarettes, and then they swish the dirt around the floor and away they go. They think they can do this because they are dealing with, by and large—and I am speaking of the North End, the area I represent, many people do not speak English that well, many of them do not hear that well and of course that does not apply to the North End only. That can happen anywhere in the City of Winnipeg. So they feel that the homemaker is actually taking advantage of not only the senior citizen but taking advantage of a good thing.

There seems to be very little that is being done at the present time to correct that situation. I say this just because the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has brought it up and I meant to—I probably did last week. I am not sure. But in case I did not, I now have said it twice.

**Mr. Neufeld:** The difficulty of course with the type of care that is being given in the house, it is difficult to monitor. It is difficult to oversee because they do work there by themselves and, unless complaints come in, there is nothing that we can do about it because we do not know of the problem. Until we know of a problem of a specific homemaker, we cannot do anything about it. There are orientation programs, I am told, for the homemakers before they start.

It is sad that somebody might take advantage of the elderly in that manner but, I dare say, this happens.

This happens in all walks of life. We do not live in a perfect world and this is going to happen. I understand that. That is, to me, quite understandable. But I also say that unless we have specific information of the worker, there is nothing we can do about it because we have no knowledge of it and, furthermore, we would have to work through the Department of Health.

In any event, I would be happy to get that information, specific information, and take it up with the people responsible for delivering that program.

\* (1500)

**Mr. Chornopyski:** The problem there is, and I think the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) expressed the kind of problems he has run into, the senior citizens are reluctant to tell you who they are, but I have to say that I have visited homes, I have had calls from people who were willing to tell me who they are and where they reside and I would drop in and visit them. On one occasion specifically, I dropped in while the homekeeper was there but it happened to be a good one. It was a lady who probably knew as much about housekeeping as the best, but there are some—and I do not want to colour them all with the same brush—who really do not know, and I wonder how they are even able to get that kind of work. It would appear almost that there is very little, if any, screening done, or perhaps the person doing the screening is not really that understandable in that line of work.

So there there are problems and the problems are, as the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) said, the seniors are fearful of losing what little they have, so the best thing to do, they keep quiet. There is an odd one that is vocal, as I say, but not nearly as many as I am sure who are out there who are tolerating watching somebody trying to do housework who is really not ready to do it, is not knowledgeable, and some who really do not want to do it. They want to put in their four hours and, sign here.

**Mr. Neufeld:** I dare say that there are always some who will not do their job properly but, in defence of those who do, I would like to say that there are an awful lot of people who are pleased with the service they are getting. I would like to think that by far the majority of the care givers are of the variety that give good service and leave their elderly customers, if you like, very well pleased.

I would also like to think, Mr. Chairman, that in time the Seniors Directorate will gain the confidence of those people who you say now are fearful of giving their names and are complaining to the Department of Health. I would like to think that we will gain their confidence to the extent that they will come to us and make their complaints. We will make certain that their names are not put forward and we will investigate the problems they say they have had with the service and, hopefully, in time we will eradicate any care giver who is not giving his best or her best.

**Mr. Cowan:** I want to go on to another issue. I know there are lots of issues that are of importance to the

Minister and to the Directorate and to the Opposition and seniors themselves. There is not enough time to discuss all of them, but there are some that should be discussed now and there will be other opportunities to go through the others.

This is one where there was some discussion the other day and—I do not want to cover ground which has already been covered, but I do want to seek a bit more definitive information with respect to elder abuse and how the Minister intends to proceed. He has said that he is not prepared to bring forward legislation at this particular time. I would ask him if he can give us some tentative schedule as to what he sees as a process that would lead up to the development of the legislation and then the bringing of the legislation into the Session and the unfolding of the legislation through the normal legislative process.

**Mr. Neufeld:** I do not at this point in time see where legislation may be necessary. I think that for most abuses there is presently legislation on the books to cover the areas of abuse. We would have to find out where we want, first of all, abuses to stop and whether or not we can legislate those abuses to stop. Before we think about bringing in any legislation, we would have to have a full knowledge of what the abuses are and how they may be stopped, if they can be stopped.

**Mr. Cowan:** Is the Minister suggesting, in his opinion, that elder abuse has not been well-documented, that it is not a problem in society today?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I think it is well-understood that there is a problem with elder abuse. I am saying what legislation can be brought in that will stop elder abuse is not known. That is something we have to have. In any complaint, we have to have a complainant. I think the biggest problem with legislation is you do not get the complainants.

**Mr. Cowan:** Is the Minister familiar with the process and the policy which was implemented by the previous administration with respect to wife abuse in that very same problem?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I am not familiar with all your legislation on wife abuse. No, I have never found it necessary to become familiar with it.

**Mr. Cowan:** As a Minister of the Crown and as one who is looking at possible models for existing or for new legislation, he should become familiar with it from a professional perspective. The Minister should take every opportunity to look at other models that could be used to address problems which he believes may be present.

He identified a problem and that problem is one of encouragement of people to bring complaints forward. That is exactly the same circumstance that existed around the issue of wife abuse. There was a policy that was implemented by the previous New Democratic Party Government that dealt with that. It is a policy that has been adopted by many other jurisdictions since that time. Is the Minister prepared to sit down and take a

look at that policy to determine if it might not deal with the issue which he has identified as being a bit of a block to the development of elder abuse legislation, in his mind?

**Mr. Neufeld:** You are talking about physical abuse only. There is legislation on the books now for physical abusers but there has to be a complainant. It is the complainant aspect of the abuse that is difficult to obtain.

There are many other forms of elder abuse that people we have spoken to have identified. It is with respect to the forms that probably will not become subject to legislation or cannot become subject to legislation that I am more concerned about at this point. I do believe, and it may well be, that we have to go into an educational process for our people, for the citizens of Manitoba. I do believe perhaps that we have to make people more caring. We have to find ways to make families more responsible for their parents or their elderly, like they used to be. These are all problems that have to be dealt with. It is not Government's responsibility to look after somebody from cradle to grave because that carries with it other problems. We do not want Government involved in our daily lives but, if we provide care from cradle to grave, we will have Government involved in our daily lives.

**Mr. Cowan:** So if I understand the Minister correctly, he is opposed to the concept of elder abuse legislation because he believes it will be an unnecessary intervention in the lives of private citizens. Is that a fair analysis of what he just said?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I did not come anywhere near as saying that.

**Mr. Cowan:** Perhaps the Minister could be a bit more definitive. Can he tell us exactly what types or what aspects of elder abuse he would believe would not lend themselves to a legislative mechanism as a part of an overall policy and program to deal with them?

\* (1510)

**Mr. Neufeld:** All too often, the abuser is the care giver. Is the abused going to lay a complaint against the care giver? That is a very difficult demand to make from somebody who receives care.

**Mr. Cowan:** If the care giver is abusing an elder person, should a complaint be laid against the care giver?

**Mr. Neufeld:** It is not for me to say whether the complaint should be laid. It depends on the kind of abuse. Is it physical? Is it psychological? Is it mental? There are many kinds of abuses, so it is not for me to say. That is for the people who we are interviewing for the White Paper to say.

**Mr. Cowan:** Can the Minister indicate why it is he believes that psychological or mental abuse is any less abusive than physical abuse?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I have never said that. I said it is a difficult thing to legislate against.

**Mr. Cowan:** Does the Minister believe that one could legislate against physical abuse?

**Mr. Neufeld:** There is legislation on the books right now that legislates against physical abuse.

**Mr. Cowan:** Does the Minister believe that one could develop legislation to legislate against psychological or mental abuse?

**Mr. Neufeld:** With great difficulty.

**Mr. Cowan:** I sense a bit of movement on the part of the Minister. He says, "with great difficulty." Does he mean that in fact it can be legislated, if necessary?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I would have to speak to a lawyer. I do not know how it could be legislated, no.

**Mr. Cowan:** Has the Minister asked a lawyer to review this matter?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We have not moved that far in the preparation of our paper.

**Mr. Cowan:** I just want to make a quick point again. There is not enough time to carry through on the inconsistencies in what the Minister says. He says that he is biased in his own mind that you cannot legislate or you can only, with extreme difficulty, legislate against psychological and mental abuse but then, when you quiz him as to whether or not he has sought, even with that strong bias in mind, to determine if a legal mind would think the same way, he says, no, they have not, because it is not that point in time yet.

The fact is that if he is going to let that bias shape the developmental process of the elder abuse program which should include legislation, then he has a responsibility to determine whether or not that bias is in fact one which can be substantiated by the legal profession. I would suggest that he do that, rather than rely on his innate feelings about what is difficult and what is not difficult.

I can tell him that having served in Government for quite some time, and my colleague having served in Government for quite some time, we found that many times things we thought were difficult were not as difficult as we had thought and many times we thought that things were not difficult and they turned out to be much more difficult than we thought. We always enjoyed and benefitted by advice given to us by people who were better versed in the legalities of whether or not a program could be implemented than ourselves.

I would suggest that the Minister seek some of that advice before he goes very much further down this particular path, because I would suggest to him that he is probably letting a wrongly held perception temper his approach and it is going to be the wrong approach because of that. There are ways to legislate against all forms of abuse and there is a responsibility to protect

all citizens, including senior citizens. There is a role that the New Democratic Party, at least, believes for Government to have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in our society. If we are going to use limited resources, then we must use those limited resources to protect those who are most in need and to provide for those who are most in need.

I would suggest that those elders who are being abused because of circumstances beyond their control are in extremely vulnerable situations and deserve protection from this Government. I am quite concerned, from what I have heard today, that the Minister is not taking the type of definitive action or developing a strategic plan or a plan of action that would ensure that they are protected against that abuse. Legislation is only one aspect of policy making around elderly abuse. There are also programs which can be used to assist where a legislative mechanism might not be necessary at a given time in the continuum of a person being abused.

I would ask the Minister what work his Directorate is doing to examine programs that are in place in Manitoba, to review them from the perspective of their strengths and weaknesses, and where there may be gaps that should be filled by new programs, what he has done to undertake reviews of programs in other jurisdictions that would address the same issue, and what plan he has to recommend to the Government ways of filling those gaps that do exist and will be identified by any such review.

**Mr. Neufeld:** It is a long dissertation from a Member of a Government that shelved an elder abuse paper in '84 and '86. That is all I will say on that.

We will be reviewing the programs that are in existence today. We will be reviewing with the seniors and their organizations the types of programs they would like to see. Until such a time as we come up with suggestions for changes, and that will not come overnight, we will continue with the programs that are in existence today.

**Mr. Cowan:** The Minister said that they will be reviewing the programs themselves and then they will be reviewing the programs with seniors and their organizations. Can you provide to us a tentative time line as to when those reviews will take place and how you will structure them? Will they be direct meetings with staff, with the seniors' organizations, or will there be meetings with the Cabinet committee and seniors' organizations? When does he anticipate them to take place? He says that until such a time as those reviews are complete, the existing programs will stay in place. Can he indicate when he believes those reviews will be complete?

**Mr. Neufeld:** In due course.

**Mr. Cowan:** That is not quite good enough. I will tell the Minister that he can make those sorts of off-hand comments in this committee and they will have to be taken as a matter of the record. We have no way of forcing an answer. But I can tell the Minister that there are seniors' organizations out there and senior citizens

who want to play an active and a vital role in the development of policy and programs on issues that affect them, and they have identified elder abuse as being one of their primary concerns. They are most concerned about it and they expect more than an "in due course" answer from this particular Minister.

I would ask him if he can be more explicit, if he can provide more detail, or is he going to continue along trying to avoid giving any definitive answer or any indication of how his Government proposes to deal with this very serious problem? Is he going to meet with the seniors' organizations? Is Cabinet committee going to meet with the seniors' organizations? Is staff going to meet with the seniors' organizations? When are they going to do it?

**Mr. Neufeld:** If the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and his colleagues had all the answers, they would not be asking the questions now. They would be answering them. The people have spoken.

**Mr. Cowan:** You know, Mr. Chairperson, this Minister has shown on every opportunity that he is cavalier, that he does not understand the problems, that he refuses to give answers if he does have an answer, that he is obstructionist when we are trying to provide information from him. He realizes full well that the purpose of Estimates is to ask questions of the Minister and the Government to determine if they have a policy or plan. I would suggest to you, this Minister has no policy, this Minister has no plan, this Minister does not know what he is talking about, and this Minister does not know how to obtain the information that will enable him to know what he is talking about. He has been a total disaster in this particular portfolio.

I only say those comments because he has refused consistently and constantly to address issues that are of concern to the New Democratic Party Opposition, to address issues that are of concern to the seniors in this province, to address issues that are of concern to those who support the goals and objectives of the seniors in this province. As long as he does that, he leaves a very black mark on his record as a Minister of this Crown.

Quite frankly, I do not care if he is incompetent, I do not care if he is incapable, but I do care about this Government and how it relates to the problems of seniors. He better take his responsibility a bit more seriously. He better find out what it is that needs to be done to ensure that those problems are dealt with rather than sit in this committee and tell us he does not know how they are going to evaluate cutbacks in the Homemaker Program. He does not know whether there are cutbacks in the Homemaker Program, he does not know how to monitor them. He does not know when the Cabinet committee is going to meet, he does not know if the Cabinet committee is going to meet with seniors' organizations or not. He does not know if they are going to meet on a regular basis.

\* (1520)

He knows very little or he is telling very little. It is either one or the other. If he knows very little, then I

think that is a condemnation of the seriousness with which he has assumed this responsibility because he has been in this portfolio for a number of months now and he should have taken more time to learn it better. If he does know and he is not telling us, then I think the Government has something to hide. I think maybe what the Government has to hide in this particular issue is the fact that as a Government they are no better off than this Minister.

They said they want a Seniors Directorate because they thought it was the thing to do during an election. It was a promise. Well, promises are also commitments—campaign promises are also campaign commitments—and people expect a Government when elected and, he is right, the people have spoken and they spoke on the basis of what they were promised by him and his colleagues during the campaign. They expect them to live up to those specific promises, and this Minister has failed entirely to do so.

You know what I think, Mr. Chairperson? I think they just put out the concept of a Seniors Directorate as a way to garner votes. I think that because we have seen so very little action on the part of the Government to establish a Seniors Directorate, to give the Seniors Directorate a mandate, to meet with seniors' organizations to discuss how the Seniors Directorate can best serve them, and we have seen the Government backside and waffle consistently on what it is they intend to do in this area. So all I can draw from that is that they did not know what they were talking about during the campaign and they just threw it out as a way to try to get votes, or they have forgotten what they were talking about since the campaign and they now do not intend to take any action.

I think if there has been any one particular area where this Government has failed miserably in its responsibilities, I believe it is in this particular area. I think the questioning that went on the other day and the questioning that goes on today is clear proof that there is a right-wing agenda at work here that does not really know how to deal with the seniors issues, which demand progressive action. When we talked about legislation to protect seniors against elder abuse, the Minister talks about unnecessary intervention in private lives.

Well, that is the same old right-wing argument we have always heard. When we talk about meeting with seniors' organizations, the Minister says, well, we do not know if the Cabinet committee will do that. They talked about open Government when they were in Opposition, they talked about open Government during the campaign, and they shut the doors the day they got elected and they have not been opened since. We talked about cutbacks in the Home Care Program, and they are happening, Mr. Chairperson, and the Minister says he is not prepared to monitor them.

Every time we asked him for a definitive statement on what they intend to do, we get the same sort of "in due course" answer from the Minister. That is not good enough. These Estimates will pass and in passing we will be no better off for trying to get a sense of where this Government wants to go with seniors' issues, and that is unfortunate because it does matter to the

New Democratic Party Opposition. I believe it matters to the other Opposition Parties but, more importantly, it matters to the seniors themselves. They will get copies of these Estimates and they will wonder why it is the Minister was not more forthcoming and they will wonder whether it was because the Minister did not have anything to say or did not want to say it. Those are legitimate questions and those are serious questions, and all we are doing by asking the Minister to put on the record their specific plans with respect to Seniors Directorate is to try to provide that information to others who care about seniors and to save the Minister some agony a while longer in the future with respect to not having answered these questions.

So we are very disappointed in the way in which the Minister has answered questions. I think the Minister is sincerely motivated. I believe he cares about problems. That much I will give him, and I think he wants to do a good job. I think that is apparent but the fact is, until he gets a better handle on the Seniors Directorate and what it is supposed to do, and that is going to take some work on his part and the part of Government, until they come forward with a better thought-out plan, then all those good intentions are for naught and it will be the seniors of this province who will suffer because of that reluctance to address those issues head on.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** I have a few specific questions. My first question is, as the Minister indicated—maybe he will clarify for me, does he think that elder abuse is only of physical abuse, and mental abuse in no way interferes with the life of the individual?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I think the Member may have been out of the room when we discussed it, but I have said all along that there are many forms of abuse to the elderly. There is physical abuse, and there is mental abuse, and there is, I guess it falls under mental abuse, just the family not coming to see their parents is an abuse and that may be mental abuse or psychological abuse, but there are many, many forms of abuses.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, the Minister's primary role, as he has indicated in the House that his role is being a workers' advocacy on the behalf Seniors. Can he tell us how many projects have been started where he has himself participated to improve the quality of seniors in Manitoba?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Mr. Chairman, we have any number of programs delivered to seniors by this Government. To add to those programs without giving full consideration to those that are in effect now would be foolhardy, and we will not advocate the addition to the program until we see the need for it, and this need will come from seniors themselves and we are discussing with them. One thing that seniors have told us is that we have given them what they have never had from Government before, is a phone that is open to them and a Minister's door that is open to them. That they appreciate.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, as the Minister has indicated, they have identified various needs. Can he tell us what are the major needs for the seniors and

what is their agenda? What is this Government's agenda to get on with those needs? What is the agenda for next year, 1989?

**Mr. Neufeld:** It is our goal to give the seniors of this province a lifestyle that is as high as we possibly give to them. We want them to enjoy their latter years in as much comfort as we can possibly give to them.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, in 1986, there was a Health Services Review Committee. It was a very extensive report, and the gist of the report was to promote independent living at home. Can the Minister tell us under this administration what steps are being taken or will be taken to promote that specific area of independent living, which is that most seniors would like to be at their home and in the environment of their families? What has he done so far and what are his plans for next year?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I said earlier that I support maintaining seniors in the environment in which they have lived for many years, and to try to keep them in their houses or in their apartments that they have lived and not take them away from there. We will do whatever we can to maintain them in that environment. We will not take away any programs that may interfere with that goal.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, Maybe the Minister did not understand my question correctly. We know that we want independent living for them at home. We know the population is growing above the age 65. Now what are the specific programs they are going to initiate to promote that independent living?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Well, it is a matter of us finding out from the people out there, from the elderly people out there who want to maintain that independent living. We want to find out from them what they are not getting now that they would like to get. It is not as easy as putting down on paper the programs we would like to have. It is not as easy as putting on paper the things, the missing areas of Government support. It is not a matter of putting on paper the numbers even of people who require aid in maintaining an independent lifestyle. There are many areas we have to research and we are doing that and, before we finish our research, we will not come up with any programs.

\* (1530)

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, would the Minister tell us in his own views what are the priorities that he has set up personally to promote the ideas of independent living at home?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I did not come into the position with any preconceived ideas; I want to gain the information. If I came in with my ideas, I would come up with the ideas from my background and my background may be totally different from the ones who require the most care, so I do not want to come into the position with preconceived ideas. I want to learn and I cannot learn unless I go into it with an open mind.

**Mr. Cheema:** Would the Minister tell us now, as there are a lot of people waiting in city hospitals and other

places and Winnipeg hospitals for a period of 6 to 18 months who are in just very simply for a placement in a nursing home. I know that is not the area for the Minister to really work with but what kind of advocacy, what kind of plans has he put forward to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to make sure that the waiting period is decreased, No. 1; and No. 2, people are again put in their home or in the community to increase their independent living? What has been done specifically for the last seven months?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I view my position as making the Minister of Health aware of any shortcomings in his programs that he is not already aware of. The placement of priorities on those programs or lack of programs will be the Minister of Health's. I hope to influence the Minister of Health but the end responsibility for the delivery and initiation of those programs are still his.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, that is what I said. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Health but still, as the Minister responsible for Seniors, to be specific, being an advocacy group, he must have some ideas that he is going to press on to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to look at this serious problem, so that the seniors could be placed at home and save a lot of taxpayers' money, because there are a lot of people who wait for 18 months, thus costing hundreds of thousands of dollars just to keep them in hospitals. My specific question was, what specific steps has he taken personally to ensure that there is a process or there is a plan for the next five years to come, so that we do not end up having more seniors in the acute care beds instead of at their homes or other places which will be suitable for their independent living?

**Mr. Neufeld:** This is, of course, not a new problem. I have said earlier in the Session today that I firmly support a program of keeping the seniors in an environment that they are accustomed to and one that they grew up in. I will advocate for the seniors to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in whatever way I need to, to encourage the development of programs if they are necessary, if we have insufficient programs for the maintenance of our senior citizens in the environment in which they have found as home.

**Mr. Cheema:** Is the Minister aware of, or does the Minister know any study, are they planning to do any study, to have the demographics of variation of senior population in Manitoba so that they could assign special programs in certain areas, or is he aware of any evaluation study like this?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I will have to take that up with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and I am certain that they have those statistics available to them because they have done numerous surveys and they have numerous statistics. So I am sure there is something there and we will, and we are, discuss with the Minister of Health the problems of seniors.

**Mr. Cheema:** I think about two-and-a-half months ago I asked a question of the Minister of Seniors and the Minister of Health. It was a very specific question dealing

with the mental health program for the seniors. There is a good report, and I wonder if the Minister has read the report or is he planning to act on some of the recommendations which are definitely going to be more, if he is advocating on behalf of seniors, or discuss with the Minister of Health to make sure that these programs are put in place. My specific question, has he read the report so far or not?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I have discussed the report with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and I do not think it is necessary that I read the report. I think it is necessary that I advocate for seniors. If I can do that with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), I think I have done my job. I will continue to advocate for seniors to the Minister of Health and other Ministers in the Government, and I am certain that over the years we will find that there is an improvement in the lifestyle of the seniors in our province. We certainly hope so.

**Mr. Cheema:** I thank the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) for that answer. Now the Winnipeg Municipal Hospital has a lot of problems and, unfortunately, no capital expenditure was given to this specific hospital. This hospital does serve the need for seniors though. Has the Minister responsible for Seniors discussed this issue with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and what are his views on the specific issue? Should we leave this hospital for another year for capital expenditure? Does he feel that this is important?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I think that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) quite clearly indicated in the House today that there are priorities that they have to set. They can not possibly meet all the capital requests that they receive in any one year. That is not something that is new in 1988. That is something that has been in existence for some time and probably will continue to be in existence for some time. The Minister of Health has a responsibility to set their priorities for the expenditures that are his responsibility. Again, as I said earlier, to the extent that I can influence the Minister for expenditures with respect to seniors, I will do so, but I have to repeat again that the end responsibility for setting those priorities lies with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, my final question, has the Minister discussed this particular issue with the Minister of Health or not?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I have discussed that particular issue with the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Cheema:** Thank you.

**Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake):** I know the question of Home Care has been discussed. Can the Minister indicate to me, is his department, his role as an advocate for seniors, which he indicates is his role, to actually monitor changes in programs and services to seniors? Does he view that as his role?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We want to have an inventory of all programs that are delivered to seniors by every level of Government so that we know, when a senior comes

to us for help in a certain area, whether or not there is anywhere to go for that help. Through keeping an inventory, we automatically will have a monitoring system, yes.

**Mr. Uruski:** Mr. Chairman, the way the Minister talks about monitoring is a responsive role, not an advocacy role. Does he view his department's role as an advocacy role in monitoring governmental services to seniors? The Minister indicated in his remarks two points that caught my attention: No. 1, that Government should not be involved in the lives of people, lessen the role of Government. That was his view that he put forward, and he talked about having an open mind in terms of working with seniors and dealing with seniors.

Mr. Chairman, those two views appear to be somewhat in contradiction to what is actually going on in terms of services to people. Government is involved in the lives of our seniors. You just have to go through some of the programs that are available: Pharmacare, a governmental program; Home Care, a governmental program; personal care; acute care; ambulatory care; driving in terms of mobility of seniors; programs for the infirm; pensions; psychiatric care; mental health; elderly persons' housing, just to name a few. These programs are in fact provided by the public, by the Government, and these are services that are provided.

One specific service which is being overhauled in a negative way is the Home Care services. I want to know from the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) whether they are going to just wait for seniors to phone them or in fact will his department be going out to look at how the Government is changing the program? I will tell you how the Government is changing the program, from the responses that I have received.

On the one hand, the Government, through its coordination network, is setting up coordinators throughout the Province of Manitoba. These coordinators are trying to get volunteers within communities to set up non-profit corporations. That is fine from the point of view of getting more volunteers involved, but what is occurring is that on the one hand while they are bringing in volunteers and setting up a non-profit corporation, they are cutting services to elderly people in Home Care services who normally were eligible for those services.

\* (1540)

There will be and there is a dilemma that the Government will face in this whole area by, on the one hand, cutting Home Care in the range of domestic services, the cleaning and care of the home because—and I want the Minister to investigate this—on the one hand, seniors who receive medical Home Care plus these other kind of services that are being cut, those services are being provided at no cost. But if you are a senior in which you do not receive any Home Care medical services, you just require housekeeping services, you have to pay.

So, Mr. Chairman, I want and I am putting this general complaint on behalf of seniors that I want his department to investigate this change within the Home

Care Program. That is how the Government is cutting services on the one hand to seniors through this, what I would call, alternate mechanism of volunteer services. It hurts the seniors on the one hand and as well it hurts the employees who work for Home Care because these people no longer have the protection and the benefits of the wage scales and the pension benefits and the like because they are no longer in the public service. So there are two areas of cutbacks in the service, and I want this Minister to investigate this area and report back to the Legislature as to how he views this as a cutback in Home Care services.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Mr. Chairman, I said earlier that I have not received a single complaint about the deterioration of the Home Care service. If I do, and I have asked both your colleagues, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski), to give me details and I will investigate. We cannot investigate complaints unless we have some details and, if we do get those details, we will certainly investigate.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Praznik, in the Chair.)

**Mr. Uruski:** Mr. Chairman, I am laying the complaint on the table in terms of the general policy that is occurring, and is occurring in the Interlake region. I will not put names of senior citizens on the record. The department should view—and it is not very hard to take a look at the broad guidelines in the Home Care services policy if that is the role of his department and deal with it on the broad basis, not to single out individual Home Care recipients.

I can tell him that one of those elderly called me and said that he was receiving services in the form of assistance in taking a bath in the hospital, where he was taken to the hospital and received a bath at no charge. The hospital provides the services. Now that service has a \$10 fee for the giving of the bath, not for the use of the hospital but for the giving of the bath. That is the kind of Home Care services that I am alluding to. I will not put people's names on the record. I believe that the Minister has the resources to monitor the overview of the cutback in the programs. I am asking him to do it in that light. I want his assurance that it will be done.

**Mr. Neufeld:** I have no objection to following up on complaints. The Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) has a very specific complaint. Without some details on that specific complaint, I do not see how I can review the case and follow it up. I would have to have some more information. I take the general statement he has made on the deterioration of Home Care service seriously. I have made a note that we will follow it up.

**Mr. Uruski:** I am hopeful that this Minister will be an advocate on behalf of seniors. It may be a difficult role because of his biases, as a Conservative within this Government, because he made those two statements of the Government not being involved in people's lives and we have to make people more caring. We cannot make people more caring.

What we can do, by example, by the compassion and having a compassionate and caring Government

providing the services for people and having compassionate and caring Ministers, that will carry itself forth to the representatives within the Civil Service, within the bureaucracy and to the people that we serve. That way, their Government and people will become and can become, through example, more loving and caring. That is what is necessary.

This Minister has a bit of a dilemma because he does not believe that it is the role of Government to be involved in providing for those who are least able to provide for themselves in our society, so he has to settle that role in his own mind. We will be watching very closely over the next number of months to see where this Minister will take this department, because clearly his role is an advocacy role. He cannot sit silently by and see other departments doing things and not speak out on behalf of seniors. He has accepted that role. I hope that he will take his role very seriously.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik):** Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Chornopyski:** This will be my concluding statement, Mr. Acting Chairman. I would be less than honest if I said that I was not disappointed to some extent. I really and truly expected a little bit more than we were able to see here during these Estimates. However, we are going to have to settle for what we get because we are not going to get anymore. I say that because, at the risk of repeating what has already been said, there are some aspects of a senior citizen's living that have a low-cost scale and a high-cost scale.

Home Care, in my opinion, for those who need Home Care, is at the bottom of the scale. The cost is very low to provide that service because, if that person had to be relocated in a personal home somewhere or—what do they call those places?—a geriatric ward or whatever, I assure you that the cost is a lot greater, but that does not mean we would not have to pay for that. We would still pay one or the other. I would have liked to have seen something improved by way of Home Care, rather than taken away. I would like to have seen the Minister perhaps screen to a bigger extent those who are providing that Home Care.

Obviously, some of them have absolutely no knowledge what their function is when they go into a house. Some of them perhaps go there knowing that they can get away with certain things, that they are not going to provide the very service that they are going there to provide. So I really expected an improvement in that area, Mr. Chairman, but we did not see that improvement. Perhaps it is coming. I hope that it is, for the benefit of the taxpayer and for the benefit of the senior himself because, as I indicated, the cost is much greater if you have to institutionalize a senior citizen.

So that is one area where I am somewhat disappointed. There are many other areas that there can be improvements made because the cost is already there. It is not costing us any less to provide senior citizen housing. Whether it be good housing or bad, whether we neglect it or maintain it properly, whether it is comfortable for the senior citizen or not, the cost

is there anyway. I say that because of personal experience in this particular area.

\* (1550)

Just two months ago, I brought to the attention of the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) a situation that existed at Columbus Courts and another one at Vita, Manitoba. I am disappointed because what happened at Vita, Manitoba should never happen anywhere. A person should not have to pay the ultimate price to bring something to the attention of those responsible for that particular housing. This particular lady lost her life. Would you believe, nothing—and I brought it to the attention of the Minister, and nothing has been corrected. I think that is irresponsible, I really do.

I am disappointed because I really expected that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) would jump on a problem as serious as that. It is not a problem that is going to cost a fortune. It is a matter of installing a doorbell. A doorbell would have saved this senior citizen's life. We are into the winter months now again. When is the next one going to happen? I hope never, but there is still no doorbell. It is a \$20 item to install a doorbell so you can push the button and alert somebody on the inside that you are outside and you cannot get in, but it has not been done. I do not know if there is any intention of doing it. That is a disappointment to me because, as I say, I expected just a little more and it is not happening. The cost, as I say, is greater. If you had spent \$20 on a doorbell, you would have saved a life.

The other thing that I want to say while I am on this subject is that it was fortunate that this lady had nobody and there was nobody to take action against the Government. But I think there was a juicy event for those who are in the know to take the Government to task over something, some negligible thing such as this. There are many problems and I am not faulting this Minister totally. A lot of the problems that are there were there from the previous Government. I have served 12 years on City Council, I have had contact with the Housing Department on many, many occasions, and I know exactly what you have to go through to get something rectified. Many times, you did not get anything rectified.

So I am not blaming this Government for absolutely everything that is wrong with services to our seniors, whether it be housing, whether it be nursing homes, whether it be Home Care because, as I say, many of these existed not for months but for years. There were a lot of things that I wanted to say, but I would just be beating the same path that has already been beaten by others before me. So with these few remarks, Mr. Chairman, I will have concluded these Estimates, as far as I am concerned.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik):** Resolution No. 136: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$200,000 for Seniors Directorate for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

This section of the Committee of Supply will now recess to enable Members to proceed to the Chamber where the balance of the Estimates will be considered.

Committee rise.

(RECESS)

**SUPPLY—EMPLOYMENT SERVICES  
AND ECONOMIC SECURITY**

**Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko:** I call the Committee of Supply to order, please. We are continuing to consider the Estimates of the Department of Employment Services and Economic Security.

I direct Honourable Members' attention to Item 2.(b) Social Allowance Programs: (1) Social Allowances—the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

**Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital):** Mr. Chairman, I was not here for the end of the last session. What item are we still on?

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 2.(b)(1) Social Allowances.

**Mr. Rose:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Rose:** No, no. I had left early in the session and my colleague from St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) took it over, but there were some incorrect remarks, I think, put on the record by the Minister and I wanted to clarify that or ask some questions. She said, before he asked it—"he" meaning myself—commented on people being, I forget how he termed it, and indeed she did forget how I termed it because she said these people were suffering and not in the home or something. I want it to be clear that I never at any time in this House indicated, because I am sure that I have all the knowledge of it, that anybody was indeed suffering in the sense that they had physical suffering or indeed that they were not still in the home.

The Minister goes on to say they are being looked after and hopefully there is no suffering going on, on their part, depending on what you call suffering, but the type of suffering that is going on by these people is, No. 1, the owner of the premises in question, the owner of the care home, has put out almost \$5 thousand of very hard-earned money to fight this in court or fight it at City Hall, not in court, and presumably perhaps later on in court. So this is a worry and it might indeed be called suffering.

The suffering on the part of the four people who come under her department, on social welfare, is the fact that they are worrying on a day-to-day basis, and have been for some two months now, that they may be on the streets before Christmas. So I would say that yes, the Minister is wrong in saying that I ever indicated there was physical suffering or that the people were not in the home; she is right in saying that they are being looked after and hopefully there is no suffering; but no thanks to her and no thanks to her department because if it were not because of myself personally intervening with the City of Winnipeg and in this matter, they certainly would have been out on the street and there would have been a battle royal. So I just wanted to make the record quite clear that it was my actions, and my actions alone, that kept

these people from suffering and from being out on the street.

**Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security):** If there was a mistake on my part, I had the feeling from the Member's remarks that he was afraid these people were not being taken care of and I was assuring him that they are. He did indicate with me one time in question period that they might be out on the street and was enlisting my sympathies because it was Christmas, and I was assuring him that they were not to be put out on the street, that my department is working to solve the problem in connection with the woman in question. I also indicated to the Member the other day that perhaps if he sat down with some of my staff and possibly myself, if we could work it in, that perhaps he would understand the situation better.

\* (1430)

**Mr. Rose:** You know, Mr. Chairman, I am getting more than a little bit disturbed by a lack of knowledge on the part of this Minister and her lack of being able to listen. These people would be on the street if it were not for my action. It is because of her department's action in forcing to be withdrawn or causing to be withdrawn, the Letter of Approval. It was a notice from the city for two of the people to leave the home. It is only because I was able to tell the owner of the home how to keep the people in there, because of my knowledge from City Hall that they are still in there.

You know the Government from time to time talks about bringing in programs. I see one today to show newcomers to this country how to use stoves, how to read recipes, how to use refrigerators and everything else. But here is a case of people who are unknowledgeable about our system, unknowledgeable certainly about how the Government works, recent newcomers to Canada, who do not understand all our laws and customs are being confronted by the Government with rules and regulations that do not exist in law. Hopefully, it should be more of the part of the Government, who have staff and people and resources to care for these things, to look after these people and to see that they are comfortable, rather than the Members of the Opposition who do not have that resource.

I reiterate, and the Minister would know if it were not for my actions alone, and no thanks to either herself or her staff or very little thanks that I can understand, these people, at least two of them, would be at the mercy of the city and would be out on the street. I could stand here and question for 15 or 20 minutes or two hours about the Minister's knowledge of this area of her own department or the knowledge of the department in the city, to do with zonings and variances and Letters of Approval and what have you. But obviously, you know, Mr. Chairman, that would be a waste of time, and not to prolong debate on this because to me it is a rather simple item.

I think, if I were Minister, I would not take up more than two or three minutes of my time nor two or three

minutes of time of my Deputy Minister in charge. But I understand now that the Minister has taken this position that there was a meeting between her staff and the person in question on Thursday. Could she now give me knowledge of what was resolved or what conclusions were arrived at, at that Thursday meeting, since she and her department have had the information placed here very clearly by myself and certainly Mrs. Eborá?

**Mrs. Oleson:** I am just wondering what Thursday meeting the Member is talking about. My staff had a meeting with Mrs. Eborá some weeks ago.

I find it interesting that I should be getting such condemnation for this, when my staff and myself have spent a considerable amount of time on it. Some of these problems are not just solved by the flick of a finger. The Member refers to rules and regulations that do not exist in law. I do not know what he is talking about. We have rules; we have regulations. They are put in place for a reason. Staff try to be as accommodating as possible.

I believe that we have worked and are still working with Mrs. Eborá to try to solve this problem. It is partly city zoning as I indicated. The Member said last week it had nothing to do with city, now he says he knows all about it because he was City Councillor, and it had something to do with city zoning. So I am not sure from all this debate exactly where the Member is coming from. Then he gets up and says how stupid I am, and the last time we met, he was telling me what a great person I am. I cannot quite follow the zigzag and flip-flop on what is going on here. I will indicate, again, that we have worked very diligently to solve this problem, that perhaps if the Member sits down with staff and gets a little more explanation from our point of view, maybe he would understand it better.

**Mr. Rose:** My point on the city is still clear and that is that the city has nothing to do with the matter whatsoever. She would know that, if she knew how the city operated and if she knew how her own department operated, insofar as Letters of Approval are concerned. As far that is concerned, I have not had time to check today or on Friday, but I understand that there was a meeting between Mrs. Eborá and her staff. I would be appalled if none of her staff knew about it and took care. Mr. Chairman, why I keep bringing up this item, because I think it is a symptom of a deep underlying fault in the whole department, this is probably just the tip of the iceberg that we see in this case. We are not getting through on this message so, therefore, I do not see how we could get through on a larger, more important message that this department should be looking after the people who need a little boost in this society through the form of social assistance.

I forget exactly what the Minister said, that I said she was a great person or something like that. I never said that. I said, indeed, that I figured she had spunk, she had courage, she has a sense of humour, she has the ability to get a little bit upset, but I also said she was very slow at the learning process. So I do not want her to continue to be putting words in my mouth of what I said, because Hansard quite clearly says what I said.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I am glad to have that clarified.

I wonder, when the Member is berating my department for knowing nothing about this and not behaving properly and all the other things he said about the department, which department he is referring to. The department whose Estimates we are debating at the moment really has very little to do with this. They do in a sense that they pay social assistance, but as far as the administration of that, that he is talking about, they have nothing to do with it. I want it clarified. If I have got to berate my department for something they are not doing, I want to know which department I am supposed to be berating.

**Mr. Rose:** Mr. Chairman, it would be the department that supplies the social assistance to these people, which I presume is the department we are debating right now.

**Mrs. Oleson:** Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the Member has information that this department is not paying the social assistance. Is that part of the problem? Are they not receiving social assistance payments when it is felt they should? I would like to have that clarified if there is a problem with that.

**Mr. Rose:** The Minister is obviously grasping at straws now. She is giving political answers to it. She fully understands the situation. She fully understands that there is not a problem with social assistance. The problem is looking after people who are caught between two departments of hers, one being Economic Security and the other being Social Services. As far as I am concerned, I repeat what I said last week and that is I will intervene further and try and solve the problem myself. Thank you.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Chairman, I was under the impression that we had passed Economic Security and we are on to Employment Services as of the last day. I wonder if you could clarify just specifically what line are we on.

**Mr. Chairman:** Page 61, item 2.(b)(1).

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** 2.(b)(1), okay. Mr. Chairman, I understand we are rather limited for time. I have a number of questions that I want to deal with in the area of employment, unemployment, job programs, and so on, so I do not have any further questions. Hopefully, we will get to Employment Services.

\* (1440)

**Mr. Chairman:** 2.(b)(1) Salaries—pass; 2.(b)(2)—pass; 2.(b)(3)—pass; 2.(c) 55-Plus: (1) Salaries—pass; 2.(c)(2)—pass; 2.(c)(3)—pass; 2.(d) Child Related Income Support Program: (1) Salaries—pass; 2.(d)(2)—pass; 2.(d)(3)—pass; 2.(e) Economic Security Field Operations: (1) Salaries—pass; 2.(e)(2)—pass.

Resolution No. 50: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$232,709,800 for Employment Services and Economic Security, Economic Security, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

3. Employment Services (a) Administration: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I have a number of questions to ask about employment programs and I am proposing just to ask them here. I guess we have some flexibility under the category of Employment Services.

I am concerned about what is happening with the alarming increase in the number of unemployed youths in the province. If you look at the rate of unemployment as of November 1988—that is the latest information we have—the rate has risen to 11.5 percent—this is actual—compared with last year, at which time it was only 10 percent. So the rate has gone up from 10 percent to 11.5 percent in November. At the same time there are fewer young people working today. There are fewer jobs for young people according to the Labour Force Survey from Statistics Canada for the month of November. There were only 100,000 jobs for those under 25 compared to 104,000 jobs a year ago.

As we know, in the summertime we always have a flood of young people who are students looking for work and it provides additional pressure on the labour market, as they call it, and it is a time that I would expect Government to take additional initiatives, as Governments have, federally and provincially, in the past. What I am leading to is whether we can look forward to a Careerstart Program or some version thereof in this coming summer.

I am asking that question now because the Minister has to now make some decisions with regard to the next year's program. Forms have to be prepared, regulations have to be devised. The business community, the non-profit community who participate in this program, have participated in the program in the past, involving as many as 5,000 job opportunities, and are expecting usually to get this material early in the New Year. Of course, the department likes it back in the early spring in order to scrutinize the applications and to decide who to approve, who not to approve, etc., and to have the program well-prepared to provide the job opportunities for the young people by the month of May, which is the first month that university students are out.

So my question to the Minister is can she advise us whether the people can expect a program this coming summer of the nature of past years, namely, a careerstart type of program providing opportunities for our young people?

**Mrs. Oleson:** As the Member knows, that program, Careerstart, that he mentioned, went ahead this year as usual. As the Member should also know, the Careerstart for next year would be part of next year's budget and so that is under active consideration at the moment. We are in the unique position this year that before debating this year's current budget, and before when we came into the House to debate these Estimates, I was preparing next year's and so sometimes it gets a little confusing. Anyway, the announcements for the Careerstart Program, or if we choose to have a variation on a name or something like that, normally the announcement for Careerstart

took place in February, as the Member knows, and all these things are being considered in light of next year's budget.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I appreciate that and I know the monies would be forthcoming in next year's budget, but as I explained, decisions have to be made now and I do not think it is out of line in the sense that Governments have to consider this question now and make a decision now. While I do not expect the Minister and the department to have all the details hammered down, I would like to get a clear indication from the Minister, first of all, whether we are going to have a program for students this coming summer.

**Mrs. Oleson:** The only thing I can indicate to the Member is that it is under active discussion, all these matters for next year's budget, and I cannot make any concrete commitment at this moment. It is under active consideration in the light of next year's budget.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I think we have had a summer program for students for many, many a year. I gather then that there is a possibility that we will not have one this coming summer based on what the Minister is now saying. There is a possibility there will be no job program for the young people of Manitoba.

**An Honourable Member:** You cannot make that statement.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** There is a possibility, and that is what I would like to know. Could I ask the Minister, what is the probability of us having a youth job program for this summer? She could indicate the probability in the forthcoming summer.

**Mrs. Oleson:** If you are dealing with probabilities, I think there would be a very high probability but that is about as far as I can go. I think the Member full well knows that you cannot make announcements about Treasury Board decisions before they are made and you cannot be announcing them before next year's budget. It is an impossibility.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I appreciate that. The point is that Governments in some cases have to make decisions before final budgets are approved. That is the way it works sometimes. You have to be prepared to make a decision. You cannot wait for the Estimates review to be completed, because if you did, it is possible you would not have your money available for this program. If you had to wait for, I would dare say, the normal budgeting Estimates approval cycle, you may not get that approval in time unless you take special measures.

I am suggesting that it is coming at you so quickly time wise that you—I mean if you are still considering Estimates budgets next March/April, you will not have a program. You have to have some decisions. The department has to have some decisions early in the new year. There has to be a decision made.

I am suggesting that may be ahead of the time, given the fact that we are still in the House and all that, given the fact that I realize we are late this year in approving

'88-89 Estimates, so I understand the reason for a delay, but I am saying the Minister is going to have a problem. If you have a delay in general approval of Estimates for next year, how are you going to come to a decision? If that is your reasoning, if that is the only answer you can give us, how can you ever come to a decision? You are going to say, sorry, we did not get around to having a Careerstart Program next year because we did not get the Estimates approved in time. That is what the Minister is telling us, to use your logic.

I am suggesting to you right now that you are going to have to get a decision from Government, from Cabinet, from Treasury on this ahead of the Estimates approval for next year.

**Mrs. Oleson:** Yes, I am quite aware of that, to the Member, and as I indicated before, we are actively looking at it but I cannot make any announcements about it. That is the constraint I am under.

The Member indicates that there is some rumour or something that there will be no Careerstart Program or no youth program. I do not think you should start raising fears in the minds of people before these decisions can be made.

I know the time. I see the calendar clicking away and the clock clicking away. I know that these decisions have to be made. As I indicated to the Member, we already have sometime ago started working on next year's Estimates. We are looking at all the options of job creation programs. So I think the Member should rest assured that things are going on as they usually do and that these decisions were made and that I can also read the calendar.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I want to get it clear. I did not say I heard a rumour. I did not use that word at all. I did not indicate that. I was just asking you a straightforward question. I would ask the same question. I have heard no rumours; I am simply asking the question. I ask these questions and I am concerned because I know this Government does want to reduce the deficit and it wants to cut back on spending or hold the line as much as possible. Therefore, I expect some programs in all kinds of departments may be subject to scrutiny and either elimination or reduction in the next year. We happen to be on this department so we are asking these questions of this Minister at this time.

I would like to ask about STEP, the Students Temporary Employment Program, which is a program within Government. By now the department should have surveyed all the provincial departments to find out what their needs are and you would not do that unless you had some idea that you are going to have money to go ahead with the STEP program. Can the Minister indicate, without going into detail, whether or not there will be a STEP program in the coming year?

\* (1450)

**Mrs. Oleson:** The STEP program, as the Member knows, went ahead at the same level this year as it had in the past. We have distributed applications to the various departments for next year's STEP program.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I would gather then, while the Minister is indicating that they have sent the forms out, etc., to the departments, that we will likely, therefore, have a STEP program in the coming year. Is this what the Minister is telling us?

**Mrs. Oleson:** The final decision has to be made through the Estimates process in preparation for next year's budget, but as I indicated, the applications have been distributed to the departments.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** One program that the Minister terminated, the major program that we had, was the Training for Tomorrow Program that affected all ages, including the young people. A large percentage were those people under 25 who are seeking work. I believe that it was a very successful program. The department had an analysis done by an outside consultant, I understand, about a year or so ago and it received a high rating, very good marks. In fact, it was so good that other provinces in this country were copying our Job Training for Tomorrow Program, it was so effective.

I wan' to say again and make it clear. We are not talking about make-work jobs. These are not make-work jobs. These are jobs in the private sector. These are jobs in the non-profit sector. These are jobs that these organizations have to put money on the line for. Mainly small businesses have been involved, not big corporations. It has encouraged small businesses to hire when they might not be able to afford to hire. It is meant to reduce labour costs and therefore hopefully increase opportunities for people. It had a particular element for those over 55 who had difficulty in obtaining employment and additional incentive for the employer, an excellent program. Is there any thought or hope of a program replacing this forthcoming? Is the Minister considering a replacement for this major program at the present time?

**Mrs. Oleson:** The Member indicates that we cancelled the Job Training for Tomorrow Program. That really is not correct. There is approximately \$8 million spent on it this year, or is being spent. There was no fall cycle of the program introduced, which does, I admit, normally take place at this time of year. It has in the past; I should say that instead. We are considering all the programs.

The Member indicated that we were scrutinizing programs. I think that is only right that we do so, especially as a new Government. We look at all the training programs, the job creations programs, in the light of whether or not they are providing the service to people, the jobs to people that we hope they are. The Member himself, when he was Minister, no doubt scrutinized the programs once in a while—at least, I hope he did—with a view to changes. We are considering all the areas of training and we are considering what programs we will introduce next year.

To say that the Job Training for Tomorrow Program was cancelled is not really accurate. It went on with the exception of the fact that there was no fall cycle introduced, but there is still close to \$8 million being spent on that and I think that is on par with what was spent on it the year before.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I am just going by what the Minister has told us previously in the House that the department was not accepting applications after June 30. Now the Minister says it is really not cancelled, we are in a fall cycle. To me, that is a little bit of gobbledygook. Does it exist or does it not? I know you have the old applications that were approved before June 30—I know those are in process—but that is just a carryover.

Can I tell my small business people that I know around the province, in my riding, yes, go ahead and apply. Please apply under this program because the Minister has said it is not really cancelled. Please go ahead and apply. Can they come, get an application and fill it out now and expect to get some wage assistance and hire some people?

**Mrs. Oleson:** Mr. Chairman, yes, the Member indicates correctly. No applications were taken after the 30th of June. The Member should also realize that there had been applications taken up to that point and the funds were committed. The program is still going on. People are still working in it but the funds are committed.

It reminds me of the day that I spent considerable time in the Estimates of Community Services trying to drive this point across to the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), who must have gone to the same school of economics as this Member because, when I told her that all the funds had been committed for a particular handicapped program, she said I had cut the program, which was not the case. If you commit all the funds, you do not take more applications than you have funds for.

It seems like an elementary lesson in economics to me but apparently it does not to the NDP caucus, because when you say that all the funds are committed and you are not taking any more applications, they immediately say that the program has been cut. That is not correct, the program is ongoing.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Chairman, I am not trying to play with words or confuse anyone, I am trying to get it clear, in my own mind, exactly where does this Minister stand and where does this Government stand in trying to alleviate unemployment. It is worse than it has ever been for a long time. The figures we have for November show a serious deterioration over the last year at this time. One method of coping with unemployment are these direct job creation, on-the-job training programs.

I have listened to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in this Legislature telling us in so many succinct phrases that he does not even believe in these programs, and that they are make-work and they are a waste of money. If that is his position and if that is the position of the Government, we in the Opposition have a legitimate reason to ask whether or not these programs are going to be with us next year.

I certainly do not understand the Minister. I know that there are—I have said it how many times—businesses and non-profit organizations who got approved before June 30, and there are monies that are still being spent because there are people still in the program. I know there are so many dollars and all that money has been committed.

But the point is if you are concerned about unemployment, if you want to do something about it, you have an excellent program. It can always be improved but it is an excellent program. Why not put money into it now? Why not say, look, as our Government did over the years from time to time, you had to be flexible. If unemployment got worse, then you pumped more money into it and you activated the program.

What you have done, you have ceased receiving applications. You are not processing any more applications, you have got no money. Eventually there will be nobody under this program. Really, as far as the community is concerned, this program does not exist because you cannot get into it, it is finished. As far as the business community is concerned that might want to apply, it does not exist. Have you got ads out? Have you got forms available? Of course not, it does not exist.

Of course, you have allocated your money and there are some people who are still in the program based on applications approved before June 30. But what are you going to do now? Are you prepared to come up with some kind of replacement for this program, or is the Minister telling me we just have not put money in this phase? Come January 1, we may find some money and pump it into this program. Are you going to do that? Can we expect some kind of activity under this type of program, whether you call it Training for Tomorrow or call it something else?

\* (1500)

**Mrs. Oleson:** Mr. Chairman, I should indicate to the Member that I and the other Members of the Government are concerned about unemployment. When the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was referring to make-work programs, he meant programs that did not lead to future jobs. That is what I, as the Minister, am most interested in, the programs that create long-term employment, not just short term. Of course, the student employment programs are another matter but we are looking at programs and hopefully we will be able to institute programs where the job does not end as soon as the funding ends, jobs that stay after the program has wound down and with the same employer or with other employers.

That is one reason why we introduced the program called, "Gateway," which should lead to future employment after the training program is finished. That, we feel, will go a long way to helping the situation. We are actively considering other programs that might be introduced next year and, no, we have not forgotten the unemployed. We are very concerned that we bring in programs that do meet the needs of the unemployed.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** The Gateway Program—I think the Minister is referring to sort of employment enhanceability money, the money that is available from a federal-provincial agreement, which is really meant to assist people on welfare, social assistance, and to help them receive some training, encouragement and experience and all that, which is fine.

That kind of money deals with the structurally unemployed. What we are talking about is money for those who are cyclically unemployed. They are unemployed because of a downturn in the business cycles. There is a downturn, there is an increase in unemployment. I am not talking about the long term, those people who have been there for a long while and will be there for a long while as well, unless something drastically happens. I have no problem with those, the Gateway Program or other versions thereof. We are spending a lot of money in the province through the Human Resource Opportunity Program and specifically under this new employment enhanceability program, which we have going with the federal Government.

What I am anxious to know is whether we will have another version of Training for Tomorrow, or will the Minister go into another cycle of Training for Tomorrow, given the fact that unemployment has increased and is increasing?

The Minister says she wants permanent long-term jobs. So do we all and that is what the point of this program is. A small employer cannot get money unless he or she says this is a permanent job, will carry on when the subsidy is finished. They must declare that is a permanent job. So this is a program that is supposed to be for permanent long-term jobs, not jobs that disappear when the wage subsidy—that was the point of this program. This is one reason it was copied by other provinces because it was successful. I think it is rather sad that there is no action in this area, that we have an economy that is showing signs of some weakness.

I do not like to see that but whether you look at retail sales now, consumer demand is down. There were just figures in today showing the department store sales. Manitoba is 10 out of 10. We have a major decrease in department store sales for October and we rank 10 out of the 10 provinces. We are at the bottom of the heap.

The labour income is not increasing as rapidly this year as it has in past years. There are other signs as well that should cause one to be concerned, particularly if you are in Government and you have some responsibility.

Now, unless you take a totally different approach and say, look, we are not interested in these, we are going to bring about tax changes; we are going to make adjustments so we are going to encourage business, generally, and that will solve the problem. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that will not solve the problem. From past experience, we know those kinds of incentives are not as effective as direct job creation, direct job training, working with the private sector. We are talking about permanent jobs. Those are not as effective as this type of approach. So I am concerned that this Government has not taken initiatives in this respect.

There does not seem to be any action. There does not seem to be any plans. You do not seem to know where you are going. Do you have any idea how much unemployment we are going to have by next spring, by next summer? How are you going to tackle it, if you are going to tackle it?

Specifically, I would like to move on to another area under employment and, again, not because for lack or want of asking questions, and this is true also of the Economic Security side. We have a thousand questions to ask on Economic Security, but we let them go because we do not have the time. There are a lot of serious questions that could have been asked, but we will have to come to some of them at another time, I suppose.

Under Employment Services, I would like to move on and ask the Minister about the status of the New Careers Program. Has the Minister had any opportunity to review that program? Is she satisfied that it is effective? Is she desirous of ensuring that it carries on in the future? Is she going to recommend in the Estimates review that New Careers carries on?

**Mrs. Oleson:** Before I answer the question on New Careers, I should point out to the Member that when he said there is no action or no commitment, this Government is very concerned and is committed to the unemployment problem. We have committed \$1.4 million extra dollars between the Gateway Program and the social assistance Young Parents Program, or Single Parent Job Access, which makes more money spent in that area than the previous year. So I do not think the Member should get up and berate me for lacking interest in job creation programs. We are actively pursuing programs for next year. I will assure the Member that we are looking very intently at new programs to best meet the needs that are out there.

With regard to the New Careers Program, it, like others, is under scrutiny for next year, which would be understood, I am sure. I have been very interested to, as a Minister, learn more about these programs myself and I have found them very interesting in some of the scope that is being used and some of the people trained in most interesting aspects for careers in some of the other Government departments and my own other department and so forth, as well as training for other jobs.

Particularly because I am the Minister of two departments, it is interesting. In discussions with different groups that come to my office, they will sometimes mention some little thing about, for instance, the New Careers Program is one that immediately springs to mind, and other programs, and what they see about them that could be improved or what they particularly like about them. So it is very interesting to hear these sort of as an aside; oh, by the way, your New Careers Program, we would like it to be longer in scope for such and such. I have found that most interesting and I have relayed that back to my Deputy Minister when I hear these things because it is all a path to improving programs when you hear groups that use the programs talk about them and express their wishes for how they could be used.

So I will assure the Member that this program is certainly, like all programs—and every dollar of the department, of course, is under scrutiny for next year's budget—but I will assure the Member that this certainly is being looked at and actively pursued to be part of next year's program.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** The New Careers has been around a long time. It is an outstanding program for helping disadvantaged people in this province, particularly people in the North, people in remote communities, but people in not so remote communities, people who have disadvantages for all kinds of reasons, and we need not go into all this now, but it stands out as a beacon among employment programs; training programs, in this country to help people who are disadvantaged for whatever reason, whether it be race, whether it be location, whether it be family background, whatever the reason. I am pleased to hear that she would like to see it carry on.

I would hope that we can get a statement from the Minister today that she is going to recommend a continuation at the same level at least. You do not cut it off in a year anyway. You cannot cut it off because your staff will tell you it is something that you have in longer cycles than a year. So it is one thing to say it will be around next year; it is another thing to say that you will ensure there be sufficient monies to carry it on at least at the same level as in the past years. As I said, this is an excellent program, excellent staff. It just shines like a beacon in terms of its accomplishment. So I would hope the Minister can tell us that she will recommend that it continues at least at the same level in the next year.

\* (1510)

**Mrs. Oleson:** This program is the subject of next year's budget, so I guess I cannot give him something cast and carved in stone that it will be continued. It is interesting that the Member says he wants it continued at the same level and I am wondering if perhaps he would not want it increased.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I do not know whether I heard it all because of an interruption here.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I said, did you want it only at the same level or did you want it increased?

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** No, we would like to have it increased but I do not want to kill a good thing here. I will ask the Minister, is she prepared to recommend a 20 percent increase in this area?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Just to go on, because we are short of time and I know there are one or two other members who want to ask questions. It is unfortunate that the department has come near the end of the Estimates review so that we do not have sufficient time to get into some of the intricacies and some additional detail and questions that are deserving of being asked but nevertheless are not going to be asked now simply because of the time constraints.

There is another area of concern that I have, just a very specific thing, and I know the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) will be interested in this; that is, what is the current status in the Minister's mind, in the Government's mind, of the Selkirk training plant? I do

not know whether she has had a chance to become familiar with that program. Again, it is a program helping disadvantaged people. It is located in the Town of Selkirk; therefore, the name "Selkirk Training Plant." Can we expect that the Government will continue its support of this fine institution?

**Mrs. Oleson:** This program is continuing this year at the same level as last year, and like all other programs, it is being looked at for next year.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** That answer is really a non-answer. Again you see, this is the problem we have, I suppose. It is because we are in Estimates at this time of the year. If we were doing this in, say, April, May, June, I would not even be asking this, but here we are on the verge of making decisions for April 1 and there are going to have to be some very fast decisions made. That is all I can say.

I would like to just make a comment and a question, and that is that I was very pleased that we were able to sign an agreement with the federal Government on employment enhancement. It has enabled the Government to do a lot for people on social assistance. Ultimately, when we looked at this program prior to it being agreed to with the federal Government, prior to its establishment, we felt that in the long run it was not going to cost the taxpayers any money. It sounds like magic, but the point is that the hope was that ultimately we would reduce those numbers on social assistance and ultimately we would not be paying out as much—a satirist's barb—most other things remaining equal, we would not be paying as much out on social assistance. So the money being spent on training and other ancillary costs involved with the program would really be an investment in human capital, to use an expression that economists are wont to use. That is, it would be an investment in those persons so that ultimately they would have the ability to be able to work, assuming there was a job for them, and that they would be off the welfare rolls and social assistance roles and, therefore, there would be no cost in the long run.

I know when we were still in office, the federal Government had indicated that it was interested in expanding the program because of its success. Can the Minister advise us whether there might be an expansion next year of the employment enhancement program, or whatever you wish to call it, but the programs that relate to that federal-provincial agreement?

**Mrs. Oleson:** Yes, we did. There was an increase on the part of the federal Government, and in response to that, the Gateway Program for \$1 million and a .4 million increase in the Single Parent Job Access Program was initiated by our Government and announcements were made about that. It seems like a long time ago now, but I guess it probably was not very long ago. No, that was part of the employment enhancement.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I just have one question in this area, unless Members of the Opposition Party wish to

ask questions on employment, and then we can get into the Status of Women. I believe the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) is interested in that area, too. So just one general question under the area, under this division or part of the department; that is with regard to Immigration and Settlement Services. Can the Minister advise, are there any new initiatives being taken in this area? There has been a lot of discussion recently in the media about changing immigration laws. The provinces are involved under the BNA Act, are to be consulted and so on.

My question is rather general. Are there any new initiatives being taken by the Minister, by her department, in this particular area where we are spending nearly \$1 million, \$919,000, in this fiscal year? Is there any change that she sees in the federal policy that will have some impact in respect to settlement of immigrants?

**Mrs. Oleson:** We are maintaining the existing level that has been there in trying to help as many people as we possibly can with the funds available. For the Member's information, there has been no, what you would call "new initiative," but we are maintaining the existing programs. Of course, these programs also, we will be looking at them for next year.

**Mr. Rose:** I just want to say that we have many questions ourselves, like the critic for the Second Opposition Party, but we are already half an hour late and I know we have some other questions. My colleague has some on the Status of Women.

Let me just say that in these programs of employment, we do have a new Minister and the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. Certainly, by the time that the next Estimates roll around, we will expect more time and certainly clear and more informed answers than we have gotten today. So I am prepared to, line by line, pass items up to the Status of Women so that we can spend the rest of our allotted time on that very important subject.

\* (1520)

**Mr. Chairman:** 3.(a)(1)—pass; 3.(a)(2)—pass; 3.(b)(1)—pass; 3.(b)(2)—pass; 3.(b)(3)—pass; 3.(c)(1)—pass; 3.(c)(2)—pass; 3.(d)(1)(a)—pass; 3.(d)(1)(b)—pass; 3.(d)(2)(a)—pass; 3.(d)(2)(b)—pass; 3.(d)(2)(c)—pass; 3.(d)(2)(d)—pass; 3.(d)(3)(a)—pass; 3.(d)(3)(b)—pass; 3.(d)(3)(c)—pass; 3.(d)(3)(d)—pass; 3.(d)(3)(e)—pass; 3.(e)(1)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(1)(b)—pass; 3.(e)(2)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(2)(b)—pass; 3.(e)(2)(c)—pass; 3.(e)(3)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(3)(b)—pass; 3.(e)(4)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(4)(b)—pass; 3.(e)(4)(c)—pass; 3.(e)(5)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(5)(b)—pass; 3.(e)(6)(a)—pass; 3.(e)(6)(b)—pass.

Resolution No. 51: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$29,650,500 for Employment Services and Economic Security, Employment Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

Appropriation No. 4. Manitoba Bureau of Statistics (a) Salaries—pass; 4.(b) Other Expenditures—pass; 4.(c)—pass.

Resolution No. 52: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$403,400 for Employment Services and Economic Security, Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

Item 5.(a) Advisory Council on the Status of Women  
(1) Salaries—pass.

5.(a)(2) Other Expenditures.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I am happy to introduce the 1988-89 Estimates of my portfolio as Minister responsible for the Status of Women in Manitoba. It is with a great amount of pride that I am able to outline the ways in which my Government's commitment to improving the status of women has steadily strengthened. There are two distinct branches of the portfolio for the status of women: The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, an arm's length body responsible for providing advice to Government; and the Manitoba Women's Directorate, the branch of Government which works within Government to eliminate barriers and increase opportunities for women.

An important part of the Women's Directorate mandate is to provide current information to the public on Government initiatives on Status of Women issues. I am extremely proud to be part of a Government which has launched the province's first ever province-wide consultation devoted to evaluating the effectiveness of Government's services and programs for women.

The women's initiative has been most successful in getting women out in their communities to discuss the various issues with a special focus on the area of supports and services to battered women and their children and in the area of economic supports and economic development. Three of the four members of the consulting committee who are travelling throughout the province are staff at the Women's Directorate and I am pleased with the manner in which these consultations have been held.

In order to reach over 22 rural and northern communities, the committee has been holding two and sometimes four meetings in a day to ensure that the women of Manitoba are heard.

Consultations have now been completed in 22 communities. As well, although the emphasis is not to hear briefs, over 40 briefs have been received to date with more arriving in the mail every day. To date, approximately 500 women have taken the time to take part in this important consultation and the Women's Directorate will prepare an interim report in a few weeks time.

The next stage of the women's initiative is the Winnipeg consultations which begin in January 1989. The committee will also be holding a series of six public meetings as well as 14 additional meetings with agencies and organizations which provide direct services to women. The final report and recommendations are to be submitted by next International Women's Day on March 8, 1989. Ongoing issues, both at the provincial and federal-provincial level, continue to be a priority. As part of the federal-provincial work that is ongoing

at a national level, an action strategy for Native women will be prepared for the June '89 meeting of Ministers responsible for the Status of Women.

The Directorate continues to be involved in any interdepartmental committees as well as remaining responsive to community issues. The Directorate coordinates Government response to ongoing events such as the Manitoba Women's Agenda, and has recently completed an update for the Canadian Report to the U.N. of Manitoba's progress in fulfilling the agreements contained in the U.N. Forward Looking Strategies document.

Public education and information continues to be an important function of the Women's Directorate. The branch's newsletter about women as well as other public education materials, films and referrals are used to respond to information requests. A new series of fact sheets about women have been published and distributed. I have met regularly with the advisory council since my Government took office and am extremely pleased that Government has had the benefit of council's advice in a number of pressing areas.

The advisory council has brought the issue of midwifery to the Government's attention with the release of a series of recommendations currently under consideration by the Government. The recommendations were based on a discussion paper published by the advisory council which preceded consultations on midwifery held by the advisory council in urban, rural and northern Manitoba centres.

These recommendations are being examined by the Attorney-General's Department. Current and upcoming issues for the Manitoba Advisory Council include an examination of how women are affected by funding under the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation, the whole issue of apprenticeship training and women in non-traditional occupations, and ongoing work in the health field.

As Status of Women Minister, I look forward to the continued efforts of the advisory council and the Women's Directorate to steadily and successfully improve the status of women in Manitoba.

**Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk):** Can the Minister tell me how many Native women are on the advisory council?

**Mrs. Oleson:** One.

**Mrs. Charles:** How many people are on the advisory council in total, please?

**Mrs. Oleson:** There are 15 positions, but 13 are occupied at the present time.

**Mrs. Charles:** I assume that the numbers are rural, northern and Winnipeg members. Could you just give me a breakdown of how many of each region?

**Mrs. Oleson:** I could just give the Member a list of the places these people are from. The chairperson is from Winnipeg. There is also Winnipeg, Manitou, Bagot,

MacGregor, The Pas, Brandon, Morden, Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Thompson, Winnipeg, Beausejour and Winnipeg. As I could indicate to the Member, I just filled five positions since I have come to office and they were mostly—well, there were some Winnipeg and some rural in that. As positions become vacant, then we will certainly be sure to cover all areas of the province and work as many ethnic groups, and try to make it as far-reaching and as broadly-based a committee as possible.

**Mrs. Charles:** I would make the suggestion to the Minister that they include more indigenous women on the board, both rural northern indigenous women and city indigenous women because I think they have two different clientele, if you wish, whom they serve.

The Minister mentions that she has met regularly with the advisory council. Could she tell me how many times that would be?

\* (1530)

**Mrs. Oleson:** I have met once with the committee as a whole, but I have met several times with the chairperson. We try to set regular meetings but hopefully in the future that will materialize more than it has, to date but I do feel it is important to meet with that committee and of course many others who have direct dealings with the department, but as an entire group I have only met with them once but, as I say, I often meet with the chairperson and discuss issues.

**Mrs. Charles:** I appreciate hearing that the Minister was working on midwifery programming and I ask her then, the other recommendations that have come forward in the last annual report of the advisory council, in particular they speak of Meech Lake, does the Minister, has she received a brief on Meech Lake from the advisory council and what action has she taken on it?

**Mrs. Oleson:** The advisory council is part of the Meech Lake Coalition. We met as a caucus, I believe it was—yes, a caucus—with that particular group. I believe probably the advisory committee—I am not sure that they are giving a presentation of their own at the Meech Lake hearings but they will be part of the one that the coalition puts forth at least.

**Mrs. Charles:** Another recommendation that the advisory council has put forward is the idea of what they call gender-neutral language. I have had the opportunity to hear various Ministers say how they do not support gender-neutral language. Can the Minister tell me if she has had discussion with her caucus as to changing their attitudes toward this issue?

**Mrs. Oleson:** We do discuss this, yes, and I circulated them a copy of the suggestions with regard to gender-neutral language and, hopefully, that will have some effect. After the lectures I got at various times, I was interested to hear the Leader of the Opposition say "chairman" the other day, so we all need lessons.

**Mrs. Charles:** I have said in this House several times that it is something that has been drilled into us to use

the masculine form of all the words and I ask the Minister, therefore, because women of our age group are so used to it that we should not therefore impose it upon our children and our grandchildren. Has the Minister been in discussion with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) to see that sex role stereotyping in readers and in our school programming is under process of being changed? I mentioned that several times in the Estimates for Education that unless we see role stereotyping changed in our schools, whether it is sex roles or minority roles or ability roles, we will not see a change in attitude coming as quickly as we might. I would hope the Minister has met with the Minister of Education to discuss the image that we are portraying in our school system and how it can be changed through the direction of the Ministry of Education.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I should remark that there is a joint meeting, I believe next June—February, sorry—of Ministers of Education and Ministers responsible for the Status of Women, a federal/provincial meeting. This is one of the recommendations that would be coming forward at that meeting is that there should be more attention paid to the matter that the Member raised about stereotyping. I know over the years I have noticed this and a lot of it is done unconsciously, but we should be more aware that we should not automatically assume that, for instance, in schools that the girls would take cooking and the boys would take woodworking. I know I have a son who went to woodwork and was most unhappy and should have been in the cooking course.

**Mrs. Charles:** I am rushing through all these questions in the idea that we have been limited in our allotment of time for this department so I hope the Minister understands that this is not indicative of my support for the cause of equality in sex roles.

I would ask the Minister what the status is on the White Paper on Family Law. I think that next to education or with education the importance of the role that law plays in our roles as determining our equality is very indicative of how much we believe in our society's equality and I hope the White Paper is ready to be put forward into this Legislature.

**Mrs. Oleson:** That is still being considered internally and I should remark to the Member, to remind her to remind her colleagues, that the reason she is short of time in discussing the Status of Women is not the Minister's fault, it is her colleagues and the colleagues in the other caucus who discussed the Department of Community Services at such length that they really shortened up the time for some of these other important matters.

**Mrs. Charles:** I will not get into laying blame wherever it may lie. We will deal with what we actually have here today.

I would ask the Minister, has there ever been any advice put forward to her department on the opportunity of job sharing? Having had the opportunity to be an at-home housewife for many years, I know, in discussing with my piers, that job sharing is an extremely important

idea for those who wish to maintain their household in the area of staying home with their children if the opportunity is there, as well as keeping up their influence and their knowledge of the work force. They feel very strongly, and I support them, in the belief that job sharing is an issue that should be coming forward in the 1990s so that women can indeed have the option of having children, supporting their children, their households and staying in the work force at the same time.

**Mrs. Oleson:** On the subject of job sharing, the people who were on the Women's Initiative Committee who went out reported to me that one of the things that they heard about was job sharing. They will be making recommendations to me in that context. I agree with the Member that job sharing is a very important part of the job market, shall we say. I guess not only with professional women but I think many professional women who, as the Member says, want to keep up their hand in, shall we say, to their profession while they raise their families but do not want to work full time. It is a very important item for them.

One of the things I noticed when I was doing a tour of the Employment Services and Economic Security Department, after I was appointed, it was pointed out to me, as I met various people in their workplace, that this person is job sharing with that person. So there is some of that in that department particularly. That is one thing, as I say, I will be receiving recommendations on from the Women's Initiative.

**Mrs. Charles:** Has the Minister met with new immigrant women and as well with the Francophone community? Are those women represented on the Advisory Council?

**Mrs. Oleson:** Yes, I have met with both women's groups and Francophone groups. I met with a group called Réseau, who are interested in a wife abuse shelter. I met with them some time ago. They put forward a proposal.

I visited the immigrant women's project downtown, to present them with a cheque in helping them with their counselling service a few weeks ago. So I had met with both of those groups. As far as the advisory council is concerned, there is immigrant representation on that. In the future, when I am making more appointments—because I did not change the entire board, I just added where there were openings. I will certainly be considering making sure that is representative of the community. There is one Francophone on the committee now.

\* (1540)

**Mrs. Charles:** I believe our Party and myself have spoken to some length both in Estimates as well as in the question period on affirmative action pay equity and wife abuse. I will wait for the Minister to come out with the new means of funding wife abuse centres so that there will be some equality in the method. I appreciate the work she has done in that area.

For the sake of time, I will not ask any further questions on those, but I would ask the Minister,

because over this weekend it has become public that there is a new telephone service out in which people can phone MTS and dial the number to get some pornography on sexual issues, I wonder if the Minister has taken any stand, has she discussed this with the Minister for Manitoba Telephone Systems (Mr. Findlay) on what can be done for the sex service calls that are available now on our Crown agency.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I will be discussing that with the Minister. I have not had an opportunity to, but the advisory council is opposed to this. I am sorry, but that was something I had missed in the news, I guess. I have been extremely busy this morning, but I certainly will follow up on that and discuss that with the Minister who is responsible for telephones.

**Mrs. Charles:** I am just going to make a brief overview before I pass it to my colleague and pass this section. I would love to have taken further time on this. We probably could go on for days, but we do not have days. I intend to be the critic as the Minister well knows for this necessary ministry, because I think all of society has to have equality and we should not leave out a very obvious segment. As the Minister well knows, getting here in this House is not the easiest because we are women and we cannot assume because we can do it, others can do it. I would point out to her that women with disabilities, who have special needs, as she well knows, I am sure, and that particularly our Native women who have much higher abuse likelihood in their lives and the special needs of our immigrant women. I wish her well and her whole department and hope that we move forward greatly over the next year as quickly as possible and that we do not allow just the system to hold us up but that we push for equality as soon as possible.

**Mr. Rose:** I just wanted to correct a couple of misstatements. The Minister seems to like to get the last word in, but I would suggest that before she does that she gets herself informed of the facts.

First of all, she refers to us spending time on the Community Services. May I remind the Minister that the item in question involved four people on social security and indeed the whole item was precipitated because of a cut in those allowances which did not then allow for 24-hour supervision which was certainly later certified to be not necessary. The fact that the economic security part of their income was cut precipitated the whole matter. So we were discussing under the appropriate portfolio.

On another item, Mr. Chairman, in regard to our Leader calling herself the chairman, indeed there has been insufficient explanation of that and it was not a slip by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). At that time, she explained that in those days before we started using gender-neutral phrases that she indeed was the chairman. That was her correct title. Even today, the Minister should inform herself that some bodies like school boards have a vote as to their operations for the year and sometimes they vote that no matter what gender it is, that they will be called this or that or the other, and often or not it comes out as "chairman."

So I do not think that the Minister would be proper in using one-upmanship there, because there has been previously a full explanation and she was if the House at the time the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) gave that explanation.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I just wanted to clarify something. I think the Member misunderstood when I remarked that there had been so much time on Community Services. I did not mean in the Employment Services and Economic Security Department. I meant the 48.5 hours that we spent on the Community Services Department in September and October. That was what I was referring to.

Just for a little clarification, when I referred to the Leader of the Opposition of having used "chairman," it was last week or the week before. It was not "back in those days." It was quite recently and it was just a little remark. If you want the last word, Mr. Critic, go right ahead.

**Mr. Rose:** I do not want the last word. As a matter of fact, I do not like too many words at all. But might I say that when she was chairman, it was back some years ago. She made the statement some short time ago, referring to her title at that time, and certainly in regards to the Minister's other statement, I hope that she does not begrudge the time spent by the Opposition in perusing her Estimates on Community Services. We feel it was time well spent.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I wanted to ask just a couple of questions, because we do not have time. Firstly, this would normally be a spot filled by my colleague, the MLA for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), who I believe gave birth to a baby boy today. Am I right? Well, that is what they were talking about, yes—well, not everyone heard so I am announcing it again. Anyway, I am replacing the MLA just very briefly. We do not have much time.

The MLA for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) has indeed a major task before her and that is chairing this province-wide committee that is a consultation committee which is looking at various aspects affecting women, socioeconomic aspects, not only questions relating to family violence, crisis shelters, and so on, but also, on the economic side, she includes jobs, training, and day care, which I consider to be an economic initiative as well, inasmuch as it enables a woman to become part of the work force if she so chooses. So it is a very big task.

My question is when—because it says in the report that the information gathered will provide a basis for the development of a three-year action plan which will serve as a blueprint for Government. This involves every, as I gather, program there is affecting women, whether it be child care, whether it be training programs, crisis centres or whatever. When does the Minister expect to receive this report and will there be—who is going to be responsible? Is the Minister responsible for the Status of Women going to take the report and ensure that the appropriate departments pay sufficient attention to these recommendations and that action

be taken as deemed fit by the Government? Is the Minister going to make sure, because you are involving other departments as well, although essentially most of it relates to Minister's responsibilities, if it involves the Department of Labour that that department will pay due attention or whether the Department of Industry is involved, is it this Minister—when does she expect to get the report? When will there be concrete recommendations, and how will this Minister assure that these concrete recommendations are going to get due consideration by Government and not be just another report that is going to be put on the shelf to gather dust?

**Mrs. Oleson:** The report will come forward and be considered at Cabinet in February for announcements on March 8. That was announced, I believe, at the time that the committee was announced. Also, there are interdepartmental committees in all departments that are reviewing the same issues and those will be brought forward. The group has found some very interesting topics being raised when they are on their travels.

As the Member knows, they have completed the rural meetings. The City of Winnipeg meetings will be in January. The rural meetings have been completed and they have heard some very interesting things from various departments which they already have been able to take back to those departments as information and, as in some cases, suggestions, as to how services could be improved. I think it has been a very worthwhile endeavour, and I do compliment the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) and the committee for their work. They travelled a lot of miles, and spent a great deal of time on the rural aspect of this. There is still, of course, time involved in preparing volume. There are notes that were taken and information that was gathered, and then in January they will commence their City of Winnipeg hearings.

While I am on my feet, I will hope that the Member conveys my congratulations to the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and her husband on the birth of their son. I had not previously heard that, having been occupied with something else at the time the announcement was made, so I do congratulate them.

\* (1550)

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Chairperson, I certainly will convey the Member's best wishes and congratulations to my colleague.

I have a related question, and we do not have much time. The Member from Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) was asking questions about which women's groups is the task force meeting with. I thought she asked that question, the one that is headed up by the MLA for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond).

My question specifically, are you paying attention to one particular group that I am concerned with? This is a disadvantaged group and certainly there are about 10,000 cases on social allowances. These are single parents, sole-support parents, mainly women, a few fathers but mainly mothers. Quite often I have found that it is these people that somehow or other do not

get their voices heard. Their points of view are not brought forward for all kinds of reasons.

I am wondering, has there been sufficient effort made to ensure that groups representing these people have had an input. There is the Social Allowance Coalition of Manitoba, is one such group; there is the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization. Have these groups had an opportunity—the committee may have to bend over backwards to ensure that certain groups are invited and are encouraged to make representation. Of course, when you deal with these people you are dealing with among the poorest, economically speaking, the poorest people in the Province.

I again take this opportunity to put in a plea that we have to look seriously at upgrading the social allowance levels for these people and particularly mothers. We have to do everything we can to allow them to have training, to seek and obtain employment, to improve their standard of living. It is a new phenomenon in a way that we are dealing with the—or it is a recent phenomenon, the single-parent family. It is growing, whether we like it or not. Whether we agree or disagree, it is a growing phenomenon. There are thousands of women who are among the poorest of the people in this province, who are on social assistance, whose voices are not always heard.

So, I would like to be assured that the Minister will somehow or other satisfy ourselves that the task force is going to hear these people and take due consideration. There should be a special section alone, in my view, on single parents who have to live on social allowances. The ideal is that no one should be on social allowances or social assistance. That is the ideal. You can work on that through these employment programs, but you also need adequate money for child care. You need other child and family services and so on.

So that is my key point that I would like to make at this time and I am wondering if the Minister has a response.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Allan Patterson, in the Chair.)

**Mrs. Oleson:** Yes, the Member should be aware that—I am trying to remember whether it was actually in the press release or not—but when these consultations were previously taking place in the rural areas letters went out to many, many groups, as many as we could possibly get addresses for, inviting them to come. It is not a task force, it is a consultation process.

People have presented some briefs to the group, but that was not really the intent of it. There is a consultative process. They sit down and they talk and tell their views and suggest improvements. People on social allowances did come forward and discuss the issues with the group. Also the Member will be interested that clients of the Single Parent Job Access Program came forward as well and discussed the program and how it was helping them. They were very positive, as I understand, about that program. It made me very glad that we had increased funding to that program because it seems to be working and be very, very popular with the people who it serves.

\* (1600)

Also the Member should know that the service providers also—the people who deliver service—are also invited to come to the women's initiative group when they are in the particular areas. They are invited to come and have input into the programs that they themselves deliver from that point of view. So I am quite confident that there will be good information gathered. I know there has been to date, and I am sure that will continue. The Member referred to SACOM, the social allowance group. They will be one of the groups in Winnipeg that will be invited to the meetings in Winnipeg. There is wide distribution, invitations are sent out, and there will be two separate consultations devoted to social assistance and single job access program in Winnipeg. So hopefully that will get us some really good information on those programs. We are quite convinced that this consultative process is really achieving what we hoped it would, a great deal of information. A lot of people have put forward ideas and recommendations and those, as I had indicated before at a previous question, will be submitted as a report to Cabinet for their consideration.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Patterson):** Item 5.(a)(2), \$126,900—pass; 5.(b) Women's Directorate, (1) Salaries, \$344,900—pass.

Item 5.(b)(2) Other Expenditures, \$159,700.00—shall the item pass? The Member for Selkirk.

**Mrs. Charles:** I think I should ask the Minister if in the—we should move this table down, it is so difficult to get recognized down in this corner of the room. I have missed on other occasions.

The third Party critic has discussed the Women's Directorate to some extent about the group that has been travelling around the province and I would add to his concern that those in low economic levels perhaps would be left out of such a group and I hope they would not. But I also ask whether they, what percentage of women appearing were non-professional women, that is, not appearing as members of an organization, but just as members of the group of women that are at-home women or non-professional women who are out of the service segment.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I understand they were about 30 percent.

**Mrs. Charles:** I notice in the allotment of expenditures that they were up about \$100,000 in total. I would ask the Minister to explain the areas that this money was given to and also I ask her why the Government side of the Women's Directorate or the Status of Women's Ministry was given such a raise and the Advisory Council was not given a comparable raise.

**Mrs. Oleson:** The \$100,000 the Member mentions is a one-time special initiative for the women's initiative consultations.

**Mrs. Charles:** So the grants and transfers payments that is down as \$30,000 was for the consultation?

**Mrs. Oleson:** If the Member is on page 65 at the bottom of the page, where we are talking about last year,

\$59,400, and this year it is \$159,700.00. If that is the figure that the Member is talking about, that \$100,000 was set aside as funds for the women's initiative this year.

**Mrs. Charles:** Regretfully, I am being informed that we have to get out of this department so I will end my comments here. It is not the end of my questions or comments. I would hope that the Minister will speak to her Government and see that more women are taking chairperson's roles in the Government because I think they have a poor record of appointing them as chairpeople. We have a lot of women on boards, better than in the past, not as good as possible, but very few taking leadership roles and I would like to make that comment before I pass this section.

**Mrs. Oleson:** I would just like to briefly say that I agree. There are not enough women in chair positions. We will not be satisfied until we have improved that record and improve the role of women on boards and commissions. There is always room for improvement and we will work on it.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Patterson):** 5.(b)(2)—pass.

Resolution No. 53: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$764,800 for Employment Services and Economic Security, Status of Women \$764,800 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Patterson):** The committee will revert now to 1.(a) Minister's Salary. Before resuming debate, I would like to ask the Minister's staff to leave please.

1.(a) Minister's salary \$10,300—the Member for St. Vital.

**Mr. Rose:** Mr. Acting Chairman, we have been searching for some clue or clear tangible evidence that perhaps this Minister does understand and is concerned—she keeps mentioning it—and is committed to people who find themselves temporarily in need of assistance in the way of economic security. We heard many times that the Government has put more money into the program. I am sure that the Minister well understands as a family person that money does not solve all the problems. It just makes some of them more enjoyable perhaps.

I think that what is missing from her department, as alluded to in other cases in this very brief set of Estimates, is the human element and the human commitment. In that we are really wondering how much of a social conscience this Government has. We hope that unlike their colleagues in Ottawa who if they had their way would de-index programs like old age pensions.

If I understood the Minister right she alluded to being interested in other programs within the Government that created jobs and helped to get people off social assistance. One of those departments, I know that she is not directly involved but hope that she would have some input because the expansion of the Core Area

Initiative and the efforts of the Core Area Initiative is to put people to work and make conditions better for them, and thereby take people off social assistance and give them some meaningful employment.

I am wondering being that the Minister may have seen the original concept of the Core Area Initiative, which was to solve social problems in the core area of Winnipeg principally, if at all when she sees millions of dollars being spent on projects like the Tourist Hotel and when she sees \$20 million being spent in the East Yards, whether this does not concern her somewhat. I would like her feelings on that and if she will be encouraging her colleagues for their part as one-third partners in the Core Area Initiative, and I realize that they only have a one-third vote on it but probably a very important vote, I am wondering in relation to getting people off economic security, if she will be encouraging her colleagues to be putting more and more of the money back where the original mandate was, and that is the core of Winnipeg where it is most certainly needed far more than any other part of the province or the city?

**Mrs. Oleson:** With regard to the Member's first remark on social conscience I do not know where it is written that only Liberals and New Democrats have a social conscience. Somewhere it seems to be that myth seems to be perpetuated. I am here to tell you that we as a Government definitely have a social conscience. We are concerned and we are concerned with all aspects of the province.

With regard to the Core Area Initiative, I have had some chance to study that program and to look at it. Some presentations have been made. I understand that at the beginning it was more of a program-oriented initiative but then we do have to look at other things as well as improving the core area of the city. It does not only affect that exact block or building that is placed there, it also impacts on the people who live in the area and the people who travel in it. It does not have a negative effect on the people who the Member is referring to. I do agree with it, that we do need to emphasize programs to help people who are in difficulty for one reason or another. Governments have to look at all aspects of a province and of a city and try to meet some balance to the needs that are there. You cannot take one segment of society and only look at them. You have to look at the whole picture.

One of the problems that I see with the Core Area Initiative, in some of the programs, that they start very, very worthwhile programs but they fund them for only a short time and then they look to someone else to fund them. Several papers have crossed my desk which want this Government to take over a program that has been started, and a very worthwhile program. We in turn have to find the funds for it. That is one of the difficulties that I see with that. There is nothing wrong with the program, nothing with that and I am not really complaining about it except in the sense that there is a hue and cry if we are not able to find the funds to carry on something that we did not start in the first place. So it becomes a bit of a problem. We do have some input into it. Hopefully, it will continue to do a major part of the job that it was intended to do in the first instance.

**Mr. Rose:** I cannot give the Minister much high marks for stick handling because she tried to stick handle that one but it did not come.

I guess, succinctly what I am asking, would she rather see \$2 million or \$3 million spent in the tourist hotel, on that corner? Would she feel that it would be better spent in the core of the City of Winnipeg where it was originally intended to be spent?

**Mrs. Oleson:** I would remind the Member that tourist hotels do not come under the purview of this department. It is not for me to decide, initially, where we build tourist hotels or if we build them. I do not really feel that the Member is asking the questions in the right place. If he thinks that my answers are stick handling and somehow devious then I am sorry, but that is the answer I have.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** For the sake of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) who has not been here, I guess, for most of the afternoon, and I am not supposed to make reference to that so I withdraw that comment but the fact is we have been proceeding as expeditiously as we could. I think we are just about ready to wind it up. So if you will be patient, we can get on to the next department.

By way of closing remarks, I just want to say this, that just talking about the employment situation for a minute, it is serious, the unemployment situation is getting more serious. This is one department that can tackle unemployment head-on but regrettably, there are few dollars being spent today on employment programs than there were a year ago. While there is more unemployment, we are spending less money to provide jobs to encourage the private sector to create jobs. I do not see any sense of direction on the part of the Government in this area. There does not seem to be any focus. There does not seem to be any program. You do not like the Jobs Fund so you eliminate it but what have you got in its place? There does not seem to be any sense of direction. We hear the odd comment from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Maness) but we have not seen any action. The Government has been in power now for the greater part of this year. Unemployment is getting worse. Not only that, but more people are leaving the province, I suspect because there are not enough job opportunities here.

\* (1610)

So I say, Mr. Acting Chairman, in closing, in my closing remarks of this department under the Minister's Salary, that this is going to be the biggest challenge that this Government, that this Minister will have in the months ahead, and it has to be, in my judgment, a priority of Government. It was of ours because this is why we created the department as we had, giving more focus, more profile to programs that tackle unemployment.

I regret very much that the Minister will not review her position on the Unemployed Help Centres in Winnipeg and Brandon. I think they have played a role. I know they are in the area of unemployment insurance which she keeps on insisting is federal, but nevertheless those are monies that they could secure for the benefit

of the people of Manitoba, particularly for those workers.

For the life of me I do not see why we would not want to spend a few dollars to get many more back for the people of Manitoba. For every dollar we spend we get several back into this province from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, of which we are net contributors. I just think that is purely bad from the provincial economy point of view. I found them very helpful and I know a lot of other MLAs have found these centres very helpful.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, with those few remarks I guess we will pass the Minister's Salary but I just trust that she will provide more focus and have a greater sense of direction in tackling this very continental problem of unemployment, of growing unemployment in this province.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Patterson):** Item 1.(a)—pass.

Resolution No. 49: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,036,900 for Employment Services and Economic Security, Administration and Finance, \$3,036,900, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989—pass.

That concludes Employment Services and Economic Security. We now turn to Northern Affairs.

## SUPPLY—NORTHERN AFFAIRS

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Allan Patterson):** The committee will come to order to consider the Estimates of the Department of Northern Affairs. First, would the Honourable Minister (Mr. Downey) like to have an opening statement?

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs and responsible for Native Affairs):** Would it be fair for me to ask just how much time there is left for the Department of Northern Affairs?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Patterson):** The 240 hours expires at 8:15 and there is Flood Control and Emergency Expenditures to follow this, so that leaves us about two hours.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Acting Chairman, the reason I ask that question, I just wanted to know how much time I would have for my opening comments because I have approximately a two hour opening speech to make on my Estimates, although being the fair-minded person that I am I will try to keep it shorter than that so the Members do have a chance to ask some questions.

Let me first of all say how pleased I am to introduce the Department of Northern Affairs and the related departments and activities that go along with them. I thank the staff for the work that they have put into the Estimates and the work that they do in the department. As well, Mr. Acting Chairman, let me say that it would be very helpful to have them approved in view of the fact that the majority of the monies are already spent.

As we are going through this process, it probably will be more productive to get into the questions but

I will just try to highlight the notes that have been made available for me. As I indicated, I am pleased to present the Estimates for the first time in Northern Affairs having had some experience a few years ago in Agriculture, the difference being that we spent some 30 hours to 40 hours at that particular time. As you have indicated, there will only be some two hours if it takes that long today.

For the expenditures there has been an increase from 27.8 million in '87-88 to 31.8 million in 1989. The \$4 million increase is largely attributable to a \$2.3 million rise for Northern Flood Agreement claim settlements and \$500,000 transferred from the Natural Resources Department relating to the Communities Economic Development Fund. As I understand it because the Minister of the Economic Development Fund was reporting to the Minister of Natural Resources, that is why that particular \$500,000 was transferred back to my department.

The Community Operations and Capital Construction experienced budget increases of 230,000 and 415,000 respectively. A new initiative is some \$250,000 earmarked for the Urban Native Adjustment Study which I will discuss very briefly. The Opposition New Democratic Party made a lot to-do about the letting of a particular contract. Three-quarters of the employees or 75 percent of the employees of that particular contractor will have Native people working on his behalf, which I think is one of the main reasons why the decision was made plus the experience that we have had with the company in other activities.

The Government is planning to implement a comprehensive Northern Development Strategy to look at both new and traditional ways to create jobs and give all northern residents a better way of life. Unemployment is still a tremendous problem in northern Manitoba. I would have thought having given such support to the New Democratic Party over the last many years that we would have seen some kinds of turnarounds take place. Again the proof of the pudding is in the eating and after so many years of their administration the unemployment levels are disastrously high. We all have to work together to try and correct that.

Economic development is assisted through a number of Canada-Manitoba agreements which identify potential business opportunities, recommend programs and advise small businesses in an effort to help the northern development. Let me say that the Northern Development Agreement does run out in March of this coming year. We have made contact with the federal Government to try to work toward the establishment of a new agreement. If that is not possible in the time available then, to at least request or would be requesting with other Government initiatives an extension of that. It is important that the province have a Northern Development Agreement.

\* (1620)

Mr. Acting Chairman, let me just go through these rather quickly. We have as well some other major initiatives that have been developed and are developing.

We have had a review of the Native Affairs Secretariat. We have had very aggressive discussions and negotiations taking place on the Northern Flood Agreement. We have—and I committed some several days ago with a statement to the House—a commitment of some \$10 million to the Northern Flood communities, an advance of funds to them.

I was pleased this morning to be able to advance the first \$1 million of that to Mr. Walter Monias. They were in the office this morning and we lived up to the commitment to get that money flowing. We have put in place a senior negotiator as have Northern Flood and as have the federal Government. It is our understanding that Hydro will be doing the same very shortly.

Let me say in human terms there are programs that have to be developed for job opportunities for northerners, training programs, support for the traditional occupations of fishing, trapping and forestry, but also development of new business enterprises and improvement in services in community infrastructures.

The majority of northern communities have utilities such as piped and treated water, sewage disposal, hydro-electricity and telephones.

Another initiative that was talked about during the Throne Speech was the development of the Northeast Hydro Project. Again there are discussions taking place with the federal Government so that those communities who have been long awaiting a hookup to the Manitoba water generated hydro-electric power that before too many years that program can be developed. As I indicated, it was a commitment in our Throne Speech and we are working to come to some agreement with the federal Government to provide support for that.

Another key area of concern is one in dealing with housing. The housing industry is something that there is never an end for the demand of in northern Manitoba, and again I would like to see a more aggressive approach taken to the provision of housing, particularly when it comes to the provision of products from Manitoba forestries and local labour which would be a major employment creation opportunity for those communities.

I am pleased to say that I have had the opportunity to work with my colleague, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), to discuss initiatives in this area and I have been pleased with some of the positive comments we are getting from Mr. Ducharme's, the Member for Riel, department.

Historically, the development of northern Manitoba's economy has been tied to the transportation system. River transport opened up the fur trade, railway made the mining industry develop, and now improvements in highways are allowing more extensive development of not only hydro-electric power but also other resource-based industries.

Since the 1970s there has been significant construction of new highways and improvements to existing roads in northern Manitoba. New highways have recently been completed from Thompson to Gillam to open up the hydro-electric projects, and from No. 6

south of Wabowden to Norway House to allow for access roads to the forestry industry.

Transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in Manitoba. When competing for markets on an international basis, this affects the North even more intensely than the southward distances from large population centres, relatively large internal distances between consumption and production centres.

Just through my short term as Minister, from the observations that I have noted, it is extremely important that continued efforts to improve the communications for our northern communities is vital and we will be working to address that when we are discussing again the agreements with the federal Government. I believe it is extremely important that we have roads to our resources. With the development of resources, automatically we see the flow of job opportunities.

Let me just conclude my remarks. I have a few others that are here, but I think in the interest of time and questioning that may want to be ensued by the Members of the Opposition, just let me say that I had the pleasure of having met many, many northern community people, many community leaders and citizens. I have to say I feel very comfortable in carrying out my responsibilities. They are tremendous people, they are hearty people, and they want the same opportunities that each and everyone of us want whether we live in the south or any other part of the province.

I will, as the questions come forward, elaborate a little bit more but I just am pleased to have the opportunity to have the responsibilities of the Northern Affairs portfolio and responsibility for Native Affairs with this Government. Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

**Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa):** I think that referencing the same two hours that the Minister referenced before he began his comments, I saw he did not go the full two hours in his opening remarks, so I will follow suit along the same vein. I will keep my remarks short as well, but I think it is necessary for us to reference that we are under pressure of time not due to our own choosing but simply put upon us by the exigency of the moment.

I noticed that in the opening remarks of the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), he did spend a good deal of time on the economic development of the North. He referenced particularly the transportation sector which seems to be the basis for almost all subsequent activity in northern communities. Without the transportation access, anything else essentially becomes almost an insurmountable problem. Transportation is the key and he did reference that and I thank him for that.

\* (1630)

However, I think that one thing we need to consider in looking at this Department of Northern Affairs, it does have another sector added to it, that of Native Affairs, and if we take these two together, we end up with having a department with a very far-reaching mandate not only geographically, as the Minister so

eloquently referenced, but also socially. The area covers the largest geographical area and probably our most disadvantaged people, and they are disadvantaged largely again because of the geographical isolation which is one thing, if we put our minds to it, we will eventually be able to address in a way that is going to help the economic development of this region.

However, a review of the record suggests that great things should be happening in this department even now, although I hope that the Minister's comment made when we took up the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund Board, "that you see things from a different angle when you are in Opposition" does not apply to his view of what he saw as necessary to be done for the Native people of Manitoba now that he is able to implement what he asked for during the Estimates in the past.

If I may quote, he stated: "I plead with the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs to set up legislative hearings throughout this province so that Members of the caucus of the Conservative Party, Members of his Government, can proceed to go to the communities of concern so that we can have input from them, so that we can have input from other portions of our society so that we can truly deal with the bottom-line concerns of the Native communities and northern communities."

**Mr. Downey:** A good quote.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** It is an excellent quote. The Minister agrees with me that it is an excellent quote. Although these comments were made in a two-party House, they did refer to an all-party committee. I hope that his intention is still as valid today as it was then.

Solutions for the problems facing Natives in Manitoba call for more than patchwork programs or the phenomenon of on-again/off-again funding or temporary make-work projects, and I could go on listing the kind of temporary activities that we try to implement in order to address an immediate need. These immediate programs of a temporary nature have been tried and found wanting. What is needed today are creative solutions that involve the people for whom the solutions are intended and the policy and lawmakers of the province and country working together with them.

I have said before, and I will say it again, that the people for whom the programs are intended should be involved in determining what those programs are. We recognize officially three groups of aboriginal people—the status, the non-status and the Metis—who in the North live on reserves or nearby communities, and it is important to recognize—and this is why I mentioned the fact that the Northern Affairs Department includes Native Affairs—these people are also found in the south of Manitoba, in rural Manitoba and in urban centres such as Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, to name but a few.

The only common thread in all of this is that the education, housing and health delivery systems needed, the employment opportunities needed, are exactly that. They are needs looking for a solution—solutions,

however, which are not going to be one-time, one-type, one-way affairs.

This is why the Minister's comments as made before in these Estimates when he was in Opposition are so interesting. He calls for a legislative committee to go around the province into remote areas, into northern communities to listen to the Native concerns regarding child care, regarding education. I gather from his comment from his seat before that he is still committed to this. The purpose of these legislative hearings: to develop policy positions to maximize funds and resources of Government to put into place programs and projects to revitalize, to bring back pride, to make sure—and these are actually paraphrased from his words—that the Native people are the determiners of their own destiny.

One of the things in these particular comments of the previous Estimates that I found interesting was a subsequent comment that, again paraphrased, seemed to downplay some of these noble sentiments and objectives by stating that he saw the Northern Affairs Department then, with its attendant Native Affairs Secretariat, as deviating from these goals by pursuing the term "self-government," which he felt was a nebulous term that had no real meaning. I ask again, does he still have that view? Judging from his opening comments where he referenced the need for economic development, I would suspect probably not.

On the one hand, he had said it was time to create the mechanism which will create meaningful economic development; and then, if we take this into consideration on the other, he decries self-government as a deviation from achieving this. I want to be on record as stating that you cannot have one without the other. The terms are almost synonymous. Meaningful control over one's own destiny cannot occur unless you have the economic ability to achieve it.

One of the things that flowed out of the Minister's comments on the record in Hansard was the review of the Native Affairs Secretariat which has now of course come down and has been tabled, and initiatives, I understand, will flow from this. In fact, if I could just hark back to the past one more time, the Minister actually did call upon the previous NDP administration to produce a White Paper with respect to the Native Secretariat. I ask again, will this be forthcoming? The Minister nods his head in agreement. Will he be producing a White Paper which will be more far reaching than even this?

**Mr. Downey:** I nodded in agreement with the fact that I had called for a White Paper, but it may not be necessary now with the review of the secretariat. I will discuss that further, but I do not want to leave that impression with the Member.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I take the comments as a correction. I simply saw the head nodding. I thought he was agreeing with me and the sentiments, but we will see whether or not the White Paper and the initiatives flowing from it might be necessary or whether these initiatives can be addressed through the Native Initiative Council that he indicated would be developed. With that, I will defer to the second Opposition Member.

**Mr. Effjah Harper (Rupertsland):** First of all, I would like to congratulate the Member for Arthur, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), for bringing forward the Estimates of Northern Affairs. The department has a very important task to fulfill. Also, in relation to the Native Secretariat, there are a number of important issues that have to be resolved. It is not an easy task.

I would just like to maybe point out that during my term here—I have been here for some years now—when I first entered this Legislature, I felt that I could do some enhancing in terms of recognition of treaty and aboriginal rights, and over the years I have continued that and I have learned and experienced in this House, in working, being part of Government, how slow the process is. I thought that I could change things overnight, but unfortunately that is not the way Government works or the development of legislation in respect to many of the rights that we have. It does not come overnight. Certainly, during my term, I tried to bring forward many of the treaty and aboriginal rights that our Native people have.

I look forward to this Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) in terms of what he will bring forward to the Legislature and the actions that he is going to take. So far the Minister has announced a number of initiatives, a number of actions, and those are, at this point, the plans that he will hopefully implement. We, too, as a Government, had a number implemented and I am hoping that this Government will take on some of the initiatives that we have taken.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

One outstanding issue in this province in respect to the Treaty Indians is the outstanding issue of Treaty Land Entitlement. That issue has been outstanding for many years. We have met with the chiefs, Treaty Land Entitlement chiefs; we have met with the federal Government. As a matter of fact, we did sign an agreement in principle with the federal Government in 1984. It was signed by the federal Government, by the provincial Government and by the Treaty Land Entitlement.

\* (1640)

Unfortunately, that agreement was never followed through. As a matter of fact, I did sign an Order-in-Council, as a Member of the Executive Council, to agree to the Treaty Land Entitlement in 1987 which I asked the Premier during Question Period that he would follow through with that Order-in-Council. It is still an outstanding issue which this Government has to follow through, but I must indicate the federal Government, the federal Minister of Indian Affairs, has been stalling. I might say has reneged on the agreement in principle that we signed, as a matter indicated in a letter to me on February 26, as Minister of Northern Affairs, saying that he would not proceed with the agreement in principle that we signed.

To me, it is very unfortunate that we have a federal Minister that does not go along with the negotiations that have already taken place. Unfortunately, it is an issue that this Government has to follow through on. That is one issue that I hope this Minister will carry

through. Another issue, of course, is the whole issue of recognition of treaty and aboriginal rights of the aboriginal people of Canada and also in this province, in the Province of Manitoba. One of them is the recognition of self-government. We espoused that position when we were at the Constitutional Conference where aboriginal people—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. Harper:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is very important to me, and the aboriginal people of Manitoba would want the Members to hear the position that they have in respect to some of the rights that they have. As I have said before, I know the Minister has worked closely with the Manitoba Metis Federation on some issues. One is, of course, tripartite discussions on self-government in relation to housing, the Louis Riel Institute, and I expect the Minister to make some comments on that later on.

But I just want to maybe take a few more minutes to say that there are a number of other issues that I would like to put on the table. Unfortunately, time is of the essence and we are not going to have very much time to discuss, but that is one of the key areas, the Treaty Land Entitlement, self-government; and the other one is the Northern Flood Agreement that the Minister had mentioned and we will all be asking some questions on that if we have some time.

One, of course, is the Northeast Hydro line in which we, as a Government, made commitments to the northeast communities that we would be pursuing that pending the federal Government's willingness to participate. Unfortunately, there again we were not able to secure agreement with the federal Minister of Indian Affairs. It is sad to note that I got a remark, somebody saying that the federal Minister did not want to work with the NDP Government because we were a Party of different philosophy. That should not matter because the people are in need in the northeast area. I find that offensive to say that the federal Minister would not respond to our call for cost sharing in that project just because of different political affiliations. I believe that the Government has that responsibility to assure that people get assistance and also the services that they need as a right of this province, like any other citizen in this Province of Manitoba.

I will be pursuing that and certainly this Government had indicated in their Throne Speech that they will be pursuing it. I hope they were able to convince the Minister of Indian Affairs that they should cost share the agreement. Unfortunately, we were unable to get any kind of commitment from the federal Government. Like I mentioned before, it is unfortunate that they did not want to talk to us. There are numerous letters that were sent to him; unfortunately, there was no response, any positive response at all in terms of getting answers from the federal Minister of Indian Affairs.

I will just leave it at that because there are a number of other issues that I would want to ask directly of the Minister at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** As is the custom of the House, item 1.(a) Minister's Salary shall be deferred.

Item 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Minister (Mr. Downey).

**Mr. Downey:** In view of the time, would you mind inviting the staff to come in, please?

I ask—it is up to the Opposition critics—do they want to deal with all their questions and then we pass the departmental Estimates in one vote, or do they want to go through it line by line because we really are not going to have much chance to do it on an individual basis? Ask the questions and I will respond, we can deal it in that manner. It is up to them, as Members of this committee.

Have the staff come in, please, and I will let them respond as to how they want to handle it, but I am prepared to deal with all the questions at once and then pass it as one complete report.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the way the Minister opened up the questioning to sort of be rather all encompassing rather than to follow page by page and line by line. You will have to bear with me if I tend to be a little bit more structured in some of the questions because I do not have some of the necessary personal familiarity with some of the things that have gone on in this department in the past.

There are, essentially, just two very short questions I would like to address—well, actually three questions. Initially at this first section of Administration and Finance, and one has to do with the fact that under the Salaries portion, in this section, there is a severance pay amount for \$89,500 listed. I was wondering if the Minister might just be able to explain to me who, or what was, or how many people were let go in that.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let me first of all introduce my staff. I have my deputy, Mr. Dave Tomasson. I have Mr. Oliver Boulette, who is the ADM who is stationed in Thompson, we have made a permanent position with Oliver; Rene Gagnon from the Thompson office, who is the Director of Administration; Mr. Percy Williams, who is the acting ADM, who is responsible for the flood agreements and that department. Let me say, I am pleased that they are able to join us here.

The question, specifically, and that is some \$87,000 for severance, I would ask that the staff provide me with that information. Mr. Chairman, as the Member has to appreciate, when Governments change so do staffs at particular times and this was to accommodate the former Deputy Minister of the department and, as well, an executive assistant to the former Minister. That is what the severance was made up of.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Two things in this particular section have occurred. One of them, which the Minister has already explained, was the inclusion of the half million dollars for the Community Economic Development Fund. It used to be a report to the Natural

Resources I understand and now is included in here as a line item. In the previous Government, there was a section called Research and Planning which used to be in this area. Now I understand that with the change in Government and perhaps in personnel, there may have been a realignment, but where now is this Research and Planning being done? It must be absorbed somewhere in the department.

**Mr. Downey:** As the Member well knows and the Opposition, both parties well know, one of the major commitments of the Conservative Party was for decentralization, and this policy area which he refers to is one of those areas that we decentralized, the head of it being Mr. Terry Sargeant who, in the reorganization the position, disappeared. But the other four positions are now in the four regional offices and that is where the appropriation for those individuals come from.

**Mr. Harper:** I wanted to ask the Minister, he had mentioned Research and Planning. I wanted to ask him a question about Phil Eyler. Was he released too or terminated, or what is the reason behind that?

**Mr. Downey:** It is interesting to note, and maybe that is why the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has been so touchy the last few days in paying attention to what is going on with the Minister of Northern Affairs.

No, Mr. Chairman, there was no laying off of Mr. Phil Eyler. In the decentralization of the department, Mr. Eyler's position moved to Thompson. Mr. Eyler decided after a period of time that he no longer wanted to be employed by the Department of Northern Affairs and it was his decision not to continue his employment.

**Mr. Harper:** Yes, I had spoken to Mr. Eyler and his position had been moved to Thompson but he was given the opportunity to move to Thompson but, unfortunately, his wife was working in the city too and could not move to Thompson. But however, what was the function of Mr. Eyler? Could the Minister elaborate on that? What did he exactly do?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let us just make the record clear. For those Members who may not be aware, Mr. Phil Eyler was the former NDP Member for River East who found employment in the Department of Northern Affairs under the New Democratic Government. It was basically a community planning area and, as I had indicated, it was his decision not to continue on with his employment in Thompson, not a decision of Government but a decision of Mr. Phil Eyler.

**Mr. Harper:** Was one of his jobs to negotiate with the Sherridon mining in terms of with the Pioneer Metal? Was that one of his functions?

**Mr. Downey:** Yes, that is correct but, unfortunately, not very much progress had been made under that particular individual and the activities that were going on with Sherridon. In fact, on being appointed Minister the whole community of Sherridon have been somewhat overlooked by the previous administration and very few results have come out of any negotiations that have

taken place between the mine and the community. (Interjection)- The Member for the Pas (Mr. Harapiak) seems to have some kind of a problem and I do not know what it would be. He is very touchy about this. I would suggest that he ask the community of Sherridon how things are going since we have taken over office, in some of the negotiations that have currently taken place.

For the Member's information, to save him asking the question, we have been doing some negotiations with the Sherridon mine. An individual by the name of Mr. Paul Jarvis who has recently been appointed as the senior negotiator for the province and Manitoba Hydro has been carrying out those negotiations with the Sherridon mine and, in view of the fact that negotiations are going on with them, I am unable to give any specific details other than to say that I think there is progress being made. When it is able to be announced as to any agreements that are reached between Sherridon and the province, then I will be quite prepared to make those public.

**Mr. Harper:** Did he say that Paul Jarvis is negotiating on behalf of the province in respect to the Sherridon mine and Pioneer Metals? Is that correct?

**Mr. Downey:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

**Mr. Harper:** Did the Government give all reasonable consideration to continue employment in the Civil Service of the employee who had become redundant? I know I am referring to the MGEA agreement, Section 1901, in terms of fulfilling that agreement in respect to Civil Service. Was that carried out at all?

**Mr. Downey:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Harper:** I will just leave it at that and then maybe you want to ask about this.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** In the Health Estimates there is an item addressed for Northern Health, specifically for primary care, disease prevention and health promotion. It is a sum of only \$48,000.00. I am just wondering, does the Northern Affairs Department have any input into the delivery of this particular program or is this strictly done through the Department of Health?

**Mr. Downey:** The Department of Health handles that.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Then just to make certain that I understand it correctly, the Northern Affairs Department then concerns itself specifically only with the economic development of the North, or is it a broader mandate?

**Mr. Downey:** The mandate of Northern Affairs is far broader than that. If we were to look at The Northern Affairs Act it is pretty well spelled out that all the activities that are carried out in northern Manitoba from whatever department of Government, basically the Department of Northern Affairs has either the clearing house or the final say or the final authority as to what takes place.

We have some 54 communities in northern Manitoba which are the responsibility of the Department of Northern Affairs. We have the responsibility of carrying out the provision of community services, whether it be the infrastructure, whether it be the firefighting, that type of essential services; the whole area of community area development plans; implementation for settling of claims under the Northern Flood, as he is aware of; monitoring Government activities relating to the northern training and employment agencies; improving the infrastructure, as I have indicated, in northern communities; developing a northern economic strategy in consultation with northern and Native residents.

The Northern Development Agreement also falls within our jurisdiction to see program developments take place, managing, as I said, the Northern Development Agreements, providing recreational facilities, assisting in the provision of recreational facilities for youth in northern communities, offering them a greater range of training and activities for personal development, encouraging northern and Native women to play a larger role in the economic and human development, and working towards new joint ventures, where appropriate.

It is a general, broad range of provincial Government acting like a lot of municipal Governments act throughout other parts of the province where we have our organized or incorporated municipalities, but it is really a broad range of municipal activities that have to be carried out under the Department of Northern Affairs. I just say that there are a broad range of activities and we try to coordinate and cooperate with other departments, whether it is Health, Education, and assist in the bettering of those communities.

\* (1700)

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Mr. Chairman, I have to speak with tongue in cheek slightly. All of the above are part of our responsibilities, except Health, because the first thing you mentioned essentially was that there was very little in that aspect. Actually I would rather ask, is there any part, in that long list of mandated activities of the Department of Northern Affairs, wherein a little bit of extra effort might not be placed into the preventative aspect of health promotion and disease prevention since essentially a lot of the services that must be delivered up there in the remote areas do, because of the transportation problem again, impact negatively on a very up-to-date health delivery service network?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, the Member makes a point. Let us say that if there is need to support or do something to help some of the other departments with the resources, personnel, particular resources of the department, we do not turn our backs on them, but when it comes to direct program delivery it is the Departments of Health and Education that provide that.

Let me say as well, and I think it is important when we are looking at the whole area of northern development communities, I make mention of the 54 communities we are responsible for and I know we are

restricted in time. This whole area of what the Member referred to as self-government of some communities, remembering it is not the mandate of the provincial Government to become directly involved in what is taking place on the reserve areas. That is federal responsibility which, yes, we do have some shared services and shared provision of resources or services, but again it has to be clearly understood that on the reserve areas it is a federal jurisdiction.

I think it is a matter of trying to maximize the provincial resources wherever we can. But again, the direct program delivery on Health falls within the Department of Health and, if there is some support in a personnel way, then probably it could be accommodated. I say the movement of people, that type of thing, if it comes to bettering their way of life, we are more than prepared and have been prepared to do it.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Just one more question left in what I consider this particular section. Under the identification of the financial administrative support group, it states it performs audits in self-administering communities. I am just wondering is this audit provided on a regular basis, on a systematic basis, on a periodic basis, or an ad-hoc random basis.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of things I would like to say in this regard. It is provided on a regular basis, but it is our desire to have some of the communities in northern Manitoba to come to a municipal status where they do not have the continued reliance on the Department of Northern Affairs, that they are self-administering type of activities that take place as have taken place in other incorporated municipalities throughout Manitoba.

We have not been able to accomplish that to this point, but it is my understanding in talking to the ADM and staff that some communities have come very close to it. I am not quite absolutely sure of what the future would hold for them with that kind of a set-up but again we are encouraging it. Again, I guess we can talk about self-government or local government. I think that is truly the way we can enhance Native self-government and activities of responsibility and enhance it in that way. I think it is an extremely important process and one which I think will work most productively in this area.

**Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas):** I would like to thank the Minister for giving us the opportunity to cover the whole department. I have to go to another meeting, so I will be leaving shortly. I am pleased that you will give us the flexibility to cover the whole waterfront. The question I have for the Minister is there are a number of Native organizations set up to evaluate the Northern Development Agreement. Has that evaluation been completed and what were the results of it?

**Mr. Downey:** That review is just in the process of being completed and I understand the department has been invited to a joint federal-provincial meeting to discuss the outcome of that very shortly.

**Mr. Harapiak:** Have there been any negotiations going on to begin the new series of meetings for new Northern

Development Agreement, or have things been held in abeyance while this evaluation was going on?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let me say, one of the first things that I did upon becoming elected was to put forward the desire to negotiate a new agreement. Let me say, as well, that at the federal-provincial Ministers of Northern Affairs this fall—it was in Goose Bay, Labrador—there was a desire to work jointly to request of the federal Government that they work toward a new agreement, and there are currently meetings going on discussing that whole program.

**Mr. Harapiak:** There are several other questions I would like to ask but, as I am not the critic for this department, I will not take much more time. I just want to ask one more question. The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) has given all of the Members of the Opposition an opportunity to have some recommendation into the highways program and, under the Community ACCESS and Resource Program, I am wondering if the Minister has completed the construction for this year and, if he has, where was it carried out, and will the northern MLAs have an opportunity to have some input into the selection for roads in next year's program?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let me say that I am very pleased with the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) in his opening up the opportunity for Members to put their recommendations forward. I sat in Opposition for six years, Mr. Chairman, and never really had that request come forward.

But it is important that the Member brought that question forward because there is one specific area that I think all Members of the Legislature should have a chance to put their comments and ideas forward, particularly when we have heard so much from the Leader of the New Democratic Party and from the Members of the Liberal Party, and that is the whole question of tendering work activities, and I know what the policies of the former administration were. It is extremely important that we clearly understand where we are going because there is no point in trying to make political marks out of what is important to some of the northern communities, and I say this with the greatest of sincerity.

We currently have a proposal to build a new bridge, the tendering process was gone through. The bridge will be built on a reserve, one of the communities that the Member is fairly familiar with. Tenders came in. There was a part of the tendering process, local employment factor is weighted on the basis of local employment, that the contractor of the bridge, in fact, hire a lot of local people. Mr. Chairman, it appears—and I say that the final decision has not been made—as if the second-lowest tender would be the one that would be favoured when it comes to the employment factor. The numbers show us that the amount of employment for that local community would be the one which should be picked. I know the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) brought it to my attention a few days ago, and I said, yes, we were looking at it. He had a person call him that had the lowest tender, but the lowest tender does not have the most local employment

factor built into it. I know the former administration, when they were awarding tenders, did in fact take that into consideration, the local employment factor.

So that is why I am laying it out here. The Member asked me the question and I would say that, at this particular point, the decision has not been made, but consideration is being made to the second-lowest tender which, in fact, has got the greatest amount of local employment.

Now, one has to appreciate many of these communities have 80 percent to 90 percent unemployment and the decision has to be weighted in that regard. So I ask the Members of the Opposition, are they going to say to that local community, who are not going to have the local employment factor involved in the work on that bridge, are they going to come at me and say, "Minister of Northern Affairs, you have done something dastardly wrong. You have not accepted the lowest tender when in fact it has weighted in favour of the second lowest tender for local employment." So I throw that challenge out to the Members. I throw it out today. Better we deal with it up front than to have the Members of the Opposition attack me and the Government saying you did not accept the lowest tender.

Well, the final decision has not been made. So I say to the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) who asked the question, having been a Member of a Government who always did not accept the lowest tender but in fact used the employment weighted factor. So I say, can we have some agreement, as three Parties in this House, to carry on with that kind of a policy? I think it is a very fair question and that is why I raise the issue, so that the publicly totally know how we base our decisions when it comes to the employing of people.

\* (1710)

**Mr. Harapiak:** I think if the Minister of Northern Affairs would look at our record when we were the Government, and how we did handle local employment initiatives, I think that he would have our answer. We did not hesitate to weight that in when the contracts were being let. So I do not think that we need to make apologies for it. As he mentioned, there are high unemployment rates in many of those communities and that is the only opportunity they are going to have if there is some local northern preference give to them. I think that should go without asking, that you would get our support on it.

I did ask the Minister, if we were going to have some opportunity to have some input into the selection, the roads that the Minister would be giving some priority to, would there be an opportunity to have some input, much as the way when our Minister of Highways came forward to the Members of the Opposition to have input into where their priorities were in their communities?

**Mr. Downey:** I am not sure, if the Member has a particular project or road that he is referring to, then I would welcome them as I have done when I was Minister before and I welcome it now. If he has some recommendations, he is a Member, it is his responsibility to come forward too.

Let me say, it is unfortunate, one could always redesign the whole request process. It is fair. I know when I became Minister of Northern Affairs, there was a tremendous neglect of the Sherridon community. The road was a terrible mess when we came into office. They pleaded and pleaded and pleaded to get something done. Well, we have been able to do that. Now if the Member happens to know of a deplorable road situation that is as dangerous as that one was, that has caused that community or a community a tremendous amount of difficulty, as that one did, then, yes, I would entertain his thoughts on road improvements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital):** I just have one brief question. The Minister alludes to the fact that I did approach him on this item of the bridge, so that clearly, the record would show that this Opposition anyway, the Official Opposition, did not attack him on his method. I only have one concern that maybe the Minister could confirm, that when the tender call went out, that there was a clear understanding that the local labour component would be a very significant factor in the method of awarding the contract.

**Mr. Downey:** I was not putting any accusations that I was being attacked. It was done very, very properly and I acknowledge that of the Member.

It is a factor, when they are tendered, that that is known by all people that tender, that there is a local employment factor. In fact, anyone who has been tendering in northern projects, from what the Member for The Pas just said, I am sure any Member of the House that has been previously in Government, know that is in there—that the local employment factor is a factor. Actually, I wanted the input from the Members, that is why I am raising it. I do not want to have to stand here and try to defend publicly why I did not take the lowest bid. The fact is that when you weight the local employment factor in, then the second lowest tender is the one that would, in fact, come to the top, would be the one that would be selected. As I said, the final decision has not been made yet, that we are in the process of doing that. I appreciate the comments of both the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) and the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** I have one specific question I would like to address with the Minister right now—and I thank the critics, both for the Liberal Party and myself, for letting me interject—and it is with respect to the tendering of contracts in Pikwitonei.

It is my understanding that the Minister has been advised of some serious concerns by residents of the community of Pikwitonei with respect to some of the elected officials in the community receiving tenders from the community for work that is done using their equipment and their staff.

They have advised the Minister that they believe there is a conflict of interest with respect to the process there and it is a difficult situation, given that in many small communities people who run for office are also people who operate businesses in the communities. But in this

particular instance, they feel very strongly that there have been violations of the Act and they have asked the Minister to take action.

I would ask him if he can provide a status report as to exactly what action he has taken with response to those specific complaints?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let me say to the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that we have investigated the accusations. The issue again arose just recently on a winter road contract of which again the recommendation came from the council, came to accept the same individual who was, again, the member of council and not the lowest bidder. The community recommended not the lowest bidder, and the department refused to accept that tender.

The other work activity that he is referring to has been investigated and to my knowledge that issue has ended without any need to take any further action in that regard. It is my understanding that it was cleared up, but there is one current issue that I have referred to on a winter road contract that it has in fact been refused to be accepted, that of the council member.

**Mr. Cowan:** Maybe the Minister can then indicate specifically what has happened with that contract; has the winter road contract been given to the lowest bidder and will be proceeding in a timely fashion?

Secondly, can he give some commitment to have staff sit down with residents of the community once again, because I know they have in the past as well, and try to resolve this issue because it is creating friction in a very small community that does not really need to have that added burden or that added problem to the existence of most of the residents of that community.

It is a serious matter, and it is one of extreme concern to a number of residents there, and they are firmly convinced that there is a conflict with respect to the council awarding contracts to the mayor, in this instance, and to other individuals who sit on the council or are associated with the business operation of the mayor's, and they believe that there should be something within the policy of the Government that would ensure that the system is not being abused with respect to that sort of awarding of contracts.

Now, I can not say, given the information that I have available to me that it is or it is not, but I can tell you that they believe very strongly that it is being abused and they are very serious and honest individuals who care about their community and would like to see these sorts of problems dealt with in as conciliatory a manner as possible, but at the same time they do not want to give up on an issue which they feel is important to the future of their community. So, I would ask him if he can commit to using his office and his very capable staff to try to sort that issue out at the community level?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, let me first of all respond to the Member by saying that there was a reply that went to the community on the issue that he has raised. I have responded to them directly. Let me say as well

that because of these kinds of things happening, the department and I, particularly the department, have reviewed the regulations with the view of trying to correct the problem of the issue that the Member raises.

Let me say, particularly dealing with the current situation, I have indicated that it has currently happened that the winter road project was not awarded to the council members, that it was awarded to the lowest tender. However, the people who were involved in that community, bidding on that community work, bid on another project which that other community recommended they be accepted, and they were not the lowest tender, they were very close to the lowest tender, but were close to it. The community recommended that it was not dealing with a straight conflict so it was accepted.

The issue raised is one that is very valid, particularly when you are dealing in small communities. A lot of the people who are doing some of the work are on council. It is a matter of trying to make sure that is sorted out and fairness is applied for everyone. As I said, we are reviewing the regulations in that regard, and trying to correct that difficulty that has been there. We will take a further meeting with staff to sit down with that community to further satisfy them that there has not been any previous activities that should not have taken place and there is some rectifying action that should be followed up, then I am prepared to do it.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Cowan:** I thank the Minister for that commitment. Just to clarify, when staff go in the community, I will hope they go in for the purpose of No. 1, trying to work out appropriate procedures that work for that community; No 2, to listen again to the community residents to make certain that there have been no violations of existing policy. They are still of that opinion, and I think they need to be heard again on that to make certain that the department has not overlooked anything.

My final point is a suggestion to the Minister and I imagine that he intended to proceed in this manner in any event but when they are reviewing that regulation or any other regulation, I hope they will be reviewing it with the Northern Association of Community Councils so that the regulation development process can follow that policy which was established previously which includes their full involvement. Seeing him shake his head yes to that comment, I accept the fact that is being done and would encourage it be done in all instances.

**Mr. Downey:** Again appreciating the confidentiality of what Government can expose publicly and what they cannot. The intent of the regulations that are proposed have been discussed with the Northern Association of Community Councils just about two weeks ago, I believe it was, I was at a meeting with them and that was one of the items on the agenda. I appreciate the Member's comments.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 1.(b)(1)—pass? The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** All right, I just have a few points of questions for clarification with respect to the decentralization of the department that the Minister referenced in his opening remarks and also upon one of my questions.

The four regions as they are now structured have made it a little bit more difficult to compare what has happened before with what is happening now and in one of the previous, in the last New Democratic Party Budget, I believe there was an item for something that—the numbers are approximate \$250,000 of a grant to reappportion to the Northern Association of Community Councils. Just exactly how was that delivered? Now I notice that there are many grant items mentioned, but not specifically this particular one.

**Mr. Downey:** That grant is basically given to them to operate their Northern Association of Communities Council Organization. That is basically what it is given to them for. Let me say as well that begs the opportunity to make an announcement that I was able to get support from my colleagues, and that is that for the first time in some six years the Councils of the Northern Communities will get an increase in their monthly honorariums for carrying out the work activities. Again, I am surprised that the former administration was unable to carry out that kind of a commitment and pay them for the kind of work activities they are. Mr. Chairman, it is that kind of positive action we are seeing in Northern Manitoba under the Conservative Government that I—

**An Honourable Member:** Hear, Hear!

**Mr. Downey:** —am surprised that it was not carried out far sooner by a Government that proposes to be such great saviours of Northern Manitoba. I know one does not want to expect the length of the time frame. I am pleased as well to say, and introduce my colleague, the Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell) who—

**An Honourable Member:** Hear, Hear!

**Mr. Downey:** —is carrying out a legislative assistance responsibility, very capable. I will tell you that really is the welcome person to the North when I go up there. He is known by everyone, and they just welcome him with open arms in every community. I am pleased to have him with me here today.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I am almost sorry I asked that last question, I did not realize it was going to give the Minister a chance to make a political statement.

However, on a more serious note, with respect to the different regions which are apportioned for delivering the direct services of the Northern Affairs Department, within the personnel itself, I would like to sort of have the Minister do a breakdown for me with respect to—and I want to put it in general terms—affirmative action. But I do not necessarily mean affirmative action the way we normally define it as women but rather here first how many Native personnel, then basically also how many women, and finally also how many Native women, get a complete breakdown on that particular area.

**Mr. Downey:** Let me reiterate my comments in my opening about the recent contracting agreement that was reached between resource initiatives and I know the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) should have taken more into consideration as criticisms. As I indicated out of four people who will be carrying out a lot of the responsibility, three of them will be of Native ancestry; so that is 75 percent which one specific contract that was let and work activity. I am, by the way, checking out some of the previous administration's actions in that regard and it does not augur quite as well for the New Democratic Party.

As well, Mr. Chairman, at some point in the near future, and I do not want to take up the time of the committee, I have quite a bit of research done on some of the contracts and agreements that were let between the New Democratic Party and their political friends, and maybe some more direct connections than what the Leader of the New Democratic Party may want to own up to.

Specifically, dealing with the affirmative action, I am informed by staff that we are somewhat above the average of the Government. The specifics of that I can get for the Member but I guess if one wants to use the visual presence of my staff in front of me, we have a good representative here of the kind of good affirmative action we have in the department.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Yes, that is well said. I see 75 percent representation here but actually I am looking at not just the members in the department, but actually working out of the regional offices. How many managerial, the professional/technical, how many administrative support are of Native ancestry and also addressing the affirmative action for getting a good percentage of women in this area? If you cannot or do not have that information here now, perhaps you can provide that to me at another point in time.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, I have not got the specifics but I can assure him as far as the Native content is concerned; it is I think above average as far as the other departments are concerned. Now, I will get that information because I think it is extremely important and I am very conscious of the Member's question and the desire to continue a good record in that regard and improve it.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** On this very same point. You used the word twice now, about average or what is right for the Government or for what is found in the Government. Could you also then determine what is the average so we can determine whether or not the average is correct as well?

**Mr. Downey:** I did not say what is right for the Government, I said what the Government average would be. I will get the details for the Member. My commitment is to make sure that we have that information to the Member and as soon as that information is available, let me add to it.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot pass this opportunity up to say that I was extremely disappointed in the New

Democratic Leader at the Northern Association of Community Councils when he made the kind of comments that he made about the new Deputy that I hired. It came back to me from many northern leaders how upset they were about the—I would say just terrible remarks about a man who is dedicated to the North and it was very, very uncalled for. I would expect that the Member of the New Democratic Party would at some point be prepared to apologize for those uncalled-for comments about my current Deputy Minister.

**Mr. Harper:** I wanted to ask the Minister on the Treaty Land Entitlement. As I mentioned before, this is a very important issue which has been dragging on for many years. As a matter of fact, when we were in Government, we had commissioned a study that was headed by the late Leon Mitchell and completed the task of completing that Treaty Land Entitlement Commission and we use that as a guide in negotiating with the federal Government and also with the Treaty Land Entitlement Bands. In 1984, in September, we signed an agreement in principle which was signed by the federal Government and signed by the provincial Government and also by chiefs.

\* (1730)

I might add that we had continued to negotiate with the Conservative Government, who the Minister at that time was David Crombie, and he supported the direction that we were doing and then there was a change of Ministers at that time. Then we ran into problems with the present Minister—the Minister's name was Bill McKnight—and we had difficulty even getting a response from the correspondence that we have sent to him. It was not until our Premier had written the letter to the Prime Minister that we had some response from the federal Minister of Indian Affairs. At that time, he indicated to me personally over the telephone—I might say, that the staff of Northern Affairs was present—and he indicated to me that we would be continuing the negotiations right after April 1, that was in 1987.

In that same year and in February 1987, I signed an Order-in-Council to proceed with the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement. I asked the Premier if there has been any change in policy, or what direction they had taken. The Premier's response, at that time, was they would continue with the present agreement and the Order-in-Council that is there right now to negotiate with the federal Government. Could the Minister indicate what is happening there and whether there has been any policy changes or what the federal response is, because the federal Minister had sent a letter to me indicating that he is not prepared to proceed with the agreement in principle that we signed? As a matter of fact, has reneged on the agreement in principle.

At the same time, he did not even bother to consult with the province or consult with the Native organizations, the Treaty Land Entitlement Chiefs, to say that he has withdrawn or completely reneged on that Treaty Land Entitlement.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, this is an important item and I know that the Treaty Land Entitlement issue is

one which has been going on for some time and the communities would like to see a resolve to it. But, if I were speculating as to why the federal Government may not have wanted to advance on some of these things, it might just possibly have been the former administration's attitude toward the federal Government. You know, who made the ruffie, who made the great noise in Ottawa when it was issues happening in Manitoba? Howard Pawley raised such a stink over CF-18. My goodness, he was really tearing up the sod.

Those kinds of things, and that kind of an approach to the federal Government, just may have cost the Native Community something on Treaty Land Entitlement. It is those kinds of approaches to the federal Government that do not also auger well for everyone. When the Premier puts up that kind of an activity, it is easy for the rest of the members of a federal Government to reject some of the other proposals that are coming forward.

So, maybe the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) should take a look at some of the actions of his previous Premier who got the trouncing that he deserved just recently in the federal election, as to why we do not have and were not able to accomplish the Treaty Land Entitlement. I say that with respect to the Member for Rupertsland that maybe, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Rupertsland is sitting on the wrong side of the House when it comes to bettering the Native community.

Maybe he should reconsider the Party that he sits with when you look at the positive initiatives that have taken place during our administration; the short period of some six to seven months. Maybe the Member for Rupertsland would want to reconsider the Party that he sits with. We are for the people of the North. So, I say that with the greatest of respect.

Now, as to where it is at this current time, it is still being rejected by the federal Government. We have not changed our position. Nothing has changed but it is the federal Government that are not prepared to go with it. I am prepared to advance to the federal Government the proposal that we sit down again and renegotiate. I believe that is an important element and we hope to do so, not with a poisoned atmosphere that was being emanated by the former Premier of this province who again could not quit.

He had to kick the federal Government when it came to free trade, again showing no clear conscience of what the people of Manitoba and western Canada wanted. All these things reflect as to how you get along. I again say to the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) in all sincerity, he may well find himself better served and the Native community better served to change from the New Democratic Party and become a Progressive Conservative Party Member and actually achieve something for his constituents.

**Mr. Harper:** It is interesting to note the Minister's comments with respect to this very important issue. I might remind him that we had difficulty in trying to reach the agreement with the federal Minister on the northeast hydro line, that same kind of response that

we had. We did not get a single response from the federal Minister of Indian Affairs. Also on treaty land entitlement he did not even bother contacting us as the Minister responsible for the treaty land entitlement. Also he did not even consult with the Indian chiefs of Manitoba with respect to that. That is the kind of attitude that this federal Minister has in respect to the aboriginal people.

I might challenge the Minister in respect to the support for aboriginal people in this country. What is his position on the Meech Lake Accord? I know that the Indian people there are shafted once again. That is the only reason we have the non-derogation clause in the Meech Lake Accord, because of our Premier who stood up for aboriginal people in this country, not Brian Mulroney at all.

In terms of the other issue, I wanted to ask the Minister, I know he is saying that he is going to continue on the treaty land entitlement thing. We do not have very much time. Based on the Northern Development Agreement, could you provide some status report to what is happening there in terms of northern development and also Special ARDA?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, I will be as kind as possible. My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) just reminded me of something. He takes a shot at me about the Meech Lake Accord and our position. We have not put a position forward. We are going to go to have hearings throughout the province and listen to the people of Manitoba. It was he who sat around a Cabinet table watching his Minister, Premier Howard Pawley, sign it. What is he coming after us for? He signed it. He was a member of the Treasury Bench that signed it. Now do not let him say and do not let him take the political position in his community that he is opposed to Meech Lake because it was he and his Premier who signed the Meech Lake Accord. Do not blame Brian Mulroney.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), on a point of order.

**Mr. Harper:** I did not say I opposed Meech Lake but it is a door opened to aboriginal people and I wanted to find out where he stood, and we supported the aboriginal people.

**Mr. Downey:** Now, Mr. Chairman, he has flip-flopped. Like his Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), he has flip-flopped. The Leader of the New Democratic Party was supportive of it. Now he is not. The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) just said on the record that he is supportive of Meech Lake. We will proceed to move on to answer the question on the Northern Development Agreement. I said earlier we have contacted the federal Government. I would have thought there would have been far more negotiations taking place previously by the former Minister, but again for some reason there has not been as much progress in that area, again maybe because of the atmosphere.

\* (1740)

But let us just put it this way. We are currently trying to get in place a new agreement. The time factor with

the federal election interruption, the time factor may well not be able to get that accomplished. It is extremely important and we are working cooperatively with my colleagues who have other agreements to put together with the federal Government, working cooperatively, that we get a major initiative for Manitoba. One of those initiatives as far as we are concerned is the Northern Development Agreement. That is all I can say. We have not gotten one signed but we are discussing with the communities trying to get one in place to assist us in that regard.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to these agreements, we have quite a few programs that have been initiated either through federal-provincial agreements, like the Northern Development Agreement, or I believe the Native Economic Development Program is entirely 100 percent federal. Could the Minister please indicate to me how the different objectives of the various programs are coordinated so that essentially we tend to get the maximum benefit for the dollars that are actually able to be developed, or able to be spent?

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, the Member is referring to special program initiatives under the Northern Development Agreement. Basically the development of that takes place through consultation with the participants, with the communities, the Northern Association of Community Councils, the different communities that are affected and involved.

A general discussion from those communities that have—we are not reinventing the wheel here. The Northern Development Agreement has been in place for quite a few years, I do not know how many years, eight, ten, whatever it has been, that there are some successes to that program and some failures. What we are trying to do are build on the successes and reimplement them.

For example, we talked about transportation. Airports are an extremely important element for northern development and community access. We have areas with need of access roads. Tourism is becoming a major developing industry in the North and that is all part of that development of infrastructure. There would be some changes when it comes to some of the agreements that may well help the tourism industry, whereas maybe 10 years ago that element was not as important.

So we are dealing with changing times, but it is a matter of making sure that we have in place community recognized needs and community people having input to those.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** It is a fact that these programs have been in place for some time, but we also have a situation where you have, once certain programs are developed, certain inertias or certain ways of doing things which tend to become fixed, either in the program objectives or perhaps in simply the way we—this is how we have always done it, that is why we will keep on doing it that way.

We have here the expressed statement from the Minister that transportation is important. He just referenced it in the previous remarks. We have many

departments that actually have, shall we say, their objectives or mandates which tend to take place in the general geographic area that is covered by the Northern Affairs Department.

Natural Resources, for instance, Energy and Mines for another, we even have Manitoba Hydro which is a Crown corporation actively involved in aspects of this and I was just wondering if there is a means whereby in this Government where a coordination committee has been established whereby some of the conflicting—not necessarily conflicting—but some of the overlapping programs can be coordinated so we actually do not have to spend the same dollar twice.

**Mr. Downey:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, there are technical working groups, management groups from not only the Province of Manitoba, but provincial, federal, from the different jurisdictions.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 1.(b)(1) Salaries—pass; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

Item 1.(c)(1)—the Member for Rupertsland.

**Mr. Harper:** I was just conferring with my critic here. I wanted to ask, on the Northern Flood issue, I know the Minister had made a statement just a short while ago with respect to the \$10 million negotiation in terms of the settlement of the Northern Flood Agreement. The Minister knows very well that we had been negotiating on the \$10 million negotiations and as a matter of fact we had that mandate from Cabinet to negotiate that \$10 million. Once we had that nailed down we were supposed to go back for approval of the \$10 million for payout, but unfortunately we did not succeed in coming to an agreement with the Northern Flood bands in reaching this \$10 million because our approach, as a matter of fact, was two-pronged. One was to negotiate item by item which we were very successful, as a matter of fact concluded a number of specific items in respect to the Northern Flood bands. The \$10 million that the bands had requested that we had negotiated were to be applied to specific claims if we had come to a conclusion.

My question to the Minister of Northern Affairs, these negotiations that are going on with respect to the \$10 million, is that sort of a global settlement in respect to the overall Northern Flood, or is that a partial settlement, agreement, or this \$10 million, is it to be applied to specific areas or what is the strategy of the Minister of Northern Affairs? I was wondering what direction this Government is taking.

**Mr. Downey:** One does not want to be too tough on the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) because I know he, as an individual, was sincere in his attempts to resolve many of these problems, but it was his colleagues, it was the Premier, it was all the Members around him that were not prepared to give him the support that he needed.

Again, let me say to the Member for Rupertsland, he would be far better sitting on this side of the House and accomplishing far more for the northern and Native communities than he was able to do under the New

Democratic Party. As well, he makes specific reference to a commitment of \$10 million. His Leader, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), clearly stated in the press that he did not have a commitment for \$10 million, that he would have to come back to the Government. Now we hear that the Member for Rupertsland said there was a commitment.

Let me again state that it is our ambition as a Government, as Hydro and as the federal Government, to find what the final global figure is for the Northern Flood Agreement. We want that resolved.

To show how meaningfully we are sitting at the table, this morning I gave a cheque for \$1 million, the first of the \$10 million to Chief Walter Monias; in my office this morning, a cheque for \$1 million was given to the Northern Flood Committee, which is the first of the \$10 million.

If he was sincere as a former Minister he would have had the money in an account. We had to get that money gathered up from different areas within the Northern Flood. We are committed to resolve the issue. We have three senior negotiators now appointed and the fourth one very shortly. We are not continuing to drag those people along for political purposes. We want it resolved and I again would suggest to the Member for Rupertsland, one of his best considerations for his political career may be to join the Conservative Party.

**Mr. Harper:** I would just like to indicate to the Minister that I did have the mandate to negotiate the \$10 million with the Northern Flood bands, but unfortunately we were in election time and we could not. As a matter of fact, the Minister knows that we were to deal with the matter after the election, but I am glad that they are carrying on the initiative that we had started previously.

**Mr. Chairman,** as a matter of fact, I indicated to the Member that we settled some of the negotiations with the Northern Flood bands. We had settled over \$3 million with respect to the fishing in Norway House and also in Nelson House. We settled the Footprint Bridge with the Nelson House Band and the Key Communicators Program. A number of issues were settled with this previous administration.

I wanted to indicate to the Minister in terms of trying to achieve this \$10 million settlement, this \$10 million advance, where does the Government go from here? Is that sort of the figure that they are trying to negotiate? My concern is that this \$10 million will probably take some time to negotiate in terms of what he is trying to achieve. I believe the objective is to settle the entire agreement, is that the approach? This \$10 million, is that part of the solution? Could the Minister elaborate what the \$10 million is supposed to accomplish?

\* (1750)

**Mr. Downey:** We are no longer talking about \$10 million, we are talking about \$9 million because I said there was a cheque went to them this morning. That shows that we mean business. We are not going around saying we did this, that, or the other thing. We have taken some action.

**Mr. Chairman,** as well, there are senior negotiators who are working on this particular issue at this particular time. I do not think that there would be any more productivity to discuss it further at this particular time. A commitment has been made; there are negotiations that are proceeding. As soon as we see some positive conclusion to the amount of money that is owed, of course we will be all part of the whole activity that is taking place.

**Mr. Chairman:** Will the item pass?

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I ask the question on the Native Affairs Secretariat. I understand, with the Minister's comments, that after the review was completed the move to change the format to the way it was described in the review process as the Native Initiatives Council, could the Minister perhaps outline for us a little bit how the workings of that council might operate? As I see, essentially, the Secretariat worked, and if I simply go by this year's Estimates for the year ending March 31, 1989, the Secretariat, if we take aside the staff complement, take aside the other expenditures in respect to operating expenses, they essentially have the authority to disburse grants to the sum of \$648,000, which is unspecified; and the Aboriginal Development Fund which is for the tune of \$600,000, essentially, according to the description, the Secretariat was to develop policies to facilitate programs to consult. I am just wondering if the granting feature, which was initially coming out of the Secretariat will still be part of the Native Initiatives Council or whether the Minister sees this taking a different form and having different powers.

**Mr. Downey:** Just to be brief, at this particular time, there has not been a clear cut acceptance of the recommendations. But I can perceive that there would be basically recommendations coming from the Initiatives Council that would help direct the funds to the betterment of the Native communities. I think it would be somewhat more sensitive to the needs and the demands and the aspirations. I think that it would develop in that direction.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** With respect to also something that was announced last week and also referenced in the Throne Speech, as the Minister mentioned earlier, a new initiative has been approved to support an Urban Native Strategy. Could the Minister please elaborate on this with respect to what he means by an Urban Native Strategy? I know the \$100,000 appropriation that he authorized for the development did not actually specify sufficiently what he meant by this strategy.

**Mr. Downey:** I appreciate the Member's question. Unfortunately, we were prepared to elaborate through a press conference and totally through the House as to what the Urban Native Strategy would be all about. I will just review the history.

It was an election commitment by our Premier and by our Party that we would develop an Urban Native Strategy. We have put together a technical team of people between the different departments that are most directly related with the urban Native issues. We had approved in Government the whole area of some of

the terms of reference in the whole direction that we were expecting it to take. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, there happens to be in Government, sometimes the system kind of information flows when Ministers are not ready for it to flow. You might call it a leak or something like that. That information—pretty precise information, by the way—got into the hands of the New Democratic Leader. Now one would never want to question how he would have any connections within Government at this point, but anyway he was making a big issue out of the contractual agreement of the work that was going to be done and the emphasis was placed on that rather than the positive side of what we were going to do with the Urban Native Strategy.

I am expecting the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) to come forward with a great speech and say he was just going to take it to Cabinet or he had it in Cabinet or he was just going to do it when the election hit—it was just there when the election hit. It seems every time we go to do something in Northern Affairs or Native Affairs, it was just going to be done, the election just stopped it. He had six years and it seems that it all piled up to the spring of this year.

With the greatest of respect, Mr. Chairman, the answer for the critic is we are going to try to draw on the resources within the urban Native communities, all the communities. The review will take place throughout the different communities in Manitoba. It is not only in Winnipeg that the Urban Native Strategy needs to be developed. We will continue to see a major migration of unemployed people coming to our urban centres looking for employment opportunities.

Services have to be provided. It is unfair to expect people coming from our northern and remote communities who are unaware of what is available in the city just to be dumped and then expect them to cope with it. So we are going to try to interface with as many Native organizations and as many people. As I said initially, it will be the Core Area Initiatives that will be involved, the City of Winnipeg, your other City Councils throughout the province, the federal Government. It is a major action that is being taken by Government and if the Member has some ideas and recommendations on how we can make this a more successful policy development initiative, then I would welcome his input on an ongoing basis.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I am getting suggestions on what kind of questions to ask from my NDP seatmate here, but I would rather ask my own in this one instance.

The Minister was very eloquent in what I thought was avoiding answering my question but then he was able to sort of focus a little bit more towards the direction that I was going in; but the strategy that he seems to outline is indicative again of more fact finding of discovering areas which need to be addressed and actually a specific plan to actually begin implementing some potential programs or some initiatives that could actually end up delivering the programs or delivering the policies that the Government has just mentioned.

**Mr. Downey:** Again, let us not think that we are going to reinvent the wheel when it comes to dealing with

the urban Native community. We have many friendship centres, we have many instruments. Many people have been working long and hard to try to make better the way of life of people who have migrated to our urban centres. We are not trying to say that there has not been work activity in that area.

What the policy is going to try to do is build on those positive initiatives and support those people that have put forward their efforts and ideas to better the way of life for people who have migrated to our urban centres. It is a constructive activity which hopefully can fill in some of the gaps because there are people that fall into situations that they cannot cope with.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say that it is a major initiative. I think that it will be carried out properly, and I would expect input from the critic of the Liberal—

\* (1800)

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the Honourable Minister. The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair—

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could make a recommendation. I understand that there is only something like 15 minutes left to conclude the Estimates time. Would it be possible to have leave of the committee to do so by 6:15 and conclude it rather than coming back?

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. The Honourable Minister has asked whether he has leave to extend the time for debate.

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** If I may, there is certainly leave to put the remaining 15 minutes on the Minister's Salary, which would excuse staff from the Chamber and relieve them of the responsibility of coming back at 8 p.m. We are prepared to move that far.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is there leave? The Honourable Minister asked if he had leave to extend the time for adjourning the House until the completion of his Estimates. I believe there are only 15 minutes remaining of the 240 allocated. Does the Honourable Minister have leave?

**Mr. Storie:** If the Minister's concern is one of having staff remain over for that two-hour period, there is a willingness on our part to move it to Minister's Salary.

**Mr. Downey:** They will be here.

**Mr. Storie:** The Minister is not concerned about staff. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** The Honourable Minister does not have leave. I am interrupting proceedings. As the hour is 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair and we shall return at 8 p.m.