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of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS (HANSARD)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

| NAME | CONSTITUENCY | PARTY |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| ALCOCK, Reg | Osborne | Liberal |
| ASHTON, Steve | Thompson | NDP |
| BARRETT, Becky | Wellington | NDP |
| CARR, James | Crescentwood | Liberal |
| CARSTAIRS, Sharon | River Heights | Liberal |
| CERILLI, Marianne | Radisson | NDP |
| CHEEMA, Gulzar | The Maples | Liberal |
| CHOMIAK, Dave | Kildonan | NDP |
| CONNERY, Edward, Hon. | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon. | Ste. Rose | PC |
| DACQUAY, Louise | Seine River | PC |
| DERKACH, Leonard, Hon. | Roblin-Russell | PC |
| DEWAR, Gregory | Selkirk | NDP |
| DOER, Gary | Concordia | NDP |
| DOWNEY, James, Hon. | Arthur-Virden | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon. | Steinbach | PC |
| DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon. | Riel | PC |
| EDWARDS, Paul | St. James | Liberal |
| ENNS, Harry, Hon. | Lakeside | PC |
| ERNST, Jim, Hon. | Charleswood | PC |
| EVANS, Clif | Interlake | NDP |
| EVANS, Leonard S. | Brandon East | NDP |
| FILMON, Gary, Hon. | Tuxedo | PC |
| FINDLAY, Glen, Hon. | Springfield | PC |
| FRIESEN, Jean | Wolseley | NDP |
| GAUDRY, Neil | St. Boniface | Liberal |
| GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon. | Minnedosa | PC |
| HARPER, Elijah | Rupertsland | NDP |
| HELWER, Edward R. | Gimli | PC |
| HICKES, George | Point Douglas | NDP |
| LAMOUREUX, Kevin | Inkster | Liberal |
| LATHLIN, Oscar | The Pas | NDP |
| LAURENDEAU, Marcel | St. Norbert | PC |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | NDP |
| MANNESS, Clayton, Hon. | Morris | PC |
| MARTINDALE, Doug | Burrows | NDP |
| McALPINE, Gerry | Sturgeon Creek | PC |
| McCRAE, James, Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| McINTOSH, Linda | Assinibola | PC |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon. | River East | PC |
| NEUFELD, Harold, Hon. | Rossmere | PC |
| ORCHARD, Donald, Hon. | Pembina | PC |
| PENNER, Jack, Hon. | Emerson | PC |
| PLOHMAN, John | Dauphin | NDP |
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| REID, Daryl | Transcona | NDP |
| REIMER, Jack | Niakwa | PC |
| RENDER, Shirley | St. Vital | PC |
| ROCAN, Denis, Hon. | Gladstone | PC |
| ROSE, Bob | Turtle Mountain | PC |
| SANTOS, Conrad | Broadway | NDP |
| STEFANSON, Eric | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| STORIE, Jerry | Flin Flon | NDP |
| SVEINSON, Ben | La Verendrye | PC |
| VODREY, Rosemary | Fort Garry | PC |
| WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy | St. Johns | NDP |
| WOWCHUK, Rosann | Swan River | NDP |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 7, 1990

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, in the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 on Tuesday, November 6, 1990, considering the Estimates of the Department of Finance, the Honourable Mr. Manness moved a motion which was adopted that the vote taken by the Committee of Supply on November 5, 1990, following 10 p.m. not be considered a precedent of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and that the Chairman be instructed to report this matter to the House.

Your committee has also considered certain resolutions, adopted same, and asks leave to sit again. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the report be received.

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Mr. Speaker: I note that the report of the Committee of Supply just received included reference to a motion adopted in one section of the committee which appears to be an expression of opinion from that section of the committee. The motion as reported does not appear to call upon the House to take any specific action, nor does it contain recommendations which could be acted upon.

In order for the House to act upon proposals from a committee, those proposals must be concurred in by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of Honourable Members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon from the Grant Park High School twenty-three Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Norman Roseman.

This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Shoal Lake - Water Quality Premier of Ontario - Meeting

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

All Manitobans and all Winnipeggers are very concerned about the state of water quality at Shoal Lake. I have been made aware that the Premier will be meeting with the Premier of Ontario next week. I was wondering whether the Premier will be releasing publicly the regulations dealing with the watershed area on our side of the Shoal Lake watershed prior to that meeting. Will the Premier be raising the issue with the Premier of Ontario in terms of the water quality for the citizens of Winnipeg for drinking water in the province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Taking them last to first, Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed, I will be raising the issue of water quality for the City of Winnipeg with respect to the Shoal Lake watershed with the Premier of Ontario. It is one of a few open files that we have with respect to interjurisdictional co-operation with the Province of Ontario.

It is something that we will want to ensure that he is fully briefed and apprised of so that we, because of the change of administration, do not lose the ground that we have gained by virtue of working with Ontario to come toward some agreements on the watershed management plan and various other long-term restrictions.

With respect to the regulations that he referred to, I am not aware of where they stand. I would have to take that as notice on behalf of the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

* (1335)

Premier of Saskatchewan - Meeting

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Well, thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the Premier will be raising this issue with the Premier of Ontario.

My question therefore follows to the Premier dealing with Rafferty-Alameda dam. If the Premier is going to raise the water quality issue dealing with Shoal Lake with the new Premier in Ontario, my question is: Why will the Premier not agree to raise the issue of water quality and quantity with the Premier of Saskatchewan in light of the fact that he has broken the licence and he is proceeding without the approval of the licence that was granted last January? Why will he not agree to the people of Manitoba to stand up for Manitoba's water quality when dealing with the Conservative Premier in the Province of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party has a very short memory. I said on Monday that I have raised that issue many, many, many times with the Premier of Saskatchewan.

Further to that, that matter is the subject of a federal court challenge right now by the relevant jurisdiction, which is the Government of Canada, who has jurisdiction over it. That matter is currently before the courts.

Rafferty - Alameda Dam Project Court Decision

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I happen to have the affidavit of the federal Government that is before the courts. Nowhere in the affidavit do they mention the water quality and water quantity components of the Rafferty-Alameda dam on Manitoba. In fact the word "Manitoba" is not even mentioned in the affidavit presented by the federal Government.

My question to the Premier is: Is he satisfied with this court case being one of which Tory is lying, the federal Minister of Environment versus the Premier of Saskatchewan, or should Manitoba not be before the courts standing up for our water quality so that we are not into a case of who said what but rather what it will mean for Manitoba's water quality and quantity when the court arrives at a decision, hopefully today, on behalf of Manitoba, or tomorrow?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the issue is the application of the federal environmental standards, their regulation, on the review basis. That is the basis upon which the challenge is being made.

The whole essence of the case is that there has not been sufficient environmental assessment and review in the application of the federal standards to assure that we have any basis of judgment on the quality or quantity of water downstream. That is the whole essence of what the court challenge is about.

That is indeed what the federal Government is doing, going there to ensure that its process will be carried out so that all aspects of the environmental assessment that obviously include downstream effects on quality and quantity of water in Manitoba are part and parcel of the whole issue.

Department of Education Five-Year Strategic Plan

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed towards the First Minister.

I am sure that the Premier will be astonished to find out that yesterday in this House his Minister of Education in one day refused to table and release in this House 14 reports or studies conducted by the Department of Education, the chief of which was a strategic five-year plan for the Department of Education.

In light of the fact that we on this side of the House have to find out information from reading the Free Press and in light of the fact that hundreds of millions of dollars are spent by the taxpayers of this province on education, will the Premier ask his Minister to make public the five-year strategic plan for the Department of Education?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, if the Member will check his notes, he will understand that yesterday in questions in Estimates he asked for the tabling of internal reports that were done for the department internally. This is so that we could arrive at such reports as the strategic plan for the department.

I indicated also that the strategic plan would be tabled as soon as it is ready for tabling. We will be glad to table that strategic plan, the five-year strategic plan that we have within our department, in short order.

Department of Education Five-Year Strategic Plan

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My supplementary is also to the First Minister. Will he not order the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) to table the strategic plan so the people of Manitoba, who pay money and who are the taxpayers and responsible for the Department of Education, can have some idea of what programs and what direction that department is taking?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Member was given the answer. The plan is not finalized for tabling, and when it is it will be.

St. James-Assiniboia School Division Accountability System

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is directed towards the Minister of Education.

Does that plan include an accountability system for public school divisions, one of which the Minister mentioned yesterday, that he is putting in place an accountability system for the private school divisions? Is that the same accountability system that is in place at the St. James-Assiniboia School Division?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the matter that the Member for Kildonan refers to is the inaccuracy of counting students in one particular school that was reported in the Free Press this morning.

In that case when we were made aware of the situation we immediately launched an investigation into the matter. Officials from my department met immediately with officials from the school division to ensure that in fact those kinds of situations do not exist.

We have to operate as a province on some trust in terms of what is reported to superintendents and then what in turn is reported to the department. It is not a different system that was in place prior to this Government coming into office. It was a system that was operated for years under the NDP as well.

In terms of accountability, I think we have a very good accountability system in this province, one that has been set in place over a number of years. The

public schools and private schools all adhere to that accountability system.

School Divisions Enrollment Reporting

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Well, the Minister of Education indicates that a trust relationship exists. The Department of Education is given by October 6 of each year an accurate accounting of the number of students, by teacher, in each school in the Province of Manitoba.

Can the Minister of Education tell the House if there is any correlation done by the Department of Education between those figures and the figures which are provided by the division so that the kind of overrun which we see in one school in St. James-Assiniboia will be impossible in the future?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it has been made evident that indeed the system that we have been following for years and years is one that we perhaps need to change in terms of how reporting of enrollments comes to the Department of Education.

I have to indicate also that there are audits conducted in all school divisions in this province; there have been for a number of years. When a situation like this arises we have to ensure that we understand why the mistake was made, who was at fault and indeed how we are going to correct that.

The department is presently investigating the matter. Once we have all the facts we will be able to embark on a better resolution of this kind of a situation.

Mrs. Carstairs: I am sure the Minister is aware that different divisions have different methods of reporting.

Can the Minister tell the House today if he has initiated in the St. James School Division a similar process as in the St. Boniface School Division where each teacher is required to submit at the end of each and every month the number of students in his or her classroom so that the principal's figures cannot indeed be out of sync with the figures being presented by the teachers?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, on the surface that may seem like a reasonable approach. In fact, the matter is much more complex and complicated than what the Leader of the Third Party might allude to.

There are in many schools no such things as homeroom classrooms. Therefore the registration is not as easy to keep track of as one might assume. So, yes, there is a need to improve the situation in terms of how reporting is done to the Department of Education, and once we have the investigation completed we will be able to make those decisions.

School Division Boundaries Review

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in senior high where there are not home rooms, many, many teachers are put in charge of keeping control on the numbers in those particular schools so that this discrepancy would not occur. Can the Minister tell the House today why he has not fulfilled a commitment made by the Premier during the election campaign to initiate a review of school division boundaries so that the pressures on schools with declining enrollment can in fact be addressed?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Well, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Third Party is somewhat behind time because last year I met with all parties involved. I met with the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, the Manitoba Union of Urban Municipalities, the Manitoba Teachers Society, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, Manitoba superintendents and also school business officials to start discussion on this very important matter. However, it has been only two months since the election campaign, and we intend to follow up on the promises that were made by the Premier in good order, but it will take a little time to be able to develop the entire plan. We have four years to do that.

Oil and Gas Price Increases Government Measures

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Corporate Affairs.

I have had many calls this morning, as has the Minister, from irate citizens about the latest massive increase in the price of gasoline. The last call I got was from a 64-year-old Portage la Prairie man who used to think very highly of this Minister, I might add. The last time that I asked the Minister to inquire into the gouging of consumers by oil firms, he claimed that their profits were not high enough. Today, prices were raised another five cents per liter in Winnipeg

and I believe Portage la Prairie. When will he stop being a door mat for Shell and Imperial and take action?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-Operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are continuing to monitor the gas prices in the City of Winnipeg. We are meeting with the oil companies. We are in constant dialogue, and we will do whatever is required, but we are monitoring on an ongoing basis the gas prices in Winnipeg.

* (1345)

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, how high do their profits and the gas prices have to go before he will consider them high enough to stop monitoring the gouging and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member's question seeks an opinion and is therefore out of order. The honourable Member kindly rephrase the question, please.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, when will the Minister act to stop this gouging of Manitoba consumers?

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, I guess the Nicolaou Report which was commissioned by the NDP in 1985 indicated several options which they chose not to do. We will continue to monitor, and when we think that -(interjection)- We will continue to watch the situation, we will continue to be in touch with the gas companies and we will take what appropriate action is needed.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, the Minister promised his constituents from Portage la Prairie that he would make sure that the prices came down to their old levels. When will the Minister call the local executives of Shell and Imperial Oil and demand an explanation as to why prices are rising on gas from Alberta and Saskatchewan?

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, we have been in constant touch. They know our feelings. They know that we are monitoring the situation. We are monitoring the lag time between the crude price and the price at the pumps.

Mr. Speaker, let me indicate to you—and the Leader of the Opposition was quite proud that when he was in Government they made the price of oil go down. He said, when they were in power they said the price would go down nine and a half cents a litre. The price indeed went down nine and a half cents a litre in Manitoba, but the irony of it and the tragedy

is that in all other cities in Canada it went down 12 cents a litre.

If the Members opposite had read the report that they commissioned they would see that in the report this was done. I would be glad to table this sheet out of their report for Members opposite to review.

Krantz Court Case Destruction of Evidence

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Members of this House were shocked at the crimes committed by Mr. Carl Krantz and that all Members of the House would like to see justice done for the many young women who were abused by this man.

That is why I was shocked to see that this Government's Crown Attorney has requested that the evidence, the video tapes of these appalling crimes, be destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, these tapes could be compelling evidence for the young women should they choose to press charges later before the statute of limitations runs out, evidence that the Crown now wants destroyed.

Will the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) instruct his Crown Attorney to retract his request for the destruction of this evidence in the Carl Krantz conviction?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the shock and dismay that has been expressed by the Member for Wellington.

On behalf of the Minister of Justice, I will take that question as notice and have him return to the House with a response.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Justice at least ensure that this evidence is not destroyed before November 15, the date when the court rules on the Public Trustee's motion for the preservation of the tapes, for the purposes of evidence in future litigation?

Mr. Filmon: I appreciate the recommendation of the Member for Wellington. I will certainly take her question as notice again on behalf of the Minister of Justice.

* (1350)

Ms. Barrett: Finally, if the court denies the Public Trustee's motion, thereby condoning the destruction of potentially crucial evidence for later

court cases, what avenues will be made available for the young female victims of this devastating criminal activity in order for them to be able to pursue charges at some later date?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the question began with "if." It is clearly hypothetical.

As a non-lawyer I would not presume to respond to that. I would doubt that the Minister of Justice would respond to it either, but I will take the question as notice.

Child and Family Services Reference Check Charges

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, prevention in child welfare takes many forms. One of them is a practice mandated by the Family Services Minister's department of ensuring that checks are done on the background of people who apply to be volunteers or foster parents or Family Services workers and the like.

This is a procedure that is also followed by Big Brothers, Boys and Girls Clubs and all sorts of organizations that involve people who are working with young people in this city.

Mr. Speaker, the City of Winnipeg has instituted, the police department in particular, a policy change which is going to result in the levying of rather considerable charges for this service. I am wondering if the Minister of Family Services was made aware of this.

Hon. Harold Gilleshamer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the information the Member has brought. I was not aware of that change.

Mr. Alcock: Well, for the Minister's edification I will table a copy of the letter that was sent.

The chief of police in the City of Winnipeg suggested it could cost up to \$120,000 to perform this service in the future and that effective January 1 he will be charging agencies and people who request this service that amount of money.

Can the Minister of Family Services, since the agencies act on a policy initiated by his department, ensure agencies that they will receive funds to pay this new charge?

Mr. Gilleshamer: Mr. Speaker, the department is currently meeting with agencies to discuss their service and their funding agreements. I will certainly share the Member's concern that people working

with young people, whether it be in Big Brothers or Big Sisters or Boy Scouts or whatever, are of impeccable character. I will raise this issue with the department.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, the police department not only is levying \$120,000 cumulative—\$120,000 new charge on children's services in this province—it is also asking that it be indemnified against acts negligently and recklessly performed by its own employees in delivering this information.

Now will the Minister of Family Services speak to the chief of police and/or the mayor if necessary to see that the police step back from this I think outrageous practice?

Mr. Gilleshamer: Mr. Speaker, we will take the information that the Member has, and I will raise it with the department. Again our department is primarily concerned with the protection of children and of vulnerable people in our society, and we will do everything we can to continue that mandate.

CPR Rail Line Abandonment Fisher Branch Elevator

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation. The deregulation and railway abandonment policy of the federal Government is about to claim more victims in the Interlake with the loss of the grain elevator in Riverton at the end of this year.

On January 1 the CPR is applying to abandon the Gimli-Riverton line, meaning roughly 100 farmers will have to truck their grain even further.

Considering what has happened to VIA Rail, does he have any reason to believe that the Fisher Branch elevator will in fact keep its protected status for another 10 years, or will deregulation and abandonment continue to be increased?

Hon. Albert Drledger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, over the years from the time that rail line abandonment came, the four western provinces prior to my time developed a consensus and a position which they presented to the transportation commission as well as the federal Government in terms of how the process should take place.

Our position is still that we have never changed that position since that time. However, we anticipate that there are going to be ongoing applications for rail line abandonment.

I think the Member is referring to the Winnipeg Beach line at the present time that is being abandoned. Certain ones were identified to which we basically have had our input into these cases. We have reviewed them with staff and through the process in some cases we raise objections, serious objections; in others we do not.

We anticipate an ongoing continuance of application by the railways for abandonment of lines. We will be reviewing each one as these applications come forward and then try and deal with them.

Highways Maintenance Costs

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Can this Minister anticipate the costs to the Department of Highways for maintenance to cover the increased use by farmers forced to truck their grain even further?

Hon. Albert Drledger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, this is the one concern that I have continually raised for the last two and a half years. When we have rail line abandonment—and that was part of the position that was put forward previously and put forward by my department as well—where we have rail line abandonment there should be an offset for the municipalities and the provincial Government in terms of the impact it will have not only on roads, but on the communities as well. We continue to put that position forward.

Grain Transportation Agency Trucking Subsidy Cuts

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, has this Minister received any communication from the Grain Transportation Agency as to plans to cut trucking subsidies for farmers?

Hon. Albert Drledger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of it.

* (1355)

Brandon Cabinet Office Director CKX TV and Radio Employment

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Rural Development. I have been just advised that the senior person in the Brandon Cabinet office is working on a part-time basis at CKX Radio and TV doing sports commentaries and as such is taking

work away from station staff. In fact, I am told a part-time staff person has been given his layoff notice as a result.

Does this Minister believe this kind of moonlighting is appropriate, given the fact that the Cabinet office director is already highly paid and that CKX has just laid off four employees this past week?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, this is certainly news to me, but I will tell the Honourable Member that I am going to have somebody look into it. I will bring back the information.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for his willingness to get that information. I wonder if the Minister could also review the situation to satisfy himself that this additional employment of the Cabinet office director does not interfere in any way with his responsibilities as the senior person in that Cabinet office.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, it is as we all know not uncommon for people to subsidize their income by holding a second job. I think it is very evident that even Opposition Members today are supplementing their income by taking positions and being paid for tasks that they perform both inside this country and outside of this country, I am informed. Therefore, I am somewhat surprised that the Honourable Member for Brandon East would at this time question the ability of somebody in his town doing something that he has already done himself on numerous other occasions.

Workload Review

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, the Minister can correct me, but I thought this person was already being paid over \$50,000 a year, far more than an MLA gets.

Will this Minister undertake to review the workload? Will the Minister also undertake to review the workload of that office and ensure himself that the office is being fully and properly utilized?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the line of questioning that the Honourable Member for Brandon East is pursuing. I am sure that he has or will have at some point in time wanted to participate in activities that involved younger people, either coaching them or be involved in broadcasting or commentating on broadcast whether it be paid for or not, but I want to assure you that the work that

our member, our employee at the Brandon office, is doing has not been on a fee-for-service basis. It is free of charge and run on a volunteer basis. What our people do on their spare time and after hours is certainly their business, and it is certainly not up to me to question or to call into question their activities.

* (1400)

Emergency Measures Organization Training Payment Policy

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the Members are obviously very sensitive about that issue.

I would like to ask the Minister of Government Services a question. Over the last several years the practice of the federal and provincial Governments has been to provide through the Emergency Measures Organization assistance and sponsorship of training sessions and emergency plans for communities. I would ask the Minister, is it still the policy of his Government to pay for all of the costs associated with emergency plans and the training seminars associated with that?

Hon. Albert Drledger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, first of all let me say that I think the Emergency Measures Organization proved themselves and their worth a year ago last summer with the fires and did a very commendable job. I can indicate also at this time in regard to the question that nothing has changed as far as I am aware. My last communication is that EMO identifies people to take the training course and pay the full shot for them.

Budget Cancellation

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the Premier identifies one change. He says he has a majority. I think that is significant, because I have in my hand a letter from the senior municipal advisor in the western regional headquarters in which he says to municipalities that due to the recent provincial election the Emergency Measures Organization budget was temporarily canceled. Upon renewal after the election costs previously appropriated for participants' expenses in the foregoing conference were not included.

I want to ask, Mr. Speaker, in light of this letter, is it in fact true that this budget was canceled during the election, the Emergency Measures budget, and is it a fact that they have gone back on budget

appropriations that were in place before the election was called?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, no way. However, I would request that the Member maybe you know pass a copy of the letter to myself, because there have been no changes. I find it ludicrous that during an election period that EMO would have canceled their budget. Certainly this is news to me, and if I can have a copy of the correspondence, I will make sure exactly what has happened and report back.

Policy Change

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I will gladly table a copy of this letter for the Minister's edification. It is his staff member writing it. He should have had it before I did. I ask, why were the municipalities advised prior to the election on August 2 that the expenses for the conference in Brandon would be picked up by the Emergencies Measure Organization, but after the election on October 18, as contained in that letter, you were advised that this was no longer the case. Does the Minister have one policy for before an election and another one for after?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, nothing has changed. If there has been, I will acquaint myself with what has transpired in terms of the communication that was sent out. Certainly this is news to me. I will find out what has happened, but there has been no policy change.

Oil and Gas Price Increases Western Canada Oil Distribution

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines. Manitobans are again being asked to fork out more money for the purchase of gas at the pumps today. In the last two months we have seen an almost 40 percent increase in the price of gas in Manitoba, and the Tory hall monitor who acts as the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs continues to say it is being monitored.

Can the Minister of Energy and Mines tell the people of Manitoba why, with gas being purchased by oil companies from distributors in western Canada, where there has been no increase in the cost of production, they should be paying an

additional 20 cents a litre for gas in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Well, I guess I would have to ask the Member 20 cents more than where? I do not recall having heard 20 cents more than where. He said 20 cents more.

Mr. Storie: In Winnipeg.

Mr. Neufeld: Than where? The Member for Flin Flon asked the question why were we paying 20 cents more for gas in Winnipeg. I asked the Member, 20 cents more than where? I cannot answer a question that could be in Timbuktu. It could be in Grand Forks. Let him explain the question.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Minister of Energy and Mines may want to be obtuse on this issue, because this Government has done nothing in the two months. My question to the Minister of Energy and Mines was a simple one. Will he explain to Manitobans why gas and oil that are produced in western Canada should cost Manitobans 20 cents more per litre today in Winnipeg than it did a couple of months ago?

Mr. Neufeld: Well, I think, Mr. Speaker, the Member is well aware that Canada is following the world oil price. The world oil price has gone up from somewhere around \$16 a barrel. It was up as high as \$40 a barrel. It is now probably hovering around the \$32, \$34 mark. I have not checked it today.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that had all the increases at the wellhead flowed through to the gas pumps it could have increased by as much as 10 cents and not only five cents. As the Minister of Co-Operative and Consumer Affairs has already said, we are hoping that they will bring their prices down as quickly as they brought their prices up. It is his department that is monitoring the gas prices at the pump.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the Minister hit the nail on the head when he said that we purchase our own oil at world prices.

Free Trade Agreement Oil Price Policy

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is a new question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism. Given that the Free Trade Agreement will not allow the Canadian Government to impose a set made-in-Canada oil price policy will the Minister

now argue on behalf of gas consumers in the Province of Manitoba for the elimination of that provision in the Free Trade Agreement so that we can pay a reasonable price for gas in Manitoba?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, it was the result of the National Energy Program implemented by a Liberal Government in Ottawa a number of years ago that devastated the western economy. We do not want to see that kind of situation occur again so we have subscribed to a world oil price.

The Minister responsible for Consumer and Corporate Affairs is monitoring those prices, determining if in fact as world oil prices come down that the pass-throughs again continue to occur to people in western Canada as consumers. We are keeping very close track of that.

* (1410)

Winnipeg Remand Centre Quick Release Program

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

As usual this Government and this Minister get a bare pass in public relations and get an F in action. We on this side of the House have consistently been appalled at this Government's failure to address the constant overcrowding at the Winnipeg Remand Centre.

On July 25 of this year the Minister, in order to quell the most recent crisis rising out of the problems at that centre, said he was going to take action to reduce the overcrowding by implementing a so-called quick release program. Accused persons would be released except for those deemed to be a risk to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the Minister would stop making promises if he does not intend to keep them.

My question for the Minister is: Can he explain to this House why he has failed now also to implement that program, some three and a half months after it was promised? Now he is telling this House—or he has made statements that it may not be in place until the new year.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The Honourable Member in his usual way prefacing his question with certain comments that tend to cloud the issue and tend to

excite debate in the Legislature rather than a useful exchange of information.

One of the inaccuracies in the preamble to the Honourable Member's question is that the hearing officer program, announced by me in July, was to quell a crisis. The Honourable Member clearly did not hear what I had to say at that time.

Our Remand Centre has been the location of certain tragic incidents over the years, not unlike other institutions across this country, young and old. The Remand Centre hearing officer program had been in the works and at the discussion stages in the department and with the judiciary long before July when the announcement was made. I hope that clears up some of the points made by the Honourable Member in the preamble to his question.

Now to get to the question itself, Mr. Speaker. I can tell the Honourable Member that the staffing of the positions of chief hearing officer and the other hearing officers is under way.

Mr. Edwards: My concern is that three press releases were made by this Minister before one brick was even removed from the existing structure where it is to be built. I hope we do not have to go through that again with this commitment.

Bail Assistance Program

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My supplementary question for the Minister is: What considerations if any has he given to a proposed bail assistance program, which is a money-saving program used in other provinces which would further ease the overcrowding at the Remand Centre, has been recommended by the John Howard Society highly, indeed across this nation, which would result in accused persons being released who had had bail set?

Mr. Speaker: The question has been put.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Some of the very, very significant problems we have had in this province, maybe especially relating to the issue of domestic violence and spousal abuse, even murder, has to do with release of people who ought not to be released. So I am a little surprised at the Honourable Member's question about the bail assistance program. Our department has indeed looked at the bail assistance program as proposed by the John

Howard Society. At the present time we are not prepared to enter upon that program.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Krantz Court Case Destruction of Evidence

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I understand that the time allotted for Oral Questions has expired, but a little while ago the Honourable Member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I think in a rather serious vein asked a question, and I am prepared to give an answer if the House is willing to give leave.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House willing to grant leave? Is the House willing? Leave?

Mr. McCrae: Well, I did not hear the question. I have been apprised of what I think are its contents. It has to do with video tapes relating to the Krantz case and an application made by the Public Trustee for Manitoba that the tapes not be destroyed prior to the expiration of the limitation on civil actions. That request by the Crown to have the tapes destroyed in the first place was made as a matter of routine.

In many, many cases involving material like this, that application is made. Because of the nature of the material, the Crown did not want to see that kind of material out and in the possession of the wrong kind of people or the wrong people. So the Public Trustee then quite properly comes forward in the interest of protecting the rights of possible future litigants, at least until the statutory time is expired, and to protect those rights has made the application that has been made.

The matter is before the court and the court will rule, but I think it is a question of protecting the options on behalf of the victims of the crimes committed by Mr. Krantz that these actions have been taken.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Could I have leave to make committee changes?

Mr. Speaker: Committee change?

Mr. Hickes: I move, seconded by the Member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Len Evans for Clif Evans, Rosann Wowchuk for Jerry Storie, for Wednesday, November 7 for 8 p.m.

I move, seconded by the Member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Jim Maloway for Rosann Wowchuk for Thursday, November 8 at 10 a.m.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a couple of changes. Moved by the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), seconded by the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Wednesday, November 7, be amended as follows: Manness for McCrae, Laurendeau for Driedger, Rose for Enns, Mitchelson for Vodrey, Gilleshamer for Orchard.

Moved by the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), seconded by the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that the Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Thursday, November 8, 1990, 10 a.m.: Cummings for Manness, Reimer for Mitchelson, and Neufeld for Gilleshamer.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you would call second readings of Bills 15, 16 and 17, please.

BILL 15—THE RE-ENACTED STATUTES OF MANITOBA (PRIVATE ACTS) ACT, 1990

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), Bill 15, The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Private Acts) Act, 1990; Loi de 1990 sur la réadoption de lois du Manitoba (lois d'intérêt privé), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is anticipating my comments so enthusiastically particularly after our exchange yesterday. I look forward at some time continuing

the debate that we began yesterday in private Members' hour on some very interesting topics, although obviously I will not be continuing that debate today as we discuss the continuing process of re-enactment of statutes in Manitoba.

I think the important point to recognize as we discuss Bill 15 is that this is a continuing process; some have actually come to see it as a part of the regular routine of the Manitoba Legislature.

What is interesting though, I think, for the edification of new Members is some of the background of the process of re-enactment. As people are probably not aware, perhaps some of the new Members who did not sit in this House during the shall we say, the great debate on French language services a number of years ago during which we had the longest Session in Manitoba history, even longer than the last Session. It began in 1982 and it continued until 1984, certainly a record in the annals of this Legislature.

* (1420)

What is interesting is really to my mind the issues that were at stake at that time, and I notice the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is obviously contemplating those days, and so he should.

At that time, it was interesting that there were really two main issues that were being discussed. One was a proposal by the two levels of Government, the federal and provincial Governments, in conjunction with the SFM, which initiated court action in regard to the question of French language services generally in Manitoba.

What is interesting is that there are really two components. The one was the issue of the operations of this Legislature in terms of the publications, in terms of Bills that had been passed after 1890 when, as we all know this Legislature unilaterally, in contravention as it was confirmed by the Supreme Court, moved to a unilingual Legislature, passage of Bills in English only. It attempted to deal with that by moving towards translation of overall statutes, a limited number that were considered to be vital to the operations of the province and also included in a formalized basis the fact that there would be French language services provided where population demanded.

It is interesting to compare where we were in 1984, then the subsequent Supreme Court decision and then the situation we are faced with in 1990. It

is important, I think, for new Members of this House to perhaps recall just how bitter and acrimonious the debate was in 1984. The bells rang for many, many days, as the then Opposition, the current Government, attempted to make this into one of the major issues that perhaps the province had ever seen.

It is interesting, the type of tactics they used and the type of rhetoric that took place. It is interesting to see that they were able to stop that agreement. The agreement would have prevented further court action; because the agreement was scuttled by the then Opposition the whole question of French language services went to the Supreme Court. The result, Mr. Speaker, was that we had to translate virtually every law that was passed subsequent to the 1890 movement towards unilingualism, and it has been at considerable expense to the province. We are now dealing with re-enacted statutes on a yearly basis as that process continues. That could have been limited if the agreement had gone through. It did not.

Well, the other interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, is the whole question of French language services because I was, quite frankly, stunned. I believe it was last year, when the Premier who was then Leader of the Opposition—he was taking over at the time, of course, from Sterling Lyon. There was some hope at the time that perhaps he would follow a different approach when he went to the SFM and said that this Government, the Conservative Government, the same group that had been in Opposition before and opposed so vehemently French language services—

An Honourable Member: No, he did not.

Mr. Ashton: Oh, well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) said, no, he did not. I would like to see him reread some of his comments, the comments of others, comments made in this House and comments made on the election hustings by Members of the Conservative Party on the whole question of French language services. What we are seeing is the Government now, well, most of the Government is moving towards—at least those that subscribed to the positions expressed by the Premier—the establishment of French language services where numbers warrant. That is exactly what was being proposed in 1984. Let the record be clear.

Now I say those that subscribed to the views expressed by the Premier because the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) seems to have a rather different approach, Mr. Speaker. He has already launched a direct attack on Francophone funding in terms of cultural funding. He has actually launched a direct attack on all cultural funding, all multicultural funding, and he still has not withdrawn those comments in their entirety in terms of—and comments which many people found offensive suggesting that multicultural funding was wasps, if you like, subsidizing the rest. That is the exact quote he used.

Although I vehemently oppose the sentiments expressed by that Minister, I vehemently opposed those sentiments, I will give the Minister credit for one thing and that is perhaps expressing a view which others share certainly in that Party and certainly in that caucus, which others share, Mr. Speaker. I point to the fact, and there was an interesting degree of discussion when the head of the organization that was opposed to French language services in 1984 was appointed to the Manitoba Intercultural Council by this Conservative Government, whose views are very similar to the Minister of Energy and Mines. I suspect that there is more than meets the eye.

The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), we learned the other day, is the Acting Minister for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, including the Acting Minister for Multiculturalism. I was stunned, Mr. Speaker, when I first heard of that. I was amazed that they would appoint the Minister of Energy and Mines to that. I suppose there are equivalents.
-(interjection)-

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) speaks from his seat. He is very much in a similar sort of way to the Minister, the Acting Minister of Multiculturalism, in a sense that he is the Minister of Northern Affairs. By his actions, his incompetence on the Northern Development Agreement and so many other northern issues, he is working himself out of a job because they are cutting back in the Northern Affairs Department. They are cutting back the Northern Development Agreement, all of the areas that he has responsibility for. We already know that the Minister has said that that is because Northerners do not vote the right way, Mr. Speaker. So this seems to be—
-(interjection)-

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) says that he wishes to run in

Thompson. I welcome that, if he wishes to stand on his feet and make the declaration. I know he is slipping in his constituency. I know, even though he has been referred to as a Conservative, he actually received a lower percentage of the vote than the NDP did in Thompson in his own constituency, so he is embarrassed.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am having great difficulty in relating other Member's remarks to Bill 50 to re-enact the statutes of Manitoba. The Honourable Member for Thompson, kindly keep his remarks relative to the question before the House.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I must apologize. I was being distracted by the nonsensical ramblings of the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) who was speaking from his seat. I had hoped that he was going to declare that he is running in Thompson, largely because I would love Northerners to have the chance to judge that Minister and that Government by their actions. I know how they will judge him and that Government, particularly if he is running in the constituency of Thompson.

An Honourable Member: Do not be too cocky.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I am not being too cocky. I just know what my constituents, how they have responded to his statements.

Mr. Speaker, what I am referring to is the policies, and I am referring specifically to what has happened in terms of French Language Services, multiculturalism—and as expressed by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

You know, I am looking forward in a way to seeing if the comments expressed by the Minister of Energy of Mines will now be expressed by the Minister on his feet in debate on his particular Bill. It is a great opportunity for him. You know, there is some precedent. We remember the late Russ Doern who had a major disagreement with the then NDP Government who then resigned and sat as an Independent, later ran unsuccessfully. I wonder if perhaps the Minister of Energy and Mines is not intending to go that route. He represents the same area of the city, not Elmwood per se, but certain parts of his constituency, I understand, are essentially the old Elmwood constituency.

* (1430)

I wonder if perhaps the Minister will not be using this opportunity on this Bill to make the break from this Government, and I know the Government is nervous about that. I believe that is why they have

not disciplined that Member. The Premier has not disciplined, certainly in public. We are not privy to private conversations, but he has not disowned the comments. I suspect it is because they are afraid that that Minister—and perhaps others who sympathize with abuse expressed by the Minister—will break from that caucus. I know they would be worried about the prospects, particularly if that Minister was to resign his seat; and if a by-election were to be called in the constituency of Rossmere, they would be worried about that.

The bottom line is there are some interesting side issues within that caucus, and we will see, but I think—and it is not that often that we have the privilege as Members of the Legislature to reflect back on some very historical decisions and make historical conclusions, but I would say, now, just a brief six years after the French language debate in Manitoba, we have seen just how phoney and pathetic the expressions were by the Conservative Party, how two-faced they were because look what happened. It did go to the Supreme Court, and the statutes had to be translated far greater than would have had to be translated with a previous agreement.

They are now Government, and they are at least mouthing, the Premier is, support for French Language Services whether the Minister of Energy and Mines agrees or not, or other amounts in that Party. So essentially what has happened is exactly what was predicted would happen as being necessary in 1984.

Well, there is another interesting irony, and that is that many Conservatives, I feel, thought the 1986 election would give them the opportunity to use French Language Services as an election issue. Indeed, if anybody protests on that side that they were really in favour of French Language Services, but in fact were seeking it in a different way, they should look at some of the leaflets distributed by Members of their Party in that election.

Well, the bottom line is they lost that election—less than two years later they lost that election. The province lost in the Supreme Court and the Conservatives lost in the election. Now, what we are dealing with is French Language Services as proposed by the First Minister and regular translations in this Legislature of legislative Acts brought in in 1890.

I realize the Minister of Northern Affairs is very sensitive about this, very sensitive indeed, because he is one of the leading proponents of those who led the charge against French language services.

I wonder how he explains to his constituents, Mr. Speaker, what has happened with the statutes and with the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) statements. I wonder if he has the political fortitude to join the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), who, even though we disagree with his statements, expresses a clear view on this, or whether the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) and others are now trying to fudge the obvious fact that six years later they have been proved to be so desperately wrong.

Those are my comments on this particular Bill. I know the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), since the Bill is remaining standing in his name, will speak on this Bill probably at a later time. I appreciate the opportunity as I said to express my views on the fact that what we are dealing with here perhaps could have been avoided, but is a necessary fact and we certainly support the continuing process of the re-enactment of statutes of Manitoba in our Legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I may have leave to address this Bill for a minute. Do I have leave?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister does not need leave. This matter has already been decided and leave was granted to the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) that it remain standing in his name.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I was not planning to rise to speak on the enactment Bills -(interjection)- and I trusted myself more so than my colleague. This is a very serious matter and I guess I find it passing strange that the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Ashton) would take this opportunity in speaking to this very important Bill and, of course—let us remember the Bill is here because of a Supreme Court ruling—that he would attempt to revise history in the fashion that he did.

It is a matter of record that the PC Party of the Day was opposed to the entrenchment of official bilingualism and indeed certain aspects of change within the Constitution of our province. That is a matter of record, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think any one of us can run from it.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

I ask the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), I mean I ask him in a rhetorical sense, why would he say on the record that this Party and now this Government were opposed to the extension of services? As the Member knows, there was a companion Bill that came forward in 1983 or '84, and I believe it was Bills 103 or 105, I think it was Bill 105, that dealt with services. The Conservative Party, in Opposition at that time, in no way voted against that Bill; as a matter of fact, spoke, as I can recall, in support of it, and that was the services Bill. We always said that services were a matter of policy of the Government and as such in the sense that they made sense along the way and in our belief, in many cases, they did then and they do today, we were supportive.

For the Member opposite now to try and revise history and say that we were opposed during '83 and '84 to provide greater services to French Manitobans, I think does a disservice to history, does a disservice to the history of the debate, which was very fractious, and I understand that, and does a disservice of course to our Party.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I thought that those comments needed to be placed on the record in case somebody saw fit to read the remarks of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and took them as being accurate, because indeed they are not.

Madam Deputy Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

BILL 16—THE RE-ENACTED STATUTES OF MANITOBA (PUBLIC GENERAL ACTS) ACT, 1990

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), standing in the name of the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to rise in this House and address this Bill, the first instance that I have had the opportunity as a newly elected Member of this House to address a Bill on legislation before the House, something that I presumed prior to my elections that we as all legislators ought to have an opportunity to do, that is basically to deal with the laws and the way they are enacted and dealt with in this province and in this jurisdiction. So in that

sense I welcome the opportunity, as I said earlier, of dealing with this particular Bill.

I also note that I am quite surprised that the matter got somewhat mildly controversial when dealing with Bill 15 which was The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Private Acts). One could imagine that any discussion of Bill 16 which is the re-enactment of public Acts could, in fact, be anything but controversial, but I do not anticipate that my comments will lead us down that particular path.

I will deal with the matter in a concise and analytical fashion as befits my training and as befits my experience of the past several weeks in this particular Legislature and this particular House, Madam Deputy Speaker, as well as the opportunity that I have had to observe the manner and the fashion in which Members opposite and all Members of this House have dealt with matters of a serious kind.

* (1440)

I note that this particular Act and this particular statute sets out to deal with the Supreme Court ruling of June 13, 1985, something with which Members in this House are well familiar and which had been dealt with extensively in this House, and I might add, in the public at large. I note that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has caused certain Acts to be prepared in conjunction with this Act which is comprised of three schedules which I will deal with while going through this particular Act.

I note that the Act set on the roll includes such statutes as The Boundaries Extension Act and The Boundaries Extension (Terms and Conditions) Act. In addition, we have the further Acts, number three and four, The Boundary Extension Act in the North-West Angle Inlet of Lake of the Woods Act, an Act that I have not had the opportunity to read, Madam Deputy Speaker, nor the sub (4) of Schedule A, The Boundary Extension in the North-West Angle Inlet of Lake of the Woods Act, 1954.

I have had occasion to review in my capacity as a solicitor The Debtors' Arrest Act, and I have had a capacity to review The Director of Soldier Settlement Act. I have not come across any particular reference or need to deal with The Expropriation Validation Act though I trust it is something that is often referred to by the public and solicitors alike when dealing with matters of expropriation by public bodies.

Of course, The Manitoba Association of School Trustees Act is one that I have had some familiarity with insofar as I have been appointed the Education Critic by the New Democratic Party.

Several of these Acts, those particularly dealing with the Manitoba-Ontario boundary and the Manitoba-Saskatchewan boundary, I have not had the occasion to review either in my previous occupation as a solicitor engaged in private practice, nor in my capacity as a newly-elected legislator in this august Chamber.

I have had occasion to deal with The A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. and A. E. McKenzie Foundation Act both in my capacity as someone who is interested in the area of corporations and as a private solicitor. As well, I have had occasion to review and deal with The Moose Lake Loggers Ltd. Certain Former Employees Act. Act 20, The Obsolete Enactments Repeal Act, 1938 is not something that I have had any occasion to deal with in my past experience as a solicitor nor an opportunity in this House.

I look with some interest upon The Railway Companies Incorporation Act, one that I have not had occasion to get to, but perhaps the fact that it is being re-enacted in this particular statute has caused me to review my statutes. I perhaps will have the opportunity to review this particular incorporation Act in order to ascertain whether it is applicable in any of my day to day understanding of the transportation industry in this province. Of course, The Red River Valley Railway Roads Around Station Grounds Act is not one that I have encountered nor had any need to in my experience as a private solicitor or as a legislator in this House.

The other Acts that are referred to in Schedule A, that is those Acts that are set out in the roll and those Acts that are being enacted as public Acts as a result of the Supreme Court ruling in 1985, are The School Capital Financing Authority Repeal Act, The Soldier Settlement Board Act and The Title to Certain Lands Act. I do not recall if I have had any specific dealings with The Title to Certain Lands Act, Madam Deputy Speaker, but clearly insofar as the matter has been enacted on the rolls it is something that is dealt with on a regular basis.

I note that in Schedule B there are a number of Acts that are repealed and for which certain Acts set on the roll are substituted. I note as I review them and as I reviewed them prior to having the occasion

to speak in this Chamber on this particular matter, I note that several of them, in fact a large proportion, appear to deal with matters of the boundary extension of the Province of Manitoba, something which is of interest to many of us here who understand the historical nature and formation initially of this province and the manner in which the province has grown from that of the post stamp province to the keystone province, something that we all have the pleasure of representing and, I am certain, quite proud of in the Province of Manitoba.

I note with passing that several Acts are of a rather, at least in our jurisdiction we would term ancient nature, although in the context of British common law and the context of along the realm they are of perhaps a modern nature. But here in the Province of Manitoba, having entered Confederation approximately 120 years ago, these are of a relatively recent vintage and relatively recent historical origin.

I note, for example, The Debtors' Arrest Act was from The Revised Statutes of Manitoba, 1892, which is of some historical note. It is interesting to note that these particular Acts and matters of this kind were dealt with in a different fashion and a different manner, Madam Deputy Speaker, than we would deal with presently in our jurisdiction under our present regime and method of dealing with those that find themselves in a debt situation and find themselves in a situation where they have no choice but to lose many of their assets. Consequently, we have new laws and new approaches to deal with this particular problem.

I note that there are other references to The Soldier Settlement Board Acts and matters that are also going to be repealed and, of course, those are more applicable to a time and an era when this nation was engaged in combat outside of the continent. It is something I hope we never have to go back to, particularly in light of the fact that we are proceeding towards November 11 and a day and a time when we all reflect upon the sacrifices made by many individuals and members of our society in many wars in order to allow us to have this free and democratic exchange in this particular Chamber, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I also note the number of Acts that are repealed in this particular Bill 16, Schedule C. As I review them I notice an Act to ratify an agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba under the Anti-Inflation Act of Canada has

been repealed. Well I remember that particular debate as it occurred, both at the federal and the provincial level, throughout the land and throughout the jurisdiction with respect to the Anti-Inflation Board. Well I remember the debates and the charges and countercharges that resulted during that particular era and troubled time in our history.

It is ironic that now we are returning back into another era of troubled times between the provinces and the federal Government. I guess that is the nature, Madam Deputy Speaker, of our federal jurisdiction and the ebb and flow of the Canadian political scene and political structure. The more things change, the more they remain the same in terms of this country and the way problems arise.

I note with some interest the fact that this particular Act is being repealed as a result of this legislation and this Act. I also note the repeal of the Act to incorporate the Civic Development Corporation. I am not familiar, Madam Deputy Speaker, with this particular Act, but I can only guess it had something to do with the Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg several years ago and is something which I was vaguely familiar with in my childhood. I note that that particular Act has been dealt with in this particular section of the Act.

As I go on, I note that the number of Acts that are repealed deal with The Manitoba Corporation Income Tax Act and it certainly gives credence to the fact that taxation has a very profound effect on all of us here in this Chamber and in the province in general. It certainly lends testimony to the concerns that have been expressed by many of our constituents and others that taxation in this province is at a very high level. We as legislators must do our part in order to ensure that the tax burden particularly on the middle and lower class is not increased and, if at all possible, that it is decreased because the people of Manitoba certainly are feeling the effect of it.

* (1450)

Certainly reflecting upon the fact that The Manitoba Corporation Income Tax Act has been changed numerous times and has gone through some transitions only brings to mind the fact that we, as legislators, are always looking at different ways and different means in order to acquire the revenues to do what we are elected to do in this legislation, in this province. It also indicates that we must be vigilant to ensure that taxation is dealt with fairly,

Madam Deputy Speaker, so that not only individuals pay their fair share, but corporations and others are required to pay their fair share of taxes, because I am of the distinct impression that a new mood is growing in this province and in this country that many large corporations are getting away without paying their fair share of taxes.

I note, as an aside, that this is a key function of our role as legislators and just to remind us in passing that we should be vigilant to ensure that taxation is distributed fairly, not just on the individual, but on corporations as well, Madam Deputy Speaker. I note in No. 27, on Schedule C, consists of an Act respecting certain debts due to the Crown. Though I am not particularly familiar with it, I can only suggest that perhaps it was an Act that dealt with individuals or corporations, or a company that owed the Crown a certain sum, and the Crown was willing at that time to forgive that particular individual or jurisdictions.

I note No. 29 was an Act to amend The Devolution of Estates Act, an Act which I and anyone who is a solicitor in this province and jurisdiction is well familiar with, that is The Devolution of Estates Act, an Act which, I might note in passing, Madam Deputy Speaker, has been recently amended in fact and changed significantly. Although I am not personally familiar with all of the changes and revisions, it certainly is a significant Act as it affects the jurisdiction of the state to deal with estates of individuals who should die intestate.

It is something that comes up, is very common and very often occurs on a daily basis. It is one of those activities which we as legislators play in the lives of individuals in this province. It is something, I think, food for thought that in fact many of these Acts and many of these regulations are dealt with on a daily basis by men and women all across the province and all across the breadth of this land.

I note that numerous other Acts that are being appealed deal with The Land Drainage Act, mostly turn of the century legislation, which I assume quite properly has probably been substantially amended or changed as we have changed our agricultural and our rural development practices. Consequently, we no longer have need to deal with these particular Acts and these particular actions.

I note also No. 51, an Act to Authorize the Payment of Special Emergency Grants to Farmers. I note in passing only too often that we have to have

legislation of this kind, Madam Deputy Speaker, to deal with the crises that seem to occur on a regular frequency in our rural communities whereby our rural friends are subject to the ebbs and flows of world price situations and are forced to receive funds and assistance from various Governments in order to survive.

It is something that we, on this side of the House, are quite concerned with and something that has been a historical factor, a historical basis in the New Democratic Party, on this side of the House, for a long time from the foundation of the CCF and the co-operative movement right up until the present day.

I note that there have been some amendments and some discussions in this House in the last several weeks. I hope it will continue with respect to the kind of assistance that could be done and given to our rural community in light of the discussions that are going on on GATT and the changes that may occur in GATT. I only hope that the question of farm subsidies can be dealt with in that regard, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I go on, Madam Deputy Speaker, to look at these other significant pieces of legislation that have been repealed as a result of the decision of the Supreme Court of, I believe, June 13, 1985. I look at an Act confirming a certain Agreement respecting certain Railways and respecting Freight and Passenger Rates (Northern Pac. & Man. Ry, C.N.R. & Prov.), an Act from 1901, an Act that deals with the historical basis of our province, railways being integral to the development of this province.

When I look at this Act, it causes one to reflect upon the foundations of this province, Madam Deputy Speaker, and those who participated in the building up of this province and the transportation system and network. I look with some nostalgia and also some disappointment at the fact that increasingly this province is no longer the transportation hub of the nation, and perhaps the continent, that it once was as a result of numerous actions undertaken by certain Parties at the federal level, who shall go unnamed at this time.

An Honourable Member: Go ahead and name them.

Mr. Chomiak: All Members in this House know full well what activities I am referring to and what particular Parties I am referring to in that particular regard.

I will go on to observe the repeal of many Orders-in-Council based on Order-in-Council numbers. I note as we repeal these particular Orders-in-Council that we, as legislators, do not have the particular information that indicates what these Orders-in-Council represent, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I am quite certain that these matters, since they are somewhat dated and from 30 and 40 years ago, are not significant. Consequently it has been well advised that these matters should be repealed. It calls to mind a pet project of mine as a solicitor in my private practice is such that the way that we classify Orders-in-Council and the regulations in this province leaves a fair bit to be desired, Madam Deputy Speaker.

One would hope that in the era of computerization and in the era of moving forward in information distribution, we could arrive at a better way of classifying the regulations to all of the Statutes in this province as well as the manner in which Orders-in-Council are presented and classified to assist the public, not just lawyers but the public in general, to know the kind of laws and regulations that we as legislators enact so that they have access to them and an understanding as to not only what we do but how they are governed and what activities we should participate in.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I note that The Proceeds of a Contract Disbursement Act has been dealt with and several other Acts respecting assessment of property for taxation in municipalities, as well as the Granting of Aid to a Railway into the Flin Flon Mines Act of 1926, another example of the early foundation of this province and assistance that was given to certain railway companies and others in order to carry out their activities in this particular jurisdiction.

I note that as we proceed to the end of this particular section that other Acts, including The Seine River Relocation Act, and The Seven Sisters and Slave Falls Validation Act are dealt with, and that these matters have been dealt with and repealed by virtue of this particular legislation.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, as my remarks draw to a close, I can just indicate that we, on this side of the House, note the implementation of this particular Act and are proceeding to do all we can in order to assist the Government in the carrying on and carrying out of its Government.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the Member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

* (1500)

BILL 17—THE PRIVATE ACTS REPEAL ACT

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), Bill 17, The Private Acts Repeal Act; (*Loi sur L'abrogation de lois d'intérêt privé*), the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

Mr. David Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to again participate in discussion of Bill 17, The Private Acts Repeal Act. As I look through the Act, I note that it deals with numerous Acts in the private realm and in the private nature that are being repealed as a result of actions, on a regular basis, that are done in this particular jurisdiction.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as I look through the list of the private Acts that are being repealed, I note that the numerous congregations in numerous churches in this regard have had the Acts repealed. Perhaps they no longer exist or they have been incorporated in another form. A review of these particular Acts amounts to a walk through the history of this province and various other activities that we engage in, in this province.

When I look at the incorporation originally, the congregation Teferus Yisroael and other congregations, and The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, et cetera, and others. I know with what great intent and diligence the Members on the opposite side are hanging on my every word as I proceed to lead them through the Act to repeal many of these private Acts, as we go through this particular portion of the Act.

I am very pleased as a legislator, Madam Deputy Speaker, to have the opportunity to comment on many of these important and, at one time, very illustrious Acts. I am sure that the Grand Lodge of Manitoba of Knights of Pythias carried on a very long-standing and interesting career. I wonder what actually happened to that particular organization,

but that will be for others to decide rather than myself.

I noticed there is reference made to many groups such as the Missionary Oblate Fathers of Keewatin from 1962, a group obviously that was involved in probably some kind of missionary work in that particular region. I looked at the list to note that most of them deal with public service, quasi-religious and/or religious organizations, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I said earlier, something in some Acts that dealt very, very much with—if one reviews them carefully, one would get a good sense of the history, the vitality and the diversity of our province.

There are many foundations mentioned here and many relief organizations, some which I trust have gone on to other things and other activities, and some that are probably no longer functional or no longer required in our society such as an Act to provide for the disposition of the funds of Weather Modifications Ltd.

I note in passing—the Act is being repealed—An Act to Incorporate Wesley College. That must have an interesting history indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, in terms of its existence in the City of Winnipeg now in another capacity.

We note, as I said earlier, the historical significance of many of these, and one gets a captionalized view of the history of the province when reviewing these Acts. When you review in No. 182 an Act respecting “the Winnipeg Electric Street Railway Company”—many will look back fondly on those days of electric streetcars and the like. In fact given the revelations in the House today with respect to the prices of gas and the increase in fossil fuels, one looks back increasingly on that age and the age of renewable energy in terms of the Electric Railway Company of Winnipeg.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I note that the Young Men’s Christian Association of Greater Winnipeg and the Young Women’s Christian Association of Winnipeg Acts both are being repealed. I assumed that they have been incorporated in some other fashion, in some other style. As I am aware, as are most Members of this House aware, that they both still are functioning in very necessary and useful bodies in our society today.

My comments on this particular Bill will be more concise than my comments on the previous Bill. Consequently, with that, I will close my remarks with

respect to Bill 17. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the Member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): It is my intention to soon call the motion that will take us into Interim Supply and Committee of the Whole. Before I do, I understand that private Members' hour will be in place today. I do not have to announce it, I know that is the rule; therefore, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Madam Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on the Interim Supply Bill.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 19, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1990, with the Honourable Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BILL 19—THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1990

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider Bill 19, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1990 (Loi de 1990 portant affectation anticipée de crédits).

* (1510)

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): I direct some questions to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who is also the Minister in charge of the Crown Corporations Council. Yesterday in the House the Minister, in response to questions we asked, said that he had no expectation that the Crown Corporations Council would review the Conawapa export sale to Ontario Hydro before the end of the year, that is before December 31, 1990.

Since January 1, 1991, is the date after which there will be penalties to Manitoba Hydro if there is a withdrawal from the agreement, my question to the Minister is why will the Crown Corporations Council, which was designed through the legislation which established it to review the capital projects of the

Crown corporations, not have an opportunity to review the largest megaproject in the history of the Province of Manitoba before December 31, 1990?

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Chairman, in the Chair)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Deputy Chair, I do not know what conclusions the Member took out of my response in the House the other day, but certainly he has taken some incorrect views. Let me say firstly, the Crown Corporations Council is charged with the responsibility of analyzing all of the capital programs put forward by our Crowns, and indeed making recommendations to Cabinet as to the soundness of those plans, and whether or not the Government should consider, in its wisdom, bringing forward loan authority in support of those plans.

I indicated in the House the other day in response to a question from a Member that the Crown Corporations Council indeed would be looking at the capital plan associated with the building of Conawapa.

As to whether or not the Crown Corporations Council would be directed to look into the export agreement, that is a different matter. I would think that is not within the purview of the Crown Corporations Council, to sit down and try, somehow, to pass judgment on the export agreement as entered into by Manitoba Hydro and Ontario Hydro. That is purely a matter of policy of the Government, whether or not that type of contract is entered into.

With respect, though, if a decision is made to proceed, then the capital plan that Hydro would put before the Government—because it is only on the basis of my signature representing all of the people of the province that Hydro would be allowed to borrow, in this case using an outside parameter of \$5.5 billion—but they would be able to proceed with the building.

I want to indicate to the Member that the Crown Corporations Council has been sitting in attendance, faithfully, at the Public Utilities Board hearing. They have been listening to the representations of Manitoba Hydro and all other interveners. They have in place meetings called with senior management of Manitoba Hydro to allow them to pursue certain lines of questioning, all of it directed towards a judgment or a recommendation with respect to the capital plan of Manitoba Hydro. Again, pursuant to their Act, they are required to

provide the Government some indication, from their point of view, as to how sound the capital program is.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not know what meaning the Member took out of my response the other day, but I am standing here, telling him that the Crown Corporations Council will indeed look at and review the capital plan of Manitoba Hydro with respect to Conawapa. That does not mean that the Crown Corporations Council will have at its disposal countless numbers of financial analysts who are going to pore through all of the information to such a degree that they will be able to give us anything more than a strong understanding, from their point of view, as to the capital plan itself. I say that because I do not want to mislead people to believe that the Crown Corporations Council has in its midst a number of analysts on staff who have an understanding in this area. Certainly, they do have analysts, whether the Member is saying that they have—

The Member is shaking his head. For instance, I would not want to mislead this House and say that the Crown Corporations Council has the same human resources at its disposal that the Public Utilities Board does, because it does not, and that was never the intention. The intention of the Crown Corporations Council was to call forward the best business minds, men and women, City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, people who understand business and people who, when presented with a plan, in this case a capital plan, would be prepared and could ask questions to which, if satisfactory answers were not provided, then could tell the Government that satisfactory answers had not been provided, and/or could call into question, or bring forward additional research, or call for a greater analysis with respect to the questions that they posed.

So, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that is the system. I fully expect that the Crown Corporations Council will have lodged with the Government before the end of December, a viewpoint as to the capital plan of Manitoba Hydro associated with the building of Conawapa, should that occur.

Mr. Carr: So we have at least two reviews that are occurring simultaneously. We have the review of the Public Utilities Board, with all of the associated analysts and experts who are given the responsibility of making that kind of assessment, and we have simultaneously the Crown

Corporations Council, without the experts acknowledged by the Minister of Finance to make a recommendation to the Government, he says, before the end of December 1990.

So the obvious question to the Minister is, what is the relative weighting that the Government itself will put on the two recommendations that will be before it within the next six weeks or so, that is to say, the recommendation from the Public Utilities Board and the recommendation from the Crown Corporations Council.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I may ask the Member to repeat the very last few words. I want to indicate to him where this process all begins. Manitoba Hydro has to satisfy a lot of needs. There is quite a process here. First of all, Manitoba Hydro had to satisfy Government that there was a need for this plant some time in the future, for our own requirements. That has to be done.

Manitoba Hydro had to satisfy the Government that indeed, as they claim that the cost to the ratepayer within the province would be lesser as a result of entering into building. Manitoba Hydro has to satisfy the Department of Environment of course, but also the Environment Commission that there will be no significant damage to the environment, and Manitoba Hydro, lastly, has to satisfy the Government that we are wise, after all those other hurdles are passed, that we would be wise to enter into a contractual agreement that would call on us, in the name of the people of the province, to borrow \$5.5 billion.

An awful lot of needs, and that has to be presented to the Public Utilities Board and that is what is being done right now. So I say, there are an awful lot of needs that Manitoba Hydro has to satisfy before this process continues.

Mr. Carr: Perhaps I will repeat the question for the Minister. The question was simply since he has just told us he is expecting a recommendation from the Public Utilities Board with all of its expertise by the end of November, and he is expecting a recommendation before the end of December from the Crown Corporations Council without the expertise that the Minister grants the Public Utilities has, how is he then to balance the two recommendations that his Government is expecting within the next six weeks?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, let us wait until we see what the recommendations are. They may

not have to balance them. They may very well be on the same side of the ledger, on either side of the ledger. I may not have to balance them. So the Member is asking me to speculate as to what the recommendations would be, and I refuse to do that. I do not need to do that, because that would really be an academic exercise at this point.

* (1520)

Mr. Carr: We find ourselves in a confusing situation. We have no fewer than four levels of authority that are very much involved in the process leading up to the export agreement with Ontario Hydro, and let me name the four. We have the board of directors of Manitoba Hydro itself; we have the Public Utilities Board; we have the Crown Corporations Council; we have the Government itself—four levels of decision-making, all of which interconnect, leading up presumably to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) and through him to the Government, which will make the ultimate decision.

We have a Public Utilities Board process now well underway, now late. The recommendation from the Public Utilities Board signed by Order-in-Council by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) was given a deadline of November 1, 1990 to report its findings to the Government. That deadline has not been met. It has now been extended until the end of November, leaving the Government only one month between the 30th of November and the 31st of December to decide whether or not to proceed with the agreement with Ontario Hydro.

Simultaneously, we have the Crown Corporations Council mandated by the Minister's own legislation to review the capital development plans of Manitoba Hydro, which will give yet another recommendation to the Government, perhaps on the 15th of December, maybe on the 18th of December, maybe on the 30th of December, which would leave the Government one day, one week, two weeks, to factor in the wisdom of the Crown Corporations Council before the Government makes its ultimate decision.

Could the Minister give us just some indication of what the interconnections are between these four levels of decision-making and how he expects his Government to make its own analysis, therefore to make an intelligent judgment when it has virtually no time to do so with the potential of competing advice?

Mr. Manness: Governments are faced with that decision every day. Every item in Cabinet, sometimes in one Cabinet meeting, sometimes faces the executive councillors with that type of process, competing information.

I am not going to stand here and say that there may or may not be competing information, but I do say to you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, and to the House, the process that the Member has put on the record as to occurring, I mean, he tends to embellish it in some respect and make it sound like we do not know what we are doing.

I say to him that there is some semblance of correctness in what he says. We do have a number of outside of Cabinet, outside of the Government agencies that we have asked, that we have approached, and asked them to provide us some greater comfort. That is what this is. It is never black and white. Ultimately it may be right or wrong, but at the time you enter into the decision it is never, ever that easy to determine. I guess that is why, as my colleague says, we are paid so well as executive councillors to undertake this important and very serious—very, very serious—determination and decision.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, for the Member to try and cast it in the light that we are giving ourselves basically a week or two weeks around Christmas time to make that decision, it says to me that, one, he has not been in business, and he does not believe that common sense in business can exist such that parties of good will at times can come to an agreement to change things. He has ruled that out, you see, as an alternative, or even that Ontario may want to come to us and ask us for an extension. You see, in his mind, if Ontario wants to come to us and has good reason to ask for an extension, we should say no, hit them, take the penalty -(interjection)- well, he must be, because he is saying to us that we have two weeks in the last part of December to make up our mind. I am saying, by the letter of the law, that is what it says today. I can also say to him if that comfort is not there with respect to the recommendations that come forward from the Public Utilities Board that come forward from the Crown Corporations Council. There may even be other groups, other individuals the Member does not even know about that we are seeking advice from.

If all that information comes in and still the balance is not tipping fast one way or the other, I can tell the

Member this Government is not going to feel like it is forced to write itself into a \$5.5 billion deal, if the comfort is not there.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, for the Member trying to say, well, you may make a horrible mistake because you are running out of time—and he has not said that, but in essence I think that is what he is trying to say. I say to him, these people here who I think are, at this point in time, showing good leadership in this province, I do not think that they would be prepared to make a decision on the basis of knowledge that does not somehow take the balance quickly one way or the other.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the Minister wants to make this now an issue of credibility, of confidence and of common sense, I will put it to the Minister. Yesterday in this House in response to a question he said the Crown Corporations Council would not give the Government a recommendation by December 31, 1990, and today he says it will. He accuses us of having a lack of credibility on the issue.

I do not understand where the Minister is coming from. Either he has had conversations with the Crown corporation subsequent to the answer he gave in the House yesterday, or he is just not on top of the brief. I would like to know from the Minister exactly what correspondence or communication he has had with the Crown Council over this issue, why it was he said yesterday they would not have a recommendation by December 31, 1990, and why today he tells us they will.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I read in a draft of the remarks made by myself in the House in reply to the question. I do not think, at least I did not take the interpretation of my response to mean that they absolutely would not meet the December 31 deadline. I think the interpretation I put on it is that they were not ordered to make the December 31 deadline. The Member is going to go and get the commentary—fine, I have no problem with that.

He asked whether or not there is subsequent information to bring forward to the question. I can say, yes, there is. Unbeknownst to me when he asked the question was that the Crown Corporations Council is very involved, extremely involved, taking their mandate seriously in being involved as far as listening very carefully to the presentations made at the Public Utilities Board.

* (1530)

It also subsequently has become known to me that they have meetings arranged for the end of this week—have had for a long period of time—with senior officials of Manitoba Hydro to pose some of the very direct questions that they have from their perspective. It also subsequently has become known to me that they are aware of the December 31 deadline and will be working as quickly as they can to meet it. Will they meet it? I have no way of knowing at this point in time, and I think that was the essence of the response I gave the other day.

Mr. Carr: We have two simultaneous reviews occurring, whether or not the Crown -(interjection)-well, the Minister says, it is not simultaneous. First he says that the Crown Corporations Council is monitoring the PUB hearings, and now he says it is not simultaneous. The question is very simple. What are the relative mandates of the Public Utilities Board and the Crown Corporations Council in this review? Is he expecting the same response from each of these organizations? Are their mandates the same? Are they duplicating and competing with one another or are the recommendations and the reviews complementary, focussing in on different aspects of public policy?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not understand what point the Member is trying to make. Nobody is competing. We certainly do not tell the Public Utilities Board anything. Indeed, I have not given direction to the Crown Corporations Council that they should be complementing somehow the Public Utilities Board process. It is not the mandate.

The mandate of the Crown Corporations Council is, whether you are dealing with the capital plan of Venture Tours Manitoba Limited, Hecla, whether you are dealing with the capital plans of the Manitoba Telephone System or Manitoba Hydro, bring your best expertise to bear. That is a combination of the best business heads, men and women from across this province, who are on that council to ask questions. If they find a weakness in an argument, the responsibility is to either hire more expertise until they are satisfied that they can work towards some type of a recommendation—to go through all of the cash flows, to call in all of the Hydro staff and challenge them as to their forecasted demand increases, to call in members of the Treasury Division of my department and grill them as to whether or not the price of money two or three years from now is going to be at a certain rate of interest versus another, that is not their role.

Their role is to ask questions on the basis of their business knowledge dealing with expected returns, dealing with—in some cases—scheduling, forecasted revenues, from a purely business point of view. If Manitoba Hydro cannot answer those questions to their satisfaction, then to call forward either more information and/or report to the Government that they do not have the level of comfort to be able to recommend that capital plan be entered into, nothing to do whatsoever with the Public Utilities Board, nothing to do whatsoever.

The Member says the review is happening concurrently. They are over at that process to try and expand their knowledge base through listening. That is the purpose of being there. So, Mr. Deputy Chairman, let it not appear for one moment that the Government is directing the Public Utilities Board to do anything other than to listen and to report and to make recommendation. Let it not appear that the Crown Corporations Council has been directed to look into certain elements of the capital plan of Manitoba Hydro. It has been directed to look at the plan and to make general recommendations as to whether or not it is supportive, and to the degree it enters into detailed analysis is ultimately its own decision.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, maybe I should just take a few seconds to tell the Minister just exactly why it is we are following this line of questioning.

By December 31, 1990, the Government of Manitoba will have to make a decision that bears profoundly on the future of Manitoba, a \$5.5 billion project which represents more money than the entire expenditures of the Government of Manitoba for one year. It is our responsibility on this side of the House to ensure that the Government is in possession of all of the relevant data, that Government has followed a process that ensures itself that all of the ingredients necessary for making a sound and wise decision are there.

I am not an engineer, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I can be snowed in 30 seconds by the engineering expertise of Manitoba Hydro as I expect so can the Minister of Finance, so can the Minister of Energy. If the Deputy Premier wants to subject his colleagues on the Treasury Board to quizzing by engineers in Manitoba Hydro, I would love to be in attendance to watch the contest. That is not our role as legislators or as politicians. It is our role to take the best advice that is available and to make a

decision of public policy based on the public interest of Manitoba.

What I am trying to get at here is just what the Government will have at its disposal the moment that decision is made, and what pressures will be brought to bear upon the Government at that moment. One of the pressures will be the knowledge that withdrawal from the contract is costly. Withdrawal from the contract on the 1st of January will cost \$20 million, withdrawal a few months later will cost \$50 million and withdrawal by the end of 1991 will cost something more than \$50 million to the Manitoba treasury. It is for this reason -(interjection)- well, it is a \$50 million penalty, and if I have used the wrong phrase, I apologize for it.

So that is the reason that we are asking questions and will continue to ask questions, not only of the Government, but when the opportunity presents itself, and let me take this moment to thank the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for allowing the chief executive officer for Manitoba Hydro to appear in front of the legislative committee after the Public Utilities Board recommendation and before the decision must be taken. I think that is a responsible thing for the Minister to have done. There is no down side in the public process for that kind of scrutiny to occur. The Minister himself, when he was in Government before and when he was in Opposition, argued hard and long and successfully that it is the role of this Legislature to apply political scrutiny to decisions of Crown corporations. I agree with him, and I applaud him for taking that decision. I think it is important. If that were not to have occurred, it would have been a very bad precedent.

Let me ask one or two more questions, and I know other Members are wanting to ask questions of their own to other Ministers.

On the record from yesterday's Question Period, the Minister states that my question was basically academic when I asked about the role of the Crown Council because, and let me quote him: I say to the Member that the Crown Corporations Council has been put in place as a quasi-treasury board system to look at the capital plans in Crowns, but indeed the question the Member asks is basically academic, at this point in time, because the Public Utilities Board has not provided, to my understanding, a public determination as to the recommendation.

Well, the implication there is that the Crown Corporations Council has no role to play until the

Public Utilities Board has made its recommendation, but today we get a different answer from the Minister. The answer we have today from the Minister is that there will be a recommendation to the Government by December of 1990. The questions that I am asking are trying to determine what it is that the Government intends to benefit from, what wisdom it will avail itself to from these simultaneous recommendations that it will receive over the next six weeks.

Now the reason that it is important that the Government have the advice of the Utilities Board and the Crown Corporations Council by the end of the year is so the Government can have all of the advice it needs to make a good decision before the penalties kick in. That is not possible given the wording of the contract, vis-a-vis the Clean Environment Commission report or a joint panel, however the environmental process will unfold, because we know that cannot happen until at least the middle part of 1991 some \$20 million or \$30 million or \$40 million already into the schedule of penalties.

Now the Minister of Finance is a man of integrity. He is a man who always looks for the wisest and soundest business judgments to be made.

While we are on the subject of comfort level, is it a matter of discomfort for the Minister that he will not have all of the advice that he needs to make his decision until the penalties of withdrawal are already in place?

* (1540)

Mr. Manness: It certainly would be if the Public Utilities Board did not report. I think we are putting a lot of our, and again, we are speculating as to what the report ultimately may read, but if it did not come down in complete support of the project, if it waivered significantly, I would say very candidly to the Member, that would cause some consternation, not only in my mind, but I think in everybody's mind and certainly in the mind of Cabinet.

I am not going to prejudge what the Public Utilities Board is going to say, but I do know they will be reporting before the deadline. I am expecting and certainly hoping that they will fall foursquare on one side of the issue. I guess if people want to know whether I am a supporter of the project or not, I am. I am hoping that in their wisdom they will come out in support of the program, but only after they have exercised all of the analytical process and subjected

the capital plan to all the analytical process that they can muster.

Beyond that, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we have asked the Crown Corporations Council, people again who are not academicians—whatever the word is—academics, who are not consultants but indeed are practising business people, people who have made it, so to speak, by making good decisions, many of them making good decisions, business decisions. After consultants had reported to them, after people within their organizations had brought forward business plans, after they themselves had to work through a feeling of comfort, but after, in their own mind, they were assured due diligence was done.

That is what we are asking the Crown Corporations Council to do, not to run through again all of the analysis of the Public Utilities Board. They feasibly can not do it, but knowing what they do about the process at the Public Utilities Board and subjecting that to their own experience in business, telling us whether due diligence has been done, whether enough comfort exists in their mind around the process and around the results, and again being another source of information which is so vital to us.

I agree with the Member. The more sources the better. As long as they are good sources. Ultimately, the decision will come down to the point—I suppose to this: If there is so much conflicting information and recommendation, then it is going to be difficult, no question, but if the Public Utilities Board with its expertise, certainly the Crown Corporations Council with its expertise, and given the fact that Hydro has been involved in this for two years and we as a Government have in asking questions, a lot of questions on our own—yes, I am not an engineer, but I basically know some questions to ask. So does my colleague, the Minister. -(Interjection)-

The Member says, so does he. Of course, he will have an opportunity to put some of those questions. When it comes down to ultimately taking the big breath and signing it, well, I can say to the Member opposite—I do not know, he has maybe been in real estate, maybe he has been in business; I do not know his background well enough, but I can tell him from my experience in 1971 when I had bid on my first piece of farm land. It was \$80 an acre, and the fellow wanted \$82.00. I could not go the extra dollar because there were no economics in it. The decision was tough, and I walked away.

In 1975 when the land had gone to \$500 an acre—'75 gone to \$500—I did not walk away, but I gulped hard. I did not know what I had committed myself to. When the land was \$1000 an acre in 1980 and somebody came to me to buy some of mine, I did not think it could pay to buy it that way. I gulped hard and I did not sell it. I can tell the Member, all the way along you gulp hard because you really do not know for sure. You do not know for sure because there is nothing absolutely certain. If the Member thinks there is, then he has never been in business. I am saying to him, that is why we have reached out to the Public Utilities Board, the Liberal Party supported that and that is why we are reaching out to the Crown Corporations Council. That is why we also over two years have asked many, many questions of Manitoba Hydro, but is the decision going to be easy when we are asked to commit ourselves, not ourselves, the ratepayers to \$5.5 billion of borrowing, it will never be an easy decision.

Mr. Carr: I do not envy the Minister the decision that is in front of him. We have established something through this questioning though, that I think is very important. I would like to just summarize it and in case there is any contradiction the Minister can stand in his place and show me where I am wrong.

Now we are assured that there will be a formal recommendation to the Government from the Crown Corporations Council before December 31, 1990 on the wisdom of proceeding with the Conawapa project: Have I got that correct?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, when I made the answer yesterday there was certain information I did not know, and I allowed myself some leeway. I was well aware that the Crown Corporations Council would be involved in reviewing the capital plan by the methodology that they have in place. I would not commit, as can be seen in the answer that that would be done, that they would respond by the end of December.

Today I am led to believe that they believe they can make that deadline quite comfortably, but I say, if something else comes up through this due diligence and one of those representatives of our community find something that is disturbing and asks a question seeking greater analysis, I am not going to hold in, and I do not think this Government is going to be locked into a December 31st deadline.

We are talking here, maybe, \$10 million versus \$5.5 billion and that is a general statement I make.

There should be nothing written in stone, I mean common sense would dictate that would it not, Mr. Deputy Chairman? I would think it would.

Mr. Carr: For the first time we have some musings by a Minister of Government that not meeting the December 31st deadline is truly an option, if the recommendations that the Minister is expecting are not—let us say to a degree of comfort, that would enable the Government to make that decision in clear conscience. That is fair enough.

I want to take this whole discussion a step further with the Minister, and again, I congratulate him for assuring that Members of the House will have an opportunity to question members of Manitoba Hydro after the Public Utilities Board has reported.

Will the Minister go a step further, given the new information that he has put on the record this afternoon? Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the newer information is that the Minister is expecting a recommendation from the Crown Corporations Council; that is new.

Will the Minister go a step further and guarantee to the Members of this House that they will have an opportunity to question members of the Crown Corporations Council on the thinking behind its recommendation, again after it is made public and before the December 31st deadline?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I will not provide that guarantee and I will tell you why. I believe that all of the questions that the Member wants to ask, that he indeed thinks are important to this whole question can be asked of Mr. Ransom and Manitoba Hydro.

* (1550)

As we have said from Day One, if Manitoba Hydro with its expertise, and you must remember Manitoba Hydro had to sell itself first on the project. The Member thinks that there are a bunch of engineers over there, and they just want to build -(interjection)- He did not say that? I am putting words in his mouth? He did not say that, but he certainly implied that.

I am saying to the record that Mr. Ransom is not an engineer and he was not driven to build. This Government, in spite of some charges, is not driven to build. It has to make economic sense, unlike the NDP when it brought forward Limestone, two years. Nobody questioned the need for Limestone. I will not stand here and say that Limestone should not have been built. The whole argument around Limestone

was the advancement of two years. That is what the issue was.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I digress. What I am saying is that the Member will have every opportunity to put everyone of his questions to Mr. Ransom. Just like, indeed, interveners at the Public Utilities Board had opportunities to take counterarguments. I would say, if in the mind of the Public Utilities Board, Hydro does not have the answers in response to the concerns of the interveners, the Government will weigh that very, very heavily if full responses cannot be made to those concerns.

It does not mean that there has to be total agreement with the intervener, but if a full explanation cannot be provided—I say the same thing to the Member if he can bring up meaningful questions that cannot be answered—I will not say to his satisfactions, but I will say that the Government will be listening carefully to his questions like we will to any concerns, because again, this is a big, big deal, and we would not want to make a bad one.

That is the approach this Government has taken on almost all of the matters which it has had to deal with. Mr. Deputy Chairman, whether Members want to admit it or not, this is a competent Government. It brings a business-like approach to all of its dealings.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I found the comments of the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), in regard to hydro development, to be very interesting, because he should check the record. He might wish to check with his Leader and a previous critic in terms of Hydro, his then Critic Responsible for Hydro, the Member for Lakeside, the current Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), because the position of the Conservative Party on Limestone was not just in regard to the advancement, but it was also in regard to the necessity of building it.

In fact, his then critic, and the then Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier (Mr. Filmon), had suggested that instead of building Limestone, we should have been importing power. If the Minister has forgotten that, I am quite willing to show him where that was stated quite clearly in the press. So let them not revise -(interjection)- yes, in the press. Let them not revise the position of their Party in regard to Limestone. They were as clear as the Liberal Party was.

I do credit the Liberal Party, although I did not agree with their position. The Leader of the Liberal Party described Limestone as lemonstone. She did so not just in one area of the province; she did so in northern Manitoba. It was not well received in northern Manitoba, but she certainly walked into the lion's den and stated the position clearly. I hope the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) will do the same.

I have a number of questions, though, to the Finance Minister in regard to some northern concerns. I want to pursue further with him some of the questions I have raised in regard to Northern Tax Allowance. As the Minister knows, we have lost that in Thompson-Wabowden. As the Minister knows, we could see many other northern communities lose the Northern Tax Allowance if the federal Government implements the implementations of the task force that it appointed, which reportedly actually in late October of last year.

We have lobbied. When I say we, I am talking about Northerners not just in the Province of Manitoba and across the country. I appreciate the fact that there has been an expression of concern by all three Parties in the Legislature, as evidenced by the fact that a resolution I had introduced last year on the Northern Tax Allowance was supported by all three Parties. I am not questioning that aspect of it.

People are saying, yes, the federal Government should review its unfair policies on the Northern Tax Allowance, but I still believe that there is room for the provincial Government to take action itself. I raised this in Question Period a number of weeks ago. The Minister, and quite rightly, indicated that for a provincial Northern Tax Allowance or tax credit to be put in place, it would require notice to the federal Government. I realize that.

Assuming that we are going to have another budget, whenever it is, spring or fall of next year, what I want to ask the Finance Minister is whether he will undertake now to begin discussions with the federal Department of Finance in regard to a northern tax credit that would be equivalent to the amount that people would have saved in terms of provincial taxes. It can be accomplished, by the way, to the First Minister, not strictly by using the current form. I realize the terms of the Income Tax Department and the federal Government—there are difficulties. They obviously have to give approval as to what provinces do, but we do have tax credits in place that are built in right at the bottom of the form,

if you like, tax credits in regard to cost of living and tax credits in regard to property taxes.

I want to ask him whether he will consider introducing a tax credit equivalent to the amount that communities such as Thompson and Wabowden would have saved in provincial taxes, and further to that, if he has any analysis as to what the cost would be. The estimates in our community are that it would be around the \$6 million mark, perhaps even less than that, for the two communities affected. I have heard various different estimates, and I am going here from, for example, the Chamber of Commerce which had done some analysis suggesting that the Northern Tax Allowance would save Thompson and Wabowden residents \$10 million, assuming that the provincial portion of that is, say, 35 to 40 percent. I would like to ask the Minister if he is in any way, shape, or form willing to consider that and if he has done any analysis on that suggestion.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am sitting here in a state of disbelief. I remember the question that the Member put, I believe two weeks ago, in the House. I did not know how serious to take him at that point in time. I should have realized that it was a serious question, and it is very serious now.

I cannot believe what I have just heard with my ears. The hallmark of the NDP philosophy with respect to tax reform is that a dollar income is treated as a dollar income, that absolutely nobody is given preferential treatment, that all sources of income are taxed as if they are a dollar income, the very fundamental understanding of the NDP Party, as I have seen it written in their information, indeed in their policy statements.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, what the Member is saying is this: that I should do the analysis, I should confirm whether or not it may be \$6 million in an area and maybe over the whole North, however defined, \$10-million-plus, granting a forgiveness on tax, personal income tax, whether I should do that, and I know, given the fact that there are northern allowances in place and that the Government should grant a tax relief in a specific area.

Two points, Mr. Deputy Chairman. How do I do that when much of rural Manitoba, certainly a lot of it agricultural based, right today is trying to make a living on, in a lot of cases, \$10,000 net income? They are not paying income tax, not at those levels, but I can tell you the contribution that those types of people are making to the tax coffers with respect to

sales tax and every other tax, indeed as are northern Manitobans, no question.

How is it that I divide the province, draw a line here, there and everywhere and say there are two classes of Manitobans, those that should have a tax relief and those that should not? How do I do that, particularly at this time when the rural economy in the North in a comparative sense is moving along pretty fairly, not in all areas, certainly in Thompson, not in all areas. I understand that, and I am-(interjection)-

The Member says 80 percent unemployment. I cannot argue, I cannot dispute those facts -(interjection)-

* (1600)

We are talking about income tax policy now. We are talking about personal income tax policy. That was the question. Income tax has no reference as to whether you are employed or not. It says, if you make a dollar, you pay tax. So, Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Member is asking me then to provide tax relief. At the same time, I will be paying more. Indeed, these Ministers here who are the deliverers of expenditure and the providers of services will be asking me to pay more in support of enhanced services in their area, because we all know it costs more to live in the North, and you will get no argument from me. The Member is saying, provide more because it costs more to live there, but give more tax relief for those that are there. If he wants a response from me—will I pursue that?—I am saying to him, in this point in time, no.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am amazed. Does the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) not realize that in 1988 such tax relief was provided to communities in Thompson and Wabowden? Does the Finance Minister not realize that if we are successful in getting the Northern Tax Allowance brought back in Thompson-Wabowden, the provincial government will be paying that anyway, as it did in 1988? Does he not realize that if other communities are cut, the real difference will be in terms of the fact that previously they were receiving both the federal and a provincial tax break; then they would receive none?

I am really surprised that the Finance Minister would suggest this. I do not know if he has taken the time to look at the question of equity here. The reason we have a Northern Tax Allowance is—yes, the Finance Minister is right in terms of wages; a

dollar earned is a dollar earned, but a dollar in Thompson or Wabowden does not go as far as a dollar in other communities because of that higher cost of living. So the real take-home pay is less.

I just want to ask the Finance Minister if he would take the time, for example, to talk to Inco workers who recently received a \$2000 cheque from Inco as part of the contract settlement to find out that fully 45 percent of that was deducted for income tax. That, by the way, was largely because of the fact that the Northern Tax Allowance has been eliminated. Yes, we understand there are tough times in other areas of the province. I want to say to the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness), our area of the province in northern Manitoba has done more than its fair share. I mean, how much revenue has come out of mining taxes alone the last number of years? How much money has come out of the North in terms of sales taxes and personal income taxes over the last number of years? He knows it is a considerable amount of money.

When I look at the situation that we are looking at hundreds of millions of dollars coming out of the North, is it really unreasonable to expect that Northerners should ask for a northern tax credit from the provincial Government, which they pay anyway—the lobbying efforts were successful—which they paid in 1988 when we had a Northern Tax Allowance that did apply to those communities? When we are paying so much money into the provincial treasury, is that unreasonable?

I asked the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) that question expecting that he would at least consider it, but I just cannot see how he can be consistent with his other Ministers who are saying, yes, Thompson, Wabowden and other northern communities should get the Northern Tax Allowance, when he is not willing to put provincial money where the provincial mouth is. That is all I am asking for. You would pay it anyway if we are successful; you paid it anyway in 1988. In communities such as The Pas, for example, which currently gets it 100 percent, if they are cut out as the task force would have it, you are paying it in 1990 in the way of tax credit, tax allowance to those communities.

Why not say to Northerners that the provincial Government, unlike the federal Government, is not going to pass the buck, that it recognizes they are northern communities? Why not say that you would provide what you have been providing to them

anyway? Is that unreasonable, Mr. Finance Minister? Is that unreasonable for Northerners to expect the same sort of treatment they have had before? Is it unreasonable to expect them to expect that those fine words of support we are hearing from the Government for the Northern Tax Allowance be translated into something?

(Madam Chairman in the Chair)

Let us not forget the magnitude we are talking about—\$4 million, \$5 million, \$6 million. I look at Thompson. We paid our fair share, and we are willing to help the rural communities in our community, because we know what it is like to go through tough times. We were through pretty tough times a number of years ago in Thompson, because of the mining industry, because of the actions of the former Conservative Government in terms of cutbacks in that area, in terms of staff, et cetera. Quite frankly, people in the North are probably still somewhat nervous about the intentions of this Government over the next number of years.

So we have a vested interest, perhaps, of being sympathetic to areas of the province that are having a tougher time than we might be having in some communities, but then we have had Lynn Lakes, have we not? We have had the Sherridons in the last number of years, so not all northern communities are going through that. As the Member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) points out, there are many northern communities with 80 percent and 90 percent unemployment.

So I would ask the Finance Minister to reconsider his statements on the Northern Tax Allowance, and further to that, to undertake within Government, as the Finance Minister, to make sure that at a time when the North has been contributing record amounts of money to the provincial coffers that they not be cut back in terms of the kind of cutbacks we have seen, in terms of the Department of Northern Affairs, and that there be some consideration picking up some of the programs that are in jeopardy because this Government has not renegotiated the Northern Development Agreement.

There might be some consideration to the fact—and the Finance Minister talks about rural communities. There is a Southern Development Initiative for which the provincial Government is going to be putting in \$30 million. What about the North? What about the programs that would have

been funded by the Northern Development Agreement they have not been able to renew?

So, I am asking the Minister to do nothing more, not give special treatment, but give fair treatment to Northerners, and to start by giving consideration to a provincial Northern Tax Allowance or credit, that would be nothing more than what the provincial Government paid anyway in 1988 in those communities and would have to pay if it was reinstated as part of the lobbying efforts which his Government and all Parties in this House have said they support.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Madam Chair, I just want to put a couple of comments on the record as it relates to what the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) had indicated. I think there are a couple of issues here that have to be clearly explained to the Member, that the ministry which I represent, along with the other Ministers from across Canada, have employed a group of economic consultants to put a case together to go to the federal Minister of Finance, to appeal the task force decision on the Northern Tax Allowance.

What I think the Member for Thompson is probably doing, in pursuing the path in which he is pushing the Minister of Finance to proceed, could well create a division of north and south taxpayers. I think it would be, at this point, ill advised to—what I would consider—pick up or to assume what the federal Government is offloading onto the taxpayers of Manitoba. I would hope we would get support from the Members opposite in rejecting what the federal Government assumed as their responsibility to transfer that onto the province.

* (1610)

I think the case can quite easily be made that there is a federal responsibility in northern communities to give a tax break and to continue on with the program which was in place, but I think it is unfair of the Member to ask the province to pick up what that federal responsibility is and should continue to be. So we are working, as a Government, and will be approaching the federal ministry of Finance to continue on with that Northern Tax Allowance. -(interjection)- That is correct; we are all citizens of Manitoba.

I just want to touch briefly on the comments that the Member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) made. I know that it is a concern of his as it has been a concern

of ours, and that is the issue of unemployment, but let me tell the Member for The Pas who has been an observer of the political scene, has been an observer and a participant in political activities as the Chief of The Pas Indian Band, that the unemployment in the North did not start two and a half years ago, that he sits with a Party that was Government of this province for the past 16 out of the last 20 years, yet he decided to sit with the New Democratic Party which governed for 16 out of the last 20 years. The unemployment did not start two and a half years ago. -(interjection)- No, I want him to be fair and recognize that.

We have to work towards employment opportunities so that there are more people generating income to put into the overall tax pool and make meaningful jobs for those people. That is why I am unclear, Madam Chair, when it comes to seeing the opposition of the New Democratic Party in the development of Repap and the forestry complex at The Pas, which would create some \$1 billion of investment and some 1,200 jobs.

Let us deal with some basic issues. We all want to reduce the employment. We certainly do, and we should work together to do that. We do not want to do it and harm the environment. We want to create jobs through Sustainable Development, and the Repap initiative was one of those which will create employment, which will give meaningful jobs to the aboriginal people. -(interjection)- No, Madam Chair, it is not nonsense. It was raised in the debate on Interim Supply.

So we are defensive and want to accomplish the Northern Tax Allowance continuation that the federal Government has had in place. We have done our homework on it, and we will be presenting it to the federal Minister, but I think it is unfair to ask the provincial Government to take the offloading that the federal Government is now putting on the people of Manitoba and create an anomaly between northern and southern taxpayers.

I can tell you where that will lead to. It will lead to a divided province. It will lead -(interjection)- No, it will lead to a divided province. No, Madam Chairman, I am very adamant about getting that tax break for those northern people. We have spent money to do it. We have worked in concert with other Governments and will continue to do so.

We also will work to create meaningful employment through activities at Repap's, and I am

really pleased that we have just seen some \$287 million committed by Inco to upgrade their plant. The injection of that kind of money means a lot of employment and activity in those communities.

Madam Chair, the whole Conawapa project of \$5.5 billion being injected into those areas of the province are tremendous amounts of money. The northeast hydro, which we have pressed for and will continue to press for the development of the hydro line into those communities that do not have hydro, again a major economic activity of \$70 million or \$60 some million and local employment.

This Government's record is absolutely clear when it comes to enhancing and encouraging activities in northern Manitoba. We will work as aggressively on the Northern Tax Allowance that was in place by the federal Government. We are working to continue it, Madam Chair, and I appreciated this opportunity to put those comments on the record.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I have a question for the Minister of Family Services. I wonder if the Minister has had an opportunity to ascertain whether or not there has been a change in the placement policy relative to older children on the part of the Child and Family Services agencies.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): We have been discussing the permanency placement that the Member raised last week when we discussed this. The department is looking at those cases and gathering some data. I hope to have that for him in the near future.

Mr. Alcock: To the Minister again: Rather than the permanency planning, there was a question raised the other day about whether or not agencies have informed the Minister that they were cutting back on services to adolescents as a result of the budget demands being placed on them by the department. Has the Minister received that information from any of the agencies?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The department is continuing to work with all of the agencies on this service and funding agreements, and those are still in progress and relate to the budget. Agencies are being asked to set some priorities. Some have come forward with plans that they have forwarded to the department and are closer to completion. Others still have work to do on those, and the work between that portion of the department and the agencies is ongoing.

Mr. Alcock: I wonder if the Minister can then tell us why the various Child and Family Service agencies are running deficits. What is his belief that has led to the creation and the growth in those deficits?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The Member is well aware of the history of the creation of the agencies. In their five years of existence certainly there has been an increase in volume from 1985. There has also been 100 percent increase in the budget over the course of those years.

I think that the Member knows that there are certain growing pains that go with the agency, certain management decisions that have to be taken, that the agencies have developed in different ways and provide different services as determined by their boards.

I had indicated to him earlier that we are facing tough economic times, and tough decisions have to be made by Government and by agency boards. At the present time we are working with those boards to look at what their priorities are. I met with board representatives on Monday of this week and we talked about building a partnership and a working relationship as we look at the services they provide and the funding that we are able to provide, and recognize that there has to be a coming together of minds in both the service and funding area. Some of the agencies are at different stages with that and the work is ongoing.

Mr. Alcock: I am aware that the Minister has to leave, so if he will indicate at what point he has to go, then I will switch to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). I have a final question on the deficits and one opening question on education that relates to the Minister if he has five more minutes.

Have the agencies brought forward details to the Minister of what comprises the deficits that they are now running, what the things are, what the situations are that have occurred, that have led to the creation of those deficits, and specifically within that, have they brought to the Minister's attention the shortfall in Government support to pay the payroll tax?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, when we met with board members on Monday, one of the issues they brought forward was the payroll tax and, of course, one that many Manitobans are opposed to and that we have been able to partially eliminate in the last two years, but that is certainly part of their cost. The agencies are so diverse. I recall one of the members of the board from western Manitoba indicating that

the boards are the ones that make those decisions based on their knowledge of the community. They set the priorities, but there seems to be a disposition to look very closely at the issues that they are dealing with and set their priorities. You know the main priority of the protection of children and vulnerable Manitobans is at the top of their list, but they are prepared to look at the legislation and the mandate, and we will continue to discuss that with them.

Mr. Alcock: Well, I appreciate that answer from the Minister of Family Services. I believe he is genuinely trying to grapple with these issues. .

I would draw his attention to the remarks from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) on Monday night in Committee of Supply where this issue came up. The Minister of Finance indicated that not-for-profit organizations funded by Government had been given offsetting grants to compensate them for what they were being charged in payroll tax.

In fact he indicated some of the universities and I believe hospitals receive up to 2.35 percent, a full tenth of 1 percent higher than the 2.25 charged because of some of the compounding of cost. I think it is a right policy, and I think it is a progressive policy.

* (1620)

The facts of the matter—as I understand it from when I was involved in the management and subsequent to that—are that when the tax was first brought in at 1.5 percent the agencies were indeed paid a grant equal to their costs for the tax. Subsequent, when the tax was raised to 2.25 they were never given a second grant to bring their base up to that level.

The Minister of Finance undertook on Monday night, if you will read the Hansard, to review legitimate cases that were brought forward by the agencies and to see that anomaly was corrected. I think it was a proper position for him to take.

I would encourage you to enter into that dialogue with the Minister of Finance and the agencies, because it is one of those things that has been allowed to exist. It began under the previous Government, and has simply compounded to the point where it is a significant although not by any means the major portion of the deficits that these agencies are incurring.

Just before the Minister leaves I will give him a two-part question. One is, there have been discussions ongoing with some of the Native

agencies, particularly I believe the Swampy Cree in The Pas, relative to establishing a separate agency carving it out of I believe MKO, and I am wondering what the status of those discussions are. To alert the Minister of Education—

An Honourable Member: He just left.

Mr. Alcock: Is he coming back, Clayton, or is he gone? -(interjection)-

Well there have been some outstanding problems relative to the issue of day cares in schools. I spoke to the Minister of Education in Interim Supply the time before last, and this was before the House, about the problem where there is a policy established by the Department of Family Services and the Department of Education to build space within schools. In certain circumstances the school divisions are reneging on those agreements we believe.

I am wondering if the Minister has been involved in discussions either with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and his department or with the school boards relative to supporting school-based day cares, seeing that the local school boards play the role that they are supposed to play and provide the support that they are supposed to provide. Has this issue been raised with the Minister?

Mr. Gilleshamer: Madam Chairperson, in regard to the first question about the Swampy Cree, the discussions are ongoing with the splitting of that agency and the creation of another one. There has been no resolution to that at this point. Certainly it is something that is still before Government, and hopefully we will be moving on that in the near future.

The question that you wish to ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) I can answer partially. There has been some discussion between my department and his department in this matter. Clearly his is the lead department in working with the school division boards and their plans for day care in the schools. Other than to say that we have had some dialogue on it I think he would be in a better position to answer the question.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated I have no more questions for this Minister. I realize he has to get away to a meeting.

I do have a question or two for the Minister of Urban Affairs. To start, the Minister has been in discussions in this House before in Estimates and in Question Period relative to what was known as

the Seniors Transport system. I am wondering if he can tell us today what the status is of that service and what has occurred with the replacement services that he had indicated might be available so that people who were formerly accessing that service will now have service.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, to the Member for Fort Rouge, if he remembers that it was the city that came forward to the province to arrange the new Handi-Transit system. We not only supported that system because it looked after the whole City of Winnipeg for someone who cannot take the regular transit system, not like the one that is in one particular area of town that was enforced before that only dealt with certain people and a specific area. Not only that, but we funded—the city had planned on having it go over a four-year period. It was so popular, extended transit, that we funded it and moved it to a three year, and we funded it accordingly. It shows in this year's budget.

I understand that the ridership, and because of the popularity of the plan, I think the membership went up by 70 percent in that short little while. I do not have the specific numbers on me of how the ridership has been affected, but I could tell him that it has been very, very popular. Most of the ridership, I would say, that have taken up on the Handi-Transit, 80 percent of them would be seniors.

Mr. Alcock: Can the Minister confirm to us that service is replacing fully the service that was provided by Senior's Transport?

Mr. Ducharme: The service that was introduced by the city and jointly supported by the province was to look at anyone who could not take the regular transit system transportation throughout the City of Winnipeg is now being serviced.

Mr. Alcock: Well, Madam Chairperson, to the Minister again, it is my understanding that the extent of the Handi-Transit will not, for example, take people to church. Is that true?

Mr. Ducharme: I am not aware that if someone is going to church or they are going to a doctor, I have been told by the city that wherever they are going, if they cannot take the regular transit system—and I am talking about anybody in the City of Winnipeg who is not able, who gets his doctor's certificate—that he would be able to use that Handi-Transit system. If that is not the case, I will check for the Member, but I was to believe that

anyone who cannot take the regular transportation system, City of Winnipeg, is entitled to use the Handi-Transit, and that was the whole idea of that program, so that we were not dealing with a small specific number in one section of Winnipeg. We as a Government decided that we would like to make sure everyone could use that system.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I would ask the Minister to conduct that investigation, because I am told as recently as today that people are not allowed by policy to use that system if they are going to church or if they are going to pastoral counselling or if they are going to a number of personal services that were formally provided by the Seniors Transport.

I would ask the Minister to look into that and report back as to whether or not that situation exists, and if it does, what he has done to correct it.

Mr. Ducharme: First of all, the program is conducted by the City of Winnipeg, funded by the province under the Urban Capital Program. However, I know that if somebody is going shopping downtown or something and they cannot—a handicap or someone who has a doctor's certificate—take the regular transportation, they can take the extended Handi-Transit.

I would ask the person or ask the Member, instead of me going out to do some research, that the Member provide me with the information he has from whoever it was, and I will find out on a specific case from Mr. Borland of why that person would be turned down. I think that would be a more logical way than going through an investigation from some hearsay or other. If he could provide me with that information, I would be glad to check it out for him.

Mr. Alcock: Well, I will see that the Minister is provided with that information, but I would ask him at the same time, rather than conducting extensive research, that he provide me with the policies that govern the management of that particular system. Would he be prepared to do so?

Mr. Ducharme: The city policy that they provide for that particular system, I would be glad to provide him with what you have to do to be available for that system. All I know is from the reports I have. It has been very, very successful. It now provides a transit system, Handi-Transit, to the whole City of Winnipeg and not to one small specific group.

Mr. Alcock: Yes, although I believe the starting point for this was to ensure that it provided the same

services that were provided by Senior's Transport. I would be interested in getting that policy statement so we could see if that indeed is the case. Madam Chairperson, to the—oh, would you like to—

Mr. Ducharme: I would like to respond to that. I would like to say to the Member across the way, if he is asking that if someone did not have a doctor's certificate and rode the previous transportation, will this one provide for that, I would say no, because that was not the idea of the extended Handi-Transit system. The idea of the extended Handi-Transit system is to provide transportation for someone who cannot take the regular transit, and that is the whole idea of it. I will provide the Member with what Mr. Borland set out in his regulation. That is the whole purpose of it.

We will not be giving rides to maybe someone who had the availability to take a Cadillac program that was available to a small, specific few. The whole idea was to take the money, spread it out and provide for those who cannot take the regular transit system.

* (1630)

Mr. Alcock: Does the Minister possess any studies which compare the cost in operating the two systems?

Mr. Ducharme: The cost to the systems that were done when the city did their survey, when the original—your democratic Government who also were on the same wavelength as we were on this one, the studies done by the City of Winnipeg felt that at the time they could serve the total city much more reasonably than the system that was running in one specific area. There also was a study done at that time and I could probably get that from the City of Winnipeg and send it over to the Member.

Mr. Alcock: Well, I would ask the Minister to do that, because if it was the study that was conducted by the City of Winnipeg, it shows that the service operated approximately one-half the cost of the Handi-Transit system.

Just to deal with his questions about the Cadillac service, in fact it was a less expensive service serving more people, and it also was a demonstration project, which was why it was started and run in one area of the city with an intention of expanding into the whole city. I think the Minister is spending more money for less service at the current time. It is unfortunate but that does seem to be the circumstance we have arrived at under the

management of this particular Government. Would the Minister like to respond?

Mr. Ducharme: To respond to the Member across the way, if he wants to talk about systems, maybe the Member—we speak about parochial areas, but when this was looked at we felt that all people should have the benefits of the extended transit system. Under his system that he is talking about, the total city did not have those benefits.

Mr. Alcock: Well, once again I must correct the Minister. There was a demonstration project run indeed in one area of the city with the recommendation that it be expanded to the entire city. The Minister could have done that, but instead chose to fund the more expensive service delivering less service rather than expand a volunteer not-for-profit service to the entire city. One questions the wisdom of such a decision but this is the decision that the Minister and his Government took. Unfortunately, we have lost a very valuable service operated by a great number of citizen volunteers, most of them senior citizens. It is a tragedy and it is one that this Minister participated in.

Mr. Ducharme: We do not fund individuals, we fund the City of Winnipeg who carries on the program. We also fund the program because we—I will show him the stats that have shown the ever-increasing popularity of this program to service the City of Winnipeg. When you are dealing with proposals and you are dealing with these types of things dealing with the City of Winnipeg, you do not look at a parochial area by itself, you look at what is good for the City of Winnipeg, and that is what we have to look at, our dollars.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, it is unfortunate the Minister did not do that in this case.

Mr. Ducharme: To the Member across the way, why does he not wait and get the results before he makes those types of comments? I told him I would provide him with that information and he will see that some people in St. Vital, some people in St. James, some people in North Kildonan, have now been able to participate in a program. It is unfortunate the Member across the way has decided that he does not want to look after all the people and the seniors throughout the city and we at the time want to.

Mr. Alcock: It is unfortunate that none of the seniors in the city are now receiving service, and certainly when you say to people you cannot access this service, this is the only one you can, the ridership is

going to go up. It is not the same service, it does not provide the same range of services, nor the same quality. The Minister, when he pulls forward the report, if he takes the time to read it before he sends it across the floor, will find that the current service is twice the cost of the previous service. Now, I do -(interjection)- twice the cost per ride, that is the study the Minister chooses -(interjection)- per ride, Madam Chairperson.

To the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), back to another favourite topic of mine which is day care in schools -(interjection)- It is indeed. There is an issue, and I spoke to the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). Well, actually the Minister asked how many kids I have. I fostered -(interjection)- Well, somebody did. Was it the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) who has an interest in this? I could tell him the answer. In any event, there is a serious problem developing -(interjection)- I fostered 17.

There is a problem between the Department of Family Services and the Department of Education. I am not sure it is a problem between the two departments so much as it is a problem between the policy, and a right-thinking policy established by those departments, and some of the school boards when it comes to enforcing and supporting that policy relative to the placement of day care centres in schools.

There was a situation in Lac du Bonnet recently and there are a couple in the City of Winnipeg. I raised this to the Minister the last time we were in Interim Supply, or the time before actually, and the Minister quite rightly I think responded that when they established a policy and put forward funding in capital projects to see that space was provided within a school, they would not want to allow a change in the use of that space simply at the whim of the school board, that such a change in use would have to come back before the department. I think that is right. I think the Minister's position on that was correct.

I am wondering, subsequent to our discussions, whether the Minister has had an opportunity to review the policy or to review circumstances within the department, and is he satisfied that the policy is being properly applied and adhered to by the various school divisions.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): A couple of things—first of all, the

policy with regard to child day care space in schools is now being reviewed by the Department of Family Services and the Department of Education and Training. It has been in place for some time and I think there are some needs for revision and review of the policy as it was written.

Secondly, with regard to the administration of the policy, it is up to the Department of Education and Training to provide the facility when the need has been identified. I am sure the Member knows the process in applying for day care space when a new school structure is going up. After the school structure has been completed it is turned over to that local board that is within that community to use for a day care facility. If the space or if the funding should not be in place for that facility at that point in time, that facility is still set aside for use as a day care facility.

In the interim, however, if there is agreement between the school board and the local day care board to use it temporarily for a public use, then that is something that the local decision makers decide upon. We do not get involved in those kinds of decisions. However, if a day care space is then turned over for some other use on a permanent basis we would have some serious concerns about it, because the facility was intended for day care space, the money allocated was for that intent, and if there has been some misunderstanding or misrepresentation with regard to the use of that facility we would have some very serious concerns about that.

Mr. Alcock: I would like to draw the Minister's attention to two issues that are in a sense related. There is the provision of day care services to preschool children, and then there is the provision of lunch and after school—before actually—before lunch and after school programs for children who are of school age but under the age of 12 so they cannot be left alone.

The problems we seem to be experiencing, relative to supporting day care type programs within the school or child care programs in the school, seems to be more serious with the question—relative to the lunch and after school programs. I am wondering whether that has been raised with the Minister and whether there has been a differentiation made.

Let me give him a second question so he can deal with the two issues at the same time. In the City of

Winnipeg they have undertaken a policy of designating certain schools community schools. I am wondering if the department has been involved in this and why there would be a policy in effect through designating certain schools community schools that would seem to mean that certain schools are not community schools, and why would that be the case?

* (1640)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, first of all the lunch and after school program is one that is not administered by the Department of Education and Training. Again that is the local situation that needs to be—and if there is a problem the matter should be raised with the local authority with regard to that program. There are some regulations that have to be followed in accordance to the regulations that have been set out for day care spaces and running the programs by the Department.

Secondly, with regard to community schools, again that is something that is a designation by the local school division and not by the Department.

Mr. Alcock: It is interesting to me. I have a couple of examples. In my own riding, in addition to the work I have done in the core area where on the one hand I have a school such as Lord Roberts, which functions as a community school, which has within it a day care and a lunch and after school program, which has a principal and a school community that is very supportive and does an absolutely wonderful job providing a service to the community, and it is broadly used by the community, when the school holds a community event there will be a thousand people in attendance. It has become a centre place and a showpiece I think for that community and one we are all very proud of. We would commend the principal and staff of that school for the work that they do.

In my same riding, which is not geographically that big, I have a school called Fort Rouge School, which lies in the heart of an extremely disadvantaged section of my riding. They have a turnover rate there of nearly 90 percent. Ninety percent of the kids who start school there in September are not there in June, a tremendously dysfunctional community.

There has been an attempt on the part of some of the residents, the few residents that are more permanent residents in that area, to build a parent council and to work with the school in much the

same way we see at Lord Roberts, so that the school is open in the evenings for certain events and accessible for certain events, so there is a lot of mixing and volunteer work going on within the school, and so the parents are supporting the work the teachers are doing. The school has absolutely rebuffed all those attempts, absolutely unwilling to work with the parents. In fact they have developed an antagonistic relationship with the parents rather than a supportive one.

Now it strikes me that there is a role we can play, that the Minister and his department can play as sort of the arbitrator in this in the establishment of broad education policy. I am wondering if the Minister—has his department looked at issues relative to the establishment of community schools and/or the empowerment of parent councils, because one of the things that came up in this dispute was that when the parent council, representing the majority of the parents in the area, asked—made a request to the school they were simply dismissed.

I know in some jurisdictions the parent councils by legislation have some authority, and I am wondering if that is something the Minister has had a chance to look at.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I have to agree with the Member that there is no better functioning school than one where there is involvement by the local parents and the community, because I think that is what education is all about. It is not a matter of a function that goes on from nine o'clock until four o'clock in the afternoon and then the doors are locked.

Through the many visits that I have had to school boards, to communities, I have always indicated that we need to move into an area where parents have a better and a more direct link to the school system. I think by doing that, we are going to alleviate many of the social problems that we have within the communities, because then indeed there is a feeling of a united front in terms of what is happening in the community. Parents become aware of what children are doing in school, there can be some meaningful dialogue when the child comes home about activities in the school, and parents then can lend a supporting hand to the teachers who have a fairly difficult task before them in this day and age.

Madam Chairman, I have to say to the Member opposite that I am supportive of parents becoming

involved, and I am distressed when I hear that schools do not allow parents to become involved and want to keep the two elements separate. That is something that I think parents need to approach their school divisions about, because even in our policy on special needs and our guidelines that we have issued, we make special mention of the fact that there is a partnership needed here, that parents need to be involved in a meaningful way.

In the High School Review, we have the same thrust where we talk about the meaningful involvement of parents and of the community in a school. I would say that it is a matter that should be raised with the local school board, and if that brings no response, then certainly I would be supportive to write a letter to the school board to indicate that we support parental involvement in a meaningful way in a school setting.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairman, I very much appreciate that response from the Minister. The one thing, and you know I am not an educator and so I have been grappling with this from the perspective of an outsider in a sense, but I notice in one school where you have an administration that is supportive, wonderful things happen. In another school if the administration is not supportive, nothing happens.

What that suggests to me is that at the policy-setting level the board in this case simply is not either setting or enforcing the policy. They may have the policy in existence but it is not somehow getting through to the administration, and I think that if we cannot prevail upon the school board to live up to the responsibilities that it itself has said it will—and I should say in this case there has been some action taken.

There has been a change in superintendents responsible for the school and a replacement principal, so we may see some changes and it may be resolved. Failing that, I would encourage the Minister to look at some examples of legislation, where we can set in legislation a framework that gives the parents a little more strength in assuming some of those responsibilities anyway.

Mr. Derkach: I thank the Member for those comments. I think in the last two years, we have seen a definite improvement in schools opening up their doors to the community. I see that happening more in the rural areas. In many of the urban areas, that has been happening over a number of years, where communities have become involved.

I think in all the statements that we make as a department, we have to continue to restate the fact that parents in the community are an important part of the education process and that schools need to build partnerships.

We have started a leadership council, as the Member knows, in education which is designed to in-service and to train properly people who are going to be moving into the administration of schools, so that when people move into principalships, then everyone understands what some of the responsibilities of a principal are, and then we can instill, if you like, our message about community involvement in schools. Hopefully that process is one that will evolve over the next year or so.

* (1650)

Mr. Alcock: I just have a final question, because I know the Member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) wants to ask a question or two, I believe. Is that correct? Yes.

In closing, to the Minister on the question of lunch and after schools, as I understand the problem, it is that, unlike a preschool day care that requires the full time space in the school where the space may be built as part of capital arrangements or renovated, a lunch and after school program, while it is an integral part of providing support and is supported, there is a policy base for it in Family Services. A lunch and after school, by definition, does not require school space during school time, because those kids are then in classrooms, but there is a working relationship that is nonetheless extremely important and less well-described in policy and is leading to some serious conflicts between day care providers, school boards and school officials.

I would just encourage, in closing, the Minister to look at that aspect of it, where the lines may not be as clear. I thank him very much for his responses.

Mr. Derkach: Just as a final response, Madam Chairperson, I would just like to indicate that perhaps if the Member knows of a specific case, I would be pleased to meet with him and we could address the situation directly. Thank you.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): I would like to express some concern about some long-term effects on the general well-being and health of our citizens, Manitobans and Canadians in general, of the pollution in our environment relating to toxic—

Point of Order

Madam Chairman: Point of order, the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Manness: I think it would be wise if the Member indicate who it is he will be addressing his questions or his comments to, so somebody can respond. This is not an open debate time. This is a time to put questions to the Ministers dealing with their responsibility, and of course, there is great preamble allowed.

I just would ask the Member indicate who it is that he wants to listen to his remarks. Ultimately, they may be followed by a question. Right now, not too many people are listening.

Mr. Santos: Whoever is the Acting Minister of Environment -(interjection)- The Acting Minister of Environment.

Madam Chairman: It is not a point of order, but I believe the Minister has received clarification. The Honourable Member for Broadway may proceed.

Mr. Santos: My concern, Madam Chairperson, is the obligation and duty of Government to take care, provide for and promote the general well-being of all its citizens in the face of threats in our environmental setting as a result of the multivarious emergence of risks such as hazardous wastes, toxic fumes, sometimes accidental, sometimes because of human mistakes.

It is always understood by everyone of us here as legislators that Government has an obligation and duty to all its citizens to promote the general well-being and health of all its people. We all know the saying, mens sana in corpore sano, a sound mind in a sound body. That is why Governments are spending money to promote ice sports recreation. That is why Governments are spending money to improve the general health and well-being of our people.

The term "health" is a concept that emerged from the Anglo-Saxon root word which means hale, sound or whole. If we are whole and sound in our mind, in our body, if we are healthy and we can do the activities that we want to do and we have the freedom of choice to do those things that we choose to do, we find contentment and satisfaction in life.

That is why I always said, and I said before this House that a person's health is perhaps his most

important form of wealth. Without a healthy body, a healthy mind, a healthy emotion and a healthy being, nothing in this world can satisfy our desires and our longings as human beings, but this function has been threatened because of the emergence of industrialized and urbanized settings in our society.

The other day, I attended a symposium sponsored by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. I listened intently to all the experts who spoke about hazardous waste and toxic waste, and I learned a lot of things about the nature of our environment. I learned that hazardous waste exists because people refuse to throw away those things that they should be throwing away. We keep gasolines in our garage and paint thinner there without understanding the risk involved in those things, that they may be emitting toxic fumes that could be detrimental to our own personal well-being.

In other words, the risk to our well-being and general wellness, is an incident to our living in a highly industrialized and urbanized society. Hardly can you go around the neighbourhood in Winnipeg without being exposed to toxic emissions from cars, buses and other forms of pollution. Indeed, the Governments are not themselves immune from contributing to this risk. We have seen the City of Winnipeg has sometimes dumped its waste in the Red River, and so is the Province of Manitoba, this building and so the other environment, but the most important polluters, I think, are the corporate productive entities, because it is an incident in the process of production that there should be a waste product, and they have to find a place where to dump this waste.

In a sense, it is part of the cost of economic development. It is one of the prices we have to pay in the production of goods and services, the waste products in our industries. What is amazing about this is that those who dump, those who produce the waste, do not assume the responsibility for paying for those wastes. Indeed, it should be forming a part of the cost of production, the cost of pollution of the air, the water and the land as a result of the productive process.

Whenever Government has to undertake this function and task of cleaning the environment, in effect, the Government is subsidizing those private companies who produce their products and contribute to the pollution, and yet not taking responsibility to pay for those costs. When the Government picks up the cost of all this pollution and

clean up the river, for example, or clean up the air, then the general taxpayer, in effect, is subsidizing the companies who produce these pollutions.

The contaminants are being released in our environment every day. Indeed, in the City of Winnipeg, probably we produce wastes everyday. In their estimate, by those experts, we produce but one ton of wastes almost everyday in our daily life, but to be hazardous to human health and well being, the substances, these fumes, this toxic waste must be in sufficient doses as to be able to threaten the health of people. It must find their way by their medial route, either by the air, by water, either surface or underground water -(interjection)- I am coming to that.

All these waste products are detrimental to the health of human beings. I listen to those experts, and do you know what they say? The effect is not immediately visible. It is insidious; it is cumulative; it is silent. For example, the effect -(interjection)- Yes. This is due to certain environmental settings. The effect of these fumes that we inhale everyday can have some detrimental, long-range effect on the reproductive capacity of people, of society itself to reproduce its young, the new cohorts in society.

Have you noticed that in western civilization, in western societies, the people are becoming fewer and fewer? Have you noticed the birthrate dropped in all industrialized society, whereas the younger, new emergent nations are bulging with people? We are now losing population, so we encourage population to immigrate to our country. So there is some long-range reproductive effect of this unhealthy environment.

There is also some kind of immunological adverse effect on our capacity to withstand the thrust of our setting in our physical body. We are weakening gradually our immune capacity to resist the diseases, illness and debilities that could fall upon our human physical body. Without our knowing it, we might be developing long-range diseases such as cancer, in the long run, without our being aware of it, because of this pollution in our environment. Now, we can—

* (1700)

Madam Chairman: Order, please; order, please. The hour being five o'clock and time for private Members' hour, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): The Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 19, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1990, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Committee Change

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change.

I move, seconded by the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows for November 8 at 10 a.m. That being, the Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. 2—ESTABLISHMENT OF CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has consistently had a crime rate substantially higher than the national average in recent years; and

WHEREAS crime prevention must be supported by the whole of society, and political leaders must encourage the development of a feeling of solidarity among community members; and

WHEREAS the community is the focal point of crime prevention and Government at all levels must nurture community-based anticrime efforts; and

WHEREAS society must go beyond a response by our criminal justice system of law enforcement if

we are to prevent crimes in our communities and develop a long range approach to dealing with crime which will be responsive to immediate needs; and

WHEREAS fear of crime is a serious problem to for all law abiding Manitobans, in particular women and the elderly; and

WHEREAS the Government of Manitoba has failed to respond to the desire of Manitobans to be leaders in the area of crime prevention.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recommend that the Minister of Justice consider striking a crime prevention council for the Province of Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Minister of Justice to consider appointing experts from the areas of housing, social services, education, the police and the courts, who represent insofar as possible Manitoba's ethnocultural and geographical make-up, to this crime prevention council.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak in support of this resolution which I have brought forward with the support of my Party. This was brought forward in the last Legislature and unfortunately did not have an opportunity to be discussed in the House openly, and so I look forward at this time to recommending it to all Members of this House for adoption.

Mr. Speaker, crime prevention is an issue which has been dear to my heart for some time, and as I learn more about what is available in the area of crime prevention and what the potential is, I become more and more enthusiastic about supporting it, and about our Government in Manitoba showing leadership on this issue.

It has been said by the present Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), it bears repeating and it certainly is true that a crime prevented is a victim saved. That is the thrust of crime prevention. The thrust is not to have crimes work their way through the justice system costing us endless amounts of dollars, as we well know, but also costing us victims. That is truly, I believe, our first priority, should be our first priority, both at the law enforcement stage and also in our homes as citizens in this community.

Mr. Speaker, let me go on to say that I am also convinced and agree with my colleague, the Member of Parliament, Mr. Kaplan, when he said

that he believes a dollar of crime prevention is worth a hundred dollars of law enforcement. I think that has been borne out in jurisdictions which have given a full-fledged opportunity for crime prevention initiatives to show what they can do.

I think it is appropriate to reflect on the politics of crime prevention. It is a nice sounding word. Putting the programs into practice does not garner the same type of immediate political response that law enforcement does, and by enforcement I mean putting in heavier fines and talking tough about those who have committed crimes. Those are far more politically saleable than crime prevention initiatives in which you do not have the automatic response of most members of society that this is an excellent idea and it is absolutely necessary.

When there has been a victim created it is sad but true that the political response to crackdown on crime is very, very popular. We have seen that in this province in respect to the drinking and driving initiative, and we have seen this Minister take advantage of the very real desire that Manitobans had to get tough on drinking and driving. I support getting tough on drinking and driving, and this Party supported it and worked very hard to assist in making that piece of legislation workable.

However, the other side of that is the crime prevention initiatives which should have been taken but which have not been taken in this province. It is passing strange to me that every time crime prevention is raised in this House mostly by myself, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) responds by saying: My drinking and driving initiative speaks for itself, and that is the cornerstone of our commitment to crime prevention.

I am not belittling that initiative. What I am saying is there is so much more that has not been done. When the Minister responds only by pointing to the increased deterrent which he has put into place for drinking and driving I believe he shows how little he really understands the potential for crime prevention programs in our society.

Mr. Speaker, we have some examples of crime prevention already at work in Manitoba, most notably the Neighbourhood Watch Program and the Block Parents Program, as well as the new initiatives, the Citizens For Crime Awareness offices, around mostly in the City of Winnipeg. I believe there are four now.

Before I go on I want to congratulate the four CFCA offices in Winnipeg. They are being awarded a special award tonight at a dinner in Brandon. I think they deserve our congratulations. They are getting the Solicitor General's Award tonight in Brandon I understand at the crime prevention dinner.

Let me go on and express why I believe Manitoba should lead, and has had every reason to lead, and continues to have every reason to lead in Canada in crime prevention. The proof, which I hope to bring forward to convince Members that is the case, I believe leads us to the unhappy conclusion that while we have had every reason to lead we have not led.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba continues to have the highest homicide rate in this country. Winnipeg continues to have the third highest homicide rate of any city in this country. We know that—and I have mentioned in my resolution specifically, I have singled out specifically women and the elderly. Let me give Members some indication of the level of the problem.

We know that half of all adult women in Canada do not feel safe going out in their own neighbourhood. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine a society which tolerates that level of fear in 50 percent of its population? We also know that 90 percent of seniors have the same fear of going out in their own neighbourhoods and have expressed that in repeated surveys.

Mr. Speaker, those are absolutely intolerable levels of fear amongst major sectors of our society. We have an obligation I believe to initiate crime prevention programs which will decrease the level of anxiety amongst such significant and such vulnerable portions of our society.

We also know from the Canadian Sentencing Commission report that society and society only will reduce crime. The Canadian Sentencing Commission met for two years I believe before they published their report. I believe it was published in 1986. Their overwhelming conclusion was that no matter how many jails you build, no matter how strict you make the sentences, no matter how much you train the judges, society and society alone will reduce crime. That is in the form of crime prevention, and that has to be a concerted effort from all aspects of society.

I have named some of them in the resolution which I have put forward, but I do not mean to suggest that is an exclusive list.

Mr. Speaker, we know that crime prevention is the best attack we can make on the comfort level of our citizens in their own homes. I want to relate my own experience in going to many thousands of homes in this last election. I think all Members will be able to associate themselves with this experience, perhaps not to the same extent that I was able to, because I had a large percentage of seniors in their own homes in my constituency.

I experienced again and again and again, every time that I was out canvassing, meeting people, I heard from seniors their fear and their anxiety about what they perceived to be the decay in their neighbourhood and the fear that they had in going out after dark in their own neighbourhood, neighbourhoods and homes in which they had lived sometimes for 40 and 50 years, Mr. Speaker.

I was indeed shocked and saw the extent I believe of a tragedy in society that we have fear amongst those, sometimes not borne out by the facts. Whether or not that is the case the fear is there. We are seeing those people turn prematurely oftentimes to other forms of living arrangements whether it be personal care homes or apartments, which they would rather not do. They are doing it solely because they fear the outside world outside their very own door.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what we need more than anything else and what has been articulated by those jurisdictions which have moved in the area of crime prevention, most notably England and France. What we need is political leadership, and they all say that. They say the necessary first ingredient must be political leadership.

Politicians will not implement crime prevention programs. Crime prevention will happen on the streets and in the neighbourhoods amongst the community representatives who take an interest in their neighbourhood and are willing to be vigilant about it.

The political ingredient at the outset is absolutely necessary. That is why after coming back from the conference, the International Conference for Legislators, which I did at the latter part of 1989, I very quickly came forward with this resolution because I realized that the Government must act quickly.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to that conference—and I have been reminded as I am speaking about it how I made it to that conference. I made it to that conference because the Government declined not only to send the responsible Minister but any other legislator to that conference.

I know that representatives of this Government were at the larger conference, which was the plenary session, but there was a separate conference a day and a half long just for legislators. In fact it was a precis and a highlight of the prior three-day conference. People who attended both, who had been at the three-day conference and then at the one day, at the end said the one day was more valuable than the entire prior three days.

It was indeed a very intense and a very enlightening experience. All of the speakers from the prior three days stayed for that 24-hour conference. There were as many of the speakers as there in fact were of legislators.

It was a marvelous opportunity, which I was saddened to learn our Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) had failed to take advantage of. I might add there was no cost associated with that. It was completely funded by the Centre for International Co-operation, jointly funded by the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada.

There were United States congressmen and senators there. There were mayors from cities in Canada. There were MPs and there were MLAs like myself. There was no Government representative from this province.

So in the spirit of co-operation I came back to this House and shared what I had learned and what I had seen with the Government, and I put this resolution forward. I am indeed disappointed that as yet it has not been picked up on and accepted by this Government. It was put forward in the spirit of co-operation.

However I look today for the Minister to give it serious consideration, and perhaps he already has and will be willing to commit his Government to some leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated the deterrent effect of stronger penalties is an important part of the law enforcement job, but it is only a beginning and it can never be the full answer.

We have seen in this province some very committed people grow up to the issue of crime

prevention, most notably those involved with Project Prevention, which of course is an organization which came together a few years ago and which brought together many of the noted experts in the various social fields as well as the justice fields and put together a proposal for this Government.

Unfortunately the proposal which was put forward by Project Prevention was not accepted by this Government. I believe that was a mistake as well. I commend those involved in Project Prevention and who continue to be involved, who are recommending to us the various very innovative forms of crime prevention.

Most notably, Mr. Speaker, they concentrate on crime prevention through social development. We must understand that tragically we can predict those who are going to be involved with the criminal law system. With amazing accuracy we can predict those people who will become involved with our legal system. Even given that, we are not taking the opportunity we have to divert those people into meaningful, law-abiding lives within our system. That is the tragedy and that is what crime prevention is about.

Crime prevention is not about after the fact taking people and attempting to rehabilitate them in the best way possible. That is what corrections is about and that is a valid pursuit by any Government, but prevention is about saving the life not just of the perpetrator, but of the victim. Crime prevention is about becoming involved before not only a crime but a criminal is created. We have a duty to our citizens, both those who are in situations where they are likely to become involved with the criminal law system and those who simply want to live in a law-abiding neighbourhood, in a law-abiding society.

We have a duty to take crime prevention seriously, to learn from the world experience and the other jurisdictions who have taken this seriously and to move forward. Political leadership is the key. That is what I am looking for in this resolution today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House to respond to the resolution of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

It is particularly appropriate that this resolution should be debated today during Crime Prevention

Month in Manitoba, Crime Prevention Week in Canada. In fact tonight, I have the distinct honour on behalf of the Government of Manitoba to attend in the City of Brandon to present Crime Prevention Awards recognizing the outstanding contributions made by individuals, community groups, organizations and business to the development, implementation, promotion and enhancement of community crime prevention programs.

I think since this is going to be happening very soon, I would like to refer very briefly to some of the recipients of awards this evening, Manitoba groups and organizations and individuals who richly deserve to be recognized for their contribution to the prevention of crime in our province.

The individuals being honoured at this evening's ceremony are Stephen Lamoureux, an 18-year-old Winnipeg university student who started a local chapter of Teens Against Drinking and Driving while he was in high school; Clifford Rivers, a Thompson Inco worker, chairperson of the Thompson Crime Prevention and Police Advisory Board for the past eight years; Hamiota social worker Airdrie Knight, who set up a local Teens Against Drinking and Driving group; and Constable Hugh Coburn, a very well-known crime prevention officer for the St. Boniface-St. Vital District of Winnipeg from 1982 until last June.

Organizations to be honoured this evening are Winnipeg's Citizens for Crime Awareness, which maintains the Neighbourhood Watch Program in four of the city's six police districts, the first group of organized volunteers to work directly with the police. That organization can point to a 27 percent decrease in residential crime since 1987 in the areas in which they work.

* (1720)

My honourable colleague, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), takes great pride in the Citizens for Crime Awareness movement because he was on the City of Winnipeg Police Commission at a time when the CFCA organization was organized. I know that other Members in this House, notably the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), take great pride in the existence and the performance of that particular group, and I know other Honourable Members in the House share with us in that.

Another organization being honoured tonight is Winnipeg Crime Stoppers, set up by the Winnipeg

Chamber of Commerce in 1984 and funded by the Winnipeg Real Estate Board. It re-enacts unsolved crimes by way of the media and offers rewards for tips. It has been responsible for the arrest of 1,668 people and solving 2,722 cases involving property worth over \$5 million, so the ratio the Honourable Member for St. James referred to of one dollar of crime prevention being responsible for the saving of \$100, in reference to something said by Mr. Caplan, could very well even be an understatement. We certainly understand the value of crime prevention.

Crime Stoppers receives an average of 230 calls a month and has so far paid out over \$106,000 in rewards—not a bad ratio, \$106,000 in rewards for recovery of property worth over \$5 million.

Another recipient tonight is Winnipeg Videon Incorporated, and it has produced over 300 Crime of the Week re-enactments to assist Crime Stoppers. It was the first cable television company to include the program as part of its community program mandate at an estimated cost of \$100,000 a year. In 1989, police estimate the program led directly to 23 percent of illegal drugs seized at a rate of \$52 for every dollar paid out in rewards.

Portage La Prairie's Kinette Club, for its Reduce Impaired Driving campaign, included a media blitz, a television commercial, the distribution of literature to residents and the designated driver program involving every bar and lounge in the Portage area.

Finally, Brandon's Keystone Lions Club, for its Child Identification Program, which now has almost 6,000 children enrolled in Brandon and the Westman area. The Club makes the recorded fingerprints available to police if a child is lost or abducted.

So you can see my pride in standing here today, Mr. Speaker, to discuss the issue of crime prevention during this Crime Prevention Month.

Just getting back to the Citizens for Crime Awareness, it was my pleasure earlier last week at the kickoff breakfast for Crime Prevention Month, organized by the Manitoba Society of Criminology, to announce a grant of \$83,000 for the Citizens for Crime Awareness Organization to recognize the value this Government places on the work done by that organization. That was last Friday, I should say.

I had the privilege again yesterday morning to attend a crime prevention kickoff breakfast held, interestingly, at the Brandon jail. A large number of people showed up for that. A large number of

volunteer people, police and Justice Department people were there to help kick off Crime Prevention Week in the City of Brandon.

There is no doubt that every member of this Assembly can support a great deal of what we find in the Honourable Member's resolution. In part, that is because the resolution is couched in generalities. The crux of the resolution, however, is to be found in the call on the Assembly to recommend the striking of a crime prevention council, which would have appointed to it experts from the areas of housing, social services, education, the police and the courts while representing Manitoba's ethnocultural and geographical makeup.

Since forming Government, we have vigorously pursued crime prevention initiatives. The Members of the Progressive Conservative Party have always been very concerned about the problem of crime, and we are determined to do everything possible to reduce the incidence of crime in the province. We on this side of the House, however, recognize that what is required in crime prevention, as in so many other fields, is a judicious use of the taxpayers' dollars in order to ensure that the people of Manitoba get an effective program. We are far more interested in practical, right results than we are interested in theory or in philosophy as espoused by the Honourable Member of St. James (Mr. Edwards).

What is notable about the resolution brought forward by the Honourable Member is the way it makes a leap from premises which I am sure we can all support to a condemnation of this Government, a Government which in the last two years has repeatedly shown its leadership in crime prevention.

There are many different ways of developing policy in the crime prevention fields. It is a fact that the crime prevention strategies suitable for fighting a crime such as impaired driving are not necessarily directly applicable when dealing with other types of crime. For example, the crime of spousal and child abuse, preventing juvenile vandalism and break and enter, are all problems calling for quite different solutions. The Department of Justice has many ways of developing crime prevention policy. In some cases a council as proposed in this resolution would not be a useful tool.

A clear example of this is the Government's anti-impaired driving program. Even the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), despite his initial opposition to Bill 3, will admit that the program

has been a success. I presume he supports the Government in its appeal of the unfortunate decision that has, we trust, only temporarily interrupted the impoundment of vehicles program.

We do not need to sow seeds of confusion in the minds of the people in the Province of Manitoba by falling short of the mark when it comes to support for such important pieces of legislation as Bill 3. We need vigorous support. We need aggressive support. We do not need the weak-kneed kind of approach taken by the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) when first looking at the implications of Bill 3. We need support. We need unqualified support. We do not need to send out conflicting messages to the people of Manitoba about the value of crime prevention. We should get together if we are on the same side on these issues.

That anti-impaired driving program would, I submit, probably never have come out of a council such as is being proposed in this resolution. Policy development for that program was almost purely internal as a small working committee consisting of officials in the Department of Justice and the Department of Highways and Transportation reviewed programs across the continent and indeed around the world to find the programs that have been most effective. We adapted to Canadian circumstances the American administrative licence suspension program, which has been most effective there and, as we know now, is turning out to be the most effective here in Manitoba. That is something the Honourable Member initially came out against, and I feel badly about that, because perhaps it was because he did not know what he was doing but, perhaps as I suspect, he has more interest in so-called civil liberties of people who will go out and break laws.

An Honourable Member: Shame.

Mr. McCrae: Shame on him, indeed. At the same time, we developed the impoundment program in an effort to make the punishment of having a licence suspended far more effective and therefore a far better deterrent. The Honourable Member had concerns about that too.

We also strengthened the hands of the police by providing a check stop van for the RCMP. We reinforced the program by advertising and we provided a computer link to the City of Winnipeg police.

The nature of driving, which is a public activity on the streets and highways of Manitoba, makes it a crime that can be most effectively attacked by beefing up police enforcement capabilities. Combined with the growing public condemnation of drinking and driving, our program has achieved some spectacular results. We do not hear the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) when it comes to talking about the results of Bill 3, and that is unfortunate.

* (1730)

As I indicated last August, nine-month figures for the operation of the program indicated that the most serious charges, impaired driving causing death and impaired driving causing bodily harm, had been reduced almost by half.

What did the Honourable Member for St. James say about that? The silence was deafening, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Deafening silence. The worst kind of silence.

Mr. McCrae: Deafening silence in the wake of tremendous success, and we are saving lives, and what do we hear from the Member for St. James? Nothing, nothing at all.

Unfortunately, when we look at the appalling problem of spousal and child abuse in our society, we immediately realize that it cannot be attacked in the same way that we have attacked impaired driving. These crimes occur behind closed doors in private homes. All too often it is extremely difficult for the police to get evidence to meet the stringent requirements of the criminal law. This is a field where indeed the real key to reducing crime is to change public attitudes. Certainly, there is a role for the whole of society in working to reduce domestic violence. Determining how best that role can be carried out is difficult, and there is a need for swift action.

For this reason, the Departments of Justice and Child and Family Services, which are the two departments most directly implicated in this problem, are interested in determining where the weaknesses are and correcting those weaknesses. In the case of family violence, I submit that handing the problem over to a crime prevention council would seriously delay our taking action, and we want to take action just as soon as we can.

The Government of Manitoba already has, through the Manitoba Police Commission, a

Government and a police based crime prevention focus. This Government has been very proud to work as well with the community groups such as Block Parents, Neighbourhood Watch and Rural Crime Watch in launching successful community based crime prevention programs. The Government is committed in every field where it is practical and, particularly in crime prevention, to using community-based organizations, because we know they work. We are aware that Government dollars could buy only the tiniest fraction of the energy, time, talent and resources available in the community for crime prevention. For that reason, tonight I am going to be recognizing the efforts of volunteers in various crime prevention activities.

I have been to many volunteer appreciation nights to recognize the efforts of people in the community. I would not mind seeing the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) at some of these things. I will not give away the secret of who is receiving—I have given away the secret of who is receiving these awards, and I am going to be thanking these people later on this evening in Brandon.

I wish to advise the Honourable Member for St. James, and indeed all Honourable Members in this House, that there is a great deal of very worthwhile work being done in crime prevention by groups throughout this province. The Government intends to work with these groups and continue to foster their activities as being the basis of successful crime prevention programs.

Consequently, what I note in the resolution put forward by the Member for St. James is a complete lack of facts to support his proposal. I am concerned that even with the best will in the world a crime prevention council consisting of experts from various areas will not act as a deterrent for Manitobans getting involved in crime.

Do we want our tax dollars to be used for a council or do we want to use the money directly to support proven crime prevention programs, which is what we are doing? There is a place for experts, of course, but I believe the best results will always be achieved by involving the general public in crime prevention efforts.

The police are our first line of defense against crime, and their efforts must be reinforced. Our courts, our prosecutors, the correction service, our schools and our Child and Family Services Agencies are also absolutely vital players in the

battle against crime. Strong community and family values are irreplaceable, however. Crime grows where parents do not inculcate in their children respect for themselves, respect for their teachers, respect for the law.

No experts and no council can replace this vital role of families. Therefore, this Government will continue to do everything within its power to strengthen family and community values, including fighting pornography and prosecuting vigorously cases of domestic violence. We will work with all Manitobans to fight crime. We will listen to their ideas, support their initiatives and recognize their achievements. We will try to make the best use of what we have.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Member for St. James is, regrettably, still trying to play politics with crime prevention. Accordingly, we have to reject the motion put forward by the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). Thank you very much.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): I welcome the opportunity to speak on this particular resolution, Mr. Speaker. I was interested in the comments of the Member for St. James, as well as the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae). I detect elements of past history and exchanges, slight suggestions of that in their comments, although I had approached my comments on this particular resolution from a totally non-partisan and totally philosophical basis. I will continue to do so as I comment upon this particular resolution now.

Firstly, I do not see this resolution as a very political resolution, Mr. Speaker, insofar as all Members in this House are interested in crime prevention. In addition, I also see this matter not solely as a justice issue. In fact, it may not be a justice issue. It may more appropriately be labelled a social responsibility issue. It is really not a question of crime prevention. It is really a question of society's responsibility to ensure that people are not put in a position where they have to contemplate being involved in crime.

I want to reflect momentarily, Mr. Speaker, to some occurrences that happened to me that perhaps will help illustrate some of the changes that have occurred in our society in the past few years. I recall when I first went to California in 1971 and at that time visited with individuals in suburban Los Angeles. At that time, break and enters were just the run of the mill. Virtually everyone had their home

broken into. I remember how surprised I was as a resident of Winnipeg. I remember commenting to these people how in Winnipeg we do not lock our doors and people felt safe walking the streets of Winnipeg. In addition, I was even more shocked when I went into some of the more affluent regions of Los Angeles to see literally street guards on the street and individuals not being entitled to go down the street unless they had a security pass. I remember how startled I was to see that, again, as a resident of the City of Winnipeg.

I return now to the present 20-some-odd years later. I look in suburban Winnipeg, and in fact break and enters are at epidemic proportions. As the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has pointed out, both women and our senior citizens feel extremely unsafe on the streets, not just at night, but in fact during the day.

Ironically, just before I came up to this Chamber to make my comments, I received a call from a friend who, of all things, attended, on behalf of the Knights of Columbus, a bingo yesterday, to participate and assist in a bingo which was robbed by individuals who were brandishing a butcher knife and two handguns. I guess that is a long way of saying we have changed in our values and a lot in society in the last several years.

Crime is something like disease, and perhaps the use of the term disease is appropriate. Crime is something that touches all of us, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to relate another anecdote from the recent election campaign. I have been door knocking now for—in a political sense—close to 20 years, and I noted as I door knocked in Kildonan constituency, both before and during the election campaign, that virtually every second house had a security system in it. If they did not have a security system, they had a dog, probably as a security measure.

I cannot help but reflect on the differences 20 years ago when, again, it seemed like everyone in Winnipeg kept their doors open. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that crime is probably at the top of the agenda of most people when discussing their urban environment and their urban lifestyle.

I would also like to comment on the two specific groups that the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) referred to, as well as the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), and that was seniors and women. Certainly as a man, I probably cannot

contemplate the extent of the fear and the frustration that must go on in the minds of many women in our society on a daily basis. I do have sympathy, but I am certain I cannot totally comprehend the horrible feeling of not fully being able to participate in our society and actively walk the streets on a regular basis as I can like a man.

I am very sorry to have to say that. As well, similar circumstances felt and experienced by many of our senior citizens, it really is a tragedy that after so many years of working so hard to build the kind of society and the kind of lifestyle that they desire, that so many of our seniors do feel prisoners in their own homes. That in fact is a tragedy.

Also, Mr. Speaker, one must not forget rural Manitoba where long felt abash and free from crime is no longer the case. In fact, thefts and all kinds of activities—rural Neighbourhood Watch is in effect in many rural communities, so it touches all of us, both urban and rural.

* (1740)

I would like to comment from my personal standpoint. As a solicitor, Mr. Speaker, I did participate as a lawyer in criminal law for a large part of my legal career, and it was interesting that, in my own personal observations, 80 percent of the individuals, in my opinion, who were involved in the criminal justice system should not have been involved. Eighty percent were socially disabled or socially deficient in certain areas, either intellectually or through some physical disability, or through some economic disability.

I often felt that if there were some kind of vehicle and some kind of device that we in society could implement to look after these individuals—and we have tried, but certainly the safety net is not large enough. If we could do something in that regard, we would go a long way to preventing crime. If we could concentrate, therefore, on that, to use my unscientific figures, if we could concentrate on the 20 percent, then perhaps we could better utilize our resources in order to deal with crime, in order to deal with the scourge that it brings to all of us in society.

I also applaud, as did both of the previous speakers, the efforts towards more community-based services and towards more community involvement in crime prevention, Mr. Speaker, and again reflecting on personal experience, I can tell you that the neighbours in my community are very reassured to see a policeman

walking down our front street periodically, because there is a neighbourhood police office only several blocks away from my house.

I can tell you it is very much appreciated by members in my community, and I am certain other communities. I certainly applaud those involved in establishing the local police offices—the word escapes me specifically as to what we call them, but certainly the local community-based offices of the City of Winnipeg Police, I think, are going a long way toward assisting in the process.

Mr. Speaker, as well, the Neighbourhood Watch programs that have been put in place in many, many communities where people band together to work together to prevent it, I think these are all positive efforts, and community-based efforts that assist people in feeling not only safer in their own communities but feel that they have some kind of participation in solving the problem, which is also very important.

Very often, people feel totally powerless and totally without any outlet in this particular area, particularly those that have been abused or those that have been victimized by crime. So, all of these efforts go a long way toward empowering people to deal with crime and other aspects of this.

Mr. Speaker, of course, we have talked about and the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) talked about \$1 of prevention being worth \$100 of enforcement later on down the criminal justice system. I have to admit and I could not agree more with the particular sentiments expressed by the Member in this regard. I have had several occasions to discuss this with the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) in this very Chamber, specifically as it relates to probation services.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, though one may be required to invest funds at the front end at this point in areas like Probation Services, that money in the long run is well spent and will result in far less money being expended in the future on incarceration and other more expensive programs to keep people off the streets.

For example, the fact that Probation Services have not expanded any of its programs in this upcoming budgetary year, is of some concern to me, because although we do have to keep in mind that taxpayers are limited in how much they can contribute, no question, I think that something like

crime prevention should be, to use an economic term, viewed as a loss leader, Mr. Speaker.

I have had experiences of individuals coming to me, who have been on probation, saying, why does my probation officer not have the time and the opportunity to see me? I had one individual who approached me and indicated that she had a friend who was on probation who recommitted a crime because there was no involvement from Probation Services, and she fell back into the traps of her old ways. Now this may not seem that significant. I suspect it was a crime such as theft under, but these crimes have a way of accumulating. As one becomes more and more involved in the criminal justice system, it becomes a slippery slope, quite frankly.

I believe that funds expended at the front end are well worth it and are far cheaper in the long run both to society and to the individuals, and frankly, a lot less harm is done to society through these preventative programs and through incorporating money at the front end than at the back end of the justice system.

In fact it would be preferable if most of these matters and affairs did not even get into the criminal justice system, Mr. Speaker. Generally, in regard to the resolution, I certainly agree with the philosophy and the intent of the Member, but I have some difficulty understanding some of the specifics of the particular resolution, because as I indicated to the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) in my throne speech comments, I indicated that in the justice system we have to make it work.

I tend to think we need more pro-active and more action basically rather than platitudes and resolutions. While I appreciate the Member for St. James' (Mr. Edwards) comments, I do not at this point specifically understand what this council would do, what powers it would have other than to make recommendations, and we well know that there are all kinds of good intentions, all kinds of recommendations that are out there in the public and all kinds of ideas.

The real problem, the real difficulty, Mr. Speaker, is implementation. I suppose at this point that is where the comments of the Member for St. James come into effect, to state that politics, political will is necessary. How one generates that political will is a question I am trying to answer myself every day in this Legislature.

Essentially, I do believe that we need action in this area, we must have action at the community level, and we need action at the personal level with respect to crime prevention. There are all kinds of other components and activities that fit into this, one of which being, of course, the education system. I think that anything that is begun and commenced at the school-age level, anything that is learned in the schoolyard effectively will last a lifetime, and perhaps that is where some of the efforts should be directed.

I want to just indicate again that it is not strictly a question of dealing with crime per se, but it is dealing with the society ills. My Party has long been on the record, since the '30s, that if we could cure or deal with many of the ills of society, we would have far less crime. If we could deal with the economic ills, if we could deal with the social ills, we would have far less crime in the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps that is where we should commence, by trying to deal with some of the social inequities and some of the economic inequities that are present in our society.

On that basis, I think we should show leadership and try to approach it from that direction, dealing with this 80 percent, as I have indicated, as unscientific as it might be, with this large group of people who are in fact not really criminals but require some kind of assistance to prevent them from becoming criminals, keeping in mind all the time that we must have an overriding concern for the victims of criminal offences. Hopefully by showing some proactive attitudes we will have far fewer victims. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney-General): It is a pleasure to rise and speak on this resolution. Some interesting comments were made by the previous speaker, the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), and I will respond to certain of them a little later on.

As the Acting Minister of Justice, it is a pleasure to stand in my place and indicate to you that I stand here as a very strong supporter of my colleague and my bench mate who, in my view, has brought incredible changes in a number of areas of his domain, indeed in the areas of his responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to review the litany of accomplishments by this Minister, but I wanted -(interjection)- Well, I listened to him while he was presenting them in his own presentation. It took

almost five minutes, and he was going point by point by point. The Member indicates that I would not know them. I do not know all of them. Of course, I do not know as much as the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). I have never, ever indicated that I did, but I do think that I could name a few.

* (1750)

Mr. Speaker, what we have in the resolution in my view is a typical Liberal response to a problem. First of all, you blame the problem on the Government. You say, "WHEREAS the Government of Manitoba has failed to respond to the desire of Manitobans to be leaders in the area of crime prevention." First of all you throw that into the resolution, you say it is not necessarily political, you throw that in and then, of course, a typical Liberal response, you say create a committee and study the problem. Make sure it has lots of money to do that and the solution will be there.

Mr. Speaker, as I have listened to the Liberal Party over the last two and a half years, and as I have watched their performance on the national stage over many years, it seems to me that is the typical approach to trying to resolve a problem.

There are some comments I would like to put on the record, some comments that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) was unable to, before I move into more of my presentation. I think, and I alluded to it already, the last WHEREAS where the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), deems it fit to criticize the Government, speaks volumes about his approach to this very real problem that society faces, and a perfect illustration of the attitude of the Member for St. James is in that last WHEREAS when he says that we have done so little to do a number of things.

As I point out, this Government has done so much to fight drinking and driving, to prosecute pornographers, to overhaul the Prosecutions branch, and to support community crime prevention organization. A Government that has done this and more—the Member's statement cannot be left on the record. I am challenged because it has failed to respond to the desire of Manitobans to be leaders in the area of crime prevention.

Mr. Speaker, our record speaks for itself, whether it is in the area of the anti impaired driving. I think we have gone some distance in our battle against crime. Be that as it may, I have no doubt in my mind that the Member for St. James will continue to take

his cheap shots and will try to make politics out of every crime issue.

Mr. Speaker, what is the solution? I listened carefully to the new Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) and he talked about locked doors. I know he once was a constituent of rural Manitoba, he was a constituent of mine, he lived in rural Manitoba. But he said something that made me think. In rural Manitoba I do not know how many of us lock our doors. Probably more now than used to be the case, but I can remember never, ever having seen a rural door locked until about 15 years ago, and I guess many in the city also.

Today I would say that in a rural sense, still half the doors are unlocked; you find that out when you go campaigning. You knock on the door and you are almost halfway across the kitchen sometimes when you realize that there is nobody there, and you are trespassing and it is time to go back. So I am well aware what the Member says, and we say, how can the system work and why has it changed so drastically? I am not going to give a long presentation on values and so on and so forth, but there is no doubt we tend to, at least we used to in the past, tend to look out for each other a lot more,

As a matter of fact, when we talk about community based crime prevention, probably the range patrols, particularly those that raise cattle, have in large portions of, not only Manitoba, but in rural parts everywhere, worked on that system, where indeed if you see something mysterious out in your neighbour's area, you give him a call. Or you are so inquisitive that you drive over and you find out, and that can lead to problems. But still you make it your business to find out who is there. That is what community crime watch is based upon, and the system works. It works if people are prepared to make a commitment to that type of system.

But society has changed, and I do not know why values are such that today, if the neighbour down the street, if we sense something is happening down there that may be a little bit suspicious, we could care less. We say that is his problem or that is her problem and so be it. But it has changed, and I am not going to point fingers because I do not know why it has. I certainly do not have the answer, but when I read in the first WHEREAS the Member says, WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has consistently had a crime rate substantially higher than the national average in recent years, I do not accept that as the truth, but it may very well be.

If it is true, and if there are reasons that can be documented as to it being true, why do we not say so? Why do we not say what those reasons are? Why do we not point fingers? There used to be a time when we did, and of course what that caused us to do, whether it was in rural Manitoba or indeed in the city, it caused us to be aware, to look for certain things. Ultimately the net result of it was that the doors were left open, because we looked after each other.

Today, society says that we do not do those sorts of things, everybody is right, everybody is basically good and we do not ever point out why things may have changed—just an observation, and others may want to of course totally dismiss it.

The Member talked about campaigning. The two worst experiences I ever had campaigning, once was in rural Manitoba and there was legitimacy for this wild dog to be on this farm, but the second one was in the area of Rossmere. A dog came around a corner—and this was in the '88 campaign. He got that far away from me, and I am showing about three or four feet. He was chained. I did not know it at the time. It would not have mattered because I died anyway on the spot. I swear he moved the house that far. Mr. Chairman, I am mindful that the city particularly is full of dogs behind these doors as I have helped my colleagues campaign. I say, "Well, what a way to live." I mean, this is incredible that is what society has come to.

Mr. Speaker, I say the solution is in the community, the solution totally is in the community. It is nothing to do with crime prevention councils, it is in the community, it is within our own abilities, it is in our own homes as to whether or not we are going to present the role models to our children and to indeed our loved ones. It is within the community, it is within the schoolyard, it is within the church community, it is within the larger community whether or not you want to present yourself as a role model. That is the solution. Certainly the solution is not a crime prevention council. -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker, the Members are encouraging me to sit down because we have to vote. We do not have to vote today. I am sure that we will vote sometime. I do not know whether we will ever vote on this resolution, but someday we will vote. I am mindful, and if I had more time I would like to talk about this word "prevention" which seems to be so much in vogue.

I think the final comment I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that it is the role models in our societies which will ultimately give meaning to the word "prevention."

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am interrupting the Honourable Minister. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Minister will have five minutes remaining. The hour being six o'clock, this House now stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, November 7, 1990

CONTENTS

| ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees | | |
| Committee of Supply Dacquay | 886 | Brandon Cabinet Office Director L. Evans; Penner |
| | | Emergency Measures Organization Plohman; Driedger |
| Speaker's Statement | | |
| Committee of Supply Report Rocan | 886 | Oil and Gas Price Increases Storie; Neufeld |
| | | Free Trade Agreement Storie; Ernst |
| Oral Question Period | | |
| Shoal Lake - Water Quality Doer; Filmon | 886 | Winnipeg Remand Centre Edwards; McCrae |
| | | Krantz Court Case McCrae |
| Rafferty - Alameda Dam Project Doer; Filmon | 887 | |
| | | |
| Department of Education Chomiak; Derkach; Filmon | 887 | |
| | | |
| St. James Assiniboia School Division Chomiak; Derkach | 888 | |
| | | |
| School Divisions Carstairs; Derkach | 888 | |
| | | |
| School Division Boundaries Carstairs; Derkach | 889 | |
| | | |
| Oil and Gas Price Increases Maloway; Connery | 889 | |
| | | |
| Krantz Court Case Barrett; Filmon | 890 | |
| | | |
| Child and Family Services Alcock; Gilleshamer | 890 | |
| | | |
| CPR Rail Line Abandonment C. Evans; Driedger | 891 | |
| | | |
| Grain Transportation Agency C. Evans; Driedger | 891 | |
| | | |
| ORDERS OF THE DAY | | |
| Debate on Second Readings | | |
| Bill 15 - The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Private Acts) Act, 1990 | | |
| | Ashton | 895 |
| | Manness | 898 |
| Bill 16 - The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Public General Acts) Act, 1990 | | |
| | Chomiak | 899 |
| Bill 17 - The Private Acts Repeal Act | | |
| | Chomiak | 903 |
| Committee of the Whole | | |
| Bill 19 - The Interim Appropriation Act, 1990 | | |
| | | 904 |
| Private Members' Business | | |
| Res. 2 - Establishment of Crime Prevention Council | | |
| | Edwards; McCrae; Chomiak | |
| | Manness | 923 |