



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 13, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 40—The Education Administration Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Bill 40, The Education Administration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration scolaire, be introduced and that the same be now received and read for the first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 41—The Public Schools Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that Bill 41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques, be introduced and that the same be now received and read the first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of the bill, recommends it to the House.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Education and Training, seconded by the honourable Minister of Natural Resources, that Bill 41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

The honourable minister has also tabled the message.

Bill 39—The Summary Convictions Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 39, The Summary Convictions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to this House, and I table the same, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

* (1335)

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 44—The Public Utilities Board Amendment Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Bill 44, The Public Utilities Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Régie des services publics, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The Securities Amendment Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Bill 45, The

Securities Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 43—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act): Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that Bill 43, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House, and I table the message of His Honour, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of all members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Rock Lake Private School eight Grades 7 and 8 students, and they are under the direction of Galen Toews. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose).

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

* (1340)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Racism Investigation Government Strategy

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed toward the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey).

Mr. Speaker, more than a month ago, the Justice minister told this House there was an ongoing investigation of KKK recruitment activities currently underway. The Justice minister also said that any discussion of the investigation would let people under suspicion know they were being investigated and that recruitment activities would become more difficult to detect.

After more than a month, during which time the government has refused to discuss the investigation, we have learned that the KKK apparently have stepped up activities in Winnipeg schools, made another information drop and has now changed their telephone message to include personal attacks on a member of this House. I am tabling a transcript, Mr. Speaker, of the message in the House today.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House recognize that all members of this House are opposed to racism, but given that the KKK group has said they are increasing their activities, particularly at the schools, I am wondering, will this Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) indicate that the government is taking this message seriously, and will he outline what the government strategy is to deal with this, particularly as it affects children?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): This government indeed takes matters like this extremely seriously, Mr. Speaker. The honourable member does not have it quite right when he says there has been a refusal to discuss matters related to the activities of this organization or group of people or whatever it happens to be.

The assistant deputy minister responsible for public prosecutions met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council—this was some weeks back now—and explained that the evidence gathered to that point in time did not contain sufficient evidence to carry on with a prosecution.

I know that the minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay) is also concerned about this matter. He and I will be discussing this further, and he will be providing me with a report as to what is happening in that particular area. On the part of the Winnipeg Police investigation, it will continue as well.

Hate Propaganda

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the Minister of Justice.

I am wondering if the minister will review the specific message we are tabling in the House today to see if Section 318 of the Criminal Code applying to hate propaganda would apply in this instance.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Yes, indeed, Mr. Speaker.

Racism Investigation Telephone Message

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My final supplementary is to the acting minister of Telephones.

The NDP government, when it was in power, took steps to remove the escort advertising in the Yellow Pages. I am wondering if the minister of Telephones will take steps to ensure, not tomorrow, not the day after, not next week, that these kinds of messages will cease as soon as practically possible.

Hon. James Downey (Acting Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated by my colleague, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), this whole issue, as was indicated by my colleague, the minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay), is under very active review and investigation. As soon as there is anything that can be brought forward to the members, it will be.

Manitoba Hydro Projects Impact Hudson Bay Ecosystem

Ms. Marianne CerIII (Radisson): We understand that this government is preparing to sign the joint agreement with the federal government for the environmental assessment on the Conawapa dam and the Bipole III. The joint assessment process opens the door to protect the environment based on natural ecosystems, not on political boundaries.

My question for the Minister of Environment is: Will the joint agreement require an assessment of the cumulative impacts of all hydro development on the Hudson Bay ecosystem?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the process that we are embarking upon, an evaluation of the Conawapa project, will take into consideration all of the impacts associated with that development, but we will not be part of a proposed larger concern that the member is referring to. That is certainly something that takes in a far broader scope than what we are dealing with in the Conawapa project.

* (1345)

Environmental Impact Assessments Ecosystem Approach

Ms. Marianne CerIII (Radisson): Since aboriginal groups from the province of Quebec and other environmentalists are urging that environmental impact assessments become more broad and consider a bioregional scope, was this issue part of the negotiations of the joint agreement that is going to be signed? What was this government's position regarding the ecosystem approach to environmental impact assessments?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is passing strange that a representative of a party that did not have any environmental assessment of the Limestone project until it was well underway, that we are being criticized by innuendo in involving ourselves in a very thorough and deep evaluation of what is essentially an in-stream dam upstream from the Limestone project.

During our project and during the evaluation of this project, we will be consulting closely and giving every opportunity to the aboriginal people within this province to have an opportunity to have input, to be heard and to clearly provide a message for what their concerns are and what their visions are as they relate to any impacts that may come from this project.

Manitoba Hydro Projects Impact Hudson Bay Ecosystem

Ms. Marianne CerIII (Radisson): Will the minister tell the house if any downstream effects on Hudson Bay from damming of the rivers that lead to Hudson Bay will be included in the terms of reference of this environmental impact assessment?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the impacts of this project are precisely what we are involving the people of Manitoba in. We are looking at—as I said a moment ago—the impacts on the aboriginal peoples, on their lands. Bear in mind, however, that this dam site is essentially within the river course. It does not flood a great deal of land. It essentially is re-using the water after it has spilled through the Limestone dam site.

We will be looking at all of the impacts related to this project as part of the larger impacts on the total system of the northern parts of this country. That is

not contemplated to be part of the guidelines for this project.

Prime Motor Oils Operating Order Violation

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): In April of 1990, Prime Motor Oil Ltd. of St. Boniface was granted an interim operating order to expand its solvent recycling operation. Within months of receiving its interim order, Prime Motor Oils was charged with violating the order on two counts. One hundred and eighty barrels of paint sludge were stored offsite in unmarked trailers in contravention of the order, and a storage tank that had been damaged in a grass fire was leaking contaminated oil. The order indicated that the site was to have been cleaned up within 30 days.

My question is for the Minister of Environment. Given that the owner of the facility stated, after charges were laid, I quote: It is not flagrant violation, anything is a hazard, toilet paper is a fire hazard, and a temporary offsite storage was no big deal, why was Prime granted an extension to Prime Motor Oil's interim operating order in April of 1991 when this company has violated its previous order and has demonstrated complete lack of understanding of the dangers involved in solvent recycling?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the specifics that the member raises I cannot respond to, but I will make inquiries as to the specifics of his question.

The fact is that in the disposal of waste and the handling of hazardous waste, the long-term protection of the environment, is important. We need not force products into the waste stream to be handled in an unsafe manner; better that we keep it under controlled conditions until we can deal with it in a proper and safe manner, and that is our objective.

As to his specific concerns, I will investigate them and report back.

Licensing - Public Hearings

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, Prime Motor Oil was given an interim operating order in April of 1990 until the public hearings could be held to determine if a permanent licence would be issued.

When will this government hold public hearings to determine whether this company will receive a licence, or is the minister content to let this company

continue operating indefinitely on an interim basis without public hearings?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns which I was referring to a moment ago is that we will not issue permanent operating licences to operations unless we are satisfied that (a) the public concerns have been raised and addressed and (b) that their operation is totally safe and within the bounds of our regulation.

I think the member should perhaps be pleased that we are not rushing to provide permanent licensing status until we have had all of the information and certainly -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cummings: Would you like to ask a question? You can come next.

Mr. Speaker, we will make sure that all public concerns are addressed and the proper procedures are put in place for licensing. We will not turn a blind eye or ram something through that the people of the community have not had an opportunity to express their concerns on.

* (1350)

Operating Order Violation

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the Solvit explosion clearly demonstrated the dangers associated with solvent recycling and the need for stringent enforcement of the regulations and the need for deterrents.

Given that the penalty for violating the operating order can be a maximum fine of \$50,000 or six months in jail, can the minister tell the House what penalty Prime Motor Oil received for violating its operating order?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer the specifics of that question, but I repeat that the major concern that we have to address is the safe handling of the material and make sure that it is controlled in a proper and safe manner, and that generators of the waste have a place to take it and have someone who will receive it and take it to a proper disposal system. It is always within the light of those considerations that these decisions are made.

As to the specifics of the question, I will have to report back.

Urban Hospital Council Budgetary Recommendations

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health's recent directive to urban hospitals to cut \$19 million from their budget is creating serious problems. In a letter dated this Friday, May 10, the nurses at Seven Oaks General Hospital have said that the cost-reduction measures being pursued, specifically the recommendation for regrouping of panelled patients, will have enormous and major impact on nurses, on their job security and on the professional services they deliver.

Will the minister lift his cost-cutting directive until such time as a planned approach co-ordinated among all urban hospitals in terms of health care reform and cost effectiveness has been achieved?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why we have the Urban Hospital Council, to provide that very request just requested, processed by the opposition's official Health critic. We have all of the major hospitals in Winnipeg, plus Brandon General Hospital, sitting on the Urban Hospital Council, so that their decisions to have balanced budgets with the funding parameters given to them by government will be achieved without one hospital narrowly making a decision to simply transfer cost to another hospital.

All hospitals are addressing a number of issues for the purpose of developing programs, program funding and policies which benefit the health care system of Manitoba in a very co-ordinated and real fashion. That advice that my honourable friend is proffering is exactly the process we started two months ago, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, I will table the letter from Glen Stobbe, the president of the nurses at Seven Oaks, and a document showing that Seven Oaks Hospital is moving in a way that is separate and apart from what I understand to be the Urban Hospital Council.

Given that they are moving and implementing directives that will achieve savings but also hurt the lives and jobs of nurses, I am wondering if the minister will lift the cloud of uncertainty facing nurses at Seven Oaks Hospital and assure that any cost-saving measures will respect the principle of job security and be tied to having appropriate services in the community.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, in all of my honourable friend's preamble, postamble and statements, not

one statement was made which urged the Urban Hospital Council, its members and government to assure that the money we spend, some \$1,750,000,000 in the ministry of Health, will achieve quality patient care. My honourable friend has forgotten about the patient in these discussions and now is into issues of job security and other issues.

All of the decisions that we are asking to be made around this budget cycle by the Urban Hospital Council and all health care professionals is that they make those decisions bearing in mind budget limitations facing this province and across Canada, and to make decisions which preserve the level of quality patient care. I would hope my honourable friend would at least add that to the next preamble of a question.

* (1355)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, all I want to know is, since the Seven Oaks Hospital has set a date of October 1 for regrouping panelled patients which will have a definite and major impact on nurses, will he ask the hospital to put that decision on hold until the Urban Hospital Council that the minister is referring to has reported with its recommendations?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I am going to give my honourable friend the commitment that I will ask Seven Oaks General Hospital, its management and its professional staff to assure that their decisions result in at least equivalent quality patient care.

That is where the Urban Hospital Council and each facility is coming around the issue, where they do not have unlimited dollars to spend and no government, despite positions put forward by opposition parties irresponsibly from time to time that money is no object—they will make their decisions based on enhancing and preserving quality patient care. If that means a change in the way service is delivered, as long as patient care is guaranteed, that satisfies the objective of the Urban Hospital—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Manitoba Trappers Association Conference Funding

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): The fur industry is vital to aboriginals in Canada and has been for centuries. Because of the difficult times which the industry is facing, Manitoba trappers have

been planning a conference to discuss important issues. The trappers had been promised funds from this government for the conference but were recently informed that the government changed its mind and would not give them funding.

My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the minister tell the House why this government withdrew funding after two ministers had made a commitment to the conference organizers?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all clarify the preamble to the member's question. Let me make it very clear, this government has done many things to support the fur industry in this province with the continued support to the Manitoba Trappers Association, with continued support to the Native groups.

I want to make it clear that we continue to support the major initiatives that are carried out by the trappers. There was no firm commitment, as far as the government was concerned, on this particular conference; however, the overall activities of the government are supportive of the trappers of this province.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier.

The withdrawal of funding is an insult to northern trappers. How can this government pretend to support trappers when it breaks its promises?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear, we did not break our promise. In fact, there was no commitment by this government to provide funds for it. What we had asked for was to have staff work with those organizations, with those individuals, to try to develop and to encourage further work so that decisions could be made, but there was no commitment to fund that particular project. In fact, by supporting that one individual group, we would have been ignoring some of the other groups within this province.

Core Area Initiative Renegotiation

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): My last supplementary question is to the same Deputy Premier.

Will this government negotiate another Core Area Initiative agreement, or does he plan to use the collapse of Core as an excuse to cut ACCESS and BUNTEP funding?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear, as far as ACCESS -(interjection)- well, if the members do not want me to make it clear, then I will not make it clear. -(interjection)- Well, they do not want me to make it clear. There is no question as to the support of this government to the BUNTEP and ACCESS programs. Our commitment remains the same as it was over the past year to the BUNTEP and ACCESS programs.

* (1400)

Child Abuse Treatment Program Accessibility

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, one of the most vulnerable people in our society are children who are sexually and physically abused, and yet those statistics continue to climb. In the most recent annual report of the minister's department, Child and Family Services agencies report a 20 percent increase, the Children's Hospital reports a 7 percent increase, regional offices report a 59 percent increase.

Can the Minister of Family Services tell this House today how those children are going to access treatment, how they are going to be placed in preventive situations when the Child and Family Services agencies of this province have received a zero percent increase in their budget?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I think the member knows full well the tremendous commitment we have made to Child and Family Services agencies over the last four budgets in increasing their funding substantially.

We are in the process of working with those agencies. Of course, the agencies are in dialogue with the treatment centres that provide that service to put together their plans. Some of these have been accepted at this time; others are still in process.

I can tell you there are a number of agencies that have operated with balanced budgets and are able to access the treatment centres that are available for children and for families, and that is ongoing. We are working with other agencies as they bring forward their plans for this coming year and are in the process, this very day, of releasing some of the deficit funding to them.

The department met as recently as Friday with a number of the agencies that are involved with children and families across Manitoba. We are concerned that there are increases in the number of abuse cases that are coming forward and the number of people who are accessing the service. We are very aware of that and are providing additional funding to these agencies as our budget permits.

The member is aware that this department received a 7 percent increase in funding this past year which was the largest increase across government, and that funding is going in part to Child and Family Services agencies.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well that the Child and Family Services agencies are going to receive a zero percent increase, yet last year they had a 20 percent increase in the number of children who were abused, that abuse that was reported.

We are in an economic recession, and all the indications are that the number of children abused is going to exceed by substantial numbers the increase of the previous year. What is the minister waiting for, the death of a child?

Can the minister tell the House today if he will meet with Child and Family Services agencies, with the school divisions and with the Child Protection people to ensure that the services will be in place and the funding will be in place for those children so we can all avoid the unnecessary tragedies that befall these children?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I take some exception to the manner in which the member raises that question.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I can tell you that I am well aware of many problems in the social services network that is in place in this province. I have taken the opportunity to read the reports put forward by the Ombudsman, the report that emanated from the Reid inquest, a number of child death reports from previous years. I have looked at internal reviews which have been brought forward in recent times.

I met with the Child and Family Services agencies umbrella organization a few weeks ago to discuss some of the very serious concerns that they have. We are working with them to provide funding as we are able to within government and trying to work in a positive way. As I have indicated, there has been

a tremendous increase in the funding for agencies over the last number of years. We are well aware that the number of services that agencies have been providing in recent years—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, I take some exception to the fact that 16- and 17-year-olds are being abandoned, 16- and 17-year-olds who show a 31 percent increase in sexual and physical abuse.

I want to know from this minister why Child and Family Services agencies and why the Province of Manitoba are literally washing their hands of the 16- and 17-year-olds, because they do not have the dollars to service them?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the member that we are not abandoning 16- and 17-year-olds. In many cases, those 16- and 17-year-olds are residing with their parents and accessing service from Child and Family Services agencies, also from schools that they attend and guidance counsellors, in some cases from church and faith groups.

There are many ways that service is accessed by those people, but the basic mandate of the Child and Family Services agencies is to protect children. They are quite capable of living up to that mandate.

Child Care Programs Rural Services

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, in 1989, this government put out the Manitoba Child Care Task Force report in which recommendations were made that various child care models be implemented in rural Manitoba to improve the quality of child care in rural Manitoba. Now we have a report from the federal Women's Institute in Canada which indicates that child care in rural areas is in very poor condition.

What is this Minister of Family Services prepared to do at this time to address the concerns of child care in rural areas? When will he implement the recommendations made by the task force of this government?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, a national survey done and reported in today's paper has been put before our department within recent weeks. At the present time, we are studying that. The member is probably aware that the Manitoba spokesperson for that

particular group is from Minnedosa, and I am in receipt of the report.

I think, clearly, this indicates that there is a national concern that day care is not available and accessible in rural areas on the same scale as urban areas. We, in Manitoba, of course, see the flexibility of day care, that rural families are able to access family day care because in many rural areas day care centres simply are not in existence and are not practical. Our system is flexible and adaptable. Rural families do access family day care.

I can tell you, and I am sure the member is aware, that in many cases rural people have accessed extended family and friends for that day care service.

Child Care Initiative Project Funding

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Can the minister tell this House whether this government is prepared to continue funding for the several projects in Manitoba that are presently being funded under the child care initiative in rural Manitoba? When the funding runs out on the federal level, is this government prepared to continue that service in rural Manitoba?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Without knowing specifically which projects the member would like us to continue funding—I believe she said that the federal government was providing at this time—we are very concerned with offloading in a number of areas. I have spoken to that before in the House. I think we are open, in my department, to looking at options that are available for day care in rural areas. Part of our system is that we do want flexible and adaptable day care in rural Manitoba.

I have indicated that often day care centres are not the answer, where people need to access day care at extended hours and on a seasonal basis. This is where family day care is probably more apropos in rural areas, but we are prepared to look at any options that the day care community and people who access day care bring forward. If we can possibly put them into effect in rural Manitoba, we will.

Ms. Wowchuk: These particular cases, Mr. Speaker, are not offloading. They are projects started by the federal government that have to be continued, and I hope the provincial government will take it on.

* (1410)

Child Care Programs Aboriginal Services

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): To the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey): Can the Minister of Northern Affairs tell us what the status is of the negotiations between the federal and provincial governments as to who should be funding Native day cares, rather than having this issue tossed back and forth like a political football?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): When I met with the federal minister, the Honourable Tom Siddon, he very clearly stated that the federal government was going to discontinue some of the payments and services that are offered off reserve and that they were going to use the money that they access by this withdrawal in social services and child welfare to enhance on-reserve services. While he did not particularly include day care in that, it is our position that the federal government is responsible for on-reserve services that are being looked for and demanded by the Native bands.

I think probably the member is also aware that the federal government has for a number of years been talking about a federal day care policy and federal funding that is put into day care. Perhaps—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

55-Plus Program Deindexing

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): History has again recorded the response of a queen who, when told about the poorest of her subjects not having bread to eat, cruelly and callously replied, "Let them eat cake."

An Honourable Member: Who said that?

Mr. Santos: Marie Antoinette. To the honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, when this government deindexed the 55-Plus program, what they actually did is they took away \$1.70 from the poorest segment of the senior citizens of this province. They can no longer buy their bread and their 2-litre carton of milk.

Will this government also make the same reply to the senior citizens who are now complaining about

this injustice, the honourable Minister responsible for Seniors?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, I will not go back as far as the critic did, back to Marie Antoinette, but I will assure him that I will deal with the seniors as we are dealing with them today. Unlike that government, who wants to look back—and in one day the interest alone \$1.8 million, what we could do for those seniors, that you blew when you were in office.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, is this the reply of the honourable minister to the letter-writing campaign now being conducted by the Manitoba Society of Seniors so that they will restore the cut that they made with the 55-Plus program?

Mr. Ducharme: I have been in touch with the different senior organizations unlike the previous government who did not care about the seniors. They did not even want to go about talking to the seniors. At least this government is going throughout Winnipeg talking to the different groups, and I will. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we are having a meeting with the society very shortly where all the ministers will get together with the society and answer their questions brought forward.

Mr. Santos: Can the honourable minister defend his decision to spend \$375,000 for housing and yet deprive senior citizens of their carton of milk and their loaf of bread?

Mr. Ducharme: I wish the honourable member across the way would go back into the last two years' budgets dealing with senior citizen housing. Under this particular government, they were increased every year and unlike the previous administration who did not do that.

Civil Technology Program Relocation

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the cuts in northern education that have been brought in by this government have had a number of impacts, whether they be in terms of trade programs, the ACCESS engineering program. The one program where it is having a particular impact is the decision of the government to cancel the civil technology program in Thompson and move the students to Winnipeg.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education, will he listen to the students who are asking that that program be maintained in Thompson, these

students who were just moved into the community of Thompson only six months ago? Will he now cancel the decision to cancel that program and maintain it in northern Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I guess it should be noted that in some of the reorganization and refocusing of the training programs in the community college system, we are attempting to make sure that the programs that are being delivered at the community college level are going to be those that are going to lead students to permanent jobs in the future and indeed are going to assist students to obtain work after graduation.

Mr. Speaker, it should be pointed out to the member for Thompson, and I am sure that he should be aware of the fact, that we have introduced four new programs at the Thompson campus through KCC, so indeed there is an effort to increase the number of training spots in Thompson, through KCC, so that students from that area can access training that will lead to meaningful jobs once those students have graduated.

With respect to the civil technology program, it has been determined that program can be best offered at Red River Community College and those students who have to be transferred to the institution at Red River Community College will have their moving costs reimbursed in that event.

Mr. Ashton: The minister did not point to the 19 staff reductions, the major cuts in programs that have taken place.

Northern Employment Training Programs Government Commitment

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): If the minister will not listen on civil technology, will he listen to the concerns that have been expressed in terms of the Engineering ACCESS program by the Faculty of Engineering, by many Northerners who see that program as their only chance to get a permanent job on either hydro-related or hydro jobs?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the former government, through the Limestone training program, embarked on many training initiatives that were supposed to lead those graduates to meaningful jobs on the Limestone project. I have to tell you, from the civil technology program and from the engineering program, there were no graduates

who achieved meaningful employment at the Limestone centre. I question what the madness in their method was at that time.

Mr. Speaker, the Engineering ACCESS program, to this date, has not graduated an individual. This year they will graduate the first graduate. There will be one graduate this year. In trying to determine the most effective use of taxpayer dollars, we are trying to focus the money in areas where individuals can go through training programs and then achieve meaningful work after those training programs. We will endeavour to continue in that direction.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, how can the minister be so critical of these programs, not just at Limestone but Conawapa which is upcoming? How can he cut a program that has 39 people in that program, the ACCESS engineering program? How can he cut the civil technology program where each and every one of the students who have graduated thus far have received employment? How can he be so callous towards Northerners?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I think I have put on the record on several occasions the fact that under the NDP government in the Limestone training initiative, something like \$41 million was spent on training. Out of all of that training, there were a handful of journeypeople who are now employed. Many did not have the opportunity to complete their programs. Indeed, it was short-term work for many people. Much of that training did not lead to any meaningful employment.

Our approach is different. If we are going to invest that kind of money in the North and in human resources, we are going to ensure that those people who take those programs are going to have an opportunity to embark on a meaningful training where they can get meaningful work after they have graduated. That is the objective, to put as many of our northern people into the work force as we possibly can—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1420)

Child Abuse Treatment Program Accessibility

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family Services says that they are not abandoning children.

Can the Minister of Family Services then explain why guidance counsellors are phoning opposition members saying that unless a child has been abused to the point where it is life threatening, there is no service either in terms of protection or counselling for those children in our schools?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I cannot account for guidance counsellors phoning the Leader of the third party, but I know that in many schools across this province, there are just excellent guidance counsellors and excellent guidance programs that deal with the issues brought forward that range from serious matters, that the member references, to academic problems.

I have the highest regard for those guidance counsellors and the job that they do. I know that they, too, interrelate with the Child Guidance Clinic and with the Child and Family Services agencies, and in many cases, that counsellor at the high school level or the public school level is the first person that child will talk to. The former colleagues that I worked with who work in guidance are doing an excellent job.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the honourable Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Mr. Speaker, I would also ask if you could canvass the House to see if there is a will to waive private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? No?

An Honourable Member: No.

* (1430)

Mr. Speaker: There is no agreement.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

**CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY
SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND
CITIZENSHIP**

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Settlement Services; (2) Other Expenditures, \$111,400, on page 33 of the Estimates book and on pages 62 and 63 of the Supplementary Estimates Information books. Shall the item pass—the honourable minister has some information?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Yes, if I can just revert back to a question. I have some information to provide to the opposition critics on questions that have been asked previously in Estimates. There was one question asked by the Liberal critic (Mr. Lamoureux) on whether we have had an increase in the number of calls to Citizens Inquiry since the budget has been brought down. I have some information to provide in that respect.

I guess the short answer will be no. There have not been increases in the number of calls. The only calls that can be recalled by Citizens Inquiry regarding the budget were for copies of the budget document itself. If we go back for three months of this year, February, March and April, the number of calls to Citizens Inquiry were 247 for February, 193 for March, and 237 for April. These compare very similarly to the 1990 figures for the same three months. In February of 1990, there were 233; in March of 1990, 209; and in April, 171.

I guess the only significant variance in figures for 1991 as compared to 1990 are respecting Revenue Canada, and I guess that is most specifically the GST. There have been inquiries regarding the GST.

The other question was: Are we receiving a larger number of calls over the past number of years—an example, comparing 1986 to 1991. My information is that in 1986-87, Citizens Inquiry handled 135,468 requests, and for 1990-91, 135,935 requests. I hope that this information is of some assistance to the Liberal critic.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Did the minister get any information in terms of the—like you mentioned the GST was a big item. Does the department have the top eight or nine, 10 complaints? GST, was that number one, followed by what?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Normally speaking, Citizens Inquiry handles requests for information from the general public. They do not monitor the complaints. What they would do is refer them to the department where they might be requiring information on wanting to lodge a complaint. If, in fact, there was a question specifically on the GST, you would have to ask in the Finance department's Estimates on what types of inquiries there were through the department. So what they do is answer telephone calls and refer people to the departments where they might have a complaint or be requesting information.

Mr. Lamoureux: So they do not actually keep track of subject areas?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed there would not be a reliable source of complaint information. They do know which departments they do refer calls to.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the Minister does, and I can understand and appreciate the reliability of the complaints, but if there is a record of any sort that indicates certain numbers or percentages of the calls that come as a complaint on the GST—on whatever the issue might be—I would appreciate a copy of that. If not, that is fine.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay. There were some other questions and I am not sure who asked the question on Cultural activities, I believe it was the NDP critic. Maybe I will wait until she arrives and provide the information that was requested of them.

The other listing I have here is a copy of the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council's grant allocation for the period of January 1 to April 30 of 1990 and for the period of May 1 to August 30 for 1990 for both of the opposition critics.

I was just indicating that I am providing some information for the critics and those are the multicultural grants for two different allocation time periods that are there for both critics. I also have answers to some questions that were asked by the NDP Culture, Heritage and Citizenship critic.

The question was, what Cultural activities are taking place through the Remote Communities

Recreation Directors Pilot Project? I can just provide copies of this information or I can read it into the record, whatever is the wish of the committee. Copies?

* (1440)

I have three copies of the 1990-91 grant allocations for the Manitoba Community Places program. Another question that was asked was what was the average Manitoba Community Places grant, and the average grant was \$25,690. There were a total of 352 grants totalling just over \$9 million—that was in 1990-91.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: You had some information for the NDP critic?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I have provided that.

Mr. Lamoureux: That is it for information?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is it for information at the present time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is this the information, I know we were discussing in terms of money, that has been allocated from MGAC versus money that was allocated out from MIC? She had said that she would come back with some information. This would be the information for that, or am I to anticipate we will receive more information on that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, those are just the allocations from MGAC. I do want to inform the critics that in fact there will be, at the end of the first full fiscal year of operation, a report from MGAC, an annual report sort of thing, on the grants that have been allocated through MGAC, as was in the MIC annual report in previous years.

That was one thing that we discussed, and that was one thing that was asked, whether in fact MGAC does put out an annual report. They will be putting out an annual report after their first full year of operation.

As far as the information on the amount of funding that the Manitoba Intercultural Council gave out as opposed to the amount of funding that MGAC provides to the community, the figures that are in the annual report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council have to be—if I can indicate, we have to get some explanation from the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation because there are several different ways that money can be reported.

Whether it is money that was actually allocated to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, whether in fact

they spent all of the money they were allocated every year since inception and whether in fact some of that money was carry-over from the previous year that had not been spent requires a fair amount of work to be done on behalf of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation in conjunction with the department.

If I could offer to both opposition critics that, once we have those figures in place, the departmental officials from the Finance Branch could sit down with both critics and explain the process, why numbers appear different and why I have been indicating that there has been no reduction in grant funding. In some years, there has been a 3 percent increase; in other years, there has been a zero percent increase in funding. There has been no reduction, but in order for me to be able to explain that and for the opposition to understand, I have asked officials within the Finance Branch of my department to get detailed information from the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

You will understand that the Lotteries Foundation had certain amounts of holdbacks from one year, and they dealt directly with the Manitoba Intercultural Council before we did the needs assessment and we changed the mechanism on how Lotteries dollars were being distributed. In fact, if I can indicate that I will have departmental staff sit down with both critics and explain the changes and difference, then maybe it will be more understandable.

It is a very complicated thing to try to explain, and also, we do need to go back over the history of what the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation allocated to the Manitoba Intercultural Council in the past.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just for clarification for the Minister, I am more interested in terms of the real dollars that were allocated from MIC to multicultural groups as opposed to the amount of real dollars that were allocated from MGAC to the different multicultural groups. That is where I am suggesting to her that it is in fact a cut.

If MIC one year, for example, decided to go into its reserves and the following year chose not to or had received additional monies from another source or MGAC through negotiations with different associations that had bingo nights, if you will, that is not really what I am trying to get at. What I am trying to get at is the real dollars that were allocated from MGAC, the real dollars that were allocated from MIC. My suggestion to the minister is in fact that it is a real decrease, and she could maybe pass that

on so that, when the explanation comes from the department, they can explain that aspect more so than anything else.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Absolutely, and that is the kind of information we are going to try to provide. What I am saying is, the allocations from the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation have either remained stable or have increased, 3 percent some years or remained stable other years. There has never been a reduction in the amount of money that has been given for multicultural grants, whether it be through the Manitoba Intercultural Council or through MGAC, and that is the kind of information we want to be able to lay out for the opposition critics so they can see and understand.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radlsson): Just a point of clarification, since I came in late, where are we?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We are dealing with Citizenship on page 33. It is item (2) Other Expenditures \$111,400. The minister was just giving the information that you have before you, before you came in. That was it. We have not really started the questioning on that area yet, so we are now dealing with that Clause (2) Other Expenditures \$111,400. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Cerilli: So we are dealing with Other Expenditures under Immigration and Settlement Branch.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That is correct.

Ms. Cerilli: I am interested in finding out some more about plans for this area. It has just been transferred over from Family Services, I understand. This branch has been transferred twice, I understand, in a short while. It used to be with a different department before it was with Family Services, and I am wondering what plans this government has for expanding services in the area of immigration settlement services. Since there is going to be increased immigration, and the government has talked about wanting to increase the levels of immigration to Manitoba, I would think we are going to require more services to meet the needs of the people coming to Manitoba.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess that is all part of the challenge for me as the new minister responsible. If I might just correct the NDP critic, it has always been a part of community services, Family Services Department, Immigration and Settlement, and it has just moved over now to Culture and Heritage. It did not belong to any other

department before it belonged to Family Services in any recent time.

* (1450)

I suppose we have indicated clearly that we want an immigration agreement negotiated with the federal government. We do want to combine services for new immigrants as a result of this change and this restructure so that we have programs that are specifically developed to deal with those new Canadians that come and have settlement issues that are of concern, and we want to ensure that there is the co-ordination of the programming and the activities to new immigrants and new Canadians. That will be what we will be concentrating our efforts on as a new division within my department. As far as specifics, those will be announced as time goes by once we get the new structure in place and take a look at reviewing what has been happening and how we can better co-ordinate activities that will meet the desires and the needs of the new Canadians who are immigrating here to Manitoba.

Ms. Cerilli: During the recent election campaign—it is not even a year ago—there were a number of initiatives that were announced that would service the immigrant communities. One of them was an Immigrant Youth Access Program which would be introduced to help younger immigrants develop skills needed to enter the work force. Is there movement on developing that program? I know that young people as a whole are suffering unemployment rates that exceed other groups, and I would think that young immigrants would suffer even more.

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is my understanding that there were a couple of commitments during the election campaign. One you indicated was the youth program, the other one was The Bridging Cultures Program that were discussed at that point in time.

The decision has been made. It is my understanding that before this was transferred over that, in fact, The Bridging Cultures Program would go ahead and the other one would not at this time. So we are working, since Immigration and Settlement has come over to my department, to finalize the details of The Bridging Cultures Program and that announcement will be made in due course.

Ms. Cerilli: What was the rationale or the reasons for not pursuing the Immigrant Youth Program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As I indicated at this point in time, the Bridging Cultures Program will be announced in the near future. When a government or a party, during an election campaign, makes election promises, those promises are made to be implemented over the mandate of the government.

In fact, the Bridging Cultures Program is the one that is going to move ahead now, and over the next four years of our mandate, you know, we will be looking at the other initiatives. I have indicated that this is one that we are working on aggressively right now, and the announcement on this will be made soon.

Ms. CerlIII: Perhaps then, the minister could describe more fully the Bridging Cultures Program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at this point in time, until the official announcement is made on the program, I am not at liberty to discuss the details. When the announcement is made, full details on the program will be communicated to the opposition and to the community.

Ms. CerlIII: I guess, in asking these questions, I am trying to get a better understanding of how this government is setting its priorities. We are in a crisis and, I think, in terms of youth unemployment, in terms of education opportunities for young people in this province, in terms of services for young people in relation to Child and Family Services, I know that the needs amongst certain groups in those areas are very needful.

Perhaps the minister could give us some indication of the demand for a program like the Immigrant Youth Access Program? Can we have some idea of the number of immigrant young people who are coming to this program and is there any information of what their unemployment statistics are?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess the youth employment programs, which are the responsibility of the Family Services department, deal with a broad cross section of youth employment. Those kinds of questions would have to be asked of the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). We do not have a youth employment program thus far in my department with my new responsibilities; therefore, we do not have any indication of numbers that might apply at this point, because there is no program.

Ms. CerlIII: Well, I am trying to identify the need for a program. The minister's party and the government must have identified a need for this

program, and that is why they announced it during the election. Does the minister have information about unemployment rates amongst immigrant youth?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, we do not have that.

Ms. CerlIII: Is there any consultation going on in that area, by the minister or the department, between Child and Family Services to see if there is a greater unemployment rate among immigrant youth?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed, at this point, there are no discussions in that respect. I think that, as has been indicated, throughout the province of Manitoba, not only with new Canadians, but with all Manitobans, employment opportunities at this point in time, with the recession on across the country, are somewhat limited, and we will have to be looking at an overall strategy throughout the government. We indicated during the election campaign, we made commitments, and I guess, over the full term of our four years, we will have to be judged on what commitments we have, what election promises we did live up to.

Ms. CerlIII: As the Minister for Multiculturalism, is the minister aware of any research or study or planning that is going on within government that would address immigrant youth employment issues?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that Winnipeg School Division No. 1 has an interest in pursuing the compiling of some of this kind of information and that they are working right now with Immigration Canada. In fact, we would be part of the process to attempt to determine and get some of those statistics.

* (1500)

Ms. CerlIII: Because of my work before being elected, at the community, I am aware that there are a number of problems where particularly immigrant young people under the age of 16 often are dropping out of school and are working for less than minimum wage quite often and being exploited, quite frankly, in the work force.

I am wondering if the minister is aware of those kinds of issues and if there is anyone that is trying to develop programs to co-operate with the schools that would address those kinds of problems?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that, quite probably, the right place to ask this question would be in the Estimates of the Department of Family Services, where they have a special employment program. That kind of data or statistics might be being compiled through the Department of Family Services. Certainly, with our new responsibility of Citizenship, Immigration and Settlement, we would be an active partner in working with Family Services in the future.

Ms. Cerilli: Does the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation have a research branch—or Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, as it is called now, sorry?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do not within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, but within the new division or the new branch of Immigration and Settlement, we will have that capacity.

Ms. Cerilli: Right now, there is no research function by the Immigration and Settlement Branch, but there will be.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there has been one in the Immigration and Settlement Branch that has been moved over, so there will be a research component available through the new Citizenship Branch in the department, but the rest of the Department of Culture does not have a research component.

Ms. Cerilli: This is the area that I am trying to address. What research is going on in the department right now, or in the branch, related to immigration settlement issues?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that the main component of research that is being actively pursued right now is an immigration agreement with the federal government. As we come to some resolution of that and make some progress there, we will be looking at other community needs and doing research based on other community needs.

Ms. Cerilli: How many staff are involved in the research section of Immigration and Settlement?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There are three who are involved in research. One is the director; one is the policy analyst, and the other is a statistician.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there any plans to expand that area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Not at this point.

Ms. Cerilli: I will move on to another election promise. Also, there is a proposal to spend up to \$400,000 for new programs to help settle the existing immigrant population. Can the minister explain what that proposal was all about and if there are plans moving ahead with that promise?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, one of those is the Bridging Cultures Program, and the other one was the youth program that, as I said, was an election commitment that would have to be followed through within the mandate of our government over the next four years.

Ms. Cerilli: What is the intention then of those grants? Who would be getting those grants?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I indicated, when the Bridging Cultures Program is announced, we will be able to give more detail on that program. As we continue to develop, announcements will be made, and those kinds of details will be made public.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there programs currently in the Immigration and Settlement Branch that have a granting function?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it seems like many, many days ago when we first started and spent our first few hours on citizenship, we talked about some of the granting programs that were available: one is the recognition program and one was the SPAR program, special program to assist refugees, that were discussed at some length, I think our first day of Estimates. The other one is the newcomer service support program.

Ms. Cerilli: That is the recognition program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I would like to remind the honourable members that we are dealing with Other Expenditures on page 33, item (2) \$111,400. You refer to your Supply book and it is on page 63. If we want to move on to grants, it is the next line. So I would recommend we pass Other Expenditures if we are going to move on to grants.

Ms. Cerilli: I think I will move then to an area that I think deserves a lot of attention, the whole issue of the agreement that the minister has mentioned a few times between the province and the federal government. To start off with, I would like the minister to begin by explaining the procedure as it currently exists now.

What is the usual procedure for developing these immigrant percentage numbers with the federal government?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That would fall more under the Business Immigration. Where is it falling into here?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think we can answer it here.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Where do you deal with immigration here?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Probably in communication.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Okay. Fine. As long as I can follow you.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that there is a yearly consultative process whereby officials from Immigration and Settlement from the province and the federal government sit down and discuss the percentages with the numbers of immigrants that will come to the province of Manitoba. Officials presently provincially can make recommendations and comments about the numbers and the types, but ultimately it is a federal government decision on how many immigrants and what type of immigrants come to our province.

Ms. CerlIII: So in the past, Manitoba has had, I think we were saying before, 3 percent of the total immigration that has been coming to Canada.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. CerlIII: So what I am trying to get a better understanding of is how we would end up with 3 percent or 3.5 percent, when I think the minister said that we had 4 percent of the population in the country and how she proposes to move on having us get, as she said as well, our fair share.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess that is where there has been time and effort put into research within this branch and that is why we would like our own agreement. Until we can negotiate with the federal government an agreement whereby they will put in writing that, because we have 4 percent of the population, we want to receive 4 percent of the number of immigrants who come to our province. We are not going to be able to have any control or influence, so what we are doing is trying to negotiate. It is a process that many provinces have been attempting to put in place, and it is not something that does happen overnight, but we want to aggressively pursue that.

I guess the research that we are doing, and the information that we present to the federal government to make our case will, I suppose,

hopefully have an impact on the federal government's agreement to have something negotiated with us independently as a province.

Ms. CerlIII: What I am trying to understand is that currently there is some type of a process where all the provinces are considered somewhat collectively, and if the minister is advocating that process be changed, where each province would have to negotiate with the federal government their own separate agreement.

* (1510)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what we want to do is ensure, or attempt to ensure, through the federal government, through an agreement, that we receive our proportionate number of new immigrants to our province. The only way we are going to be able to achieve that is to aggressively move toward an agreement with the federal government, a provincial agreement which will guarantee us those numbers. I cannot say anymore except—I do not know if the opposition is opposed to that kind of thing, do they not want us to try to negotiate something that might give us our fair share?

Ms. CerlIII: The idea I am trying to get at is if the government and the minister are wanting to see a change in the way the federal government deals with immigration agreements with the province and what kind of a change she would like to see.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Basically, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what we would like to see develop through an agreement is to ensure that we have some input into the selection criteria for only those immigrants in the independent classification.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the minister repeat that, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: What we would like to do with an agreement is ensure that we have the numbers that we feel we deserve, the numbers of immigrants that we feel we deserve as a province based on our percentage population of Canada, and also have some control over selection criteria for those immigrants who come to the province of Manitoba in the independent class.

Ms. CerlIII: So there will be a move to increase the proportion of immigrants that fall under the independent class?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, certainly we would like to see more people in the independent class and more people in the other classes. Obviously if we go from a 3 percent figure

to a 4 percent figure, we are going to have increased numbers in all classes.

Ms. CerlIII: From the information that the minister gave, I think the first day when I was participating in the Estimates, we have seen that there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of refugees. I have some concern that the people who are going to be coming to our province and our country are going to be assessed not on the basis of their needs but purely on the basis of their economic ability to invest in Canada. I have some problems with that, and I am wondering if the Minister can clarify or make a commitment that will not become the case.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that will not in fact become the case and that was not information that I put on the record. In fact, we have a larger proportional share of refugee immigrants than any other province across the country.

Ms. CerlIII: Yes, I am aware of that and I am also aware that we also have some of the best services in the country for refugees. I would hate to see that jeopardized, and I know that the other day I was asking questions related to that. I am concerned about the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) statements, and I would think that the minister would be agreeing with the notion of streamlining—I am not sure of the words that were used—of trying to match immigration with work force trends. I am wondering if the minister can clarify that concept.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what I have indicated is in the independent class where people come here—we are not talking refugees now because refugees will always come with certain qualifications or no qualifications. We do not have control over that, and we will continue to take our share of refugees. What we are saying is in the independent class, what we want to do is to be able to put forward to the federal government a list of occupations where we have people in short supply to perform or to do those jobs.

In fact, we would like to have some control over ensuring that the independent immigrants who come to the province of Manitoba match the shortage of job skills that we have here. That only makes common sense so that those who come are not on unemployment insurance, they have jobs to come to.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the minister make a commitment then that the percentage of immigrants coming under the independent class will not increase disproportionately to the other classes?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do not have an agreement with the federal government. That is exactly what we are attempting to negotiate and those kinds of things—our numbers and percentages—would be clarified in that kind of an agreement. So that is what we are working towards, and I can indicate that we want to ensure that all classes of immigrants come to our province of Manitoba. I indicated before, of course, if we go from 3 percent to 4 percent, there will be increases in all classes.

Ms. CerlIII: The minister has said that this is an area that the branch is researching, and negotiations are ongoing right now with the federal government. Has the research gone as far as identifying areas in the work force where there is a shortage of skilled workers?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is still in the process, but I am informed that Immigration and Settlement has been working with the Training Branch of Education and other departments throughout government, so the process is just being put in place. We are not into any final determination as yet.

Ms. CerlIII: When is the minister expecting that the negotiations would complete—that they would arrive at an agreement?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, other provinces have been working for several years to try to come to an agreement. As I indicated earlier, it is not a short process. My understanding is that B.C. has been working on an agreement for three years and still has not come to a final resolution. It is something that we want to place a priority on. We want to move as quickly as we possibly can, but I cannot give any indication on how long it will take.

Ms. CerlIII: So what happens in the meantime?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we will continue to pull together the information that we need to make a case to the federal government. I know at the official level they have been meeting, and I will certainly be requesting a meeting with my federal counterpart to discuss the issue. We will work as aggressively as we possibly can, but as I indicated, there have been ongoing discussions in other provinces for many years, for up to three years, without a final agreement, so it is not something I anticipate to happen overnight, but I would like to move as quickly as possible on it.

Ms. CerIII: What is happening in the meantime in terms of the agreement that we are following and with our levels of immigration?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is absolutely no agreement. That is what we are trying to negotiate with the federal government, but we have absolutely no control right now. The federal government tells us what refugees, what independent class and what family reunification immigrants are going to come to our province. We have to accept that, and we have to accept the numbers that they give us right now. We have no control.

* (1520)

Ms. CerIII: Is the minister aware of any federal policy that would provide some direction in how this would work with all the different provinces?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, they have no central direction whatsoever. I know they have negotiated an agreement with Quebec, and they have not—no other province has been successful in negotiating an agreement individually to date.

Ms. CerIII: I will pass over to my Liberal friend here for a few minutes.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wanted to pick up—we talk often about immigrants and the benefits that we as a society and those as immigrants get when we see more and more immigrants coming to the province, which I believe is a positive thing. We should work to get our numbers up in terms of the population. We discussed that earlier in the Estimates.

What I did want to make a point of is, those immigrants who come to Canada, because of the point system—who come Canada with high qualifications—I am wondering if the minister can tell me what she is doing or her department is doing in an effort to recognize the credentials of these individuals.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think that, if we could pass on from this line, that could be discussed under the Working Group on Immigrant Credentials that falls under another line within the branch -(interjection)- Oh, I am sorry. I am a little confused at this point. It does fall in under this line. Maybe I could ask you then to repeat the question.

Mr. Lamoureux: I will repeat the question. Given the point system the federal government has put in, in terms of being able to come to Canada as

immigrants, we find there is a large number of immigrants that come here with outstanding credentials. These individuals, upon arriving into Manitoba, are unable to do what they did in their homeland.

I am asking the minister, what is it she is doing in her department to ensure that the qualifications that these individuals brought here are being in fact recognized?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know this is an issue that has high priority within the community, too, and those who are arriving in Manitoba and in trying to find work in the area where they have been trained in their own country. We have put in place a Working Group on Immigrant Credentials that is doing some broad consultation throughout the community and going to bring forward recommendations to government.

In the meantime, the one program we have that is very unique across Canada and has been very successful is the recognition program, which we touched on briefly my first day of Estimates, and that is a program that does assist newcomers who have acquired their professional or technical training outside of Canada to overcome the barriers of employment.

As I have indicated, we have doubled the funding and doubled the number. It does not go far enough, but it is a step in the right direction. There are some 30 to 35 new immigrants per year placed directly into the program, which does give assistance to employers who will train and work with these new immigrants in the areas where they have been trained in their own country.

I have indicated it has been very successful. We have doubled the funding to it, and that at this point in time is all we can do there, but we do have the Working Group on Immigrant Credentials that is looking at the whole issue.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the government has been in office now for just over three years, and we see two things coming out of the government when it comes to recognizing it. I agree with the minister that this is probably, next to learning English, one of the largest concerns that comes out of the different multicultural groups, the fact that there are people out there with good qualifications and we are not recognizing the qualifications, we are not putting them on an equal playing field.

The minister talks about the recognition program. I am familiar with the program. It is in fact a good program. It has been increased by the government, but the minister is likely aware of the waiting list or the number of people that would love to be able to get into that program, which in my opinion once again reaffirms or demonstrates the demand out there for programs of this nature and at the very least to be recognized for some of the things that the immigrant did in their homeland.

In terms of the Working Group on Credentials, how often has that group met?

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Within the last year, the committee has met seven times. They have put a process in place whereby there has been broad consultation with the whole Manitoba community through questionnaires that were designed and have been sent out. They are now compiling the information that they have received back from the community. There was a lot of consultation that went into the preparation of the questionnaires to try to deal with different segments of the community and get accurate responses back.

Mr. Lamoureux: When was the group itself first organized and the first meeting date?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was in December of 1989.

Mr. Lamoureux: Who sits on the working group?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Dr. John Didyk is the acting Executive Director of Planning and Research for Education and Training; Dr. Robert Goluch from Education and Training; David Langtry is the Executive Director of the Multicultural Secretariat; Dr. Desmond Bevis, Director of Admissions, University of Manitoba; Ms. Pat Tobias is a community member; Ms. Monica Verma, a media specialist in the multicultural community; Mr. Alan Denton is a member of the Manitoba Federation of Labour; Dr. Joseph Du is a medical practitioner; Dr. Leo LeTourneau is the Chair and Dr. Jerry Kuye.

* (1530)

Mr. Lamoureux: I ask the minister, in terms of process, what it is that she is expecting from the group. When are we expecting a report of any sort from the group?

Mrs. Mitchelson: If I can just go back to what has happened since September of 1990, there was a subcommittee struck on the questionnaire to design four different sets of questionnaires which were targeted to the professions and the trades, the

educational institutions, the multicultural and ethnocultural organizations and individuals and other Manitobans.

There was consultation at that point with the Manitoba Intercultural Council on the appropriateness of the questionnaires. Six professional organizations were used for pretests before the questionnaires were sent out. They were medicine, dentistry, engineering, architecture; Professional Certification Branch of Manitoba Education and Training; law; and Labour, Apprenticeship and Training. Other ethnocultural groups were consulted along with MIC to preview the questionnaire before it was mailed out to the designated groups.

I guess in November or December of 1990 the questionnaires were sent out. February of '91 was the deadline for return of the completed questionnaires. I think 426 questionnaires were mailed back. There is a basic analysis that has been done and a draft report is being prepared for consideration by the working group right now. We are expecting that a final report will be submitted to the government this summer.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister covered one of the questions I was going to ask in terms of who the survey was sent to. The 426 that were returned, is that a fair cross-selection? Were there any groups that responded more so than others?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, my understanding is that in Ontario, they sent out about 18,000 questionnaires and received 200-and-some back. We sent out around 6,000 questionnaires and received back 426. So obviously there was more of a response here in the province than there has been in other areas.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am aware of a number of the professions that tend to come up time after time when I am out, in terms of not recognizing qualifications, things like the nursing, education, engineering, accounting. Does the department or the working group, has it come up with a list of the complaints, in terms of what occupations we are looking at?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is my understanding that the most prevalent professions are medicine, dentistry, engineering, architecture, law and labour and the trades.

Mr. Lamoureux: In many different states, you can have the credentials from one country and come to

Manitoba where, in fact, you are not able to practise because for some reason or another it is not being recognized, whereas you can go down to some of the states and—again, it is more so through hearsay, I understand even in some cases in provinces you can do the same. I am wondering if the minister might want to comment on that point. Is that in fact the case? You can take a profession, for example, let us say of medicine or accounting. Is that a valid concern in your opinion?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that there is not a province with a standard approach at this point in time. Even the federal government has not been able to co-ordinate sort of a standardization across provinces, and I am informed that just as late as this morning, we have had a call from Ontario, that would like to sit down and discuss some standardization. We have been working and in discussions with B.C. and Alberta on this issue, too, so there is no province that—and the regulations are not the same from one province to another, and that makes it very difficult.

That would be a goal, I guess a long-term goal, but I think we have to try and get our house in order here and look at what the responses are, see what the recommendations from the working group are and go from there. It is a problem, it is a recognized problem across the country, and we are trying to actively pursue and see whether we cannot come to grips with the problem and find some resolution.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, there are some provinces, and I will cite the Province of Quebec, which I understand has a Department of Multiculturalism. They have an infobank of information in terms of what different countries have in terms of universities and recognizing—or at least the Province of Quebec seems to be moving towards recognizing some of these credentials.

I would ask the minister if she or her department has looked at the Province of Quebec and see what they are doing on immigration and credentials?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is my understanding that I guess the long-term goal, and what we need to be looking at, is to ensure that credentials and recognition of credentials should be able to be moved from province to province within the country. Right now it is only within Quebec, and they do have an information bank that has been set up. It is not the most complete, and I have been informed that immigrant credentials and looking at credentials was moved into the cultural department

some 15 years ago in Quebec, and they are still trying to get a handle on complete information and a complete data bank. We have had immigrant credentials for one month now here in Manitoba in the Department of Culture, and I guess hopefully we will move a little more quickly than what Quebec has.

Yes, I think that the working group will be addressing in their final report some of the questions that have been raised. I think it would be important to try to work towards a system whereby recognition of credentials could be and it should be country-wide.

* (1540)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, last year I had in fact moved a resolution in which I believe the minister did speak to, regarding the whole question of credentials. The Province of Quebec was one of the things I brought up in that resolution. I also made reference to the fact that what is really needed is credentials from Ottawa. It would be ideal if Ottawa would take responsibility of that particular issue, but failing Ottawa's lack of a desire to do what I believe and the Liberal Party in Manitoba believes is something that is very important to do, the province has to pick up after it.

If we have a province like Quebec that has for a number of years, as the minister has so correctly stated, tried to get the credentials of immigrants recognized, I would suggest to her that it would be a worthy province to look at and possibly learn from some of the experiences and even try and gain some type of access to that data bank. My concern stems from the people who come up to me, who are discouraged, who have been working for a number of years in a profession or have not been able to work in a profession that they had in their homeland. Time after time, they suggest to me that, in other areas, other jurisdictions, it might be in their best interests to go to, as a direct result of us not tackling this problem.

The minister says that she is expecting the task force report of, a full report, the final report, during this summer. What or how soon can we anticipate the minister to respond to the report?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I could only answer that when I see the report, see what the content is and see what the recommendations are. I could not give anything definite at this point in time.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am somewhat weary of the government. I am hoping that they will act fast on this particular issue. It is not a new issue; it has been around for a number of years. I can appreciate that she is the one that struck this working group. If it was not her, I believe it was the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), but that is a positive.

This is a report that, I would suggest, we cannot afford to leave sitting around. I would ask the minister to make a commitment to the two opposition parties so that, when she receives the final report some time this summer, the two opposition critics and the Leaders would be given a copy of that report.

Mrs. Mitchelson: At this point in time, it is an internal report to government; it is the working group's recommendations. As all reports that come to government, when it is internal, when it is received, we will determine how to respond to it. I will give the assurance that we will respond to it as we see fit at the time, take a look at the recommendations and see what we can move on and how quickly we can move.

It is not going to be the kind of report that sits around and gathers dust. It is a concern; it is a real concern out in the community. It is one of the major concerns that we have indicated we are aware of, and we will be working to try to address the problem.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would—and I recognize the fact that it is an internal report, but I think the minister can appreciate the interest out in the communities and in fact on all political parties on this issue and that there would be some benefit to having that report up for debate, both inside the Chamber and also so that, when people such as myself and the other Culture and Heritage multicultural critic goes out to communities, we can get some type of a feedback on the report in hopes that ultimately what we will be able to do is to speed up the process.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

On that issue, I will leave it at that. I also wanted to move on to what the minister had promised back on May, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the May 15, 1990, press release or Manitoba News Release that was issued out by the government. I have a number of questions that I would like to get or seek for clarification. I am going to quote a few parts of it—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That has nothing to do with this.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, it has to do with Immigration and Settlement, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in terms of—

Mrs. Mitchelson: In what area?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Under Other Expenditures?

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister had made a commitment to establish a 10-minister multicultural affairs committee of cabinet in order to advocate and make sure that government programs reflect a new policy including Immigration and Settlement, for obvious reasons. I am wondering how often this cabinet committee has met since its announcement and who, in fact, sits on a committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this does not necessarily fall under Immigration and Settlement. This would fall under the Multicultural Secretariat because, in fact, we have a 10-member cabinet committee, and there is an Order-in-Council that was passed naming the ministers. I would ask the director of the Multicultural Secretariat when we come to that line, because in fact we have an interdepartmental committee for all of those who are sort of the shadow to all of the ministers who sit on the cabinet committee. That information I can get in detail on the numbers of meetings when we get into the Multicultural Secretariat. That is co-ordination of government activities regarding multiculturalism.

Mr. Lamoureux: Is the minister seeking any advice from her colleagues, in particular through this committee, on the percentages, or how this government is going to arrange a deal regarding immigration into the province? Is that not part of the debate?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I think the honourable minister has already stated that we will deal with those questions under the Multicultural Secretariat. Is the honourable member finished with the business under Other Expenditures?

Mr. Lamoureux: No. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, to be very specific, has the minister had any discussions whatsoever regarding Immigration and Settlement within that committee that was established by her government?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have been responsible as the Minister for

Immigration and Settlement now since the beginning of this fiscal year, which would be the beginning of April. We have been into Estimates now for at least two weeks with the critics and, in fact, the budget came over to our department with the new fiscal year and the staffing. In fact, we as a committee have not discussed the immigration agreement with Canada, mainly because there is a process in place whereby officials are meeting. I am being briefed by officials on the immigration agreement, and that process will be in place. When I have something a little more concrete to take to my colleagues, based on us getting a little closer to the agreement, yes, that will be discussed.

Mr. Lamoureux: Okay, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will wait for those questions until we get to that particular line. She could maybe expand on it. In the line—or another commitment that the government had made was in regard to the store-front Outreach Office, and that was an announcement that we were glad to hear about. I would ask the minister where is the store located, and when is the door going to open?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I would like to remind the honourable member that will be dealt under Multicultural Secretariat as well. That is where it is dealt under.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, not wanting to reflect on the Chair, I will refrain from asking my questions until we get into the Multicultural Secretariat.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I want to go back to program recognition. Sorry—what am I saying? Well, it is related to program recognition; it is the Working Group on Credentials. My apologies to the staff—moving around. It keeps you awake.

This whole area is, as you have said, a great concern to a lot of the communities, and I think it holds a lot of the most maddening examples of systemic discrimination that exists. When I was doing employment counselling, I over and over and over again ran into professionals who came to this country and were so frustrated in their attempts to be hired. I am please to see that there is some movement in this area.

* (1550)

I want to pursue specifically the area where, in my estimation, there needs to be the greatest amount of development. I understand that you have the four surveys that went out, and I have them in front of

me. I would like to begin by asking—this is a huge area, and you are dealing with a lot of different organizations. It is mind boggling when you think of the number of training institutions world wide that we could be having people come to this country from, and the whole idea of trying to develop a system of assessing all of those training programs and the credentials that could be coming to Canada is huge.

I wonder if that is not walking into a bureaucratic nightmare and if there are not some other methods that we could pursue to deal with that. I am afraid that, in this whole area, we could be creating more hoops that people have to jump through, and quite frankly, it seems like there are enough hoops and barriers. I would like to ask the minister if there is a focus that is being taken with this working group and what that focus is?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess the most successful and effective system would be a system that would be nationally driven with the interprovincial co-operation. As yet, we are not at that point, and I do not believe that there has even been a meeting of ministers interprovincially across the country, with the federal government, in this respect. My understanding is that we are working or coming close to trying to getting a meeting like that set up whereby the ministers across the country, with the federal government, can meet and discuss this issue. As a matter of fact, that will be something I will be pursuing.

Ms. Cerilli: I am particularly interested in the minister explaining the approach that is being used with the professional organizations and trades organizations.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess the questionnaires were developed because the professional side has their side to tell, the new immigrant who has come to Canada has their side to tell, and it was important that the questionnaires tried to address both of those issues.

We are apparently, I am told, making some progress in the areas of medicine, law, in engineering and in some of the trades.

Ms. Cerilli: They have targeted a number of professional organizations.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that all professions are being contacted, but there are areas where the community has identified there are real major concerns, where we have immigrants presently who have qualifications

that they have obtained or achieved outside of Canada, where they are having difficulty entering the work force in that same profession. Those are the areas that are the high-target priorities, and they were: Medicine was right up there on the list, dentistry, engineering, architecture, law and then the trades.

Ms. CerlIII: What changes in these professional organizations does the minister and the staff envision?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am going to have to wait for the report from the working group. I mean, we appointed a working group for a purpose, to come forward with the information that they had gathered based on the community input that they have asked for, and we will have to wait for that report to see what the recommendations show.

Ms. CerlIII: One of the problems people run into is that these professional organizations are not accountable to anyone but themselves. They set their own rules and oftentimes have very limiting procedures. I am wondering if those aspects are going to be dealt with?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that most of the regulations were put in place at a time that it sort of did not reflect the changing demographics as a result of new waves of immigration. The working group, at this time, is reviewing those regulations in the context of our multicultural policy that has been announced to see if we cannot look at them reflecting more accurately the changing demographics.

Ms. CerlIII: I am not sure I understand what the minister means by that statement. Can she clarify what she means by that statement?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, we are reviewing all of the legislation, through the working group that is in place presently, to see whether it does reflect the changing demographics. I think that the best solution will be a solution that is worked at co-operatively where both sides agree that we are working in the right direction.

Ms. CerlIII: Is there any consideration being given to the accountability issue with organizations? We hear a lot of talk that certain professions have an awful lot of power in our society, and they are basically self-contained. This is an opportunity to try and deal with that, not only for the benefit of newcomers to Canada but I think for the benefit of us all. Is that issue going to be dealt with?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again I have to indicate that we have put in place the working group. They will be coming forward with their assessment and, at that point in time, we will have to deal with those issues as a result of their recommendations.

Ms. CerlIII: Our party, I think—we have put forward a resolution which would make professional organizations accountable to the public. There would not only be—there would be public participation. There would be members of the professional organizations as well as members of the public. There would be some accountability to government, and there would be some legislation that would have requirements that would I think deal with the concerns of newcomers, as well as other concerns that people have when they are dealing with professional organizations. Are those kinds of things being considered?

* (1600)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will say again that we are waiting for the recommendations that come from the working group. I have indicated and stated quite clearly that it is so very important that when we talk about a multicultural policy which talks about partnership, I think there has to be partnership and co-operative working, not confrontation but co-operation. We have to ensure that we are working together with those professions which we want to deal with the change in demographics and try to work together profession by profession. I think that co-operation is the way to make this kind of thing happen. That is partnership, and that is what multiculturalism is.

Ms. CerlIII: Partnership, I think too, would be to have community people represented on professional organizations. I hope that those kind of things are going to be considered, also that there would be some consideration given to legislation. Is the minister aware of legislation that currently exists that is going to provide some guidelines for the professional organizations?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have indicated already, I am going to await the report of the working group and not prejudge the work they have been doing. When that comes forward, I do not know what the options might be. We will take a look at all of the options and implement a process whereby we can improve the situation and try to help those who have credentials from other countries access employment opportunities in the same areas

here. We will await that report and at that point in time determine what path, what direction we will take.

Ms. CerlIII: I will deal with the present then. Currently, what recourse or resources are available from this government when a newcomer has a problem with a professional association?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Presently it is my understanding that they have three areas that they can go. They can go to Education and Training, they can go to the Department of Labour or they can go to the Program Recognition course through Immigration and Settlement. There are currently three different avenues within government. I guess what we are trying to do is co-ordinate through this process services for those who are having difficulty receiving accreditation or receiving recognition for their credentials.

Ms. CerlIII: Who right now is responsible for assisting immigrants and doing some research on their credentials?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Currently, I guess the Professional Certification Branch of the Department of Education does some work. They might go to the director of apprenticeship and training in the Department of Labour or they would go to the branch, Immigration and Settlement that, has the Program Recognition component.

Ms. CerlIII: How are immigrants finding out about where to go?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Through settlement pamphlets, brochures and referral services.

Ms. CerlIII: I would like to go to another issue.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Shall item (2) Other Expenditures—

Ms. CerlIII: The other issue that I would like to raise—I think it also falls under the branch—I will just clarify to make sure that it is this section, anyway it has to do with health and immigrant access.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Could we take just a short recess?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Recess, five minutes.

* * *

The committee took recess at 4:06 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:15 p.m.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are going to enter into some questioning in regard to the Outreach office, and I believe—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That is under the Multicultural Secretariat.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Do you have any more questions on the Citizenship programs? Immigration and Settlement Branch, that is where we are on right now.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We will go with the honourable member for Radisson. She had a line of questioning she was following.

Ms. CerlIII: I understand that health is one of the areas listed in terms of working with the Immigrant Access centre. I am wondering how that is done. What health services are used?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am informed that, in the health area through Access, in fact they will assist people in accessing doctors who are culturally sensitive. If indeed the need arises, we will escort those people to doctor's appointments and that kind of thing. They also do network, I suppose, and link with mental health through the fairly recently appointed cross-cultural mental health specialists within the Department of Health. I work closely with that office. They work in conjunction with seniors programming, day cares, Legal Aid, Vocational Rehabilitation, Child and Family Services, Income Security and Housing, as well as Health.

Ms. CerlIII: I am particularly concerned about the health area right now. I am wondering what agencies if there are other agencies that are used?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that Planned Parenthood is the one agency that is dealt with.

Ms. CerlIII: The Planned Parenthood program, Immigrant-Refugee Health Program, which was recently cut back, was a serious blow to the immigrant community. Was the Immigrant Access centre involved in the evaluation of that program prior to the cuts?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, my understanding is that they do not have a role in evaluation. They are a direct service area of government.

Ms. CerlIII: I am wondering if the minister was consulted before that program was cut. Who in the ethnocultural community or immigrant service community was consulted before that cut was made?

* (1620)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think those are questions that would have to be asked directly to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) within his departmental Estimates because it was a program within his department and his jurisdiction. Any direct detail on that program would have to be asked of him.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister is responsible for Immigration and Settlement Services and Multiculturalism. I would think it is her responsibility to speak up for programs that would meet the needs of those communities. When discussions for funding, budgetary cuts were being considered, was she not involved?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in the decision-making processes, it is the minister who has direct responsibility for the program who deals with that. In fact, I will indicate that, when we met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, both the Minister of Health and I were there as cabinet. We brought up the issues specifically of Planned Parenthood and asked whether they felt that it was a program that we should be reconsidering as far as funding goes.

The answer from the Manitoba Intercultural Council was that they had not evaluated the program enough to know whether, in fact, it was valuable, but they would be prepared to work with us to determine what kinds of things were priorities for the community and what kinds of things we could maybe reallocate dollars to if, in fact, there was a need and a desire to ensure that Planned Parenthood continued with funding that they had received before.

I know that the Minister of Health has met with Planned Parenthood and that a final decision has not been forthcoming at this point, but he is quite aware and quite cognizant and if, in fact, that is a community priority, we are going to have to see whether there is money that can be reallocated from other areas into that area.

Ms. Cerilli: I think one thing that point raises is that perhaps MIC needs more staff if they are being expected to do that kind of research, but I would hope that members of the board at MIC would be speaking up for that program. I am aware that it is important to the community.

I am wondering if the minister has, since the budget came down and it became apparent that this

was a serious cut, if she has had any discussions with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and what is the current status of funding for that program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess I want to comment first on the comments that were just made. If, in fact, the opposition critics recognized it was a valuable program—I question whether the Manitoba Intercultural Council needs more staff, or whether those that are elected from the communities to serve on the Manitoba Intercultural Council obviously are elected by their community because they represent their community, and they have a close pulse on what is happening within their community. If there is a sense within the community that there is a very valuable program by government, the community obviously would be in contact with their representative at the Manitoba Intercultural Council to express that opinion, and that could be passed on to government.

There is a role for those that are elected by their community to have a pulse and a sense on what is available to their community and if, in fact, they feel there is a program in jeopardy, they would bring that forward at the Manitoba Intercultural Council and then subsequently, of course, to government.

It is not a staff person necessarily, or more staff. It is those that are elected to represent their community. I know some of them do a very good job at representing their community, in getting back into the community and consulting with them. They have been given the confidence by their community to bring the community's concerns forward.

I have indicated clearly that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) at this point is evaluating the need for funding through Planned Parenthood, and when a decision is made on that, it will be announced. I have been in contact with him, and I am aware of the concerns that have been brought forward. We are working in a co-operative fashion, but ultimately, when the decision is made, that will be his announcement.

Ms. Cerilli: Why was the program not approved in the budget process?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that detailed question would have to be asked of the Minister of Health in his Estimates.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$111,400—shall the item pass?

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am interested in asking some general questions of the minister on the state of race relations in Manitoba. -(interjection)- Well, how close to the line are we?

An Honourable Member: If we cannot talk about race relations in Immigration and Settlement, where can we talk about it?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable members that we are dealing with line 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration and Settlement Services, but we are under item (2) Other Expenditures which, if you refer to your book, it is on page 63. The lines are there that we are dealing with.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, might I recommend that under the Multicultural Secretariat, we could discuss that. We have been dealing with one line in the Estimates in the Citizenship Branch which deals with Immigration and Settlement, new Canadians coming to Canada and our role in providing programming to help them settle. We can discuss broadly the issue of race relations under the Multicultural Secretariat.

Ms. CerIII: Maybe just to finish off questions regarding the Planned Parenthood immigrant health program, is the minister aware if the program has laid off staff?

Mrs. Mitchelson: My understanding from my staff within the department is that they have not laid off staff yet.

Ms. CerIII: I guess I would just like to say that I would hope the minister would continue to speak up in cabinet for programs such as this. I think it is the only one in Manitoba that is providing that kind of community-based translation services and support. I understand they have had over 1,000 sessions with health care professionals, and it is an essential service.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Line (2) Other Expenditures \$111,400—pass; (3) Grant Assistance \$366,800—pass.

Item 4.(b) Business Immigration \$50,000.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what is the role of \$50,000 in Business Immigration for the government of Manitoba? What is the purpose of the funds?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Initially that line in the budget will be to work on an immigration agreement, monies to promote and work aggressively on an immigration

agreement with the federal government, and secondly then, to work with the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism to get a sense of those independent immigrants who are coming to the province and to help to determine what skills are needed and what immigrants can come to Manitoba to fill those vacant jobs where we do not have people with trained skills.

Mr. Carr: What is the status of the federal-provincial agreement on immigration? Who is the lead minister responsible for negotiating the agreement? Can the minister give us a report on negotiations to date?

* (1630)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we discussed this just a little while ago. In fact, I am the lead minister on negotiation of the agreement. It is a new responsibility for me. I have indicated we all know that Quebec has an agreement signed with the federal government. Other provinces are actively pursuing, some more aggressively than others.

I know some provinces have been working for up to three years and still do not have a negotiated agreement with the federal government. We would hope it certainly would not take that long, but I have no guarantee until we get into the process. I think it is important that we have a meeting with our federal counterparts. I know, at the officials' level, they have been meeting and have been discussing, but to date there has not been a ministerial meeting. I guess, I might indicate that I have been the minister responsible, have been given this responsibility in the last short period of time and plan to pursue it aggressively.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairman, presumably the officials have not been meeting without some sense of direction from the minister. What is the government's position that it takes to the table as it begins this negotiation? We all know what the agreement with Quebec states, the so-called Cullen-Couture formula, that there would be 5 percent more immigrants to the province of Quebec than its share of the Canadian population. There was an attempt to constitutionalize immigration agreements during the Meech Lake process, but that failed.

The minister says that officials are meeting to discuss the issue, but presumably the minister has given her negotiator some framework, some guidelines, some sense of policy direction from the

government. Could she share those with the committee, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I have already indicated, we feel that we in Manitoba are not getting our fair share of new immigrants to the province of Manitoba. We get some 3 percent when the population of Manitoba is 4 percent of the national population, and we believe that we need greater numbers of immigrants. That is one of the priorities in negotiation, that we in fact get our share which would be around 4 percent of the new immigrants who come to our country.

We are looking right now at the composition. I have indicated we want to see greater control over those in the independent class to come to Manitoba, where we have shortages of trained labor here in the province of Manitoba to fill jobs so that they in fact do not come here and end up on unemployment insurance because there is no job. If in fact we can match skills in that independent class to jobs that are available here, obviously it is going to benefit those that come and our province of Manitoba. Those are areas that have been looked at. We also want to negotiate federal dollars for programs to adapt and settle those new Canadians who do arrive here.

Mr. Carr: The government's position is that it wants at least Manitoba's proportion of the Canadian population translated into our share of immigrants who come into the country. Have I got that right? Now, is the government's position that we want more than our share of the population, which was the position that the government of Quebec has taken?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at this point in time, when we have traditionally year after year been under our proportional share, I think a move to our proportional share would be a very positive step in the right direction.

Mr. Carr: Just finally, is the Province of Manitoba currently or does it intend, and I understand some of these issues have been covered so I do not want to belabour it, to promote Manitoba among potential immigrants to Canada? Is there any sense that the province will take a proactive role in trying to encourage immigrants to Canada to settle in Manitoba? If so, what form is that encouragement taking?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that, back as far as last year, we had spoken to the federal government and indicated

that, yes, we would like to promote Manitoba as a place to come for immigrants when they are looking at options of where they might want to be, so it will be a process of consultation in that respect. I do know that, through the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, there is an office in Hong Kong where they do some promotion of Manitoba and encouragement of those to come here.

Mr. Carr: Does the minister have any association with the Maple Leaf Fund?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No.

Mr. Carr: The \$50,000 in the budget that relates to businessclass under the immigration program is not in any way related to the operations of the Maple Leaf fund, formally or informally.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. In fact, I have indicated that that will be dollars that will be spent in the negotiation of the agreement with the federal government on an immigration agreement.

Ms. Cerilli: What specifically is the \$50,000 being spent on right now?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at this point in time, we have not spent a penny of the \$50,000, but in fact it will be for policy development and negotiation with the federal government. There are some costs involved in that.

Ms. Cerilli: Will there be staff hired?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, there will just be dollars spent, whether it be for meetings with the federal government, for policy development, and there might be a research component to that.

Ms. Cerilli: Who are the staff in the department who are working on this?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It will be through the Immigration and Settlement Branch of the department.

Ms. Cerilli: Which staff, though?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The director and the staff through the deputy minister because it is a new branch, so the newly structured department will report directly to the deputy minister to the minister. It will be through that new Citizenship Branch that we will be negotiating the agreement.

Ms. Cerilli: The member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) raised the issue of the Maple Leaf Fund. Could the minister describe how that fund has been used in the past?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have absolutely no idea. I suppose it would be the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism that

would be the department that those questions would be asked in. I have no knowledge or no understanding.

Ms. CerlIII: Perhaps the minister could consult with her staff who might have some information with regard to that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is Industry, Trade and Tourism's responsibility, and it would be their staff who would provide that information to their minister.

Ms. CerlIII: I guess I am concerned about there not being co-operation between the department that is responsible for Immigration and Settlement Services and Industry and Trade, which as we have heard, is going to be marketing the province and seems to be recruiting immigrants.

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is my understanding that there is consultation going on between policy and management, between Immigration and Settlement and Industry, Trade and Tourism regarding negotiation of an immigration agreement.

Ms. CerlIII: Being a new member, I am not familiar with the Maple Leaf Fund, but I would expect that the minister who has been the minister responsible for multiculturalism would be more familiar with—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member that the Maple Leaf Fund comes under I, T and T. Any questions relating to it should be brought up at that time.

Ms. CerlIII: I have an article here from a magazine that deals with refugee issues. There is a concern expressed in the article that with the current agreement in Quebec, Quebec is going to have some kind of ability to influence immigration levels throughout the country. I am wondering how the minister is dealing with that in her negotiations with the federal government?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess when you look at it, if in fact they have an agreement that guarantees them more than their fair share of immigrants coming to Canada, it will have an impact on the rest of Canada.

Ms. CerlIII: I was trying to address this earlier. Just to clarify then, what is the government's policy in terms of that issue?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, our policy is that we want to negotiate forthwith an agreement with the federal government whereby we will receive our fair share of new immigrants to our province. I have indicated our fair share is around

4 percent. We have only been getting 3 percent over the last number of years, so that is our policy and that is what we want in an agreement.

* (1640)

Ms. CerlIII: Has the minister had any consultation with the Province of Quebec?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is my understanding that staff have spoken to many provinces on this issue including Quebec; but I, personally, as minister, have not had contact with my counterpart in Quebec.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I just have one or two questions on this and again it goes to committees or working groups of any sort. Does the government have any committees, in particular in this department, that seek business opportunities outside of Canada?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it all falls under the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and there is no responsibility within our department for that.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister feel that she has a role, or the department has a role, to play when it comes to this particular item?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think that if in fact we, and I as the lead minister, can negotiate an agreement with the Government of Canada whereby we have some control over the recruitment of immigrants who can fill the job shortages that we have available, there may be some role; but at this point in time, I do not see that role. I think our main priority is to get an agreement negotiated whereby we can get our fair share, not only of immigrants but our fair share of dollars from the federal government too for programmings for adaptation and settlement. Then, in fact, those are our first priorities.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item (b) Business Immigration \$50,000.

Ms. CerlIII: I have some questions related to another program. I am not sure where to ask them. It has to do with the certificate program for intercultural trainers.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is my understanding that it falls under the Department of Education, and those questions could be asked there.

Ms. CerlIII: Maybe I could just ask if there is involvement of the Immigrant Access centre or MIC

or any other organization in the development of that program?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, not in Immigrant Access Service, no.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 4.(b) Business Immigration, \$50,000—pass.

Item (c) Adult ESL Programs: (1) Salaries, \$301,000. Shall the item pass?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I doubt that.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Well, it was worth a try.

Ms. Cerilli: This is an area there have been a lot of questions about, there is a lot of confusion out there in the community, and to start off, I would like the minister to explain how the money flows, basically. We know there is money coming from the federal government. There is money coming from the provincial government, and I would like to get a clear picture of which programs the money is coming through and where it ends up.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is a really good question, and if we can just get our files pulled together here—you know, I inherited this and immediately it became a real issue in the city of Winnipeg with Winnipeg School Division No. 1. I will attempt to explain because it is a terribly complicated program to try to explain. We will pull together the information here and I will try to provide, to the best of my ability, the information that is being requested.

I will attempt to answer this question on adult ESL. The federal government is responsible for funding for implied linguistics through Julia Boone School. That is 100 percent a federal responsibility. There are many different ways that adult ESL are funded through the province so I am going to give you a list of them, and then I will tell you what our responsibility is as the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Okay now, there is federal-provincial cost sharing in Winnipeg School No. 1, at Red River Community College. So there is cost sharing by both the federal and the provincial government.

Then there is adult ESL programming in other school divisions throughout the province of Manitoba. These are fully funded by Manitoba, so there is no federal involvement in these. The other school divisions are Mystery Lake, Garden Valley, Western in Morden, Rhineland School Division in Altona, Seven Oaks School Division, Fort Garry, River East, and in the Whiteshell, Pinawa, and

Portage la Prairie and Steinbach. So those are completely provincially funded.

Then there is noninstitutional adult ESL. That is why it is so confusing to try to get a handle on it all. The noninstitutional is completely federally funded, and that is settlement language programs and workplace language training. There may, at one point in time, have been Core Area Initiative money in those programs but, basically, they are federally funded. Occasionally, through some of these noninstitutional programs—when I talk about federal funding, they are a federal responsibility, and there has been money from the Secretary of State into those programs, too.

The responsibility for adult ESL in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 has been transferred to the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship from the Department of Education.

Ms. Cerilli: So the Department of Education then still has responsibility for programs at the other school divisions and at Red River Community College?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They do Red River, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and we do the other school divisions, too. I am sorry. So included in that is Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and the other school divisions. Red River is a community college and there are specialized training programs, I think, through there. That is why it would have remained with the Department of Education and Training.

Ms. Cerilli: To clarify further then, what are the names of the programs that the money flows through? I am familiar with the CILT program, the SLP. Those are federal programs.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is no more CILT Agreement. There was a couple of years ago, and the federal government discontinued that through Secretary of State. I guess there are different ways, if I can understand it properly, that the federal government funds ESL training and that is the Applied Linguistics through Julia Boone School. There is noninstitutional through the SLP, settlement language program, and the workplace language training, that is, English in the Workplace. Those are noninstitutional. The institutional that they fund are through Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and Red River Community College.

* (1650)

Ms. CerlIII: Okay, I would like to get both the historical number of dollars that has gone into these various areas as well as the current.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot indicate to the opposition where the federal government has spent their money. I do know where the provincial government has spent their money, and I can provide that information; but when it comes to the federal government, I cannot give detailed information on that.

Ms. CerlIII: Is the minister or the government involved in negotiating those agreements?

Mrs. Mitchelson: If I could just ask for a repeat of the question. You are wanting to know what our responsibility as a provincial government is in—

Ms. CerlIII: Yes, in negotiating agreements with the federal government to ensure that the funding levels in those areas are maintained.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess one of the things that we would want to negotiate in an agreement with the federal government is a stable level of funding. Right now we have no control over where the federal government puts their money in or takes their money out. Two years ago they had the CILT Agreement through the Secretary of State, and they cancelled that and decided to put their money into ESL training through CEIC. In fact, they removed \$1.1 million out of the Province of Manitoba, and the \$900,000 that went into ESL training came from other training areas throughout the province.

So it was not new money that was put in; it was not even money that was replaced; but it was money that was taken from other areas to put into adult ESL. What the federal government right now is trying to do is to get out of institutional—they are not placing a high priority on institutional training. I guess we have placed a priority on Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and the institutional training there because it has been the program that has been able to deliver the best program, most cost-effective program for institutional training.

So I guess in the overall negotiations of an agreement we would be looking toward getting a firm commitment from the federal government on what kinds of stable funding for ESL programming, which we do not have at this point. They are free to take their money out and put it in wherever they want to reallocate, and it seems that they are moving away from institutional-type ESL, adult ESL training.

Ms. CerlIII: So currently does the Manitoba government put any money into agencies like the Applied Linguistics agency?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, we do not. There is no provincial money in there.

Ms. CerlIII: What is currently the cost-sharing agreement that is being used with the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 program? How much money is coming from the federal government for the Winnipeg School Division program and how much is coming from Culture?

Mrs. Mitchelson: \$645,000 from the federal government, and \$1.174 million from the provincial government.

Ms. CerlIII: How much money is the province currently putting into the other school divisions and into Red River?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Approximately \$51,000 total to the other school divisions. I guess if I could go back and indicate that if we still had the CILT Agreement that the federal government was involved in, our money that would be going into Winnipeg School Division No. 1 would be matched 50-50 by the federal government. You can see the difference in what we are providing, as opposed to what the federal government is providing.

Ms. CerlIII: What amounts of money are going into the programs at Red River, and what are the names of those programs?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, those questions will have to be asked of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). He has the responsibility for Red River and the training that is provided there.

Ms. CerlIII: This is why it is going to be difficult for us to get a real clear picture of what is happening in the province in terms of ESL. The school division is now, as I understand it, going to have to pick up the classes. In other words, as I understand it, there were 11 classes eliminated from Red River and there were 6 staff eliminated from the programs at Red River. That will account for about 160 students. What provisions are being made to ensure that those students are not on a waiting list at Winnipeg School Division?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the 160 people who are presently receiving adult ESL at Red River Community College will be finished at the end of the year, so it will not in fact be those 160 students. If some of them will require further training, and some may, they will either be absorbed into the

present or the newly structured system at Red River Community College or they will spill over into Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Some of them may have received enough training at the end of that period of time and others will have to continue.

Ms. Cerilli: I guess we are talking about not specifically those people but the seats or the space for 160 students that are being eliminated from the province. There are a number of different concerns related to that. I am asking the question: What is the minister doing to ensure that the waiting lists do not grow by that number of people? I understand the waiting lists are already quite long.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess we cannot predict the number of new immigrants who will be coming to Manitoba, and there has been an indication from the federal government that there will be a 40 percent decrease. So we have no way of determining yet what the new numbers for this year will be, and that was something that we discussed, I think, the first day of Estimates. As we have indicated, we have no control over that. The federal government makes that determination. We would like to see a new agreement in place whereby we would have more control over the number of immigrants who come to Manitoba.

The federal government has announced, or did announce, some \$30 million for ESL programming throughout the country. There was a commitment of some \$500,000 that would come to Manitoba. To date we have not seen a penny of that. We are trying to find out from the federal government where that money is and where in fact it is going to go in Manitoba to provide ESL programming. If they put that into the institutional component at Winnipeg School Division No. 1 we would have more than enough money to run a very effective program at Winnipeg School Division No. 1. So there still is that uncertainty about where that money is from the federal government and where they are going to put it.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: The hour being 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for private members' hour. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting at 8 p.m.

SUPPLY—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Education. We are on page 39, item 4. Program Development Support Services, (b) Curriculum Services: (1) Salaries.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Chairman, I have a number of questions that I want to ask the minister about his own statements, quite frankly, with respect to curriculum. The first one is the following quote: Our curriculum is somewhat behind when we compare it to others in Canada and the world, Mr. Derkach said. We need to spend some energy and revise it quickly to bring it up to par.

Would he like to identify specifically for us the areas of the curriculum that he thinks that we are behind in and how he proposes to bring us up to par with a five staff reduction in this particular branch?

* (1430)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Chairperson, when one looks at our curriculum and takes a very close look at the revision of entire curricula, whether it is at the high school level or at the intermediate or the elementary level, one can identify areas where there is need to revise the curriculum. As a matter of fact, it was for that very reason that we did a review of high school curriculum, and we came forth after some year and one-half of consultation with the public with regard to changes that needed to be made in the entire high school area. Within that, we stipulated some of the changes that were going to be made over the next four-year period of time to bring us up to par, if you like, or perhaps, in some cases, even ahead of other jurisdictions.

Madam Chair, when you examine, for example, such programs as the Skills for Independent Living that is going to be introduced at the Grade 9 or Senior I level, you begin to understand where it is that we have been lacking in terms of the curriculum that is presently before the Grade 9 students. It is for that reason that we will be embarking on a new program for the Grade 9 students. That is simply one example.

Madam Chair, I have heard the Leader of the third party from time to time call for mandatory curriculum in various areas such as the family life area and also the alcohol and drug abuse area. There are

constantly new revisions that need to be made. If we are going to be competitive with students not only across this country, but indeed globally, we are going to have to ensure that appropriate curricula is written to reflect the changing times, the changing society. That is exactly what we are doing in the high school area, and we have to go beyond that.

When we look at Early and Middle Years, for example, we have called for a review of Early and Middle Years education which is all laid out in the Strategic Plan. We do that because we want to stay abreast of the new technologies. We want to make sure that our students are capable of being competitive in a global economy and a global society. For that reason, we have to make sure that curricula is written and rewritten constantly.

Madam Chairperson, additionally I might speak to such programs as making sure that we have more women enter the field of science. Our science curriculum has not always been open; or it has been open, but it has not always been encouraging many women, for example, to enter that area. Indeed, in the changes in society today, there has to be a change in focus in that area as well.

So we can go through many areas and find where there need to be changes, where changes are already beginning, have begun, and we will need to continue to do that as we move along.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, when we talk about curriculum, we usually talk about course content. I would like to know from the minister, since he is talking about course content, what specific areas of course content does he believe we are behind the eight ball or, in fact, denying our students of an adequate level? It is his vocabulary. It says, we are behind Canada and the world.

I would like to know in what specific curriculum? Are we behind them in math? Are we behind them in language arts? Are we behind them in social studies? In what specific areas is he making reference, because the only one he mentioned in his comments were Skills for Independent Living?

With the greatest respect, that is not a curriculum that is well developed in any other province, so it is hard to believe that we are behind other provinces, let alone the rest of the world, in Skills for Independent Living. So let us stick to the actual curricula materials taught in the schools. How does he justify his statement that we are behind Canada, and we are in fact behind the world? Where?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I do not think she will find the comment in that article which she is referring to, and I believe it is perhaps the article that I spoke of at a gathering in Gimli. I would have to indicate that I do not think she will find in there where I was zeroing in on particular courses in particular grade levels. Indeed, when we talk about curriculum we talk about the broad spectrum of curriculum and I think I have just gone through about five, or six, or eight examples for the third party member with regard to where changes need to be made.

Indeed, I have to tell her that Skills for Independent Living is a new course, but that new course will have within it many aspects which are not going to be specifically new, but indeed whether it is aspects such as entrepreneurship and the like, those kinds of concepts will be integrated into a curriculum where there are many schools offering that in other jurisdictions, but I would also indicate that because of the need of changes in our societies we are constantly renewing our curriculum.

For example, new curriculum materials from the Curriculum Services Branch now are the K to 9 Science curriculum guides. We have the new programs that are now available in Health and Science Dimensions, Grade 7, Health Science Dimensions, Grade 8, which will be available in January of 1992, and Health Science Dimensions, Grade 9, which will be available in September of 1992. In the area of social studies, language arts in the senior years, Grades 9 to 12 we will be redoing that curriculum, and you do not redo curriculums just for the purpose of redoing it. You redo curriculum because either there is a need to redo it because there is new information present, perhaps the methodology that is within the old curriculum is outdated, and indeed in some instances it is.

If you will take a moment and listen to what some of our educators are telling us themselves, and if you listen to some of the business community and the needs that they are expressing that have to be addressed in our kindergarten through Grade 12 system, you will find that indeed it is time for us to change in many ways.

Another example, Madam Chairperson, is the whole area of co-operative education, where I would say if we are not at the leading edge, when we talk about co-operative education, then a great deal has to be done in that specific curriculum to ensure that there is a better link between the business

community and between the school so that there is a better understanding between the two, and so that we can enter into meaningful programs for students that will lead to a proper co-operative education experience and will allow students a greater scope, if you like, as to what goes on in the business world and conversely the education system then gets to link up with the education system.

So, Madam Chairperson, we could go on for a long time, whether it is in the core subject areas, whether it is in some of the optional areas, whether it is in guidance counselling, in many of these areas there is a need to change the way we are doing things.

One of the big areas, I could also add, is the whole area of vocational education. In this area we find that there is very little articulation between what happens in our high school system and what happens at the community college level. There is an area which needs a lot of work done in it to ensure that students who are in a vocational arts program in the high school system can easily progress to a post-secondary system and continue along their path of education.

Another area which requires more co-operation, more collaboration, more revamping, is the area between the universities and our community colleges to ensure that students do not necessarily have to take their first year perhaps of university education in a university setting. We have already moved in the area of distance education in university but indeed a lot more has to happen in that regard as well.

Madam Chairperson, the comments that were made were not a criticism of any individual, group of individuals. It is a reality that we have to face up to and ensure that our education system reflects society today, what is going to be in the future and addresses the needs of students today and for tomorrow as well.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, the minister says he was not addressing any particular curriculum, but he said in this same speech Manitoba school curriculums have to be rewritten to bring subjects, including science, math, physics and language courses, up to world standards. Now, if he is going to make those statements at public forums, then I want to know from the minister specifically what he thinks is wrong with our science, math, physics and language courses that we have

at the present time that makes them below world standards, and what he is going to do about it.

* (1440)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, once again the Leader of third party chooses to twist what is in the article and what I said into something that is not.

Madam Chairperson, let me tell you that in the area of science I have already addressed that. I have indicated to her very firmly that we do not have enough women entering the science area, and the question is, why? Indeed, we have to ensure that we encourage more women to enter the science curriculum, the science area. We have to motivate them to ensure that the science curriculum is relevant to them as well, so that indeed we have more women in that area. It is the same for the area of physics, the same for the area of math.

Madam Chairperson, I would have to say that if you talk to some of the critics of our education system, they will tell you, for example, that we do not challenge some of our brightest minds enough in the areas of math, science and physics. As a matter of fact, I would have to illustrate by example what perhaps we mean.

I had a group of students from the Soviet Union visit with a school in Transcona-Springfield, and when I visited with their principal, I asked her how our education system compares to that within the Soviet Union. She said that in the language arts area we are about equal. Our students and their students can compete quite at the same level, quite favourably. Once we got into the areas of science, mathematics and physics, she told me herself, without any criticism on our system, but said that her Grade 10 students were able to handle the subject matter that was being taught at the Grade 12 level in this province.

So, Madam Chairperson, those are the kinds of issues that we must address. We cannot keep our eyes shielded from the realities of the world. Indeed, in those areas where we must challenge our students more, we have to do that, but at the same time we have to ensure that our curriculum is relevant to those students who cannot achieve those levels. The curriculum at all levels must be challenging to the students who are within that grade level.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, will the minister now get specific and tell me what exact rewritings are now going on in science, mathematics

and physics, so that we have upgraded standards in science, mathematics and physics that will bring us up to the world level. When will we have those curriculums in place, and how is he doing that when, by his own admission, it costs \$150,000 a course and he has just laid off five people from his staff?

Mr. Derkach: First of all, if we go into the area of science, I have already told the Leader of the third party that the key to science curriculum guides have been rewritten, and they are going out to schools right now. They will be in the hands of the educators at the end of this month, and feedback on those is expected between 1991 and '93. In that time, a final document will be prepared.

The Health Science Dimensions 7 is now available at the Grade 7 level; the Health Science Dimensions Grade 8 will be available in January of 1992, which is being worked on now; Health Science Dimensions Grade 9 will be available in September of 1992 as well.

Additionally, in the social studies area, a new Grade 8 text, *People Through the Ages*, is under development. A textbook and teachers' guides will be available in September of 1992. Teachers' guides to the Grade 12, *World Issues*, is now available from the Textbook Bureau.

We can go through the whole area. For example, *Introduction to Calculus 305*, a curriculum support document will be available or is available now to the schools throughout the province. *Computer Applications and Technology 105*, we will have a curriculum guide to the schools by September of 1991. So there are those areas which are under development right now.

Additionally, *Mathematics 300 to 301*, as addressed in the document *Answering the Challenge*, is scheduled for June of 1991. The information is out to the schools now and we are expecting the feedback from schools—pardon me, that is the examination. We have written the first exam in January. The second one will be in June. The results of that will be back to the schools by the end of June, and certainly from that we will be learning what types of needs there are, what types of in-servicing has to go on in that area, where there are deficiencies, how we can improve those deficiencies and, indeed, how the curriculum needs to be changed to address those needs.

So, Madam Chairperson, the department has undertaken a fairly aggressive agenda with regard

to the laying off of consultants within the department. In this area, I would have to say that the department is refocusing its method of addressing the needs in school divisions. More of the needs will be addressed on a regional basis; more will be addressed on a project basis, if you like; and we will be conducting our affairs more like the bureau is doing, where we have consultants who are leaders in the field and who can provide the leadership on a regional basis. The in-servicing on a school basis will be done by professionals from within the field through secondment and through project work in that manner.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, would the minister like to explain the statement:

Although Math 300 students did very well, many 301 classes with a broader range of students fell short of the mark. There were pockets where an entire classroom did poorly in an exam. We found in some cases the curriculum was not being taught. Perhaps in the last 10 years we have become lackadaisical in following the curriculum.

Can the minister explain how widespread this lack of curriculum teaching is in the province of Manitoba, judging by his statements? Can he also indicate whether it was a lack of curriculum being taught or the lack of the ability of young people in the class to grasp the curriculum, and how has he come to that conclusion?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, there are many examples out in the field where teachers will tell you directly that they have not looked at a curriculum guide for a long time. As a matter of fact, at an in-service in the southwest area of this province a teacher indicated quite clearly that he did not necessarily follow the Manitoba curriculum in the 301 Mathematics.

I can give her a personal example where I spoke with a teacher who indicated to me he was never encouraged to really follow the curriculum, and he actually had not looked at his curriculum guide for seven or eight years that he had been teaching in a program. Those kinds of examples throughout the province would indicate that there is a need for us to perhaps refocus some attention on the importance of curriculum guides and if they are important then they should be followed. If on the other hand, we are not going to place any emphasis on curriculum guides then I have to ask the question, why are we writing them and spending many, many

hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to ensure that they are in the school system.

Some of the things that need to be addressed is to find out how closely schools in general are following curriculum guides, and because we do not have any way of assessing it at this time, we have addressed that issue through the initiative in Answering the Challenge, the High School Review. It is our hope that by addressing it we will assist more teachers to follow the curriculum guides more closely and indeed in that way we will be able to achieve a more uniform or a more standard approach to the whole area of educational standards in the province.

Madam Chairperson, I would also indicate that overall the results of the mathematics exam that was written in January were very positive in both the 00 and the 01 level. The teachers' responses were positive. I can indicate that of the few student responses I received, most of them were very favourable in terms of what they had to say about the exam and about the experience of writing it. That does not say that we have overcome every problem that there is in terms of administering and writing the exams. The date, for example, was a problem. We are looking now whether we can change it in a way which will become better for students, better for teachers and yet allow us time to get that exam back in time. The experience we are going to go through in June in writing the exam will also give us that indication of whether or not we can perhaps move that date forward a bit and get the exam back in time.

* (1450)

Madam Chairperson, the exam counted for 30 percent or zero percent. More than 50 percent of the students who wrote the exam counted it for 30 percent of their mark of their final grade. So that indicated that a fairly large number of schools and school divisions made sure that the exam was a worthwhile experience. The results from those who wrote and counted the exam towards the final grade were very positive, I would have to say at this time. We are looking forward to that kind of a response in June.

As I said, nothing is without problems and, indeed, if there are little problems that arise, we will deal with them as we move along.

Mrs. Carstairs: The minister indicated that he had spoken with teachers who had, quote, not looked at

a curriculum guide or were never encouraged to follow the curriculum guide.

Can the minister explain what attitude his department has taken to that? Quite frankly, if teachers are not following the curriculum guide, perhaps the curriculum guides are of little or no value to the teachers. What evaluation is going on within his own curriculum branch to ascertain whether curriculum guides have value? If they have been determined to have value, what communication is now going on between the Minister of Education and school divisions to ensure that curriculum guides are indeed followed?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I guess there are two things that come to mind here. One—just a little experience that happened after writing the exam on January 6. After the exam was written, there was an increased call on curriculum guides from the department, which meant that teachers were starting to focus their attention on what was in the curriculum guides. It does not mean that the curriculum guides are wrong.

What I think it means is that perhaps teachers, through developing their style of teaching, have gone away from what is demanded of them in the curriculum guides. Having been a teacher myself, I know how quickly that can happen. The more you stay in the teaching field, the more you begin to develop your own style of teaching and you begin to use your own materials. You do not often check back to what the curriculum guides really mean.

For that reason, in the initiatives that were announced in Answering the Challenge, the whole concept of monitoring what happens in the school level and hiring individuals who will go across the province and actually go into the schools and check to see whether or not curriculums are being followed and then assist teachers within those areas on how they can better make use of their curriculums, I think, is a positive move and will give us a better standard, if you like, in terms of teachers throughout the province following the curriculum and not being so rigid that teachers cannot, perhaps, teach beyond the curriculum. Indeed, it is going to help us to ensure that there is not anybody out there who is teaching something so different that it indeed does not make any comparison with what is in the curriculum guide.

Mrs. Carstairs: Quite frankly, my recent examination of some social studies curriculum guides, they were little more than chapter headings,

and they were of little use, of little value to the actual instruction of history at the 300 level in terms of the philosophical orientation, the broad range of skill levels that one wanted to acquire.

My question is the same. What kind of evaluation is going on in his branch with respect to the effectiveness of the curriculum guide? What kind of interchange is going on with teachers to say, do you find this document useful? What kinds of changes would you like to see in it? What kinds of things would you like in the curriculum guide which would enhance the methods that you are using in your teaching?

My experience has not been that teachers ignore the curriculum guide unless they find the curriculum guides of no value.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the curriculum guides are set not by one individual in the department. They are done through an elaborate process whereby we develop the courses and the curriculum guidelines with those particular courses through extensive consultation with a professional field.

I would have to say, it is not a matter of a teacher wanting, because he or she feels that the curriculum guide for his purposes is not meaningful, so therefore he or she will stray and teach something different. That is not the intent of this at all. Teachers must adhere to the curriculum guides as they are set.

I take some objection when the member, who is a professional teacher herself, would indicate that the curriculum guides that have been set by not just by one individual in the department but indeed through a process are absolutely useless, because they are not useless. I have been through the curriculum guides. I taught under them, and I would have to say that they do provide a guide to what is to be taught within the curriculum.

Madam Chairperson, it does not provide a day-to-day lesson plan for the teacher. It provides a general guide, a general direction in terms of how the curriculum can be best administered and taught.

There is constant consultation with the field through in-services, through contact with teachers, through our regional offices, through our consultant staff within the department with the field. It goes on on a continuous basis, on a daily basis. There are numerous in-services planned throughout the province to ensure that teachers understand the

changes in curriculum, that teachers understand the importance of curricula, that teachers understand and can have input into what is happening in terms of developing new curriculum as well.

There is a process in place. The department staff are constantly in touch with the field, with teachers. We provide in-services in all of the curriculum areas, whether it is science or social studies or math. There are curriculum or in-services delivered each year in all curriculum areas.

For that matter, we are constantly in touch with the field, but it does not mean that we go into the classrooms and observe whether or not curriculum is being implemented. That is why, through Answering the Challenge, we have addressed that very key area, so that it will give us a better understanding of where there is a lack, where there is a need to adhere to curriculum and how we can best address it.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is the minister going to make public the results of the Math 301 and the Math 300 examinations that were undertaken in January, in that some school divisions are already quite freely distributing the results of those examinations?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, when we entered into the math exam this year, we said that we would get back to the school divisions and give them some indication of how students performed in a general sense, that we would give them analysis of the questions, of the paper itself, and that we would give them a general overview as to the exam itself. That has already been done. I went out to school divisions quite some time ago, and, indeed, principals should all have that in their hands now.

In terms of publishing it in the newspapers or making it a public document, that was not done in this particular year because the program was on pilot. There was a general statement made about the success of the exam and how many students wrote the exam and how many counted it for 30 percent and so forth, but we did not do an analysis on a school-by-school basis and give each school a comparison of how other schools did in relation to that school.

Mrs. Carstairs: That may be true, but the information is gradually getting out there. I think that if, in fact, that kind of information is going to be disseminated, it would be appropriate that the correct information was put out. For example, in The Interlake Spectator of February 27th, in Gimli,

which has a semester system, 21 students wrote the 301 test with the highest mark being 24 out of 30, which is 80 percent; 18 wrote the 300 test with 27.2 or 90.6 out of 30 being the high mark. Five students in 301 and six in 300 did not pass. Now, if that kind of information is being given out piecemeal school board by school board, would it not be wiser to put the general information out so that we have some sense of what the results were province-wide?

* (1500)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated in my last response, it was a pilot year for the exam, and, being a pilot year, our responsibility was to allow each school division to have the correct information as we had gained from that school division.

If that particular school division wanted to publish the results in a newspaper of how the students within that division did, that was fine. I mean that is something that is really in the hands of the administrators of that school and the school board and indeed has nothing to do with what the department does.

We gave our word that this is the way we would approach it this year, and we do not have any intentions of giving any other information out in a more broad sense than we have already.

Madam Chairperson, in another year school divisions will have the opportunity to compare their results with the average of the province and in many other ways, but certainly it was not something that we wanted to do for this year, because not all schools counted that math exam as 30 percent of their students' final grades.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, not all of them counted, but all the students took it. Is that information going to be sent to the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and The Manitoba Teachers' Society as to what the province-wide results are, so that any comments they may have as a group can then be made to the minister?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the general results were sent to The Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees along with the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. Once again we follow the same procedures and the same rules that we followed for school divisions, and that was that on a school-by-school basis, on a specific basis we did

not release that kind of information either to the organizations or to the school divisions.

Mrs. Carstairs: You say that there was general information. Were they told for example the number of students who wrote, how many received marks say from 80 to 100, how many from 70 to 80 or 70 to 79, how many failed? Was that kind of specificity provided?

An Honourable Member: What is that word?

Mrs. Carstairs: Specificity, means specifics—as an adjective.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, there were several things that were reported to the organizations. Those were the mean mark, the median mark, the number of students who wrote the exam and the number of students who counted the exam as 30 percent or more. That is the general kind of information that was sent to the organizations and to the school divisions.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I would like to move into Strategy 17 as part of Answering the Challenge. I know that the minister has received a number of letters from parents whose children are in French immersion classes concerned about the decrease in the content of English that these students will now receive at the senior high school level. Can the minister tell us today if the department is considering making any change as to the number of hours which will be compulsory, mandatory, for all students in French immersion?

Mr. Derkach: Strategy 17 is one that has caused us a little concern in that when the consultation went out, the original consultation paper, there was quite a strong sentiment from those who were sending their students to French immersion that indeed students were spending more than their fair share of time in language arts in the English area—in English language. So based on that we changed the strategy, if you like, to make it more equal to what the English-speaking students would get in language arts.

Since that time there have been a large number of letters raising concern about Strategy 17. For that reason we have indicated that we will put it on hold until September 1992. During that period of time we will be consulting broadly with the school divisions who have French immersion programs to ensure that they are allowed to have some meaningful input into the changes that will result.

I will be making an announcement later in the year, after we have had a reasonable amount of time to consult and to meet with those who are going to be affected by Strategy 17.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): I appreciate the minister's comments with respect to Strategy 17, and I have a bit of a concern, which is a general concern, and I am just raising it with the minister at this time because it does relate to Strategy 17. That is, as I understand it, the minister did communicate with interested parties, superintendents and the like respecting Strategy 17, and I am wondering why it is not policy for that kind of communication to be forwarded to the opposition critics as it respects an amended version of the Answering the Challenge, because I believe there are a whole number of sections that were amended as a result.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I would apologize to the member if I had not communicated the message to him, but indeed this question was asked, I believe, by the Leader of the third party quite some time ago with regard to Strategy 17, at which time I indicated that there were letters coming in and that we would be reconsidering the entire strategy. However, perhaps I did not make it clear by following up with a letter to the opposition critics, and I would apologize for that and ensure that I will, even after today, follow up with a short note indicating the status of Strategy 17 and where we are proceeding to from where we are now.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for those comments. I am sure that it was not deliberate, and it was just something that occurred, and I do appreciate the minister's comments, because I do appreciate being on the mailing list for matters of this kind in order to keep basically up to date.

Would the minister entertain questions at this point—and I think it is probably appropriate—with respect to the Copyright Act and how it is now applying to school divisions? I am wondering if the minister could give us a status report as to the status of the copyright proceedings?

Mr. Derkach: As the member may know, the copyright legislation has not been passed by the federal government at this time, and I think it is before the House right at the present time, but I would indicate that the negotiations on Manitoba's behalf are complete in that we now know that the cost of the legislation as it is going to affect us is going to be something in the order of a dollar and a

half rather than the \$3 that we were looking at about a year ago.

Also, this cost will be borne by the school divisions and it is something that we will pass on to the school divisions. Rather than exchanging cheques, however, what will happen is we will simply deduct the cost of copyright from the advances that are being made to school divisions on a quarterly basis or whenever they are made.

Let me say that the negotiations are simply not completely wound up yet. As soon as the legislation is in place, then Manitoba will be in a position to move ahead with the process quickly and completely.

* (1510)

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister just outline for me what the \$1.50 cost will entail and roughly how much they envision that will cost the school divisions, an average, provincial average, or provincial total?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the \$1.50 is an approximate figure. That is based on a per student count within each school division. That is the way that it will be charged back to the school divisions.

As I indicated, it is not something that we are going to be charging the schools and then expecting them to issue a cheque. Rather, it will be done through the Admin and Finance branch, who will set up a mechanism to deduct these fees from the school divisions or districts, payments that are made to them.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, just returning back to Strategy 17 for a moment, so I understand the minister correctly, that the policy is presently on hold, is there any definitive alternative being pursued by the minister at this time?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the status at the present time is that the meetings are being held with the various school divisions and interest groups to ensure that those who have some concern about Strategy 17 first of all understand clearly what the strategy means and, secondly, have an opportunity to have some input as to the changes that should be made. Following that, there will be a recommendation coming to me from the steering committee. We will look at it and see whether or not it needs amendment or whether it should stay as it is presently.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I am wondering, the minister mentioned a steering

committee. Can he indicate to me what steering committee that is? Will the negotiations be headed up by the Answering the Challenge co-ordinator, Mr. Isler?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, we have a steering committee that is made up of individuals from the various organizations, MAST, MTS and so forth, who have been brought together to act as a steering committee for the implementation of the High School Review process.

Secondly, this is the group that will be reporting back through Mr. Norm Isler, who is the coordinator of the High School Review. He is actually the individual staff who is out and talking to various school divisions and groups at this time.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, moving on to Strategy 37, I am wondering if the minister can give me a status report as to how matters are proceeding as it relates to the development of the curriculum and the availability of resources for the small high school program?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, Strategy 37 talks about affording opportunities for students in small high schools to broaden their scope of programs that they have available to them, and also to perhaps allow small high schools to offer as wide a range of programs as possible to students that they have within their jurisdiction.

This, of course, involves the development of a Distance Education system service that will provide as many courses as possible via Distance Education using the satellite network and so forth. Some of the changes to, for example, the Correspondence branch that have been made and have been embarked on are intended to provide small high schools with better access to those kinds of programs for the students that they have.

Over the last year the Distance Ed branch has been working very tirelessly at making those changes and, indeed, making sure that new programs can be developed for distance education, and there are a series of new programs which have been embarked on in terms of writing, in terms of developing for the Distance Ed and delivery mechanism.

So, in a general sense, considerable amount of work has been done in that regard, but it will take some time to complete much of it. We are in the process, from now to 1994, of trying to enhance the quality of programs. I think in the last year and a

half we have installed something like—is it 90 dishes or more?—somewhere in that range, of satellite dishes that have been installed at schools to ensure that those schools can access the satellite network and can get programming through the uplink of the satellite network.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, with respect to Strategy 64 and 65, I am wondering if the action plan is now complete.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, with regard to the Strategy 65, which speaks about "the Department, in conjunction with the federal government and school divisions, will develop programs designed to motivate students to stay in school until graduation." That, of course, is—the Stay in School Initiative is part of that, and one might say, well, is that all you are going to do in that regard? No, but indeed it is a beginning where we have an agreement, or we have a working relationship with the federal government to encourage school divisions to enter into programs that they develop to allow students to stay in school until graduation.

We have several school divisions which are now participating in that program to motivate students to stay in school. As the member knows, I was involved in the kick-off of the Stay in School Initiative along with federal counterparts and the school divisions which are participating in the project at this time. There are more school divisions which are now, through their officials, looking at getting into the program and I think it is a very positive initiative. As I said, it is not the be-all and end-all, but indeed it is a beginning.

With regard to the first or Strategy 64, plans are well underway at this time in developing the program and channeling some energies into the development of a program for the fall of 1992. Again it will be an initial step, if you like, and through the Ed Finance Review we are going to be identifying some funding that we can channel into the area of addressing students at risk. So therefore it is not complete, but work is going on currently towards that initiative.

* (1520)

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, the minister anticipated some of my questions in this regard. We have already discussed the fact that probably one of the difficulties in developing an action plan in this area is perhaps a lack of data, which I understand the department is working on, and which

will obviously assist the department in pinpointing specific areas and specific difficulties.

The other point which I think the minister has made is that specific finances will be earmarked and set aside for dealing with this obvious difficulty, one which permeates not just suburban schools, but, of course, all of society in general and all groups in society and some more so than others, which is one of my concerns with it.

I would be very interested in seeing a copy of the proposed action plan as soon as it is ready, or if there is an interim plan, if there is one ready, with respect to what approach the department is going to take to this particular matter. One major area of concern is the statistics for aboriginal peoples and for perhaps inner core people as it relates to dropouts. I am wondering if the minister might comment on that, and before he does, if the minister does not mind, I will just editorialize for one more second and that is—I have seen the ads on TV, and this is not meant as criticism, but I am not sure—if that is the total initiative then this is criticism, of certainly the federal government, if TV ads are the only thing, because it strikes me, as a lay person, that they only apply to a very narrow segment of society and I am not sure if it will have much of an effect, if any, on students in general.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the advertisements on television are certainly not the complete picture, if you like; they are simply a vehicle to get the message across to students who may be considering or contemplating dropping out or, in fact, have dropped out and it is a way to get the message to them. Let me say that the Inner City branch—and this is probably the area that we should be having this kind of discussion, but nevertheless we can continue—is one that is collecting data on students at risk and probably has a lot of information with regard to students at risk and probably have a lot of information with regard to students at risk and will have some ideas as to the types of programs that we should be embarking on to assist those students.

Indeed, presently staff from that branch are in contact with the program area and the finance area in developing the Ed Finance Review to ensure that when the Ed Finance Review is announced, it is going to be done in such a way that takes into account the need for the planning that goes into students at risk.

As soon as we have some solid information that we can make public or that we can share with the critics, I would certainly be happy to invite them into my office and to share what our plans are and how we are going to embark on that process, but at this point in time, it is far too premature and early to do that.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for those comments and I look forward to receiving that information.

I would like to move, just briefly, to another area that was dealt with by the Leader of the Liberal Party. I am wondering if the minister, in terms of the whole question of testing—we have discussed this actually at the previous session as well—in terms of the concept of testing and what we are moving towards as a department, if the minister, in a brief description, can tell me as a lay person why and which direction we are moving towards in terms of testing in general.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I guess there are several different types of testing that one can talk about. First of all, at the school level there is testing done by each school at each grade level. Each school has probably a bit of a different approach to that.

Additionally, at the high school level specifically, in most of the high schools in the province, and I think the figure is somewhere around 80 percent, schools do write some form of final test or exam and that result is part of the final grade. Additionally, the department has for a number of years now been involved in assessment of various subject areas in the K to 12 area.

I can tell the member that previously what used to happen was that the assessment used to be done in one year, but the results were not really made public until about two years later. We had to ask the question about the validity of the results of that kind of testing for the schools in the field when the results were not known for two years. We are addressing that issue to try and make sure that the turnaround time between the time the test is written and the assessment goes out, that there is a reasonable time rather than two years. What these assessment tests do is they give us some indication of how the students are performing at those various levels, perhaps how well the curriculum is addressing the needs of the students, how well they are performing in relation to other jurisdictions, other schools, and how we as a province are doing in that particular

subject area. That has been going on for some time.

I can tell the member that we are going to be doing the health assessment from the Grade 5 to Grade 10 level in 1991, I believe. That is being done in June, and a reading assessment will be done in 1992 from Grades 4, 8 and 11. That again is going to be written in May, and certainly we hope that the test results are going to be available, not two years, but something like six months after the time that they are written.

With regard to the final exam in Grade 12 that we announced, we anticipate that we will be writing one exam per year for the next four years and that each exam is going to be worth 30 percent starting in the 1991-92 school year. There will not be an option for schools to either opt out for 30 percent or 15 percent or zero. Every student will have it count for 30 percent of the final grade.

This test is going to be designed for several reasons, and some of them perhaps have not even been identified or defined exactly. I think it is important to—once we get into the mode of writing those final exams—start talking to the field and saying, okay, now how can you best utilize the results of this kind of an exam? Is it going to be to evaluate programs? Is it going to be to evaluate standards of education in the province? Is it going to be to establish where in-servicing should be done?

There are many reasons that one can point to in terms of what you would use that exam for, and that is exactly what we are going to be doing over the course of the next year, is embarking on some dialogue with the field to ensure that everybody understands the purpose of the exam, that we all agree—we will not agree on everything, but for that reason it is our responsibility to lead—but that everybody understands which direction we are moving in, in terms of what that exam will be used for.

Then it is also important for us to share with the field the results of the exam quite clearly and allow them to understand what the exam for the next year will be, so that everyone is in sync, if you like, and understands where we are moving to.

* (1530)

Mr. Chomlak: I guess, following along that line of reasoning, then one would not be able to make any kind of evaluation of the process until several years

had elapsed in order to make some kind of comparison between one year and a subsequent year. That being the case, I am wondering if the minister can indicate for me—if it is, say, hypothetical at the end of a five-year period, would the minister consider the process or the improvement to education to have been worth it if, for example, all the marks by all the students had gone up on a regular basis over the five-year period?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I think that is very hypothetical at this time, and I would not want to be guessing as to what the results might be, for example, or what the anticipated action might be at that point in time. All I can indicate is that when we meet with people throughout the education community, be it in Canada or even in the United States, there is a call nowadays for greater accountability, greater standardization, or standards if you like, of quality of education at each and every grade level. In some jurisdictions there is a far greater demand on standardized testing than there is in this province by far.

We have embarked on an initial process. I think that each year we will have to evaluate the process to see whether or not we are meeting the mark or whether we need to enhance it or whether we need to simply continue along the path that we have embarked on now. What the results will be in five years I cannot tell you at this point in time, but I think it is important that we continue to monitor the system from a year-to-year basis, that we continue to dialogue with the field and that we establish procedure and policy as we see changes required.

Madam Chairperson, if I could just go back to an answer I gave in the last question, I said that the health assessment was going to be done in 1991 for Grades 5 through 10. It is not; I made an error; it is for Grade 5 and Grade 10, and the reading assessment is going to be done in Grade 4, Grade 8 and Grade 11.

Mr. Chomlak: I believe that the minister has answered my question, because it seems to me that the minister's response generally is that five years down the road or four years down the road or three years down the road these results will be utilized or can be utilized to compare Manitoba students with students, say, for example, from Minnesota or Georgia or Japan and on a relative level see what the competitiveness or, for lack of a better word—no, I will not use that word—to check, to

compare the ability of Manitoba students vis-a-vis other students.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Madam Chairperson, it will be extremely difficult for us to compare ourselves in a precise subject area with students in another jurisdiction, because indeed those students would not have written the same type of examination at all, but what it will allow us to do, it will allow us to determine whether or not students, for example, in Flin Flon are competing favourably or have skills that are at an approximate same level that students in Carman have, and based on the results of the testing, is there a need perhaps to put more in-servicing in an area where we see a lack of perhaps performance at an acceptable level.

This is the kind of information that I think is important to us if we want to establish standards within our province. As I indicated, Manitoba has recently announced, and I was happy to make the announcement, that we would participate in the national indicators project, which is going a look at standards of education throughout Canada. It is regrettable that one province has decided to pull out of the process, but that is certainly their choice as a province.

We will have a fairly good overview of how we compete to other jurisdictions in Canada once that project is going to be complete. That will not be known for a number of years yet, but indeed Alberta and Quebec have co-operated in developing a standardized test for students, who will write the test both in French and in English. Once we know the results of those we will know precisely where it is that we may have some deficiencies and perhaps where we have exceptional strengths. We will need to build on our strengths and improve in the areas where we see deficiencies. Our testing at the Grade 12 level in mathematics and in other subject areas will only give us an idea of how other jurisdictions within our own province compare to each other.

The other thing, I might add, it is going to do is the whole question of accountability. It is important to ensure that the money that we are investing in education is indeed yielding appropriate results, that is, that students who are going through the high school system and are getting a Grade 12 certificate with mathematics or with English on that certificate are going to be reassured that the level of competency of that student is going to be such that he or she will be able to function at a post-secondary level or favourably in the work world.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, does the minister have any concerns that the process may in fact prove counterproductive, particularly to those students who have difficulty with a testing process? Probably more appropriately, concerns have been expressed to me. Is the minister concerned about teachers being forced to teach toward a curriculum and perhaps spending a disproportionate amount of their time dealing with the question of testing as opposed to the question of teaching a wide variety of students rather than the upper echelons of a particular class? I think the minister knows what I am talking about. I am just wondering to what extent he thinks that is a potential difficulty.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I am far more concerned when we do not know exactly what standard we have at our schools throughout the province. Indeed, universities have expressed their dissatisfaction with the range of students that they receive who are supposedly destined for university. That may be a problem with our universities, and indeed we may have to call on universities at some point in time to do their share in terms of determining who should be entering a university program. As the member knows, we have a wide range of Grade 12 students who graduate from our high school system. We acknowledge that. We understand that. The range of students in 301 alone is very wide, and we have to accept the fact that not every student who graduates with a Grade 12 certificate can function at the same level.

I would have a bit of a concern, I guess, if the exam were to count for 100 percent of the student's mark. Then I would say that there would be a legitimate concern about the fact that teachers would be teaching toward the exam and would only be zeroing in on the content that might be within the exam. However, the exam is only worth 30 percent of the final grade. That means that the teacher has a lot of flexibility within that 70 percent to test the students in areas that the exam may not necessarily have covered or that the teacher also has the flexibility to assess projects, individual projects, and other work outside of the exam itself.

So, Madam Chair, I think that because the exam is worth 30 percent, it makes sure that students are serious when they enter that exam room to write the exam and give their utmost effort. Secondly, it provides us with some indication as to what standards across this province are. It is a way of the system being accountable to those who pay the bills

and indeed to those who receive the students after they have graduated from Grade 12, but it is not an answer in itself. It is simply one item in a range of items that need to be addressed in terms of making sure that there is some quality and some standard in the education system that we have before us today.

* (1540)

From the students whom I have talked to—and I have talked to many students in university and in high school—what students in second-year university and first-year university expressed to me is that, if they have never written an exam, a final exam, in their lives, and they are confronted with an exam at university, it becomes a fairly horrifying experience for them. No matter which student I have talked to, there have been very few who have told me that examinations, final examinations worth 30 percent are having a negative impact on their ability to compete at the university level or that they think it is a negative approach. So there has been a lot of positive feedback on the exam.

Certainly, there is The Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees still make it their official position that they do not support final examinations. Nevertheless, the field is certainly giving us a different message at this point in time.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, the tests which are going to be conducted nationwide in the spring of 1993—but unfortunately not in the province of Ontario—will include some literacy examination, as well as some numeracy examination. Can the minister tell me what objections Ontario had, other than the one that I heard from the Minister of Education? Was there a concern about cultural relevancy to certain target groups within their ethnocultural community and the fact that an examination of literacy skills might work to a disadvantage of those students? Was there any other reason given to the Ministers of Education as to why Ontario was going to opt out of this participation?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the Minister of Education from Ontario made it very clear that their government did not believe philosophically in the concept of testing to begin with. Secondly, they wanted a long period of consultation with all of their groups on the test itself, and they indicated to us also that their teachers in the province were not in favour of the project as it was set up. So those are

just a few of the areas that were raised at our meetings.

Indeed, they wanted the tests to be more relevant to the Ontario scene, if you like, rather than nation wide in scope. They were concerned about the cultural aspect, of course, but so were we. We had the same kind of mix in Manitoba as they have in Ontario and in a smaller city I think it has just as much as an impact as it does in Toronto, for example, relatively speaking.

Those were the kinds of objections that were made by the minister from Ontario, and if I can generalize, it appeared more of a philosophical approach rather than that they had some specific flaws within the process. They did not have any concern with the fact that Alberta and Quebec were doing the development of the test, but they would have much preferred to be involved in the setting of the test so they could have their input into Ontario's perspective on the test as well, but that is impossible when you are doing a nation-wide test.

Alberta and Quebec both voluntarily agreed to do the test. They have spent enormous sums of money from their own provincial coffers to develop the test with not that much support from other provinces, and to this point in time, I understand that the two provinces have co-operated perfectly, and that is really a plus in terms of the development of the test.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is the plan of the test, because the information I have is very sketchy, to be more or less along the lines of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills? Is this the type of thing or are they going beyond that basic vocabulary recognition and number capacity as found in CTBS to measure other skills as well?

Mr. Derkach: My understanding of the process right now is that it is going to be much more specific and much more in depth than the current Canadian Test of Basic Skills in testing numeracy and literacy, and they are going to become very specific about content. There are going to be levels of proficiency that they are going to be testing in both numeracy and literacy.

In a general sense, they will be looking at things like process and content, and that is the most I can give in terms of specifics about the test because I have not seen it specifically at this point in time.

Mrs. Carstairs: If there is going to be content examined, how will we be allowed to maintain an individual curriculum if, in fact, curriculum is going

to become a part of what is examined? I will just give you an example. If you are asking the children to be able to identify whether they can read a map, that is easy because it does not matter whether you have taught it within an American history course or whether you have taught it within a Canadian geography course, but if you are going to specifically examine factual data, then if that is not part of the course curriculum, that is obviously going to put students at a disadvantage if that is not part of their course curriculum.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, one of the elements that is under consideration is the fact that throughout Canada there is common content within the curriculum which can be tested. That is what the test is going to zero in on. Where there are differences, those areas, of course, will have to be stayed away from; but common core curriculum, common content area will be looked at, and that is the area that will be included in a test.

Mrs. Carstairs: I just want to move to one final area in this section, and that is with respect to the art consultant. I understand that as a result of the cuts in curriculum services, there will no longer be an art consultant for Manitoba. Can the minister confirm that and indicate how a standard of leadership and equality of art education in the province of Manitoba is going to be maintained with this deletion of the art curriculum? Particularly, what is the impact going to be on the middle years curriculum?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the duties for the area will be assigned to the assistant director of the branch, and we will be identifying people in the field who can assist the department in the work that needs to be done.

One of the things we can do as a department is to develop the possibility of a committee that will look at the kind of work that needs to be done in this whole area that was done by the art consultant previously. We feel, as a department, that we can probably manage quite comfortably with the use of the assistant director in the place of an art consultant, using expertise from the field more broadly than we have in the past, doing the in-servicing on a regional basis, and calling on specific school staff to do the in-servicing on a school-by-school basis.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, it is my understanding that, as a result of this decision, there will in fact be no one in the Department of Education with the specific mandate to look after cultural

activities—I say art, drama, music. Is it true that there will not any longer be any consultants in any of those fields in the Province of Manitoba?

* (1550)

Mr. Derkach: No, Madam Chairperson, the art consultant's duties were specifically in that area. We will still retain a multicultural consultant within the department, and those areas will be addressed by the consultant.

Mrs. Carstairs: With the greatest respect to the minister, a multicultural consultant is supposed to develop a curriculum and ideas with regard to the broad ethnicity of the province of Manitoba. I am specifically gearing in on the cultural education of our youngsters.

We have said over and over again, consistently, that children should be allowed to maximize their talents and abilities. Some children, while their academic abilities may be limited, have tremendous talent in art or music or drama. Others, quite frankly, have both academic talent as well as tremendous talent in art, music and drama. If there is no one left in the Department of Education, does that bode well for the future training of artists in the province of Manitoba of a wide variety of cultural pursuits?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I think maybe the member of the third party is referring to the consultant in esthetics, and that is an area that we do not have a consultant in. Indeed, the department staff, through sharing responsibilities between various consultants, will have to manage that area. Whether it is language arts or whether it is other areas, multicultural areas, we will still continue to offer those services through other consultants. Once again, I might emphasize the fact that we will be looking for expertise in the field to deliver the specifics school by school, in-servicing and those types of needs.

Mrs. Carstairs: A final question: Because I am concerned about this area, can the minister tell us if there is anyone on the professional staff of Curriculum Services who has a degree in music, drama, fine arts, in any of the other areas which would reflect a knowledge and an understanding of the cultural life of the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Derkach: When the member asks about who has a degree in music or art or some of these other areas, I might indicate that when we hire consultants we look for a broad range of skills that might be used within the Curriculum branch. I would say that many

of the consultants that we have within the branch can handle more than one task by virtue of their experience, by virtue of their training and their educational qualities as well. For that reason, for example, in the area of the art consultant, we will be using the assistant director in that area who has some skills and, through his experience, some ability to do the consulting for that specific area.

More importantly, I think it is important for us to find the expertise in the field, those people who are currently teaching in a field, who have the experience and the expertise, and use them as our resource in delivering the in-servicing needs in the various school divisions. That is really the task that would be done by the experts, that is, the in-servicing. The consultants will be more the ones who deliver the in-servicing in a broad regional basis and bring in expertise for the specific areas that are required.

Mrs. Carstairs: I would just like to put a comment on the record in that I think there are, indeed, many highly skilled people in the field in a wide variety of areas, whether it is social studies, whether it is science, whether it is language arts, whether it is French. Where we have always found gaps in almost every school is the lack of someone trained in the fine arts, someone lacking music training, someone lacking artistic training, someone lacking drama training.

When you remove the curriculum consultant in that particular area, you put in real jeopardy the opportunities for enhancement of children in our schools. You put into jeopardy the broad range of talent that could be, quite frankly, brought to a high level of competence. We have watched band programs develop with tremendous growth in the last few years, but I think that those music programs will be hurt if we do not have people. We have watched the music consultant go over the last few years. Now we see the art consultants go.

I would hope that the minister, if at some time he feels that he can add to this department, would seriously look at someone with a degree in one of the artistic disciplines so that those curriculum areas can once more be stimulated by the Department of Education.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I think it is important to know that there are people with experience, with expertise in the field that we should be using to give the in-services and provide that leadership where there is a lack of leadership in that

knowledge. What we intend to do is ensure that the curriculum staff at the department will be the facilitators, will be the co-ordinators, will be able to draw out that expertise. Then we will be able to set up the in-servicing for the various school divisions around the province.

I think that is the task that we should be looking at as a department, to be the co-ordinators, to be the facilitators and to utilize to the best available advantage, if you like, the people who are in the field.

Madam Chairperson, as the High School Review points out, we are not diminishing the importance of art, music or esthetics in any way, shape or form in this province. As a matter of fact, we probably need to have more emphasis placed on some of those areas, because we do have students who have some special talents in those areas. Indeed, when we have within our city the school of ballet, which is not only known in Manitoba, but indeed throughout Canada, that points to the fact that we have some very talented people in this province.

I have to say that Strategy 45 talks about the establishment of specific schools that might be set up for the purpose of drawing out that kind of talent within our province and developing that kind of expertise that we could probably use later on in other schools as well. So there are ways to address that, and we intend to do that. Unfortunately, we cannot do it all overnight, but over the next four-year period I can assure the member that we will be moving in that direction.

Madam Chairman: Item 4.(b) Curriculum Services: (1) Salaries, \$2,482,900—pass; 4.(b)(2) Other Expenditures, \$1,525,500—pass.

Item 4.(c) Native Education.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, the area of Native education causes members on this side of the House some grave concerns, and the reality of the situation is that, while the government speaks about prioritization of aboriginal and Native education, its actions do not reflect those words. We note that funding is down this year, and while the minister will indicate that this does not necessarily mean that programming is down, nonetheless this has been a continuing pattern for the last several years. I am wondering if the minister can provide for me the outline of individuals who are employed in this branch and what their job functions are?

* (1600)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, let me begin by refuting everything the member has put on record in the last minute or two, because indeed there has been a tremendous effort put into ensuring that aboriginal and Native people in this province take their rightful place in our society, and indeed are given the opportunities for an education, for being able to serve their society as other people within this province have.

Madam Chairperson, I would have to say that within the last three short years our government has come a long way in addressing the needs of aboriginal and Native people in this province, far more than we did in the previous eight years, or seven years. Let me indicate that we have not gone all the way. We have not been able to address all of the needs that are out there in society. Because there are so many that no one can possibly do that in the space of three short years. We will continue to work towards the goal of making sure that aboriginal people in this province are going to have opportunities that are going to be equal to those of anyone else in the province. Yes, that means that we will have to put some extra energies, some extra monies into making sure that happens.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to just briefly indicate that we have moved a part of the Native Ed branch to Dauphin, and we have done that for a very good reason. Because that part of the province where there are significant numbers of Native people has not had any service provided to it from that region. For that reason we were able to decentralize some of our people into the Dauphin area to ensure that people in that area are going to be given the kind of service that they require.

Madam Chairperson, we will continue to do and continue to invest that kind of time and energy and money to ensure that aboriginal people in this province can have the service that they need and that they deserve. I am not going to say that we can achieve all that over the next year.

In terms of the staff and what their positions are, I can indicate that we have an acting director who manages the overall branch activities. She liaises with school division administrators, Native organizations and government agencies. She delivers early childhood education, parental involvement workshops in schools and does many, many other things. I must say that she is a very dedicated individual who also travels to our Dauphin

office for one week each month and has been exerting a tremendous amount of energy in ensuring that the services are provided. She is with us today here at this table, Mrs. Juliette Sabot.

We have a curriculum consultant who is also the assistant director of the branch. We have a Native Awareness consultant. We have a Native Studies consultant. We have a Native Languages consultant, we have two of them, and we have three support staff, as well.

In the Native Ed branch in Dauphin, we have a career counselling consultant. We have an English Language Development consultant, and we have a community liaison consultant. We also have one support staff in the Dauphin office, as well. So this is the staff complement of the branch.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, the minister indicates that energy and effort have been placed by the department in this particular area. I do not question that fact, but he says the further that increased funding is in this area—and I certainly question that based on the statistical evidence before me, because while it may not be appropriate or measurable to determine energy and commitment to an area—but we will get into that. Certainly, one can measure the funding in the area.

Since this minister has come to office, this branch of the department has decreased in funding by 2.8 percent over the last several years. If one considers this in light of the rate of inflation and the other costs, then the commitment by this government in monetary terms is down, not up.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Madam Chairperson, when one examines the reality of the situation we have before us, in a fiscal sense, it is understandable that we have had to make some adjustments through the entire department. Indeed, this particular branch was not immune to those kinds of adjustments. We tried to ensure that there would be as little pain in this area as possible. For that reason, there was just the one SY that was reduced in this branch.

We have determined, through the analysis, that we will be able to deliver this service in different ways just as effectively as we had before. Nevertheless, it has been a reduction of one SY and that reduction was the media specialist position, and the responsibilities, of course, were those of scripting and the production of audio-visual support materials for Native education. Nevertheless, we feel that will be a minimal impact on the department.

We will, however, be able to provide that service through other means within the department. It is just one of those situations that comes up when you are faced with making some of the essential decisions in an overall sense.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I am appreciative that the minister admitted what is a fact on the record that funding to this branch has decreased and has decreased by 2.8 percent since this government has come to office. That is reality and the minister indicated that, given the fiscal realities of the situation, that was a hard decision taken by this government and I do not dispute that. I just question why this particular area suffered a 2.8 percent cut the last three years and other areas have seen increases. One realizes and recognizes that there are all kinds of trade-offs that one must make in terms of the limited financial resources, yet the government insists over and over and over again that this is in fact a No. 1 priority within a priority area.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, there are many priorities within the department and this is indeed another priority within the department. That is why we have decentralized some of this branch to a rural part of the province where the services can be accessed more readily by the people who need them. I must indicate that the branch has reorganized itself in such a way that it is doing much more. We have implemented many policies which I think are very proactive in the Native community and we are going to have to work very closely with the Native organizations to ensure that we can provide the best services possible.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I have to indicate that we have probably done the best that we can do in terms of the situation that we face. I can tell the member that if we had \$500 million that we spent on interest costs per year, we could enlarge this branch tremendously, but the reality is that \$500 million is spent on interest costs per year and, as I indicated before and the member knows, this is not debt that resulted from the three short years that we have been in government. It is debt that was accumulated in previous years.

* (1610)

Nevertheless, it has—and I am not pointing fingers at anybody at this time except to say that we have to pay for that debt in some way. We cannot

continue to keep spending beyond our means, and so this year, until our revenues increase—our revenue growth is zero percent this year—and until our revenue growth increases to some respectable level we are just not capable of providing each and every service. I have to indicate that the communities that we deal with recognize this and they are prepared to undergo some pain for the short term and hopefully when our revenues increase, they will receive the benefit as well.

When I met with the people at the Native conference, one of the sentiments that was expressed was the fact that yes, we recognize that the government has a problem, and that is the interest and the deficit, and we are prepared to do our share. As long as we find other ways to provide those services, they are satisfied, and that is what we will attempt to do in every way that we can.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, I have heard the speech on the debt and deficit by the minister on at least one other occasion, and I anticipate I will probably hear it more often. The reality of the situation is that the 2.8 percent decrease is not just this year, but cumulative over the last three years, ever since this government came to power and supposedly indicated this was a priority within a set of priorities.

The department indicates that in terms of an activity it will draft a K to 10 Native education policy with input from the Native advisory committee. I am wondering if the minister can describe for me what he means by a K to 10 Native education policy, what that entails?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I guess the purpose of a Native education policy would be to ensure that we are addressing the needs of the Native community in an appropriate way. I would say that up until this time we have been operating under an assumed understanding of what the needs are, and some of them are very evident, but I think it is important for us to have a framework for discussion which will provide a vehicle for participation of the Native people within the development of education policy in the education system within our province.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I think it is consistent with the other approaches that we have taken. We need to ensure that Native people have a say in, first of all, what types of education are required so that the needs of the children, Native children, in this province can be addressed. For that reason we are

going to establish an advisory committee which will have some input into what kinds of educational programs and the system in general is being established.

As I indicated, we have committed ourselves to the establishment of that committee. We do not have all of the names for that committee at this point in time but, nevertheless, the department is working on the committee. The make-up of the committee would be probably somebody who is a teacher, perhaps somebody who is an administrator, someone who has some expertise or some experience in the trustee field, somebody who is a parent, someone who has some perhaps experience in business. Somebody probably from the Native community who is an elder would be an important contributor to the committee; probably somebody from the Native Ed branch itself would be an important contributor to that committee.

This is the general type of make-up of the committee that we are looking for to advise the department and the minister as to some of the education policies, some of the education programs that need to be implemented over time to ensure that Native people in this province have the appropriate programming that meets their needs.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the implication of what I am reading on page 60 of the Supplementary Estimates leads me to believe that a structure or an overall strategic plan or plan of action is envisaged, that it is not just a case of the committee forwarding recommendations. Indeed, Strategy 25 in Answering the Challenge indicates that core curriculum will be incorporated at the high school level with respect to Native education. That seems to me to indicate that the thinking is further advanced than simply, we are going to have an advisory committee that is going to advise us as to what the policies and objectives are. That is what I am trying to get at in terms of my question to the minister.

I am wondering if the minister can outline for me where he is, how far advanced it is, and what they envision occurring in this process, and finally, what the time line is?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, there are several strategies, if you like, that relate to the Native community. They do not all have to be coming from the Native Education area, but there are many that relate to that area.

The Native advisory committee, which we have not had up to this point in time, is something new, something that will be established within the next year or so and will have responsibility for a variety of things. It is up to the department, the Native Ed branch in the Department of Education and Training, to implement specific courses, specific content, into the various grade levels. The committee, nevertheless, will have responsibility to do some background work, to do some gathering of research to provide advice to the department and to the minister.

At the present time, draft terms of reference for the committee membership were submitted to me, and I just read out what those were. Indeed, we may have to add a few positions to that or delete one or two. That has not been determined yet, but this is the stage that we are at. The mandate of the committee specifically will be to advise the minister on all matters which relate to Native education. At that point in time, it becomes the responsibility of the minister and the department to take those recommendations, to perhaps change or massage them, or perhaps implement them in the way that they are recommended to the minister.

Mr. Chomlak: I take it, then, we will be waiting for something of a report or recommendations from the advisory committee. It will proceed to the minister, and the minister will, presumably, implement as it encompasses Native education. My question is: What is the time line on this process?

* (1620)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, I indicated earlier that we would have the committee members in place by the fall of this year. Work toward the implementation of the strategies and the development of the strategies will take place after that. We have not put any specific time lines on the strategies, but a lot of the background work has already begun, so it is a matter of, as soon as it is available we will implement it, but we have to be sure that we consult with the Native community as well. I cannot be specific about the exact time frame, but indeed within the prescribed time for implementation here, we will be embarking on many initiatives.

Mr. Chomlak: The difficulty I have with the minister's response in this particular area is that the community has been waiting a long time for specifics, not just more study. That being the case, we have a rewriting of legislation, we have a review of the financing model, and there are specific time

lines that the minister has given me with respect to the legislation and the finance model.

The minister has not given me really any indication with respect to this particular area, particularly in light of the fact that this is very much an evolving area and developments are occurring on an almost daily basis. I am wondering now, will that mean if some innovative project is on the horizon or some other developments occur, the answer will be to the community, well, wait until the Native advisory committee reports on it, and goodness knows when that will be, and we will proceed on that basis.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I can indicate to the member that the Native community waited patiently for eight years prior to our coming into government in virtually a stalemate. In the last three years there has been some movement and some activity within the department. The embarking on a specific policy, on a specific advisory committee is an indication that we are not simply going to sit on our hands and do nothing.

I can read out a list of activities that the Native Ed branch has been working on to ensure that work toward opportunities for education for Native students is going to be much better than it has in the past. The activity of the branch, Mr. Acting Chair, is such that they prepare reports for budgets. They act as brokers for service between government branches, Native organizations, schools and Native communities. They respond to the public inquiries related to Native education. The branch also co-ordinates staff development and training throughout the province.

In the area of the decentralization in 1990-91, there was a major move in establishing an office in the Dauphin area in hiring and orienting staff into that area and into that region of the province.

In terms of the Native Awareness program, here the branch provides pre-service and in-service sessions for teachers, administrators, community members related to the Native cultural heritage in contemporary Native society. The branch provides cultural workshops for both Native and non-Native students, and it develops print materials and cultural displays for classrooms.

In 1990-91, the branch provided a total of 40 in-service workshops involving 34 provincial schools and 11 different divisions. Participating were approximately 3,700 students from K-12, and

300 teachers and administrators. The branch also presented at six conferences and conducted workshops for 30 community organizations and government agencies.

In the area of the Native Studies program, the branch assisted five school divisions with adaptation of social studies curriculum or development of local Native Studies credit courses. Here, Mr. Acting Chair, I might say that, when I came into the department we had a number of audio-visual materials that were very discriminatory, were almost racial, in a sense, in the way that they approached various topics towards the Native community. We have made sure that all of those materials have been removed from the shelves and are no longer available.

Might I say, Mr. Acting Chair, that these were available during the time of the previous administration. They continually scream at us about the initiatives that we take, yet a lot of the stuff had never been touched when the previous administration was in office.

Additionally, in the area of the Native Studies program, the branch has completed and distributed Native Peoples Resource Bibliography; it began the development of Native people of Manitoba posters series; completed Women of the North video; finalized early, middle and seniors Native Studies Sourcebook for 1991-92 for printing and distribution.

The branch also conducted 22 in-services for 27 schools and nine divisions related to curriculum implementation and resources. Participants included: 160 teachers, administrators, 20 librarians, and 100 students.

The branch also presented at four conferences and conducted workshops for 13 community organizations and government agencies. In the area of Native Languages program, the 1990-91 activity list was the development of a basic program for Cree and Ojibway. It has been completed. There are a variety of programs in the Cree and Ojibway which are in draft form at the present time. In the K-6 area, curricula are available for Dakota-Island Lake, and the Island Lake dialect. Again, in this area, the branch provided 25 in-service workshops involving 20 provincial schools from nine divisions. The participants were 150 teachers and administrators and some 320 students.

The list goes on, Mr. Acting Chair, to include six courses which were delivered for the Native Language Certificate program in Thompson; 23 certified Native language teachers will graduate in June of 1991. A Native language fluency testing also was conducted involving 388 students, of which 331 were enrolled in provincial schools with 10 divisions.

In the area of English language development programs—this is the ELDNS program—the branch reviewed and recommended changes to program proposals for 31 school divisions funded under the ELDNS area. They completed publications, *The Crying Christmas Tree* and *Two Pairs of Shoes with Pemmican*, conducted 12 in-services in 11 schools in five divisions and the participants here included 300 teachers, 200 parents and 200 students.

In the area of career guidance, they organized 12 in-services involving 15 provincial schools in six separate divisions. Here, again, participants included 60 teachers, 1,000 students and 50 parents.

The branch also conducted three in-services on reserves for 100 teachers and 120 students, and they participated in two provincial career symposia which were attended by approximately 50,000 students, parents, community members and so forth.

Mr. Acting Chair, as you can see, it has been a very, very active and productive year for the Native Ed branch and, indeed, I am very pleased at the performance of this branch to this point in time. I indicate that staff in that branch have been very active, have been putting forth extreme amounts of energy. As a matter of fact, weekends and long hours into the night are almost something that is not an exception but a rule around the place.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for those comments and, indeed, it must seem that as a very hard working branch, and certainly there is a long list of projects, that it is too bad their funding has been cut by 2.8 percent the last three years. It is a pity.

It is too bad the minister can not attach a time line onto the development of the Native Education policy because his own report, the Skills Training Advisory Report, indicated that there was, quote: an urgent need for government to have a strategy for Natives.

* (1630)

While that applies more in essence, I would think, to skills training and post-secondary, it applies equally as well here. It is a pity that the minister's own report says "an urgent need" may not be acted upon for some time. In light of the fact that I remind the minister it took three years to finally—and we are still waiting for the Finance Review to be put in place. We have been hearing about PSA review for some time.

My question to the minister is, has the minister had an opportunity to assess the feasibility, has the department looked at the functionality, of an aboriginal survival school as proposed by the Winnipeg School Division No. 1?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chair, the member keeps coming back to that same old line about the 2.8 percent cut. He said it at least five times to this point in time, but he has ignored the litany of projects that the department has embarked on and the Native Ed branch has been working on within the last year.

Indeed, it would take a deaf man not to have heard all of the positive initiatives that were embarked on by the department. The fact that we decentralized some of the Native Ed branch must be an indication that we are interested in taking the service to the people where they need it.

I simply cannot understand the reluctance of the member to acknowledge that we are moving towards a program that is more relevant to Native people in this province and one where they have some say in the kind of programming that is developed.

One of the areas that we have not touched on is the whole area of Frontier School Division that does serve a large portion of the Native population of this province. Under the former administration, Mr. Acting Chair, reality was that the province controlled the school board. When I came into office I ensured that I would move towards development of authority to the Frontier School Division so they would have the same rights, the same responsibilities and the same privileges as any school board in this province has.

I am pleased to say that we have moved in that direction. We passed legislation in that regard, and it is my hope that by the end of spring we will be in a position to announce the regulations and proclaim that legislation giving full authority to that school board to conduct its affairs as any other school board in the province.

Mr. Acting Chair, those are a few of the things that needed to be done, are being done to allow the Native people in this province to take more control and have more input into the kind of education that their children should have. I am proud of that record to this point in time and would indicate that we have indeed moved a long way.

When he talks about the recommendations from the STAC Report, that, of course, is in the post-secondary area, and I would be more than pleased to announce some of the initiatives that have been undertaken and some of the positive steps we have embarked on and we have achieved in that area, Mr. Acting Chair. I will take a second seat to no one in terms of some of the things that we have embarked on in that area.

(Madam Chairman in the Chair)

Madam Chair, when he talks about the survival school in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, this is indeed an issue that is that of Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Our role in that would simply be one of a facilitator in terms of helping them develop program material and implementing the program material and the curriculum of the province. Indeed, that is an issue that has to be left to the local school division, and we will certainly do everything we can to ensure that the Native students in that area will get an appropriate education in terms of the division following the curriculum and so forth.

This is something that certainly I will not involve myself in, in terms of making a decision or moving the school division towards a decision of that nature.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chair, has the minister any studies or any understanding of the concept of a Native survival school? Does the department have any general policy with respect to that, that might serve as some form of guidance to the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 or any school division for that matter which might be contemplating the specific route in question?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, we have been involved with Winnipeg School Division as a facilitator and as a provider of information. The Native Ed branch and the Curriculum branch have done considerable work in terms of providing information that is required, but the policy of the department is that these kinds of issues are those of the local school division and have to be dealt with at that level.

Mr. Chomlak: Because of the innovative nature of this particular project, I am wondering if the minister can indicate whether or not any additional grant monies would be available in this area to proceed to develop a school of this kind, given the prototype nature of a school of this kind?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, this is not an area that we have special grants for, and that kind of policy is not in place in the department at this time.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate whether or not their policy of developing schools of this kind will be considered by the Native advisory committee?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, our responsibility as a department is to ensure that education is provided for all students. It is not our role to start separating Native students from other students in this province or students of some ethnic or cultural background from other students in this province. Our responsibility is to provide educational opportunities for all students within Manitoba. Indeed, we will not be embarking on separating and segregating students in the province.

If a school division, on the other hand, wishes to establish a school like Winnipeg No. 1 has embarked on, that is something that is within the local jurisdiction, not within the provincial jurisdiction.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I do not understand the minister's response. The fact remains the minister is talking about adopting a major policy initiative as it deals with Native education, K-12. The minister has indicated that they will provide support services to a school division that may wish to do that, but they are not in favour of that.

Has the minister, this department, this branch or the advisory committee considered the educational merits, either one way or the other, of a move in this area? Would he be prepared to table any information in that regard as to educational benefits, either positive or negative nature, of a move of this kind?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I have indicated from the beginning our role is to provide services for all students in the province, not to segregate one group of students from another. That is the way this department will continue.

The advisory committee, if they wish to examine that area, could probably give opinion or advice on

that matter, but this is not an issue which is one for the government to involve itself in directly, more it is an issue that is of a local nature. If Winnipeg School Division No. 1 feels that they can better deliver the services by the establishment of that kind of an institution, then indeed it is a decision that they have to make and they have to be responsible for.

Mr. Chomlak: I guess I have to go back to some of my earlier questions to determine where the Native strategy is going with respect to the minister. I recognize the minister's sensitivity in this area, but such is life.

What is the minister expecting to get from his advisory committee that he already does not have in order to put in place a Native education policy?

* (1640)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, with the greatest of respect, the member has to be very naive to think that the Native people of this province cannot contribute something to the process of education.

I would have to say that the terms of reference of the Native advisory committee as set out in Strategy 24 would be to assist the department in identifying such things as educational goals and objectives and then aimed at improving Native students' academic achievement levels within our education system and to assist the department in preparing a plan for the implementation of these goals and these objectives. Those are the general terms of reference of the advisory committee.

Now I am not going to stand here and indicate that we have all the answers for addressing the needs of the Native community. Indeed, we do not. That is why we need to call on those people who are of Native origin to become involved through an advisory committee way in giving us some advice on such things as how we can better address the needs and how we can improve the outcomes of the monies that are invested in education for the Native community.

Mr. Chomlak: Does the minister anticipate that the Native advisory committee will go on the road to solicit the viewpoints of Native leaders and people in the community?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the advisory committee is going to be made up of Native people from around the province who will bring with them the input from their variety of organizations and communities that they are representing. They will

take back with them from the advisory committee information to those communities.

It is a two-way communication aspect, and if they see need to consult with a particular community, then indeed that kind of request will come forward to the minister. It will probably be the Native Ed branch that would do the consulting. The committee's work will be that of an advisory capacity, and it will be dealt with in that way. There are many other advisory committees of this nature that function in government and function very well. This is not something that is brand new in terms of its mandate; it is new in terms of the fact that there has never been a Native advisory committee to Education, and it is time that we had one.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister has indicated that the Native advisory committee will work with the department. The department is already overstuffed; the department has already had its resources cut. I am having some trouble understanding what the process will be and whether, in fact, there will be some goals met at the end of the road, but I will accept that. Does the minister anticipate that the advisory committee will be half time, full time, quarter time, part time? What is the nature of the advisory committee and the set-up, the structure?

Mr. Derkach: We are not hiring anyone, Madam Chairperson. This advisory committee will be like many other committees in government. It will meet periodically to give advice, to share information, to take information back just like any advisory committee does. They will be attached to the Native Ed branch and to the ADM of Program Services and when there is a need to meet, whether it is on a monthly basis or a quarterly basis, the committee will be called and it will be dealt with in that matter.

It is my hope that once the committee is formed and the work is outlined for the committee, there will be an established timetable for meetings. There is a great deal to do in that area. Indeed, we are expecting some positive feedback from the communities and from that committee, but what I might highlight is that we have referenced the needs for greater work with the Native community in all of our materials that we have put forth, and if the member had a stack of them, he would find that in every publication that we put out, we ensure that we address all of society, and Native people in this province are important so we address them.

As a matter of fact, in the whole area of Creating a Framework for the Future, Educational Legislation for the '90s, a consultation paper, item No. 22, programs for aboriginal people are specifically mentioned here, and there are a couple of very important questions asked. Through the process of consultation, I am hopeful that we will get input from the Native community in terms of what directions we should be taking with Native education. For that reason, we appointed Ms. Claire Riddell from the MMF to the committee to ensure that there would be representation from that segment of our society.

Mr. Chomlak: How large a committee does the minister envision this will be, and who will have membership on it?

Mr. Derkach: I think, Madam Chairperson, that an average makeup of this committee will be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 12 to 15 people; however, if we need to add after the committee has been established because someone would feel from the Native community that they need representation on it, that certainly can be considered. I would say the average make-up of the committee will be somewhere in the range of 12 to 15 members.

Mr. Chomlak: Just the second part of my question, what would be the rough make-up of the committee, representatives from what organizations, what professional bodies, what community groups or that type of thing, if the minister has that information?

Mr. Derkach: The draft recommendation in terms of groups that should be represented on this committee would include teachers, trustees, administrators, people from our universities and colleges, the Manitoba Metis Federation, the parents of children who are of school age, the business and industry sector. We want to ensure that there are elders and there are people from the Native Ed branch as well. As well there might be the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs which probably will need to be represented and perhaps there might be one or two other groups that we have not recognized at this time that might need representation on there. As I said, the range of the committee will be between 12 and 15 depending on who we might have missed.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I would assume that my colleague, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), has indicated his concern about the decreasing budget yet once again of the branch of Native Education—a number of times he tells me.

I would like to focus now on the survival school which will be up and running in September of this year. I would like to preface my remarks by saying that they have taken on a very large mandate here. They are suggesting that they would begin a school in September for Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. I have difficulty with that. I think I would prefer if they would take a little smaller chunk and perhaps try a 9 and 10 in this first academic school year, and then move it on to 11 the following year, and 12 the following year. That is neither the minister's choice nor my choice, this is the Winnipeg School Division No. 1.

One of the issues that is of concern to us, I think, is the curriculum that is going to be taught in that Native survival school. In thinking about it, because the social studies field is obviously my specialty, I can see the curriculum changes that could be made in 9, 10, 11 and 12.

* (1650)

I would like to suggest some of those that I think could be made and then ask the minister if it is possible by September, first of all, have this branch present them with materials in that direction or even if they would be willing to do so. For example, in the Grade 9 Canadian government course, it would seem to me a logical place for an aboriginal history, particularly the history of aboriginal government. One of the units, for example, could be on a variety of ways that the aboriginal people have governed themselves, the Mohawk long house, for example. At the same time there could be a comparison between their modes of government and our modes of government.

A further unit could indeed be on the whole notion of self-government, what it means and how it could constitutionally be made possible. All of those things could take place within a Grade 9 Canadian government curriculum. The Grade 10 course, which is a geography and American course, certainly there is no question that, as it already deals with some of the history of land formations, there could be a tie-in between the land formations in the way in which the aboriginal peoples lived. For example: the coastal Indians and the type of development that they brought because they were coastal aboriginal peoples; the Plains Indians and the type of development they brought because they were plains people; and a whole study of the landform at the same time as the study of the aboriginal peoples.

Grade 11 is a natural, of course, because it is a history of Canada, and great units could be developed on the history of our aboriginal peoples as part of that.

Finally, if they were to teach social studies at the Grade 12 level and were to do a world issues course, they could, of course, examine the aboriginal peoples not only in this country, but aboriginal peoples in New Zealand, aboriginal peoples in Australia, aboriginal peoples in parts of the Soviet Union.

Now is it possible to provide that kind of curriculum development by the Native Education branch between now and September of 1991?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, as the member knows, this whole move towards an aboriginal survival school only began a few short months ago. So it would be unreasonable to expect that the department would have the complete curriculum specifically developed for that type of school in terms of their wants by September of 1991.

I think it is fair to say that our present curriculum has been amended in the last three years to include sections on aboriginal issues which are relevant to Manitoba and to Canada. The Native Ed branch has been working with Winnipeg School Division No. 1 in the whole area of curriculum to ensure that they can provide as much information as possible to Winnipeg School Division No. 1. The core curriculum will have to be followed. There is no question about that. Over and above that there are going to be, I am sure, many local, if you like, types of programs required to address the needs of those students.

I do not think that we should fool ourselves for one minute by saying that we can have all of those in place by the fall of this year and implemented completely. I think it is going to be an evolving situation where over the next number of years, as the school becomes established, we will be identifying more clearly the types of programs that schools should offer. Indeed, some of the suggestions that the member makes are excellent ones, and I would not indicate otherwise, but that is something that the professional staff from the branch, from the department, and the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 will be working on very closely.

As a matter of fact, I would suggest that those will probably become some fairly important priorities as

we embark on this new pioneer approach, if you like, in terms of educating our aboriginal students.

I would hope that we do not move into the same mode, if you like, that we were 20 years ago where we begin to segregate completely our Native students from the rest of society, because I do not think that is the way that many of our Native peoples in this province want to go either.

I think where our schools cannot meet the needs of some of the students, they become dropouts. Where that kind of school is important for them to stay in school, that is something that school divisions have to address. I will be instructing my department to work as closely as possible with the school divisions, or that school division, to ensure that the same opportunities, or as close to possible the same types of opportunities, are offered to those students as they are offered anywhere else in the province. I mean in terms of meeting their special needs from a cultural perspective.

Mrs. Carstairs: There is a fundamental difference of course between the segregation which is being proposed in the survival school and the one which was perpetrated against our aboriginal peoples in the last century and in this century. There they were denied any opportunity to learn about their own culture and the use of their own languages. Here they are going to be encouraged to learn about their own culture and the use of their own languages.

The concern that I have though is that unless we move quickly to ensure that there is curriculum which is culturally relevant that the school will not achieve its mandate, which is to provide a very different educational experience to these youngsters than is presently available to them in the public school system.

The minister indicated that they would have to follow the core curriculum. How much flexibility is going to be allowed with respect to the core curriculum if it can be proven that the alternative curriculum achieves the same skill base as the curriculum that is in place.

Let me give a very specific example. If one of the skills that is to be acquired in the teaching of Canadian government is an understanding of the Canadian government system, and that skill is acquired, will that preclude them from also doing a comparative study with their own aboriginal forms of government in Canada?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, I would have to say that because this is a new experience, we want to avoid some of the pitfalls that we experienced in the past. I think it would be important that we be flexible, that we have our Native Ed branch stay in close contact with the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and the survival school and that indeed they understand clearly the types of materials that we have already available to assist students in that area and the fact that we have developed an integrated curriculum if you like on many of those issues. I think that here is an opportunity for our Native advisory committee to play an important role as well.

I believe that we have to be somewhat flexible, allow for creativity, but indeed make sure that educational quality is not sacrificed at any point in time.

Mrs. Carstairs: Will one of the professional staff persons be specifically assigned to work with the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 on their survival school, and can the minister identify which staff person that will be?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the acting director will certainly be involved in all of those aspects, and it would depend on which area of expertise is required. We would have available within the branch people who would perhaps be able to work with the school division depending on the kinds of information, the kinds of expertise that might be required. So it is not a matter of appointing one person. Indeed, it is a matter of ensuring that services from the entire branch are going to be available for the division.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, that concerns me, and I hope that the minister will consider giving one of the professional people at least a line position here to specifically look after this. There are going to be so many decisions that are going to have to be made so quickly if this school is indeed to function with any facility in September of 1991, that unless such a person is assigned, I am concerned that the curriculum will not be the kind of relevant curriculum that will be required to make it a success.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairperson, the reality is that the branch has responsibility for the entire province, and it would be very difficult to assign one individual staff person to this division on a full-time basis, because that could happen anywhere else. We will keep in close contact with the division, because this is a new experience for them as well.

If it is going to be successful, and we want it to be successful for the students who are involved in that system, then we are going to have to pay some special attention. Indeed, my acting director will be in close contact with the school division. She is aware of the situation there, is in constant dialogue with the division and will continue to be.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The time being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, I am interrupting the proceedings, and we will return at 8 p.m. this evening.

Call in the Speaker.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 13—Free Trade with Mexico

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that

WHEREAS the Free Trade Agreement with the United States has cost Manitoba thousands of jobs; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has indicated its intention to join in trilateral free trade negotiations with the United States and Mexico; and

WHEREAS many Manitobans have grave concerns about the implications of an impending free trade agreement between Canada and Mexico, particularly with respect to its impact on wages and benefits; and

WHEREAS there has been no public discussion about the elements of such a free trade agreement; and

WHEREAS there has been no public discussion or consensus developed on the benefits and costs of such an agreement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier of the Province of Manitoba to call on the federal government to immediately suspend free trade discussions with Mexico.

Motion presented.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks on this resolution by saying I wish it was not necessary. I wish the government, of its own

initiative and its own accord, would have decided some months ago that the potential free trade agreement with Mexico, which follows very closely on the heels of a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, is of such concern that it warrants a thorough review and a thorough study, both by the Canadian government and the provincial governments across this country, before we embark on such a move.

Mr. Speaker, I say that because despite the continued support of the Conservative members opposite and their federal colleagues and a certain number of large companies in Canada for support for the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Canada, I think there is a growing body of evidence that the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States is having a devastating effect on our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I refer perhaps lately to the March 15 issue in the Winnipeg Free Press which says, as a headline: Manufacturing Sector Takes Sickening Dive. We predicted, many people predicted—not just New Democrats, but many including the Pro-Canada Network, labour unions, economists in every faculty of economics and faculty of management across the country—that the Free Trade Agreement would devastate our manufacturing sector, that it would take away some inherent advantages we have as a country, particularly referencing our energy and the ability of the Canadian government of the day to manage our energy resources.

It also talked about the long-term impact of creating what—particularly members of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, but also members of the Conservative caucus across the country and some Liberals, including Donald Macdonald, of course, but including some other prominent Liberals—talked about creating that infamous level playing field.

Well, Mr. Speaker, of course, in a continent as large as North America, in countries as diverse as Canada and United States, there is no such thing as a level playing field. A level playing field is only possible if you share the same climate and the same geography. A level playing field is only possible if you share the same economic base. A level playing field is only possible if you share the same kind of political institution. A level playing field is only possible if your economic and social institutions are in some way harmonized.

Mr. Speaker, any objective observer of Canada and the United States could not say that any of those conditions were met, let alone all of those conditions that would be necessary to create what is euphemistically called a level playing field. There are many of us who believe that the road to that level playing field would be an extremely painful one not only for Canadian manufacturers, but for Canadian retailers, for Canadian taxpayers, for Canadian governments, for all of us collectively. I think the events of the last two and a half years have shown that to be the case.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that this government, in particular this federal government, their colleagues in Ottawa, can show us any objective review of the Free Trade Agreement to date which would support the contention that in the long run the Free Trade Agreement is going to be good for us. We have given up already much of what has made us uniquely Canadian.

Of course, one of the particular concerns of New Democrats, particularly in western Canada, has been the commitment of the federal government under the Free Trade Agreement, this particular Free Trade Agreement, to give up essentially control over our energy. Anyone who has looked most recently, for example, at the National Energy Board's approval of the gas pipeline, the additional pipeline which will take gas to the northeastern seaboard of the United States, knows that we have lost control of our energy.

The National Energy Board no longer regulates the export of energy. There is no longer any requirement in place to ensure that our natural gas reserves or our oil reserves are there to protect our interests over the long term. There is no requirement that we have a 15-year or a 25-year supply of known reserves of those commodities for Canadian use. I remind people again that we have some particular needs when it comes to energy because of the size and the breadth of our country, because of the extreme nature of our climate.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, the evidence mounts. Today, or yesterday in the Free Press, Palliser Furniture announced, or it was announced that it had purchased a furniture manufacturing plant in the United States. Palliser has been a successful Manitoba company, and it is interesting to note that Art DeFehr, the President of Palliser Furniture, was one of the few, I should say, large manufacturers

with significant interests in Manitoba, who I thought took a particularly realistic view of the implications of free trade, because Mr. DeFehr, to his credit, said, yes, there are going to be problems. Mr. DeFehr said, yes, there is going to have to be rationalization. Mr. DeFehr said, yes, some companies are going to move their manufacturing plants to the United States.

But he thought, Mr. Speaker, and he said so quite clearly, that Palliser would not be affected to any great extent, that they could compete in Manitoba. Although he had been successfully competing for many years, he said he was prepared to take on that challenge. Well, the success, or lack thereof, of Palliser in the last two and a half years is well known. We have lost jobs in Manitoba and now Palliser, in making what will inevitably be a good corporate decision, has decided to purchase a manufacturing plant outside of Canada. It means no more jobs here.

It is not only in the manufacturing sector. The food processing industry is going to suffer perhaps an even more dismal fate in the province of Manitoba. These things are happening all across the country. The Conference Board of Canada recently suggested that unlike the recessions Canada has suffered previously, 50 percent of the jobs which disappeared as temporary layoffs in previous recessions are going to disappear forever from the Canadian economy, not just the Manitoba economy. So we are seeing a major restructuring of the economy, and much of it is based on the mistaken assumptions that were created in the heat of the discussion about free trade which went on in 1988 and up until January 1, 1989.

Mr. Speaker, the decision of the Mulroney government and with the support apparently—although there were some reservations expressed by the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) initially—but with the apparent support of this government, the Canadian government is prepared to enter negotiations for a free trade agreement between Mexico and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I do not expect members opposite to adopt my particular world view. I do not expect them to adopt the world view of the many people, intelligent people from other institutions, including the business community who feel this may be a mistake. What I do expect them to do on behalf of the people of Manitoba is to present us with some rational evidence that what we are doing is the best

way, or necessarily the only way to go, with respect to trade liberalization.

We believe and have believed for a long time that we can become more competitive, that we can become—our manufacturers, our private sector can become leaner and meaner by doing many things apart from governments being involved in global negotiations like we had with the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the U.S. and the global kinds of negotiations that appear to be taking place between the United States, Mexico and now Canada.

Mr. Speaker, if we think the trauma that is going to be caused to our economy and average people, working people, as a result of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, they are in for a much more serious shock when we try and level the playing field between Canada and Mexico. There are literally dozens of questions which must be answered before I think we, as a province, should be throwing our support behind any set of negotiations with the United States and Mexico.

First, Mr. Speaker, I think that Canadians generally, Manitobans more particularly, have to understand what elements are being included in this set of negotiations. Are we going to commit to Mexico the same kind of energy arrangements we have with the United States? Are we going to in some way be able to protect what little appears to be left of our social programs and our safety net programs? Are we going to have the same kind of environmental regulations imposed in both jurisdictions? Are we going to have the same kind of workplace, health and safety requirements imposed in both jurisdictions?

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a myth that somehow this is required, this kind of mindless wearing away of the benefits which we have created for ourselves and our children over the 120 years, on some premise that this is going to improve our society. Other countries in the world have adopted a completely different approach, and I think that the least we should expect from our governments, our federal government or our provincial government, is some sort of rational examination of the larger question of, where is this agreement going to take us? What are the benefits going to be, and what are the costs going to be?

Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) what

steps the government was going to take to examine the question of how the Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico would affect Canada, he indicated that he was consulting broadly on that question. I asked the same minister back in March whether he would table a copy of this report from Price Waterhouse on attitudes towards free trade with Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, to date, I have had no substantive result from this government, from the minister, on the implications of free trade with Mexico. I believe that, like the NDP government in 1987, we should have at least a provincial view of what the implications are going to be. How are our different sectors going to be affected? What is going to happen to our tax regime as we try to create that level playing field for our companies, companies that remain in Manitoba after the ravages of the last couple of years?

We do not exist on a level playing field. I have said, and many others have said, that creating that level playing field may not be necessary and is certainly going to create repercussions throughout our institutions, our education system, our health care system, our safety-net system, including our child care system, unemployment insurance, welfare programs. Anyone who pretends for a moment that this kind of agreement can be proceeded with without consequences for those basic Canadian programs, programs that were supported by politicians from every stripe now for decades, is kidding themselves.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association, during the free trade debate in 1988, said, oh, no, there is no need to be concerned about the universality of social programs. Of course, after the agreement was signed on January 1 of 1989, the same Canadian Manufacturers' Association and, in fact, many Conservative politicians who had denied it previously said, yes, there are going to have to be adjustments. Those adjustments mean, quite clearly, less money for health and post-secondary education, and that is what we have seen from the federal Conservative government. They mean changes to unemployment insurance, and that is what we have seen from the Canadian government. So the repercussions are there, Mr. Speaker.

I urge members to debate this point, but I also urge the government to give Manitobans the facts for a change before we leap headlong into an agreement that is going to cost us and,

more particularly, our children, a great deal. Thank you.

* (1720)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the resolution put forward by my honourable friend from Flin Flon perhaps, I think, is a little premature in the sense that Manitoba is presently undergoing broad consultations through the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) to consult Manitoba businesses and those who are going to be affected by a Canada-Mexico-United States free trade agreement.

Even the honourable member, in his discussion of this topic during the last few minutes, indicated that the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, for instance, he says in the opening line of his resolution, has cost Manitoba thousands of jobs. Mr. Speaker, that has not conclusively been proven at all. The fact is that very few of the job losses over the past while have been attributable to the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. By and large, those job losses have been attributed to a wide variety of very legitimate other reasons: Corporate restructuring; outdated plants that have not been kept up to speed for a variety of reasons, not unlike a number of years of NDP government in this province that, for instance, browbeat industry here and gave them no encouragement at all to want to reinvest in this province. We have had considerable evidence of that over a long period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I guess we should look a little bit at where we are with this current situation, the fact that the Canadian government has agreed to enter into discussions, not agreed to enter into a free trade agreement, but enter into discussions with the United States and Mexico with regard to a potential North American free trade agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. is supporting that process primarily on political grounds. They have a number of problems associated with the relations with Mexico, not the least of which is a preservation of free market economy in that country and, of course, to protect their southern border. So that, while it is not necessarily entirely related to trade relationships, it is related to the fact that they would like to see Mexico as a strong free-trading partner with a strong free market economy and if that occurs, with their assistance, then they can see that

their southern border is certainly protected, as is their northern border with Canada.

The benefits for Canada are, of course, a little less clear, Mr. Speaker, in that regard. We have concerns with regard to a free trade arrangement, but one of the most important implications, I think, related to a Canada-Mexico-U.S. free trade arrangement is the protection for Canada of the benefits of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, we do not want to see a situation where the United States, for instance, is the only country in the North American trading bloc where companies can locate and have free access to two different economies.

Going back to the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, before the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement was signed, 80 percent of our exports went back and forth across the border unimpeded. So to suggest now, two years into the agreement, that tariff reductions of 2 percent, 3 percent and 4 percent have decimated Canadian industry and Canadian social programs I think is a great leap of faith on the part of the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

The fact that those kinds of occurrences could have happened on 20 percent of our exports, Mr. Speaker, I think is something that unfortunately the members of the New Democratic Party tend to do, they tend to leap before they look. They tend to not consult, but, simply based on ideology, proceed on the basis that—(interjection)—and pressure from their friends in the labour union movement, I understand that, those friends of theirs who have a very vested interest in maintaining as high a wage level as possible and as high a benefit level as possible for their membership, and that is a reasonable legitimate concern on their part. I do not quarrel with that, but the fact of the matter is that the members of the New Democratic Party unfortunately only looked at that aspect of it, and do not look at any other aspect associated with the fact that the world is changing, the fact that we have over a long period of time seen major changes take place in world trading blocs.

We have some concerns, Mr. Speaker. We should have more concerns. The fact that, for instance, in manufacturing technologies—there are about 20 or so basic manufacturing technologies in use throughout the world. In Canada 60 percent of our businesses do not use any of the basic

manufacturing technologies that are in use throughout the world. Now that should scare each and every one of us, because we are not going to be able to compete in a global market. That global market is happening all over. Imports, exports are happening. Because we are not able to compete, we are not going to get our share of those markets. So we have to be concerned about that.

Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize that there are benefits under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. We have to recognize also that we have to at least participate in negotiations to ensure that we can maintain those benefits under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Our participation as a country in those negotiations—and I stress in the first instance, negotiations. I think we need then to at least be there to protect our own interests.

You know, much has been said, Mr. Speaker, about the maquiladora industries that are located south of the U.S.-Mexico border and what will happen under a free trade agreement associated with those industries. At the present time without a free trade agreement, they are able to assemble and ship back into the U.S. for distribution throughout North America products manufactured there on the basis that only the value added of what happens in Mexico has a tariff put against it. So the equipment that is used to put it together and the raw materials that are used to assemble the final product are not presently tariffable. So we have to be concerned about that, and we have to make sure that under any trade arrangement, we have to ensure that reasonable, level playing-field types of situations occur out of that area, which is not presently happening.

So we have an opportunity, I think, as part of this discussion to at least try and level that playing field for our manufacturers here in Canada by certainly dealing with that particular area. We have, Mr. Speaker, an opportunity. I do not think we should out of hand simply dismiss the benefits of any future broadening of our trade horizons.

We have people predicting that the world will be divided ultimately into three large trading blocs: the Pan-European trading bloc, the East Asian and the North American. If that occurs, and it seems to be happening more and more as we take a look at what is happening in Europe, for instance, and what is happening in Asia with Japan shipping more and more of its manufacturing and processing out of its

country, because it can no longer afford to compete on the basis of its own costs of manufacturing, into other Third World countries and southeast Asia. As that develops and as Japan tends to ship more and more of its manufacturing operations offshore, that Pan-Asian trading bloc as well will come into place.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that Canada as a country, with its limited numbers of people, its large land mass and its costs of operating, will ever be able to compete on its own in a large trading bloc situation such as I have just outlined. I think there are some opportunities, and we have to weigh these very carefully. We have to look at the opportunities that are available to us and try and assess those impacts, assess the impacts of what might happen if we do not participate, and if we do. We have to weigh those very carefully before making an ultimate decision.

* (1730)

The principal impacts for Manitoba as far as the Canada-Mexico-U.S. free trade agreement, I think while limited at the present time—and I have indicated that publicly in the House previously, in my former ministry, that we do not have a large trade either way at the present time with Mexico.

We have opportunities in nickel. We have opportunities, particularly in the urban bus area. The fact that presently New Flyer Industries has secured larger and larger parts of markets in the US and has been extremely competitive against other manufacturers of urban buses—we have a very good opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to do some work in that area. Pork products, canola, canola oil and breeding cattle also are major exports now to Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to be concerned that there is provincial participation. Under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, near to the end of that particular process, finally the federal government agreed that provinces should be allowed to participate in those discussions in order to ensure, because of the diverse regions of Canada and the diverse economies of each of our areas of the country, that we be able to participate.

With the election of this government in 1988, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that the former government was ideologically opposed to free trade under any circumstances, we were invited as one of the provinces of Canada to participate in discussions with regard to free trade. We have been involved in

discussions with the federal government to be able to bring forward our position now as a province, and collectively in western Canada as a region as opposed to even the specifics of our own province, because we have a great deal in common with our western counterparts.

I am sure as we speak here today that during the discussions with the western premiers this item is on the agenda, that they are discussing this issue and how western Canada in particular can assure that its interests, as opposed to the interests of the country as a whole, but the specifics of western Canadian interests in a Canada-Mexico-U.S. free trade agreement are protected.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta and Saskatchewan have already indicated that they fully support negotiations on the basis of protecting the gains made under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Ontario is opposed on the grounds that Canadian jobs will be lost to low Mexican wages. That is a concern, something we cannot ignore out of hand and that we must assess in trying to weigh the equation of whether we should or should not be participating in a future free trade agreement.

Quebec is supporting Canada's involvement as well as New Brunswick. At the present time, those are all of the provinces who have expressed a preference one way or another. British Columbia is presently in a negotiating and consultation process, as is Manitoba. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), as I said earlier, has been conducting wide consultation with a variety of Manitoba groups who are interested in this particular trade agreement. We have to be careful we do not jump to conclusions such as the resolution proposes. We have to ensure that we look at all of the aspects that are going to affect our country, affect our province, affect our economy and the people who live in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is important, I think, that all of us not jump to those conclusions but to simply say, let us weigh the advantages, let us weigh the disadvantages, let us look at all of the information, not just simply throw it out of hand on ideological grounds but to say we must, we owe it to our children, we owe it to our grandchildren in this province to view all of the information associated with this and then make a valid judgment.

When that judgment is made, when the government has taken a position with regard to

Canada-Mexico-U.S. free trade, then we will be in a position to be either criticized or complimented, dependent upon your point of view and dependent ultimately on the results of what happens as the result of those decisions. We need not, I think, jump to conclusions at this point, but simply to say let us look at all the options, let us consult as widely as we can, let us talk to as many people who are going to be affected as we can and then make a sound judgment based on that information that comes forward.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all members not to become too exercised over this particular issue just yet. Let us look at that information, let us look at what the people who are involved in these export activities and so on are concerned and let them ultimately provide that information to government and then ultimately let government make the decision. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this resolution put forward by the opposition member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). It is on a very serious issue, and I believe properly and astutely before this Chamber, although, of course, it involves primarily the federal jurisdiction, that is the international trade. However, there is no question that we in the province of Manitoba, and as provincial governmental representatives, have a role to play on the issue of free trade. It is with that in mind that I will address my comments to members.

Mr. Speaker, the member puts forward the resolution that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier of the province to call on the federal government to immediately suspend free trade discussions with Mexico.

He premises that with the statement that the Government of Canada has indicated its intention to join in trilateral free trade negotiations. That is putting it mildly. The Government of Canada all but begged to be part of those negotiations. The Government of Canada did everything within its power to get into those negotiations and were deeply afraid that they would not be part of those negotiations. If there is any more poignant example of the very junior partner that we are to our neighbours to the south on international negotiations as of the free trade agreement with them, that is the clearest example. We had to go on bended knee to ask the United States to be a part of the negotiations with Mexico. We have come

nowhere in the last hundred years given that very illustrative example of subservience, the role we had to play in going to the United States as they sought to make a continental market agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I start with that comment, that the Free Trade Agreement has done nothing to enhance our political credibility or our political clout on the North American scene.

With respect to the minister's comments that the Free Trade Agreement generally creates a level playing field, and any of us who lived through the 1988 election knows that was the catch phrase. We need a level playing field, that was the statement. Now we have the minister here using the same verbiage, the same phrase, to defend a free trade agreement with Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, let us take the issue of working conditions in this country, in this province, and that in Mexico. If we are going to create a level playing field, and labour is the most significant cost for most businesses, most businesses spend the majority of their money on labour, at least businesses in the manufacturing and industrial sector, so it is an appropriate one to look at. If we are looking at labour, and the effect on labour of a free trade agreement, creating a level playing field, will it be us who go down to the Mexican level, or will it be they who come up to our level? Because there can be no question that wages are higher in Canada, the working week is shorter, conditions are better in the workplace, and in the society at large we have better and a free medical service, we have a social welfare net which includes unemployment insurance and other attributes.

If someone happens to find themselves disabled or unemployed, we have a social welfare net, we think, in Canada; they have none of that in Mexico. We have workplace, health and safety standards here which are much higher, protection for workers who blow the whistle on unsafe work practices. We have an environmental protection regime which tries to protect our natural habitat against the ravages of uncontrolled industry; they have none of that in Mexico. All of those things we appear to be ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Now, if the playing field is to be made level, are we going down to their level, or are they coming up to ours? Mr. Speaker, there can only be one answer, we are going down. The world economy is a very competitive place, things sink to the lowest

denominator in terms of cost. He who can produce a good cheapest that is competitive will win the prize. That is the way it works. If Mexico has the advantage of technology imported from the United States and from this country, the know-how, they have the labour, that is their greatest asset.

Mexico has cheap, cheap labour, labour that is willing to work in conditions and for rates of pay which are below what we have had in this country for going on 50 years. Now, if there is any doubt as to who will go up and who will go down, we can only look at the experience since we have signed the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, and that can be quadrupled, in effect, if we get into one with Mexico.

* (1740)

Canadian labour has everything to fear, the Canadian working person has everything to fear from a free trade regime with Mexico, based on this minister's words and his defence, which is the level playing field. That playing field is going to sink dramatically from a Canadian perspective in order to be level with Mexico.

We look at the trade agreement since it has been signed with the United States and we see, in fact, all of the bad premonitions that were put forward in the 1988 election. It was stated in that election that there would be pressure on our social welfare system, there would be pressure on our wage rates to compete with the United States, which in many sectors and in many parts of the United States were far less than we had in Canada. That has come true, Mr. Speaker. Patently, that has come true.

We have seen in Canada the drain of manufacturing and industrial sector jobs, those jobs that are high paying, most oftentimes organized work force jobs that pay people enough to support their families. What we have consistently attracted, and this government relies on them to support their job creation, are the minimum wage jobs, the part-time jobs, the jobs that are insecure and do not feed families. They barely feed individuals. They are \$5, \$6, \$7-an-hour jobs. That does not get you very far in today's world. So we are consistently seeing people leave this province because they do not have the opportunity to make enough to feed and clothe and house dependants.

We look again at the issue of labour and the impact of the Free Trade Agreement. It is something I harp on, but I want to raise it again. In

1988, when the federal government was moving into signing and implementing the Free Trade Agreement, they commissioned a report by a gentleman by the name of Mr. de Grandpre, a reputed expert, and he was appointed by the Conservative administration to put together a report and tell the federal government what they could do to minimize the negative effect of free trade on the labour sector and to maximize the positive effect.

It was all on the understanding of course, the political decision had been made. Free trade was a go. The only issue was, how do we best make it a go? So the Conservative government of the day brought in Mr. de Grandpre. Mr. de Grandpre wrote a report, and that report is a very, very thick document. It bears reading by all members of this House. It was called Adjusting to Win. Mr. de Grandpre had his marching orders at the outset. It was that free trade was good. That was the only conclusion he could come to. What he did was conclude that if we are going to win—and that decision was not for him to make. It had already been made politically—we must adjust, and that is the title of his report, Adjusting to Win. The reverse of that is, if you do not adjust, you do not win. That was his conclusion.

If we look at that report, it tells governments—and it mentions provincial governments, it is not just a federal responsibility—but it says provincially and federally, the governments of the day must put into place significant efforts to allow the labour sector to adjust as we go through the free trade era.

They suggested, Mr. Speaker, and it is not a new fact to this House, I have put it on the record many times, that the average Canadian worker will go through four or five career changes in the modern environment. The days of 40 years at one job doing the same thing with the same company are gone. To some extent, that may be good. People will have the opportunity to work at four or five different things through a career. Hopefully, the job may not be as monotonous as it may have been at 40 years doing the same job, but what is worst of all is to be out of a job and not have any bridging, any ability to retrain to keep up to the economy, to learn a new skill, stay with the same company. There is nothing in place to do that, Mr. Speaker.

That is what de Grandpre called for. That is the one thing he said, that if you do not help workers adjust, you will not win. That was the conclusion of his report. That was 1989 he said that, at the outset

of the free trade era. What have we done in this country? Both federally and provincially there is a pitiful, scandalous lack of response to that report and lack of realization of the effect of free trade on the labour sector.

That is why today we are losing the industrial and manufacturing sectors, Mr. Speaker, and if we enter into a free trade agreement with Mexico, be assured that will mean further loss this time, perhaps not just south to the country directly below us, but all the way to Mexico, Mr. Speaker, because that is where labour cost can be absolutely minimized. That is where you can get somebody to work for you a whole day for the price of one hour for a Canadian worker, because you do not have to pay pension plans. You do not have to pay UIC. The minimum wage is negligible. You can work them 12 hours a day in conditions that are unheard of in this country. You do not have to worry about workplace, health and safety inspections or regulations. You do not have to worry about massacring the environment. There is no concern to that extent.

That is the way it works in Mexico, and that is what we are buying into. Mr. Speaker, that is a tragedy for the future of this country on all sectors and on all fronts. I know the way of the world, and the way of the world is trading blocs. That is what is happening. The minister says that is what is happening, but Canada has humbled itself and begged to get into that. That is the Conservative model. Let us get down on our knees and see if we can please possibly join Mexico in a free trade arrangement. How humiliating for this country, how backward.

This country has one asset which puts it above any other nation on the face of this globe, and that is our natural resources. We have a good labour force. It is an educated labour force. It is a reliable labour force, but other nations have that, to be fair and to be honest. What we have that no other nation on the face of this earth has are our natural resources. We have always had them. It has been our birthright, and it has been our ace card.

Mr. Speaker, what we have given away by free trade, first to the United States, now to Mexico, what we will be giving away is free unrestricted access to the one thing we had which we could hold over any nation on the face of this earth. That is what we are giving up. We have said forget the tariffs when it comes to water, when it comes to minerals, when it

comes to forestry, when it comes to the things which we have more of than any other nation on this earth.

We have taken down the tariffs, and we have said, you can come here and you can exploit. You can take the profit home. You can take the manufacturing jobs wherever you want. You can extract the resource into the jobs that are created to turn that into products you can take somewhere else. That is always what we had.

I do not defend or like the branch plant economy, but the fact is that we kept jobs in Canada by putting up tariffs. We kept jobs here, the manufacturing sector here, and we kept percentages of profits here that had to be reinvested in Canada, that had to be paid to Canadians so we could tax those Canadians and bring it into our economy, bring it into our tax base. That is what we did. That is the way we maximized the use of our natural resources, and we have given that up.

If we have to buck the international trend and remain isolationists, Mr. Speaker, then that is the cost of political independence for Canada. The fact is, that theory—and that was the importance of the 1988 election—of Confederation in Canada has been abandoned. With it has gone our political independence. If, and I say "if" and it is a big "if," we ever economically benefit from free trade, if we do, it will be at enormous political cost. We will have truly become the 52nd state or just a part of a much larger North American economy without the political independence to assert our own policies and our own place in the world. We are seeing that day by day. We have increasingly become the whipping boy of the United States administration, and now we are begging them to let us into the Mexican arrangement—truly an abominable and humiliating situation for any Canadian.

This resolution is worthy of support because it does illustrate and call for the pulling out of the talks and, for that reason, I am pleased to endorse the contents thereof. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1750)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, listening to honourable members and listening to the debate that is picking up steam across this country on this issue, as it did several years ago when the Canada-U.S. trade agreement was widely debated, we do realize that there are people that simply want to find a big

blanket, big cover, and cover themselves up with it—not just a blanket, but a tarpaulin.

Canada is a trading nation. It always has been. We have managed, in the early part of this 20th Century, to develop an enviable position in the world and, for us, an extremely good and comfortable standard of living, along with a wide range of social services that all of us want. There are different percentage figures that one can attach to it, but I can name you certainly a few specific commodity items.

We know that 80 percent of the agricultural production, grain production, that we grow in this country needs an export home. We know that 90 percent of our forestry production—and forestry is bigger than agriculture, industrial manufacturing and mineral extraction. Forestry is by far the biggest export earner of this country generating some \$19 billion to \$20 billion annually, but it needs an export home, and it needs conditions, climates for us to be able to utilize those great natural resources that the last speaker of the Liberal Party referred to.

There was a time when Canada produced 85 percent of the nickel supply of the world. We are down to 27 percent or 28 percent today. There was a time when we produced 55 percent of the aluminum production of the world. We are down to 16 percent or 17 percent today.

The honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about the level playing field, to make it fairer, to make it equal. That is a pretty understandable position, but where did Canada—and who is at least somewhat responsible for the uneven or the unequal playing field? I suspect that there are few honourable members here—well, perhaps the Sergeant-at-Arms and some others, some of our attendants perhaps up in the gallery who would be of that age, that vintage age—who would remember, as I remember, when our automobile industry in the Oshawa triangle, that Golden Triangle of Ottawa, Hamilton, Toronto, in the immediate post-war period was really picking up steam. What was the cry of our union leaders every time it came to negotiate a new contract? Parity, parity, parity with their U.S. cousins in Detroit. That is what they wanted. Because why should a Canadian manufacturer of a Chevrolet or a Ford or a Buick not be earning as much as his American cousin was just across the river, across from Windsor in Detroit?

When have we heard that cry? Fifteen years ago, 20 years ago? We have not heard that cry, because the Canadian automobile worker now gets 25 percent more than his American counterparts and produces 20 percent less. Who accepts some responsibility for being out of step? Who has created some of the inequality in that playing field that the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) speaks of?

I am quite prepared to acknowledge, and that is a political choice that Canadians have made and that can be factored into the differences with respect to the playing field, that we Canadians have chosen certain and very worthwhile, universal social programs such as medicare, but that can be factored into and built into the differences between the weight structure of our two competing economies. I speak of the Americans, whether we like them, hate them, or are indifferent to them, the fact of the matter is, there is no bigger trade agreement in the world than that which exists between the United States of America and Canada.

Honourable members look for an industrial strategy. The member for Flin Flon says, why can we not develop an industrial strategy? Mr. Speaker, the Liberals knew what the industrial strategy of Canada was back at the turn of the century under Sir Wilfrid Laurier. They called it reciprocity in those days, free trade with a little fancier and longer name.

For this country to provide the kind of job opportunities, to provide the kind of economic well-being, to create the wealth that we need for our social programs, for our hospitals, for our education system, means that our trade relations are healthy and hopefully to our benefit. They could have been, usually and always have been, with the bank of natural resources we have. The member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is quite right, that we could have enjoyed without too much masterminding, without too much worrying about how to arrive at it. The strategy has always been there, is there today, and has been there since the birth of this nation, the capability, the ability to trade with 250 people who need and require the goods and services that we produce from time to time. If we do it smart enough, then we make sure that the balance is in our favour, and then we all can live a little better.

Mr. Speaker, I am shocked by the poll that just recently came out that indicates—I do not know how we have all failed as politicians of all parties, how perhaps our education has failed so dismally. I say this knowing that we are in the midst of Education

and Training Estimates when fully 70 percent, when you total the two up, of Canadians who are taking their business across the border to avoid high costs and high taxation, do not identify with the fact that they see nothing wrong with that.

An Honourable Member: That is a shame.

Mr. Enns: That is a shame. That says something that just is mind-boggling. I do not know what it takes when I see, particularly, in the eastern—or in the west coast when you see these major highways with three, four or five cars abreast streaming across. If you had a meter counter there, how many—like when 800 cars go across and do their shopping does that mean that we lose the ability to maintain a hospital bed, or when another 800 go across that means we cannot hire two more nurses to keep them in our hospital care. When another couple of thousand go, does that mean we have to raise our taxes, generally, so we lose more jobs so we can continue growing the gap between the unequal playing field that members are so concerned about?

Mr. Speaker, surely we can come back to some rational form of government. We can build the walls around this nation, although our citizens, 70 percent of them are telling them no way, no way can we do what some other nations have done. -(interjection)-

The honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says, why not do what other nations have done?

Well, what have other nations done? I suggest to you that the sophisticated factory worker in Frankfurt, Germany, or in Liverpool, England, or in Paris, France—the difference was just as great between them and the unsophisticated vineyard worker in Greece or in Spain when they joined the Economic Community.

An Honourable Member: Unsophisticated?

Mr. Enns: Well, low wage earners, in relative terms. You know, the highly unionized shops of Great Britain, in a Rolls Royce factory, compare that to a wagon maker in Spain or in Greece. I would say that the difference was just about as big as what now exists between Canada and Mexico. What is happening, Mr. Speaker, contrary to the pessimism of the Liberal Party they are adopting, the movement is up and the European economic community has become the most powerful trading bloc that our farmers are only too well aware of, capable of competing with the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In accordance with the rules, I am interrupting the proceedings. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have five minutes remaining.

I am leaving the Chair with the understanding the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, May 13, 1991

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Introduction of Bills

Bill 40, Education Administration Amendment Act Derkach	1923
Bill 41, Public Schools Amendment Act (2) Derkach	1923
Bill 39, Summary Convictions Amendment Act McCrae	1923
Bill 38, Wildlife Amendment Act Enns	1923
Bill 44, Public Utilities Board Amendment Act McIntosh	1923
Bill 45, Securities Amendment Act McIntosh	1923
Bill 43, Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2) Praznik	1924
Racism Investigation Chomiak; McCrae; Downey	1924
Manitoba Hydro Projects Cerilli; Cummings	1925
Environmental Impact Assessments Cerilli; Cummings	1925
Manitoba Hydro Projects Cerilli; Cummings	1925
Prime Motor Oils Gaudry; Cummings	1926
Urban Hospital Council Wasylycia-Leis; Orchard	1927

Manitoba Trappers Association Hickes; Downey	1927
Core Area Initiative Hickes; Downey	1928
Child Abuse Carstairs; Gilleshammer	1928
Child Care Programs Wowchuk; Gilleshammer	1929
Child Care Initiative Wowchuk; Gilleshammer	1930
Child Care Programs Wowchuk; Gilleshammer	1930
55-Plus Program Santos; Ducharme	1931
Civil Technology Program Ashton; Derkach	1931
Northern Employment Training Program Ashton; Derkach	1931
Child Abuse Carstairs; Gilleshammer	1932

Oral Questions

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Concurrent Committees of Supply

Culture, Heritage and Citizenship	1933
Education and Training	1953

Private Members' Business

Proposed Resolutions

Res. 13, Free Trade With Mexico Storie	1977
Ernst	1980
Edwards	1983
Enns	1985