



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS (HANSARD)

39-40 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



VOL. XLI No. 59 - 1:30 p.m., TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1992



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 5, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Lorraine Roels, Coreen Roulette, Hedwig Mueller and others urging the government to consider establishing an Office of the Children's Advocate independent of cabinet and reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Al Park, Lori Pichor, E. Sandercock and others requesting the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) consider a one-year moratorium on the closure on the Human Resources Opportunity Centre in Selkirk.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Dutch Elm Disease control program is of primary importance to the protection of the city's many elm trees; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) himself stated that, "It is vital that we continue our active fight against Dutch Elm Disease in Manitoba," and

WHEREAS despite that verbal commitment, the government of Manitoba has cut its funding to the City's DED control program by half of the 1990 level, a move that will jeopardize the survival of Winnipeg's elm trees.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the government of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Natural Resources to consider restoring the full funding of the Dutch Elm

Disease control program to the previous level of 1990.

* * *

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member of Wellington (Ms. Barrett). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

* (1335)

* * *

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), and it complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

The Brandon General Hospital is the major health care institution for southwestern Manitoba; and

The citizens of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba are deeply concerned and disturbed about the downsizing of the hospital and view it as

a threat to the quality of health care in the region; and

The Manitoba government has chosen not to review the current budget to ensure that cutbacks to vital services do not occur; and

The administration of the hospital has been forced to take drastic measures including the elimination of the Palliative Care Unit and gynecological wards, along with the layoff of over 30 staff, mainly licensed practical nurses, to cope with a funding shortfall of over \$1.3 million; and

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): The Committee of Supply has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): It is with considerable pleasure that I table the Annual Report, the year ending 1990-91, The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

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 Garden City Collegiate, twenty-six Grade 11 students under the direction of Roberta Topping. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Also this afternoon, we have the Student Council of the Silver Heights Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Wallace Linton, the principal. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

Also this afternoon, from Acadia Junior High School, we have twenty-one Grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Wanda Dombek. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Economic Growth Private Sector Investment

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the question is to the First Minister.

Last Friday, unfortunately, statistics provided by Statistics Canada indicated that the GDP growth in Manitoba, as a basis of factor costs, was the last place in the whole country in terms of economic performance. Mr. Speaker, this is the first time since Walter Weir was defeated by Ed Schreyer in 1969 that we were in last place, unfortunately.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has tried to create an illusion with the public that it is based on labour incomes in this province. In spite of the fact that other provinces in Atlantic Canada had the same public sector wage freeze that the Premier implemented in this province, the Premier has tried to create the illusion that this is the reason for the decline in domestic growth in this province, being in last place.

Mr. Speaker, if you really look at the numbers, it is really that the decline takes place in the private sector. Many of the factors of private sector investment in 1991 declined dramatically. I would ask the question, in 1991, the private capital investment declined some 15.3 percent, the largest decline of any province in the country—again, last place. I would ask the Premier why private sector investment declined \$277 million in 1991, the largest decline of any province in Canada?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we notice the priorities and the directions of the New Democratic Party. They always have their directions in reverse, always heading backwards and always looking for where they can find the most negative. The prince of darkness, as I have called him earlier, is at it over and over again, day after day.

There is an article in today's paper that he may or may not have read—Manitoba mood called upbeat.

They talk about, again, for the third time in a matter of two weeks, a new forecast coming out by another forecasting organization that is suggesting, once again, that in the coming years, in '92, '93 and '94, we will be in the top part of the provinces of this country in terms of economic growth.

I also suggest to him that Stats Canada is suggesting that we will have the highest overall capital investment growth of any province in the country this year, in private and public capital investment. We will have, in terms of manufacturing investment, the highest increase, 31.7 percent in manufacturing capital investment. These are all the positive signs.

These are built upon the solid base that we have formed in this province by virtue of the fiscal policies that have kept our taxes down for five straight budgets, that have kept our deficit down at levels, overall, that have been half of those under the Pawley administration, and all this during a period of time in which we have had a very, very severe recession.

We have set the base. We have set the opportunity. Obviously forecasters are suggesting that we will now see the kinds of fruits of our labour that all of us want to have, all of us, that is, except the Leader of the New Democratic Party, who only wants to see negative situations in this province, who only wants to preach doom and gloom, who does not want to believe in the people of this province.

We believe in the people of this province, and we believe the growth that is being forecast will indeed come forward because of the policies that we have set in place.

* (1340)

Manufacturing Investment

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, what we want this Premier to do is accept responsibility for his last-place performance in economic performance, primarily in the private sector.

On November 1, 1990, the Premier said in this Chamber, again, Manitoba is to outshine the rest of the nation. That is the headline of the Business section of this morning's Free Press. Of course, if it had been bad news, it would have been on page one.

The Premier keeps pulling out these things from the Business section, Mr. Speaker, but economic performance belies the Premier's words in this Chamber.

A second question—the Premier has not answered why private sector investment was in last place. He has not answered the question, if you go down 15 percent, that is not a solid foundation, as the Premier alleges. That is a decline of our foundation, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we are back to pre-'85 days in private sector investment. I think the Premier should be accountable for that point.

Mr. Speaker, the manufacturing investment in this province declined 38.1 percent, the second worst performance in 1991 in this very important private sector area of any other province in Canada. Only Nova Scotia was worse.

Can the Premier, as chair of the economic committee of cabinet and as the person who is in charge of the economy of this province, explain to the people of Manitoba why we were second last in this other very important issue of economic performance?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Again, the Leader of the Opposition wants to concentrate on the past. We did not put in place the Economic Development Board of Cabinet until last fall, late in the fall, after the year was already done, because we saw the things that had to be done.

We put in place the budgetary conditions, no increase in taxes for five straight budgets under this administration, a deficit that has been kept much more under control than all of the other deficits in this country, including particularly New Democratic provinces who are raising taxes and deficits right across the country.

The results of it are that this year, manufacturing capital investment is expected to be the highest increase of any province in the country. That is the kind of thing that is resulting from the policies that we have put in place.

Economic Summit Implementation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): A final question—and the Premier again, looking at private sector indicators of the economy, a final indication is that residential construction declined in Manitoba by 40 percent, Mr. Speaker. Now, it is going to go up this year. If you are going to go up from three

houses to four houses, it is going to go up 33 percent, but it declined by 40 percent.[interjection] Well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) will want to explain why Manitoba was in last place in terms of residential construction investment in 1991.

Will the Premier now admit that they do not have a clue about what is going on in this economy? They are not getting the investment that they talked about in both the private and public sectors. Will he do something positive like an economic summit of business, labour and government to get Manitobans working together to get our economy on a good path, a positive path, in 1992?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is dead wrong. The figures he quotes demonstrate that we are getting the results and the performance that we were looking for.

Every single one of the forecasters is suggesting that we will be in the top three or four provinces in the country in terms of economic growth, in terms of private capital investment, in terms of public capital investment, in terms of housing starts, in terms of every one of those indicators, manufacturing capital investment, every single one of them. All of the forecasters are suggesting that in '92, '93, '94, we are going to be in the top half of the provinces in the country as a result of the things that we did in a difficult year.

Nobody suggests that 1991 was not a tough year on our economy, as it was on economies everywhere in this world. The only place that fact has been lost is in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, who does not know what is happening anywhere in the world. He has his head in the sand, and he is looking at what is in his own political interest to look at. We are looking at what is in the best interests of the people of Manitoba.

* (1345)

Mining Communities Government Initiatives

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, maybe the Premier (Mr. Filmon) should take that message to Snow Lake.

On Sunday afternoon, I attended a meeting with hundreds of other people from the community of Snow Lake, as they listened to their own obituary. This is the third mining community in northern Manitoba who has to listen to their own obituary and

then read it in the paper the next day, while this minister was in charge.

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Mineral Resources corporation, a Crown corporation, has some \$24 million in the bank.

Can the Minister of Energy and Mines or the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) explain to the people of Snow Lake why this government has been so indifferent, has refused to act in the interests of protecting the community and the jobs of those 480 families who are now dispossessed in Snow Lake?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all express the concern for the individuals who are impacted when these kinds of things happen dealing with a mining community. That is why this government took a very proactive position and introduced one of the best mining incentive programs in this country. We introduced an exploration incentive program that is not matched anywhere in this country, so that the private sector could come forward, along with the mineral resources exploration program of government, to find those resources that are there, to bring new life to communities such as Snow Lake.

What I would ask the member is: Why, in his term of government, did they not introduce something? They put us in the worst position in this country, Mr. Speaker, as far as taxes are concerned in the mining industry.

Mr. Storle: ... dollars in Leaf Rapids, in Snow Lake and in Flin Flon.

Mr. Speaker, the hypocrisy of this minister, to stand up and say the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program, which was introduced in 1991, was going to be of any help. Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting could not take advantage of the program. They were excluded. I raised it with this minister.

Mr. Speaker, why has this government been so indifferent to the fate of mining communities in northern Manitoba? What are the Minister of Energy and Mines, the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey) going to do to protect these people and secure their future?

Mr. Downey: Again, the member wants to play politics with the lives of the people of Snow Lake, rather than deal genuinely with the concerns of the mining industry.

There is, Mr. Speaker, an extended exploration budget being put in place by HBM&S for that

community. Some \$4.5 million will be spent this year in the exploration field.

As well, Mr. Speaker, this government has put a program in place that will encourage exploration. Mining companies like HBM&S will be able to write off 150 percent of their exploration expenses against their income. That is available to HBM&S.

Exploration

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the government has known about this for at least a year and perhaps two. As much as two years ago, I was asking the then Minister of Energy and Mines to double the exploration budget of Manitoba Mineral Resources to prevent this kind of tragedy.

My question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines, the minister responsible for MMR.

Why has the government refused the pleas of the community and myself to increase the exploration budget as much as two or three years ago to prevent the closure today because of a lack of ore?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, there has been approximately \$30 million expended in that area over the last 10 years to find new orebodies. We have not reduced the expenditures. In fact, the expenditures have been increased by HBM&S to find new reserves. We have put in place tax policies that are exceptionally good for the searching of new mineral deposits.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, why did the government, of which he sat as the minister, not—why were those programs not in place five years ago and six and seven years ago to encourage investment? [interjection]

No, they were not. In fact, the mining industry believed that the New Democratic Party policies were still in place and that we wanted to participate in 50 percent of every mine that was developed in this country. That is not the case.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, we—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has already used his question and his two supplementary questions.

* (1350)

Social Assistance Food Allowance

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, for days, we have been hearing the bad economic forecasts and the forecasts about the very low quality of education that is available to our children from coast to coast in this country. It is time to put a very human face on the whole issue of how people are surviving in Manitoba.

Winnipeg Harvest indicates that they have had a 111 percent increase in the number of households turning to food banks. Unfortunately, their donations of food have only increased by 65 percent. We have had an increase in volunteer hours, a recognition of the participatory nature of Manitoba, because we have seen an increase of 112 percent.

We have a Family Services minister who has before us in this House a bill which is going to reduce the benefit for food that people are going to receive. Mr. Speaker, infants on a provincial payment scale will receive \$83.90. At present, they are receiving \$152 per month.

Will the minister explain to this House why this government is going to get a cash revenue increase as a result of this new system of \$5.6 million?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, much of what the member has put on the record is in error.

The bill before the House, Bill 70, is to create the same entrance requirements across this province to access social allowances and to indicate that there will be a standardized level of social allowances. That is what the bill is intended to do, and we look forward to members entering the debate on Bill 70.

The government, the department is currently meeting with members of the SARC committee, which has members from MAUM, UMM and the City of Winnipeg—brought a report before government as a result of hearings and discussions that they had, calling on the government to do two things and to make access to social allowances equal across the province and to standardize the rates. That is what the bill is going to do.

We are currently meeting with the SARC committee to work out a lot of the other details that will be put in place after Bill 70 is passed.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, 89 percent of all social assistance recipients live in Winnipeg. Winnipeg has considerably higher assistance rates for food than does the rest of the province of Manitoba, 11 percent.

Will the minister explain why he is accepting as his level playing field, the level playing field of 11 percent of the social assistance recipients and not the level playing field of 89 percent of the social assistance recipients, resulting in for a family of one adult and one infant and one five-year-old child, \$102.50 less a month for food, \$1,230 a year less for food?

Mr. Gilleshamer: Mr. Speaker, again the member, I think, needs to take an accurate look at the legislation that is before the House to see what in fact it does, and that is to create one standard rate across the province and to set the same entrance requirements for people wishing to access social allowances.

The rates will be set on an annual basis. At the current time, the department is involved with members of the SARC committee looking at many details that have to be dealt with prior to this legislation being put into force. So on the question of rates, I think it is premature for the member to be saying that the rate is this level or that level. Those points are points of discussion that are currently going on with the SARC committee.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, what I am quoting are the rates set by the province and the city as of March 20, 1992. There has been no rate change since that time. The minister, on April 13, 1992, admits that some municipalities have higher rates.

Will he now admit that Winnipeg, with 89 percent of the social assistance recipients, is the municipality with the higher rate, and will he now commit that it is that higher rate for food which will become the standard in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Gilleshamer: Mr. Speaker, I say again, the legislation is still before the House. The legislation will come into force probably some time in 1992 or 1993. The actual rates will be determined, and the details will be worked out between the department and the members of the SARC committee. These negotiations and discussions are still going on.

* (1355)

Mining Community Reserve Fund Snow Lake, Manitoba

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, who does not seem to want to bother himself with the dirty details of 1,500 people losing their jobs, their homes and their community.

The Premier and this government are in charge of the Mining Community Reserve Fund which has some \$10 million at least at its disposal.

Will the First Minister today agree to commit those funds and more, if necessary, to the 480 households, many of whom are going to be asked to move their homes and their possessions? Will he commit today to provide support in the neighbourhood of \$15,000 to \$25,000, which it would take for each person to relocate?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member for Flin Flon knows full well that his comments are not accurate.

The fact of the matter is, this government, because it wanted to increase investment in exploration and development, has brought in a series of programs that are designed to do precisely that. For the first time in 20 years, we are seeing massive increases in exploration drilling in this province in northern Manitoba.

It goes all the way back to the Schreyer government of the 1970s, when various programs were put in place that essentially confiscated mining revenues and mining properties from the people who were there. As a result, wholesale companies that had been exploring in northern Manitoba just withdrew and left from this province and never came back for 20 years, until just this last year, as a result of the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program and the further policies of this budget.

He presided over a government and over a mines department that essentially kept out exploration and development from the private sector, which is what killed the opportunities for Snow Lake and every other mining community to survive in northern Manitoba. It is on his head that this, in fact, rests, Mr. Speaker. It is on his head that all of this policy has resulted in the people in Snow Lake having difficulties.

This government has put \$55 million into the renovation and upgrade of Flin Flon, the smelter there, to preserve—[interjection] Mr. Speaker, none

of this was done under New Democratic governments. New Democratic governments would not risk a nickel in terms of support for these mining communities and would not put in place policies that would encourage exploration and development. Unfortunately, the people in those communities are paying the price as a result of their ignorance and of their bad policies.

Mining Communities Employment Retraining Program

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I can only say there he goes again, misleading the Legislature and the people

In 1988, this government, the NDP government, invested some \$17.7 million—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Flin Flon this is not a time for debate. Kindly put your question, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, is there no rule to protect the people of Manitoba from the kind of misinformation this—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Flin Flon, kindly put your question, please.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, since this minister took over, this First Minister (Mr. Filmon), there are one thousand—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Kindly put your question, please.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, will the First Minister now commit to using the offices of the Department of Education and Training, the resources at the disposal of the Minister of Energy and Mines to provide training and retraining opportunities for the 1,000 people who have already lost their jobs in the mining industry since this First Minister became Premier, and the 600 people who we learned on Sunday are likely to lose their jobs by 1994 in the mining industry? Will he begin a training program now, commit to a training program for these people—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1400)

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, again, it is unfortunate that these kinds of things happen in mining communities. That is why we have put in programs and initiatives so that we can stem this kind of thing from taking place. New orebodies being found means new job opportunities.

We have, some four months ago, Mr. Speaker, put in place a Worker Adjustment Committee with government, working with those communities to help them, to assist them. There is the Mining Reserve Fund that the member refers to, that we have used in the past to assist when these kinds of unfortunate difficulties come forward.

Again, Mr. Speaker, let me re-emphasize what we have said. There is an expansion of resource discovery activity taking place in those communities. There will be job opportunities with the upgrading of the smelter in that whole area. Again, we are doing all we can to encourage new mining activity to take place in northern Manitoba.

Equity Insurance

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, it becomes increasingly obvious this minister does not know what is going on.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, I will give the Minister of Energy and Mines and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), if he cares to dirty his hands on this issue of 480 people—

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, some time ago, I offered the Minister of Energy and Mines an opportunity to be positive.

Can the minister today tell us whether he will reconsider and initiate immediately a plan to establish an equity insurance program for homeowners and small businesses in single-industry towns in northern Manitoba, so that families will not be faced with this kind of crisis again?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, again, one has to be concerned about the individuals who have invested in their homes and their businesses in the single-mining industries. The best way to preserve the value of their homes and their communities is to find new orebodies.

I cannot understand why the member did not, in his term of office, introduce policies that would help that happen. Mr. Speaker, what they did was continue to raise the taxes that put in disincentives.

What I do not want to do, Mr. Speaker, is create false expectations in valuations of houses or businesses by the introduction of government money or programming. We do have to assist those people when it is inevitable that there is no longer any opportunity for them, but let us find an opportunity to continue through what has traditionally been the mining industry.

Racism Investigations Police

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) or the First Minister.

Last year, after a \$3-million study and years of review, two respected judges recommended that a special investigation unit be set up to investigate allegations regarding incidents involving the police. Now, after bringing a judge to review the Pollock matter, after having the RCMP review the city of Winnipeg police and bringing in the RCMP for other matters, we still have no action on this recommendation.

Will the government stop procrastinating and establish such a unit, as recommended in this report, so that when events occur, as did occur in the city of Winnipeg this weekend, an investigation unit can go into effect immediately to deal with the problem?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the Justice minister.

Mr. Chomiak: My supplementary is along the same question, Mr. Speaker. There is a very good reason for requiring such an investigation unit. What if this happened with the RCMP? Who would the minister call in then? As I understand, the minister may be calling in the RCMP to deal with the Winnipeg instance. What if it were to happen with the RCMP? Who would they call in then?

Mr. Filmon: I will take that question as notice as well on behalf of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Chomiak: My final supplementary, I would urge that the minister bring it to the Justice minister's attention at the first instance, because we have

been waiting 10 months for this recommendation. We have gone through five or six incidents that could have been dealt with by this investigation unit.

Economic Growth Government Policy Performance

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, in the four years since this government came to power, we have lost the equivalent of 50,000 people in this province, we are 10th out of 10 in national wealth, we have lost the equivalent of \$300 million in retail trade and \$91 million in commercial investment.

I would like to ask the Minister of Industry and Trade a very simple question. When this government came to power, we were at one level. Since then, the country has slipped into recession, but this province has slipped much further. We are now 10th out of 10. How does the Minister for Industry and Trade explain this?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): At the outset, I do not accept most of the honourable member's preamble. He picks one particular statistic and generalizes it to all aspects of the economy. I think for somebody who is showing such a great deal of interest in economic performance indicators, I would encourage him to read all 12 or 13 of them that are prepared by seven different agencies, and he will see how we have fared in other areas, in areas like unemployment as it relates within Canada.

We willingly admit we are not satisfied with where the percentage is, but within Canada, we are faring very well, and if you go through the list of traditional economic indicators, you will find that Manitoba is faring very well in many areas as it related to other provinces and Canada.

In terms of the future, Mr. Speaker, which I am sure we are all looking toward the future of Manitoba, the economic indicators show significant strength in manufacturing investment, that we will lead the nation in manufacturing investment, in private investment, in all kinds of economic indicators. I would encourage the honourable member to take the time to read all indicators in some detail.

Mr. Alcock: Well, it just so happens that I do read those indicators, and in 11 out of 15, this province has done worse than the rest of this country, worse not better, in 11 out of 15 indicators that are reported on monthly, Mr. Speaker.

My question for the minister is this: How does he explain the fact that this province is doing so poorly?

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, certainly the Minister of Industry and Trade can answer the question. The question has been the same day after day.

I would refer you to Beauchesne 409, point (8): "A question that has previously been answered ought not to be asked again."

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I would refer you to Beauchesne 409.(3) and I quote: "The question ought to seek information and, therefore, cannot be based upon a hypothesis, cannot seek an opinion, either legal or otherwise, and must not suggest its own answer, be argumentative"—and this is the point I emphasize—"be argumentative or make representations."

Mr. Speaker, we can go through this day in, day out. There can be general questions, and we can debate so-called statements of fact, but by these rules, I say the question that is put over and over again asking for a generalized answer is out of order.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I can understand why the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is so embarrassed by this question, but if you check the record today, you will find that the question I asked the second time was different from the question I asked the first time, and I believe that as a member in this House, I have the right to question the policies of this government, and I shall continue to do so.

If they cannot explain why their policies are failing, that is their problem, not mine.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I think the government House leader is correct on one point. Beauchesne is very clear. A minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for refusing, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed.

Indeed, we can understand why the government may not wish to answer this question. It is obviously very embarrassing to them to be shown day after day to be 10th out of 10 economically, but on the other point raised by the minister, I would suggest to him that if he wishes to get Question Period back to the normal way of functioning, he might ask his

minister to just simply answer the question—why are we 10th out of 10?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable government House leader, it has been the practice here in Manitoba that Beauchesne's 409.(8)—a question that has previously been answered and ought not to be asked again—generally has been applied to a same sitting day. This rule has been very relaxed for previous sittings of the House.

The guidelines that were distributed to members quite clearly spell out that a question must not repeat an earlier question which was answered or to which an answer was refused at that sitting.

I believe the honourable member's second question was not repetitive of his first question, therefore the honourable member's question was in order.

* (1410)

Mr. Stefanson: Once again, I believe I have to correct the honourable member's preamble in terms of performance indicators and where Manitoba stands today.

Out of the 11 traditional performance indicators, Mr. Speaker, I want to quickly walk through them for the benefit of the honourable member for Osborne, that in the manufacturing sector performance, in employment, we are above Canada; in capital investment, we are above Canada; in business bankruptcies in terms of the positive side having the least in the nation, we are above Canada; in terms of economic growth, we are above Canada; in terms of unemployment rates, we are above Canada; in terms of housing starts, we are above Canada; in terms of retail sales, we are above Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the record speaks for itself today in terms of the economic indicators where Manitoba is positioned.

Economic Growth Full-Time Employment

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister's predictions are not reality. Reality is that we have lost the equivalent of 26,000 full-time jobs in this province.

I would like to ask a question to the Minister of Labour, a very simple question to the Minister of Labour. How does he account for the fact that we have lost, under this government, the four years that

this government has been in power, the equivalent of 26,000 full-time jobs in this province?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I think if the member would wake up and look at the fact that we are going through a very difficult recession, as my colleagues in this House have answered the member on numerous occasions, and as the member knows, we are going through tremendous restructuring of our economy.

I am sure the member would agree—[interjection] Well, the member from his seat talks about last place. The member still has not recognized, I think, what has happened in the agricultural community, what that has meant to income in our province. He has not recognized changes. We have seen a debate go on here today about the mining industry, 20 years of bad mining policy—and now we are reaping the benefits of that in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it takes time, as the member will acknowledge, to get the province onto the right course, and that is what is happening now.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Minister of Labour continues to put false information on the record.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation the province operates under was put in place by the Lyon government in 1978.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Public Utilities Lock-Off Statistics

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, on June 25, '91, on page 3841 of Hansard, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province said, and I quote: "... I want the NDP to save \$10 a month for every senior in this building by passing Bill 44."—which was the gas disconnection bill.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs claimed that 3,000 people would have their gas cut off this year.

Could the minister tell this House how she arrived at this figure and how many people were cut off last year?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do not have the exact number for last year. As you recall, last year the legislation was passed and brought into effect midsummer. The Centra Gas utility was able to then proceed with lock offs in the later part of the summer. This is the first summer we will have an entire summer to go through. Beginning on May 15, lock offs can occur.

Last season, there were a fair number of commercial accounts that were shut off. We are anticipating this year, based upon projections that were informed to me by my department, that there will be in the neighbourhood of about 3,000 this year. I can check on the exact number for last year and give it to the member later.

Mr. Maloway: Last year, Mr. Speaker, there were 186 commercial and industrial lock offs and 409 residential which is a total of 595. The minister has suggested 3,000 this year. That—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please. The honourable member for Elmwood, kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Maloway: The question to the minister is: Why is there a 500 percent increase in lock offs this year, based on her statement in the House yesterday?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, I am constantly surprised at the members who go to the trouble to look up the statistics before they come to the House and then ask the question as if they did not have the statistics. That is the kind of game playing I do not think we need when we are trying to come to accurate and carefully thought out decisions. I do not need to bring the figures back to the member, I believe, at this point, since he already looked them up before he came into the House.

I can indicate that last year, as I have already indicated, we were not able to have a full season of lock off to enable consumers to not be penalized by having to pay delinquent accounts of those who choose not to pay. We will have a full season this year, beginning on May 15, and the figure given to me by the department is they are anticipating a ten-fold increase of approximately 3,000 lock offs this summer.

Mr. Maloway: That is at odds with what the gas company vice-president tells us, and that is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Question, please.

Customer Refunds

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): My supplementary to the minister is: When will she be requesting the refunds that her Premier promised last year?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): The member opposite knows full well how the legislation is written. He was very much a part of the discussions that went on at the time the legislation came in.

The member knows full well that the savings that will come to people will come to them by way of bills that will not escalate at the rate they were predicted to escalate prior to this legislation—good legislation which has the support of consumers, good legislation which has the support of industry. He knows the answers to the questions that he has been asking here today.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Antiracism Recommendations

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Premier.

This government has given lip service to multiculturalism, and today, later on this afternoon, there is going to be a rally at City Hall regarding racism. Nowhere else has this government had such a failure in trying to address racism in the province of Manitoba. MIC has brought forward a report on combatting racism. On numerous occasions, I have asked the question—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Deputy Premier is, the government asked the MIC to come up with a report on combatting racism. The question is: Why has this government not implemented, in particular, two resolutions put forward from the MIC report, one dealing with the crosscultural awareness for elected officials, another dealing with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, giving it the additional—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all say that this government is proud of its record and the work that it has done in the whole area of multiculturalism and the work activities within that portfolio. As far as the details are concerned, I will take the question as notice for my colleague, the minister responsible.

Multicultural Legislation Introduction

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question would be to the Deputy Premier.

This government made a commitment to the multicultural act. I would ask the Deputy Premier when he anticipates that legislation being brought forward to the Chamber. It is a substantial piece of legislation. Are we going to be receiving it this session? Are we not going to be receiving it this session? When in fact are we going to be having that legislation brought forward?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Liberal Party, there has been a lot of work done in consultation with the communities through my colleague, the minister, and I am anticipating the legislation to be presented soon.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I question, in terms of the Deputy Premier, what he said. In contact with—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please. Order, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question to the Deputy Premier is—he did not answer. The question is: Is the government going to be bringing forward the multicultural act, as promised in their throne speech this session?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that as far as the specifics of the question are concerned, again, I will take it as notice for my colleague, the minister responsible.

Annual Water and Waste Water School Government Support

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I think that we would all agree that money spent in preventing environmental contamination is preferred to cost for cleanup.

For 38 years, there has been an Annual Water and Waste Water School to try to ensure that this happens, and it has been providing training for operators so that they are competent in managing sewers and water treatment plants.

Given the environmental problems associated with poor sewage management, I would like to ask the minister why his department is planning to eliminate its support for this school, and does it have an alternative or replacement program in mind.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I do not think that is quite an accurate reflection of where we are headed with this program because we do want to support training and upgrading for operators, but we want to make sure that we are able to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information. The concern the member raises I believe will be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): I move, seconded by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for St. James (Mr. Edwards). [Agreed]

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for the 10 a.m. May 5 sitting be amended as follows: the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) for the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay). [Agreed]

I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the member for Morris (Mr. Manness) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey); the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner). [Agreed]

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes); Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). That is for Tuesday, May 5, at 8 p.m. [Agreed]

Nonpolitical Statement

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I might have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [Agreed]

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lorne and Chris Hamblin, who farm in the Morris area and who were recently presented with the Outstanding Young Farmers Award for the mid-Canada region.

The purpose of the Outstanding Young Farmers Program is to recognize Canadian producers who do outstanding work in the agricultural industry. Farmers nominated for the award are judged on their individual operations, conservation efforts, production history, their involvement in the community, as well as financial and management practices.

Lorne and Chris farm about 2,500 acres in the constituency of Emerson, close to Morris, with Lorne's brother and his wife. It is a family operation and also includes a select seed business. As well, the couple is heavily involved with agricultural marketing clubs, Manitoba Seed Growers' Association, and Ag in the Classroom. This couple has been very involved in encouraging the establishment of legislation in regard to agriculture and promoting agriculture in our classrooms in Manitoba.

They are also members of the Manitoba Seed Growers' Association, Risk Area 12 producers, and those of who are involved in agriculture in the Red River Valley know of the work that Lorne Hamblin and many of the farmers in that area have done to create some equity in their soil classifications in this area—Ag Expo, Valley Ag Society and many other organizations that they are involved in.

If that is not enough, Mr. Speaker, Lorne and Chris still find time to take part in the Manitoba Curling Association and to help out with activities of the local Cubs and the Beaver clubs for their three young boys. Mr. Hamblin has a degree in agricultural economics, while Mrs. Hamblin is a graduate in Home Economics, and they have put together quite an effective business operation.

I think, Mr. Speaker, you will agree, Lorne and Chris Hamblin will be representing the mid-Canada region this fall in Regina along with winners from other parts of Canada. I would ask that all members in this Legislature join with me to pay tribute and to recognize and congratulate the Hamblins on their efforts.

Committee Change

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I have a substitution for a committee.

I wish to rescind the change that I made, the member for Morris (Mr. Manness) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey). Instead, I want the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey). [Agreed]

* (1430)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you ascertain whether or not there is a willingness to waive private members' hour?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Leave?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), 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.

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 Health; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

HEALTH

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Bob Rose): 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 Health.

When the committee last sat it had been considering item 5.(a)(1) Administration Salaries on page 87 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have a few questions, and I am hoping some of the information which was requested yesterday, we can get that today if it is possible. If not today, then tomorrow or by Friday, that should be all right.

My next question is in terms of last year in Health Estimates we discussed the issue of prostate biopsies guided by ultrasound, and Dr. Krahn has met with the Manitoba Health Services Commission and so far they have been unable to resolve that issue.

We discussed this issue last year and we just wanted to resolve this problem because the cost of the ultrasound-guided biopsies is less expensive compared with other methods, and the explanation has been provided to the Health Services Commission by Dr. Krahn and his associates. I would seek some clarification as to where his request is in terms of getting funding for the prostate biopsy which is guided by the ultrasound technique.

Also, I understand the ultrasound advisory committee has also met with Dr. Krahn and it seems that they have been unable to resolve some of the issues, and I would like to know from the minister's office what, if anything, they are going to do with this outstanding issue.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): We have asked the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation to take a look at the ultrasound biopsy procedure to give us the best indication of its effectiveness and its efficacy.

In anticipation of my honourable friend's next question, I cannot get an answer as to when we expect them to give us some consultation or give us some advice, but that is where consideration of that issue is right now.

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

Mr. Cheema: The last letter I have is dated February 6, and the letter is written by Dr. Krahn to Bob Vandewater who is the chair of the board of the Health Services Commission, and in that letter Dr. Krahn has explained some of the difficulties he is experiencing. I am willing to share that letter with the minister's office and his staff to make sure that they are well aware of the situation, and I think that may help to some extent to solve this outstanding issue.

Mr. Orchard: Yes, I think that correspondence was with the commission board, I believe. Yes, and we are attempting to come up with some sense of direction on that issue, and as I say, have asked the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation to give us some assessment. Okay?

* (1440)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, one further issue in terms of the committees and commissions and votes and everything else that the minister's office has established as of 1988. Can the minister provide us with a list of all the committees and all

the studies undertaken by the Department of Health as of 1988?

I just want to know how much the department has been—you know, what issues they have worked on. I think that will be helpful for us to get some knowledge of some of the issues. I am not going to use it in any negative way. That will be helpful for us to really well inform ourselves about how the policies are going to be brought forward. I just want the minister to feel comfortable with that kind of request. It is not something very intrusive. It is simply basically letting us know the issues and some of the concerns the Department of Health has, and some of the statistics they have developed.

Specifically, we do have the reports from the health policy analysis the minister shared with us. The chairperson of the board also offered to us that if we want any specific information, as long as it is not confidential they will be able to share with us. I think that is very positive.

But I just wanted a full list of all the studies and committees and commissions, starting with the Health Advisory Network to the Urban Hospital Council, the number of the groups in the Urban Hospital Council, and the other advisory committees in terms of the nursing education, the medical education, the college of medicine, the college of nursing, the physiotherapy association, in terms of speech pathology association. Anything that the minister has set up advisory committees on at all levels of the health care department.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I presented earlier on in Estimates some of that, but we will revisit that and pull that list back together again.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I appreciate the minister's willingness to be helpful to get our knowledge updated. I work with a mission still of hope and the hope to achieve good things, so I am sure we will achieve something here.

I have a letter from one of my constituents. She has a lot of difficulties in terms of Pharmacare this year, a 10 percent increase in 1992, and she is concerned about the younger disabled and chronically ill patients who are, for example, diabetics and their Pharmacare prescription costs have gone up. They are having a lot of difficulties, and they find themselves in a situation where they think that they should be treated at par with the seniors in terms of the Pharmacare program, because their funds which they use for the medicare system are quite

significant. I will share the copy of the letter I have received from my constituent.

She is also leading a group of individuals who are diabetic and also have a significant impairment in terms of their ability to perform some of the functions. I do not want to put her name on the record, but certainly I will share the letter with the minister, and that will give some indication. They are also requesting this issue not to be treated on a political base, but on a nonconfrontational basis and resolve the outstanding issue and I will share the copy of the letter with the minister's office also.

I am almost out of my letters that I have, you know, individual—I have asked the minister today about some of the issues, and I will certainly pass the rest of the time for the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcya-Leis).

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when I receive the letter I will have the department investigate and provide an answer to my honourable friend.

Ms. Judy Wasylcya-Leis (St. Johns): First of all, let me indicate that I hope that the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) has better luck with his request for a complete list of all studies and committees and reviews by this government than I did. I do not know if the member for The Maples recalls that I did ask for that information, and I was quite hopeful, in fact, based on the minister's response, that he was genuinely going to provide that list. I fully expected that he was taking my request seriously and would treat it that way. Instead, the member for The Maples might recall he provided us with his usual list that he proceeded to read on the record: the list of Urban Hospital Council working groups, and the list of Health Advisory Network Studies. He did not table for us the complete list of studies, working groups, consultation teams, reviews, task forces, and so on which clearly number in the hundreds.

I am sure it is an embarrassment to the minister at this point to provide us with that information. I hope the member for The Maples has luck, and that we will all get that information, but he is clearly not willing to provide it to me. Maybe the better working relationship between the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will produce better results, and I hope so. But I do not think we are going to have much luck in terms of that end of things. I say it is probably an

embarrassment to the minister because, in fact, as he knows from people close to this government, close to the Conservative Party, he is now receiving fairly substantial constructive advice, constructive criticism, that there be some effort to get a handle on the number of studies and some efforts made to consolidate the reviews, task forces, and studies.

In fact, I will refer specifically, since the minister has sort of raised his eyebrows at this mention, to the February minutes of the Ministerial Council of Nursing Education, which we have referred to in the past as relevant to the resignation of Trevor Anderson as chair of that committee and his concerns expressed about communication between the ministry and the council. That memo, as the minister knows, also references the number of studies that this government is involved in and makes a recommendation; that is, the chair makes a recommendation, the former chair, the Conservative, whom I believe to be a Conservative supporter or certainly a person closely associated with the Conservative Party, Trevor Anderson, who suggested that there be a consolidation of studies, and some handle on all of this work being done for which there appears to be no end in sight.

I think it is also appropriate to reference at this point the words of advice of another Conservative supporter, also referenced in the Legislature, that of Jack Purdy, who clearly has, on a number of occasions, pointed to problems in the department, the lack of objective, scientific, wise input into the decision-making process, which has resulted in such foolish decisions as the elimination of an important part of a preventative program, that being the children's dental health program.

It is clear, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that we have a number of people now speaking up about this whole issue of studies and, in fact, what appears to be one giant study session on the part of the Minister of Health. In my view, that is having some serious, damaging consequences for health care reform. In many ways, it is demoralizing. People have commented time and time again of late that they are so caught up and so busy doing these studies with no sense of the government ever listening to their recommendations, that they wonder if it is all worth it. They wonder if the system has not become immobilized and incapable of the kind of significant change that is required as part of our health care reform agenda, as a result of this minister's busy, make-work exercise.

Certainly, I want it to be clear, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that since the minister is wont to twist words around and distort comments, this is by no means a comment, a questioning of the input and advice that the government is receiving from numerous, too numerous to mention, individuals and groups involved in some form or another on a government working group or task force or review or commission or study session. All of their inputs, from whatever party they come from, whatever association they have, whatever link they have in terms of the health care system is very important and should be treated seriously, and I worry for the health care system because that advice, coming from all directions and all parts of our community is not being seriously included and acted upon.

* (1450)

The minister has talked a lot about health care reform. I am trying to find in this budget—and we are now on this whole issue of hospitals and community health services—a sense from the detailed print Estimates about a shifted emphasis from hospitals to community health services. I had asked last night for an indication of the breakdown of the increase for community health facilities and the minister indicated \$750,000 increase.

I would like to back up one step and ask where the funding for community health services is, in what line that shows up, and what is the breakdown, what is the expenditure by this government of dollars to community health centres or facilities for the past three years?—so we have some way of comparing expenditure in this area to expenditures for hospitals as we have been talking about for a considerable period of time over the last little while.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I apologize, I was reading a memo from staff and I missed just the very last part of the question. I have the community health centre part of the question, but immediately after that?

Ms. Wasylcya-Lels: I would like to have the actual expenditure over the last three years for community health centres. The minister has provided us with the figure for hospitals, which may or may not include community health centres. I would like the breakdown for community health centres for the last three years and then the breakdown of the \$750,000 increase for this year.

Mr. Orchard: First of all, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, community health centres are funded under the

Hospital line so that they are inclusive of the \$946-million budget. As I indicated, there is roughly a \$740,000, \$738,000, somewhere in there, increase for this year, and that is to provide for salary increases under the existing contract with the Manitoba Nurses' Union and to provide them with the same bargaining mandate, because they are part of the bargaining mandate for the other contracts, because some of their employees are within the same bargaining units whose contracts are coming to an end this year and for supplies is the breakdown on—it is salary adjustment, anticipated funding of salaried settlements and supplies.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: not that I want to get into a—because I do not know whether we are going to finish Estimates this month, but you know—

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just before you get into that, what about the global expenditure for community health centres?

Mr. Orchard: I do not have that global for the last three years, but we will get that information.

I am deeply troubled with my honourable friend's observation about our process of study and consultation. I am going to remind my honourable friend every time she changes from this position to the position that we need to study more, and I am going to be more direct in my comment because this is about the third time we have had this discussion.

I can recall rather clearly, and I believe it was even earlier today—earlier this week on Monday—I think I heard my honourable friend asking about the status of a funding request from the Wolseley Residents' Association—do you know to do what, Mr. Deputy Chairperson?

An Honourable Member: What?

Mr. Orchard: To study the health care system in—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Yes, on a point of order. I am wondering, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if you can help clarify for me, does asking a question just for information purposes imply something on one side of the issue or the other or am I missing something?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think it would be useful since this has been raised so many times. Every time I have asked a question, the minister has suggested by merely asking the question, I put

myself on one side of the issue or the other. I would like to know, what is Estimates for if we cannot ask questions and therefore, if every time we ask a question, it means something, a certain judgment or a bias in our position already?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: I am only going by recent memory but my honourable friend wanted to study the impact of one other area. Then my honourable friend, about three weeks ago, said all we do is study issues, we never make decisions. Then, when we are about to make decisions, my honourable friend says, you cannot make the decision, you have not studied it enough. It is an absolutely unbelievable display of trying to be something to everybody all the time.

You know, where my honourable friend went over the line, where my honourable friend said to me, that, you know, all of these committees I have studied—and the allegation she made was they were always chaired by friends of the party, Tories, et cetera—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On a point of order, the minister is clearly putting false information on the record and imputing motive. I at no time suggested that all of the heads of all of these numerous committees, too numerous to mention, were headed by Conservatives or friends of this government—at no point. I simply referenced two individuals whom I have known to be, in the past, supporters of this government and their concerns about the study session that is going on.

So, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the minister should withdraw those comments and get on with addressing the serious issue I raised. If he takes offense at me asking these questions, just answer what he is doing with the information, how he is consolidating the studies, and where the plan of action is.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order, but I would like to advise honourable members please to choose their words very carefully. Some

of the words are getting very close to nonparliamentary. We will try and keep this to a very decorous afternoon.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I certainly do not want to fall into the use of provocative language like the member for St. Johns. Never would I want to receive from the honourable Chairperson of this committee such a direct and very appropriate caution as to language, because I want to maintain my gentlemanly approach to this whole Estimates process.

But I do tell my honourable friend, that when she drags up even a single name and says this is one of the Tory buddies that we have appointed to chair a committee, the inference is that we only pick Tory friends of the party.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lets: Balderdash.

Mr. Orchard: Well, I mean, that is what you do when you make those kinds of accusations.

Now, I want to indicate to my honourable friend, my honourable friend may choose not to believe what I am going to tell her. But I quite frankly have never entered into a political discussion on what the political affiliation of Professor Trevor Anderson is.

* (1500)

I do not have the knowledge my honourable friend is so free to profess to this committee that he is a known Progressive Conservative—[interjection] well, past or previous. Now you see my honourable friend, after making the accusation, is now trying to duck it. I do not know what Professor Anderson's political affiliation is. I do not know because I did not ask.

I asked, could the individual take the time and chair a committee on the study of nursing issues? I was looking for impartiality because it is a sensitive issue with lots of turf war, and I was given good indication that Professor Anderson would approach the issue from an impartial basis and that he would have a stature which would allow him to chair that committee effectively. That he did. But at no time did I ever ask anyone what his political affiliation is because I was interested in the capabilities of the individual.

For my honourable friend to try to make the allusion that he only got the job because he was a friend of the party never even entered into my discussions or my considerations. I want to tell my

honourable friend, with very few exceptions, the people that have served on committees investigating the issue of health care reform and change in the province of Manitoba, I could not tell you, except by accidental knowledge of the individual, what their political affiliation is.

I could go through a whole list of individuals, and with very few exceptions I cannot tell you what their political affiliations would be. I can tell you what their professional credentials are, which is what we have asked them to bring to the committee. Maybe my honourable friend is reflecting on the way the government she was part of chose to set up committees and had to have them stacked with partisans to make sure that they would provide the appropriate advice to the Howard Pawley government. We have not done that.

Where we have had major investigation—I will tell you the process with the Health Advisory Network, the chair of that was Dr. Arnold Naimark. I have to confess that, when I asked him to chair the committee, I did not say, now the one thing we have to get out of the way first, are you a card-carrying supporter of the Progressive Conservative Party because if you are not I am not going to give you this job? I never even asked him that because I did not really care. I was looking for a person who could lead the committee through a couple of years of very, very extensive reviews.

Do you know the process that ensued from that? The Health Advisory Network, appointed by myself—and again I will tell my honourable friend with very few exceptions, I did not know the political affiliation of those members of the Health Advisory Network—established the membership of all of the task forces. They established those by bringing together people who had knowledge in the areas of investigation.

That is why when my honourable friend starts making these kinds of accusations that these study groups are led by Tories, et cetera, my honourable friend discredits many dedicated Manitobans whose professional interest is changing the way we deliver health care to make the system better; and, by holus-bolus, leaving the allegation that, if they worked on a study group for this government, they have to be politically partisan. That is absolutely untrue.

That is not accurate and it does a discredit to those Manitobans who have chosen to take a lot of

time without compensation. With few exceptions, all of my investigative committees and task forces have been nonpaid. At best they get mileage and meals, and that is not too much compensation for the substantial amount of time they put in.

That same truism applies to the Regional Mental Health Councils. I did not appoint a single person to any of those councils, yet my honourable friend would lead one to the conclusion they are all partisans of the political party in government. She shakes her head now, and I should hope so.

As a matter of fact, I would hope later on this afternoon my honourable friend would clearly state that she intended no such connotation of those many Manitobans who have helped this government develop policies that are better—that I simply say to my honourable friend whether my honourable friend wishes to believe it or not—which have helped to place Manitoba and the government of Manitoba and the health care system of Manitoba as viewed by the rest of Canada as the one system that has got its act together, that is better positioned to deal with significant and serious financial and resource allocation challenges of the 1990s, to deal with the new way of thinking about health care delivery, to discard the old-think methods that have been predominant in our health care funding for the past 20 years and to get on with the new system of health care delivery and the reform that is needed across Canada.

We are viewed by the rest of Canada as having our act together collectively as a province, and government takes a small amount of the credit of that. I am pleased to say that, because, quite frankly, I have worked hard at it, and so have my senior staff who are present at this committee and my deputy minister. We have had the input from literally hundreds of Manitobans, professional Manitobans, to give us good advice.

Where my honourable friend says it is just a whole bunch of studies, I will put that record of achievement and positioning, understanding of the system and ability to make meaningful change and real reform happen in the system against any previous four years of government in the history of Manitoba as long as we have had medicare. There has not been an administration that has ever engaged as many professionals across the health care system to give us sound advice to the best of their ability on how we can meet the challenges of the 1990s. If my honourable friend had done that

when she was part of a government, we would not have the challenges we have today, but all my honourable friend seems to want to do is try to tear down the processes that we have put in place, and in the course of undertaking that narrowed agenda my honourable friend uses such things as: friends of the party are chairing these various committees. Well, that is not right. It is simply not right.

I am saying to my honourable friend, be careful when you are out there discrediting the work of many individual Manitobans who are seriously trying to help this government come to grips with the changing environment of health care provision in Canada, because those people do not take these kinds of comments by my honourable friend, as reflective of the New Democratic Party's analysis of their worth to the system, lightly. They do not take it lightly at all, nor should they, because I think my honourable friend, in trying to establish her phantom problems and her phantom allegations does discredit legitimate individuals who are working very diligently to make the system of health care better.

Now, we spent a total of \$14 million in 1990-91, \$14,590,000 on community health centres, and in 1991-92 that increased to \$17,893,000, and in 1992-93 that was projected increase to \$18,632,000.

Ms. Wasylcza-Lels: Could you just repeat the 1990-91 figure, 14—

Mr. Orchard: That was \$14,590,000, and for 1991-92, \$17,893,000, that is a 22.6 percent increase over the previous year and for '92-93 \$18,632,000 is the projected expenditures representing a 4.1 percent increase. That is slightly lower than the 6.1 global because there is no capital involved in community health centres, whereas in our hospital system there is capital.

Speaking of capital, my honourable friend wanted to know the list of construction contracts for the psych health centre. I will give my honourable friend a list here.

There was bulk excavation shoring: There were five qualified bidders, two of whom responded in the low bidder; Hugh Monro Construction was selected.

Pile foundations: There were four qualified bidders, three of whom responded; Subterranean was the lowest bidder.

For pile caps: There were six qualified bidders, six responded; Bird Construction was the low contract.

For concrete structure: There were five qualified bidders, four of whom responded; PCL was the low bidder.

Tunnel construction: There were five qualified bidders, five of whom replied; Bird Construction was the low bidder.

Pedway structure: There were six qualified bidders, five of whom responded; Crystal Construction was the low tender.

Exterior masonry: Three qualified bidders, two responding; Heymanns' Construction, the low bidder.

In terms of roofing: There were five qualified bidders, three responded; Flynn Roofing, the low bidder.

Windows and doors: Four qualified bidders, two responded; Border Glass, low bidder.

Cladding: Three qualified bidders, two responding; H H Robertson, low bidder.

* (1510)

Quarry tile: Three qualified bidders, two responding; Fabris and Watts, low bidder.

Interior/exterior wall board: Six qualified bidders, four replying; Alpine Drywall, low bidder.

Mechanical: Five qualified bidders, four responding; Derksen Plumbing, low bidder.

Electrical: Six qualified bidders, five replying; Westcan Electrical, low bidder.

Interior masonry: One qualified bidder, one responding; naturally, low bidder, Heymanns' Construction. In case my honourable friend wants to the know the size of the contract it was \$115,330.

Interior miscellaneous metal: Two qualified bidders, two responding; Empire Iron, lowest bidder.

Hollow metal doors and frames: Four qualified bidders, four responding; Allmar Distributors, low bidder.

Interior glazing: Two qualified bidders, two responding; Border Glass, low bidder.

Interior gypsum framing and carpeting: Four qualified bidders, four responding; J. Wagner and Son, low bidder.

Miscellaneous metal plates: Four qualified, four responding; Shopost industries, low bidder.

Exterior masonry: Three qualified bidders, three responding; Heymanns' Construction, low bidder.

Structural steel: Four qualified bidders, four responding; Abesco, low bidder.

Roofing: Five qualified bidders, four responding; Flynn Roofing, low bidder.

Metal wall cladding: Four qualified bidders, four responding; H H Robertson, low bidder.

Exterior gypsum and framing: Four qualified bidders, four responding; J. Wagner and Son, low bidder.

Millwork: Five qualified bidders, four responding; Schmidke Millworks, low bidder.

Flooring: Five qualified bidders, four responding; Western Asbestos, low bidder.

Ceramic tile: Four qualified bidders, three responding; Torino Tile, low bidder.

Painting: Six qualified bidders, six responding; Nu-West, low bidder.

General installations: Four qualified bidders, four responding; John Miller, awarded the contract. He was the second lowest bidder, because the low bidder was allowed to withdraw because his bid was in error.

Elevators: Four qualified bidders, two responding; Otis Elevators, low bidder.

Subgrade plumbing and site servicing: Five qualified bidders, five respondents; Derksen Plumbing, low bidder.

Air-handling equipment: Six qualified bidders, six responding; Retrofit Systems, low bidder. Retrofit Systems not the low bidder, low bidder was rejected as not technically acceptable products, so it was the low bidder of those that qualified.

Mechanical: Seven qualified bidders, seven replying; Derksen Plumbing, low bidder.

Sprinklers: Three qualified bidders, three responding; Grinnell Fire, low bidder.

Tunnel mechanical: Five qualified bidders, five responding; Derksen Plumbing, low bidder.

HVAC balancing: Three qualified bidders, three responding; DFC Mechanical, low bidder.

Electrical: Five qualified bidders, four responding; State Contractors, low bidder.

Tunnel, central services: Seven qualified bidders, seven responding; McCaine Electric low bidder.

Temporary power: Three qualified bidders, two responding; State Contractors low bidder.

That should cover the 32 contracts.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Would the minister be able to provide us with the breakdown for those 32 bid packages of the estimate and the actual expenditure?

Mr. Orchard: I can give my honourable friend the individual contract values. Bear in mind that the project, as I indicated last night, is estimated to be coming in slightly under budget by about \$1 million or \$905,000.

If my honourable friend wants the amounts of each, I can give my honourable friend that figure.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I would like both figures, if the minister is able to provide us with the estimate overall and then the actuals overall. I am asking for him to provide us with the estimate on a stage basis and then the actuals for each of those.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, these are the contractor bid prices to undertake the various types of work that I have indicated. That is not the total price. If you were to add up all the bids, it is not the total price, because there are architectural fees and other costs that are in addition to this as charged by the project manager and allocated.

If my honourable friend would just come out and ask the question. If she has an allegation that someone was way over bid in terms of some undertaking of operation, please indicate so. I will investigate and give my honourable friend an answer, because going through each one of these may serve some purpose that I am not aware of. When you add all of these and the management of the project, you come up with an estimate that we were going to spend \$52 million, I believe was the figure I had put on the record last night, and we are coming in at somewhere around \$51 million, which appears as if we are going to be slightly below what our estimate was for the building and for the tunnel interconnect.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I do not have a specific issue to raise or some hidden agenda here at this point. I am trying to get a handle on what was actually budgeted for in terms of the overall project, which I appreciate the minister giving us the information on yesterday, and also on a staged basis, and then try to understand how much was actually spent in terms of the stage-by-stage construction of the psych services building.

If the minister does not have that at present, I am wondering if he could get it for us. I agree I am

not—the minister just reading out the list of the actual value of the contracts for those 32 bid packages is not going to really be that helpful, so if the minister would like to table that for information purposes that would be fine, but I think at this point I will proceed to another set of questions.

Before doing so, let me indicate that we were just talking about the amount of studies being done by the government. The minister, as I suspected, did distort my comments since I clearly stated, even before the minister started his long answer in response to my question, that my questions had contained absolutely no negative connotations. If the minister would like me to state that, as he just said, I would state that I am making no such connotations against any individuals, I would be happy to do that again.

I said it at the outset and I will say it now. I was casting no judgments, making no negative connotations about any individuals. In fact, I had never said a negative thing about Professor Trevor Anderson or about Mr. Purdy from Brandon. I think by all accounts they are two fine outstanding individuals.

I simply indicated to the minister that we have been saying for a long time that there has been a lot of effort going into studying health care issues and little sign of an action plan. The minister has pooh-poohed us when we have made those comments, so I suggested to the minister today, as I have done in the past, that if he will not listen to us and our comments, maybe he would take seriously the words of individuals he is consulting with that appear to be connected or supporting the Conservative Party.

If the minister wants to jump all over that and distort comments and suggest that we are questioning—suggesting that all of his chairs or members of these committees and task forces are political appointees, then let him do so. That clearly indicates to me a very defensive reaction to a simple straightforward question and one that is obviously a sore point for the minister. It is not a sore point for me. I really do not care what political persuasion these individuals are as long as they are qualified. I do think what is significant about these two individuals I named is that they have some important advice for the minister that should be heeded, and they have something important to say in terms of future health care directions. I would hope that the minister would take their advice very seriously.

I would like to ask a couple of questions on—and I will just move all over the place for a moment—Pharmacare. The minister had said he would provide us with a list of all the drugs that would be impacted by the change in Order-in-Council which removed coverage of any investigational or emergency release drugs. I am wondering if the minister could give us that list at this point.

Mr. Orchard: I am just having that very important issue searched.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: While the minister looks for that information, could he indicate what plans, if any, are in the works with respect to changes to the formulary?

* (1520)

Mr. Orchard: Every year—I have to get the name of the committee correct, but our pharmacist committee—the Pharmacare Advisory Committee. Is it made up exclusively of pharmacists, or do we have nonpharmacist representation? The Pharmacare Advisory Committee annually provides to government a list of changes that they would propose to the formulary, deletions of current eligible pharmaceuticals or products available for use by individual Manitobans which have been covered by the Pharmacare program. They will suggest deletions, and they will suggest additions to the Pharmacare formulary.

That is an annual undertaking and is undertaken as we approach year-end, because any decisions that we make—the Pharmacare program is not fiscal year driven; it is calendar year driven. The Pharmacare Advisory Committee concentrates, I think it is fair to say, its efforts in the latter part of the year so that they can provide advice to government so that the new regulation can be established which would make eligible new pharmaceuticals or new additions to the formulary as well as to inform pharmacists across Manitoba of ones which are removed from the formulary and no longer qualify for reimbursement.

That process is undertaken, as I said, towards the end of each year, and recommendations are incorporated in the Order-in-Council. I believe I passed one towards the end of December each year wherein I have provided advice as to such issues as change in the deductible as it applies to seniors and families, any changes to the formulary and those drugs which are eligible, ineligible, and any changes in policy. For instance, this year we made some

administrative changes in addition to the changes on the Pharmacare deductible and the formulary. One of the policy issues follows on the questioning my honourable friend and I have been engaged in around the drug clarythromycin.

Another policy area is that we have changed, for instance, the free provision of a photostat copy. When a person comes to the commission and asks, we now charge for that, I think, a \$10 fee. That was an administrative charge, because we found our staff time was taken up to significantly greater value than the \$10 in terms of searching for and photostating that claim form for an individual. With advance notice, we have said we are no longer going to do that. The intention is not to make that a revenue for the ministry or for the Pharmacare program but to curtail the dedication of staff time for that. With clear advice on the refund form, we are anticipating that Manitobans will make sure they have a copy for their records before they file.

The other change that we brought in was around—the cut-off date is firm at April 30 for any refunds. It has always been April 30, but we have allowed some flexibility around that close-off of April 30 and I have accepted some. We made the decision again because of an administrative streamlining within the Pharmacare program to make that April 30 deadline definitive. We will not accept claims for 1991 past April 30, 1992, and we know we are going to get some complaints about it, but that still leaves a four-month window of time to make a claim. So we made those administrative changes. I believe that was the extent of administrative changes to Pharmacare this year.

On the Pharmacare Advisory Committee, the members are all pharmacists from government and private practice.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am just wondering, before I go on to another line, if the minister might have the list, and would he be prepared to table that information of drugs that are now not covered as a result of the change at Order-in-Council, specifically that section dealing with those drugs approved under the emergency release program?

Mr. Orchard: I am going to have to provide that information to my honourable friend Thursday or later, because this is not—the information I have I do not think is the information that was attached to the Order-in-Council.

Ms. Wasylcya-Lels: I am not looking for the information that was attached to the Order-in-Council, I am looking for a breakdown. Part of that Order-in-Council was a change that eliminated investigation or emergency release drug programs that have not received a notice of compliance unless provided for in this regulation. I am asking for a list of those drugs as now known on the market today that will now no longer be covered under Pharmacare because they fit into that category, clarythromycin being one, cyclosporine being another. I am just wondering what is the full list of those drugs.

Mr. Orchard: We will get that.

Ms. Wasylcya-Lels: I would just like to ask a couple of questions on the ambulance program, and then my colleague the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has some, I know, on the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

I would just like to start off with this whole issue that has been in the media lately, and that is the question of support for a paramedic program or an EMA III program which has been the basis of a pilot program for some time, has demonstrated some results, but for which no level of government has yet made a commitment to fund and for which all kinds of concerns are being raised among those in the field.

Could the minister tell us what discussions he has had with the City of Winnipeg on this matter and what consideration the government is making in terms of some involvement in support for the paramedic program?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if I might introduce to the committee members, Ken Knaggs, who is head of our ambulance division.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, on the issue that has been in the news recently, the issue has been brought to the ministry. Staff has entertained discussions with the City of Winnipeg, and the City of Winnipeg made a presentation to the commission board. I have not received recommendations from the commission board and hope to in the near future.

Ms. Wasylcya-Lels: I am wondering why the government is pursuing the idea of purchasing a similar program from the Edmonton college. If this program is already here and has been tested on a pilot project, why is the minister's own department involved in pursuing purchase of a program from

somewhere else, and how does that make sense from a cost-effective point of view?

* (1530)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, before my honourable friend gets into the—and I do not want to put words in her mouth, because maybe she is not going to advocate that government should provide this funding to the City of Winnipeg, I do not know. But I want to tell my honourable friend that under ambulance funding, we have established a formula. In that formula, we provide a per capita grant, based on the population of the municipality served by the ambulance service.

I want to take my honourable friend right back to square one. Ambulance services are not an insured service under the Canada Health Act. I want to take my honourable friend back to when we inherited government in 1988. At that time, Manitoba had the lowest support for ambulance funding in Canada. It was the subject of a demonstration out on the front steps, where ambulance service providers were saying to the provincial government that the province was not providing reasonable funding.

At any rate—I am just trying to dig up the figures, because I am just going by memory—we took something like a \$2-million or a \$3-million commitment on ambulance funding, and we brought in a new formula and significant new funding to provide support to ambulance services across the province.

Now, when we did that, we established several criteria so the municipalities could access the funding to varying degrees, depending on need. Our funding formula, first of all, was per capita driven; the per capita grant was significantly increased so everybody participated in increased funding from government.

Secondly, we had a number of ambulance units formulas so that larger ambulance associations with more ambulances would have an opportunity to access more funds.

Another area that we brought in was distance sensitive so that we assisted with a greater ability to defray costs for long distance service of them, and the Swan River Valley in particular benefitted from that particular change in funding formula, because distance sensitive it reduced, if I remember correctly, something like \$300 to \$400 a trip? On the longest trips, there was a reduction to the

individual paying the bill, because ambulance service is not an insured service, a reduction of over \$400, I believe it was, for the longest ambulance bills.

In addition to that, we set up accessible funding for training programs so that—we were running into a problem with our volunteer ambulances where in some communities volunteers to go into the ambulance services were having to take time off their work to undertake the ambulance training courses, first responder. The case was being made to us that if employers could not provide time off with pay, really someone going in to provide service on a volunteer ambulance was out of pocket salary and out of pocket for the training costs often. So we changed all that to remedy an inherited disaster from Gary Doer as Leader of the New Democratic Party. I just thought I would toss that in, seeing as how you are at the end of the room.

At any rate, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when we provided a significant increase in funding to the municipalities and to the ambulance organizations, if they were independent of municipalities, we made a precondition that they could not use the increased money from the province to reduce their municipal commitment to ambulance funding. What we have tried to do is provide a minimum amount of support across the province for ambulance services. That is why we have made it per capita sensitive, and where there is extraordinary cost because of distance, we have addressed that through the new funding formula.

Ambulance services, above what are achievable through the funding formula of government, are paid for in one of two methods; either direct charge to the user, for which we have encouraged Manitobans to have Blue Cross for ambulance, et cetera, or by direct levy of the municipal government on their property owners of any additional ambulance costs that the municipality may want to put in from the property tax base to support additional costs of ambulance services.

That is where I have difficulty with the City of Winnipeg's proposal, because what the City of Winnipeg is asking the province to do is to provide them with special funding which would place them in a unique position to the rest of Manitoba in providing an enhanced ambulance service for the residents of the city of Winnipeg.

We have always made the case consistently, and this was the case that was made in the previous administration, that we will provide as much minimal support as we can, recognizing that in some areas the provincial grant will not be sufficient to provide for an ambulance service. Additional resources must be found either through charging the user of the ambulance service or the property owners in the area served by the ambulance service. If we were to provide and accede to the City of Winnipeg's request, we would have to do the same thing to the rest of the province, and we do not believe the rest of the province can necessarily afford to put that enhanced service in place, number one.

Number two, I do have a bit of a problem with what happened in the time that we increased our ambulance funding. Bear in mind that one of the preconditions was that the City of Winnipeg and every other municipality receiving funding, additional funding from the province, would not reduce their commitment.

For the calendar year 1988, which was the last full year under the formula that we inherited, which was the lowest in Canada, from the previous government, the City of Winnipeg received \$1,117,752 under the per capita grant formula. When we changed the formula in its first year, bear in mind that it was not a full year, that grant increased to \$1,561,490, a \$444,000 increase to the City of Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg in that same year decreased their commitment by some \$220,000. That is where I have a little difficulty of them coming back to us now and saying, you give us more money, and we will match it. They reduced their commitment in the year that we increased ours.

In the next year, we increased our grant again by \$376,000 to the City of Winnipeg, to a total for the 1990 calendar year of \$1,937,911 on the per capita grant and district grant and direct grant to a total for the calendar year 1991 of \$2,129,129. Over three calendar years, we have increased our support to the City of Winnipeg for the provision of ambulance services by \$1,012,000. Now, the City of Winnipeg decreased theirs in the first year, then increased it back up to reflect some reinstatement of funding. I will just give you the figures for the three calendar years, 1988 as the base year and considering the increase in funding '89 and '90.

The province increased the funding to the City of Winnipeg by \$820,000, and that is not including 1991 because I do not know what the City of

Winnipeg contributed towards ambulance services in 1991. In calendar year '90, we had increased our funding to the City of Winnipeg by \$820,000, and over the same period of time, the City of Winnipeg had increased their direct funding to the ambulance services by \$232,000. Had they matched our increase in funding, they would not be coming to government for any money for their enhanced ambulance service.

* (1540)

So I have to tell my honourable friend that at no time, when they were dealing with their union in terms of the implementation of this program, was it preconditioned on the government of the province of Manitoba acceding to participate in the funding. Sure, it would be nice if we did. I recognize that, but appreciate that while we were increasing our funding to the city by \$820,000, they were increasing theirs only by \$232,000, hardly a shared commitment. I mean, we were more than generous in our supply of funding to the City of Winnipeg.

I simply say to you, I am going to have to hear an awful lot of significant argument before I am persuaded that we should participate to the tune of funding beyond the million dollars additional that we have put into the City of Winnipeg ambulance funding, taking that funding from \$1,117,000 to \$2,129,000—a doubling of the funding.

I have a tough time being persuaded that with that much generosity in ambulance funding over the last three years, all of a sudden it is up to us as the province to provide the money or else this program dies when we were not being asked at the time or were not being preconditioned at the time when they brought in the program that unless we were there, the program would not go beyond a pilot project. We provided a significant amount of increase. One could say we have already paid for the program.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do indeed have a number of matters to raise with the minister both in regard to the policy in regard to northern medi-vac and also in regard to northern patient transportation.

The first situation I want to outline, and I will be sending the minister a letter in this regard, is in regard to policy as to medivac, because concern has been expressed to me in a number of communities. There are a number of communities in the North which are essentially served through the normal air ambulance system. I am not referring

here to treaty communities; I am talking about Northern Affairs communities.

I know in the case of an incident involving a resident of Pikwitonei recently, Percy Laubman, there was concern about the procedures that are in place. It was expressed to me by members of the family and also by a number of the nurses who have to deal with situations as to when medi-vacs are authorized and under what circumstances they are not authorized. There was a concern in this particular case that a medi-vac should have been authorized.

I want to indicate that I will be corresponding with the minister in regard to that, because we want to ensure that proper policies are in place. Obviously, people should not be evacuated by the medi-vac system if it is not an emergency situation, but there is very real concern being expressed by people in the communities, by individual nurses, et cetera, in the nursing stations about the limited role they have to play in terms of that determination. In fact, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in this particular case there was a specific concern that the nurses felt that a medi-vac should have taken place and that was not done. That is the issue of medi-vacs, and this is more giving notice to the minister.

I recognize that there is probably not that much time to deal with specific matters today, but I want to turn to the question of northern patient transportation, because I have written to the minister time and time again on behalf of northern residents in regard to the singular unfairness of the \$50 user fee for the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

I am growing increasingly concerned about the rationalization of this government, of this onerous fee that is placed on northerners.

I have raised this matter in the House; the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has raised this matter. I know our critic has been very concerned about the \$50 fee, and we get different kinds of rationalizations from members opposite. For example, the minister will recall a recent case of Bruce Guyne who expressed concern about, not only the fact he is faced with a \$50 dollar user fee, but the Northern Patient Transportation Program to begin with does not cover many of the additional costs that are involved in terms of the other costs—days off work, accommodation, meals, et

cetera. His point was, why add the additional \$50 on top?

The minister responded to the concern that this individual placed, who has faced a fairly significant medical problem recently, that the question of days off work was irrelevant since most employers in Manitoba provide sick leave. Well, I do not know which employers the minister is talking about. Many employers do not provide sick leave. There is no provision for sick leave in legislation, none whatsoever. For the minister to try and rationalize, to justify the unjustifiable, in this particular case, I think, was particularly unfair, and I have corresponded and will be corresponding further on Mr. Guyne's case.

I have written recently in the case of Dave Mackie who has had to go out of province for follow-up checkups in regard to a medical procedure that took place a number of years ago. Up until this point in time, that individual has received assistance in terms of the Northern Patient Transportation Program, at least up to travelling to Winnipeg. Now he is being told he has to get an opinion from a specialist; the policy has changed and he has expressed his concern as to whether he, in fact, will be able to receive this kind of assistance. I have corresponded to the minister in this regard and questioned the overall policy.

In this case, the minister responded that now he has turned policy over for northern patient transportation to regional hospitals, et cetera. In other words, what the minister is doing is using the front line, the people in the North themselves, to essentially administer his policy and the policy of his government in terms of northern patient transportation.

I have written to the minister in other cases, the R.D. Manaigne situation, and once again, I do not think the minister has understood the situation. An individual who had a secondary infection that had extended far beyond a dental situation into a potentially life-threatening situation, and who had to go down to Winnipeg and was unable to get any assistance from the Northern Patient Transportation Program because the surgery that took place to deal with that infection, which was life-threatening, could have been that serious, took place in a dental surgeon's office. So there are questions related again to overall policy issues. The minister ought not to simply brush them off.

But I will get back to the focus of what I would like to talk about today and the \$50 user fee, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. What struck me as particularly insensitive on behalf of the minister is when he, and I know the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has talked about this, they have talked about this being a fairness and equity tax. In fact, in response to a letter I had written on behalf of one of my constituents, Mr. Guyne, the minister said that, oh, well, many other people in the surrounding area of Winnipeg have to pay a considerable cost to go to Winnipeg for medical procedures unavailable in their home community.

Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let us deal with that. Is he talking about some of the examples that his own Premier talked about, a resident of Gimli? How much is a resident of Gimli going to have to spend to come from Gimli, Manitoba, to Winnipeg for surgery, for medical procedures not covered under the provision that does provide assistance in terms of that. How many of them are going to have to pay more than \$50? Obviously that is not the case. Is it the case in terms of someone living in the minister's constituency? Just talk about strict travel costs. What is the bus fare from the minister's constituency to Thompson? For the minister to turn on to the considerably greater costs of some people in rural areas compared to the north is simply not true, and once again the minister does not account for the lost time.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

If he just cares to look at travel schedules, someone travelling by bus from Thompson to Winnipeg, and I have been on that bus many times, 10 hours, is going to lose a significant amount of his wages, because as I said earlier, they are not covered in terms of sick leave as the minister seems to think they are.

* (1550)

I ask questions again to this government in the way they are implementing this \$50 fee. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) said in the House that essential medical procedures are covered. Well, I say how unfair can you get than in the case of a constituent of mine whom I saw just recently who has been off work since December, who is borderline kidney dialysis, who has gone to Winnipeg nearly 10 times in the last four months and has had to pay the \$50 user fee each and every time

he has gone to Winnipeg? If he was on kidney dialysis he would have been covered, but here he is going to Winnipeg dealing with a specialist who is trying to make sure that that individual does not have to go on kidney dialysis, and he has had to pay. Not just the \$50, by the way, either, but all the other costs that are not picked up. How is he doing that? He is, between UIC, being on sick payments in terms of UIC, and he has basically had to go to the welfare department. But because he is not strictly on social assistance, once again he is stuck with the fee.

How does the minister then deal with the situation in many of the remote communities around Thompson, who are now having to travel even just to Thompson, Wabowden, for example, Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei, for basic medical treatment? Is the minister not aware of who he is hitting the hardest? If people are on social assistance it is covered. If people are receiving kidney dialysis it is covered. But many people have to go for essential, and I use the word to the Minister of Northern Affairs, "essential" medical checkups are not covered, and these are people on low income, pensioners, our senior citizens, so it is having a real hardship on people.

We have been saying this since they introduced this fee. It is now being referenced by every council in northern Manitoba, community councils, urban councils such as in the City of Thompson, and I know the minister and the Minister of Northern Affairs have received countless resolutions calling for removal of the \$50 fee. At its recent convention, the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities also called for the removal of the \$50 user fee on northern transportation, and no matter how the minister tries to justify it, it is having a negative impact on northerners and it is not a fair tax.

We have asked questions for the minister to review this. We have raised this issue and we will continue to raise it, but rather than continue to do this, time in and time out, face the frustration of dealing with the minister who does not understand, as he has indicated very recently in his correspondence to myself, where he has dismissed the concerns of average northerners, direct letters written by average northerners concerned about the impact of his policies and the policies of his government. That being the case, we feel we have no alternative than to put very clearly in the form of a motion exactly what this government needs to do, what this committee needs to do.

I therefore move that this committee condemn the government for imposing the \$50 user fee for the Northern Patient Transportation Program, and call on the minister to revoke the \$50 user fee immediately.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine): To the honourable member for Thompson: Do you have the motion in writing?

Mr. Ashton: Yes, I do.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I just wanted to have some clarification from the minister on this issue.

I have a letter in front of me, that is February 6, 1992. I will table it for the members of this committee. I think that we should read that very carefully. I want some clarification in terms of the northern transport system. It says that about 77,000 people in the province of Manitoba are eligible to have travel expenses for necessary medical appointments subsidized under the provincial northern transport program.

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has raised the issue on which I need some clarification. I want to know whether the minister's office has received any major complaints or any concern from patients who have been unable to come to Winnipeg to get their treatment done. I think that is the issue here. It is whether there is some—I think it needs to be clarified. I think before we as a caucus make any decision about this issue, I want to reach to the bottom.

I would like to table this letter for the members. It is signed by the director of the emergency services. It is very clear that I do not think anybody, according to this letter, could be denied services for medical reasons under The Health Services Insurance Act. If somebody is going to do that, they are in violation of The Health Services Insurance Act.

I just wanted us to read this letter very carefully because it may not be, as the member for Thompson has said, and if he is right, that some individuals have not been able to get services. That means either this person who has formed the policy is wrong, or the member for Thompson is wrong. One of them is not right. [interjection]

I just wanted to—[interjection] Because it is very important for us to reach to the basics of the problem in terms of the why when we are raising the issue and when the government's own policy, signed by this Dr. Ip, medical director of Emergency Health

Services, dated February 6, 1992, and it came to my office as a medical practitioner, to make sure that we know what we are doing. There is form attached to it, and the form is called MIC No. 626.

On this form it is clear that if the patient or consultant wishes the patient to return for a follow-up appointment, this form must be completed for the subsequent one to be processed. That clearly defines that they cannot deny anybody access to services for medically necessary services. It does not matter whether they are employed or not, whether they are working or not. I do think that is the issue.

I just want some clarification. I would like to have somebody to have the copies for the members of the committee to read this letter before we proceed further. I think it is very essential that we should know the whole issue of this problem, and then I think we can decide as a caucus whether we are going to support this motion, because I want to be very clear on what we are dealing with here.

The second part of my question to the minister is: How much money, actually, did the patients pay last year as a \$50 fee? Has there been somebody who has been paying that amount of money?

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, my honourable friend the member for The Maples has made reference to a letter that Dr. Ip has sent out to physicians in terms of providing guidance around the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that our experience to date is saying that there may be a great deal more politics around the issue than medical facts, if I can put it as genteelly as possible. The reconciliation at year end, we are unable to do to indicate what has been the contribution and what has been the impact on the budget of the program, but I will just indicate a couple of figures.

I will just indicate to my honourable friend a couple of notable changes. I will deal with elective transportation warrants. Our preliminary indications for year-end '91-92, with the implementation of the \$50 northern patient transportation fee, has indicated that elective warrants out of Thompson have decreased by 25.7 percent, out of The Pas by 27.6 percent and out of Flin Flon by 11.3 percent, out of Churchill 8.8 percent and out of Winnipeg, which is east of Lake

Manitoba, there has been a decrease of 48.4 percent.

Now, let me indicate to my honourable friend that Dr. Ip's first paragraph is an important one, because he is saying in here: Concerns have frequently been expressed regarding the high volume of callbacks of patients by specialists in southern Manitoba; in other words, having the individual come back. Patients who must travel long distances for medical care incur significant personal expense and inconvenience which might be avoided by having any necessary follow-up done by physicians in their home communities.

Now, I want to tell my honourable friend, first of all, there is an equity issue, and I will deal with that because my honourable friend the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) constantly raises this. I will deal with that one directly, and it will be dealt with very directly—[interjection]

I listened very patiently to his repeat of last year's argument, and I would appreciate the member for Thompson giving me the courtesy of the same patience in listening—[interjection]

Oh, you mean you were not talking directly to me as minister when you were carrying on, and I listened with patience. So I suggest to my honourable friend for Thompson that he shows the decorum of a House leader and shuts his mouth and listens.

* (1600)

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the minister, of all people, should not lecture other members about listening. He is one individual I have known in the last 10 years who continuously talks back and forth across the floor. The minister referred to me, and I responded to him. He is not in order—

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

I would remind everybody to use some discretion when they are addressing these very, very sensitive issues, and I would ask you to maintain control and to keep proper decorum in this committee.

I have recognized the minister, and I would ask him to complete his remarks.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as I was explaining to the member for Thompson, Dr. Ip's caution is a very important one, because it involves an issue of patient comfort in terms of travelling for specialist referral follow-ups in southern Manitoba. My honourable friend the member for Thompson often does not want to talk about some of the things we have done to help northern Manitoba. He is a student of the prince of darkness, I guess is the best I can describe him, because he is always talking about the negative.

My honourable friend for Thompson in 1988 was bemoaning the fact that at one time, I think, the physician numbers were down in Thompson to seven or eight. I took that very seriously as Minister of Health, and I flew to Thompson. I met with the board, and I met with community leaders. We discussed how we could come around in a co-operative effort the issue of physician numbers in Thompson. I made a very, very direct case to the citizens who were at that meeting and to the board members of the Thompson board that they have a tremendous number of advantages to sell in their community and that they ought to sell those advantages. All I had heard about is how tough it is in Thompson from, I guess, maybe, members in opposition. I never did believe that. Thompson is a marvelous place to live, work and raise a family.

We co-operated with the board and the citizens of Thompson and through the Standing Committee on Medical Manpower. I do not know what the current physician count is, but it is in excess of 20 physicians in Thompson.

There is a bit of a saying in terms of medical recruitment to rural and northern areas, and the message I have often given to communities is, "use them or lose them." If you do not use your physicians who come to those communities and you want to keep on by-passing them and going straight down to Winnipeg for your medical treatment, then you cannot make a case that you need doctors in your community.

We undertook a significant, supportive effort with the City of Thompson, the board and community leaders, and we successfully saw a number of doctors choose to practise in Thompson. Subsequent to that, we believe that, to make those doctors and their practice viable for them as professionals and for the community in general, we

should make every effort to develop the liaisons with specialists in Winnipeg so that the follow-up for specialist referral can be undertaken by physicians in Thompson.

It benefits the community because a physician in the community sees the patient closer to home. That is what health care reform is about. My honourable friend maybe does not want to have health care reform in Thompson. I do not know, but we do, because we think it is good for the citizens of Thompson.

When my honourable friend wants people to keep on coming down to Winnipeg and not use doctors in Thompson, I disagree with him. I disagree with the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). I believe we should use those physicians for follow-up referrals from specialists working in co-operation with specialists to avoid the unnecessary utilization of Northern Patient Transportation Program at significant expense to the taxpayers of Manitoba.

My honourable friend the member for Thompson has a little difficulty with the issue of contribution of \$50 towards elective use of patient transportation services. I do not have any difficulty with that because every other citizen in the province of Manitoba who lives below the 53rd, west of Lake Winnipeg, or below the 51st, east of Lake Winnipeg, pays their entire costs: time off from work, meals, transportation, accommodation, all of those costs, and the entire cost of getting from their place of residence to the physician's office—the entire cost.

It does not matter whether they fly in from Swan River, whether they drive in from Swan River, whether they take the bus in from Swan River, they pay the entire cost. If they have to have someone escort them from Swan River, they pay the entire cost of the escort, et cetera.

My honourable friend says that is not appropriate for members of northern Manitoba, for his constituency, that it should be totally free. Well, I am sorry. I do not think that it is asking too much to pay the first \$50 of upwards of \$900 per trip support. The balance, if it is an airplane ticket from Leaf Rapids, may well be \$650 paid by the taxpayers, first \$50 paid by the individual.

The individual living in Swan River, the individual living in Ashern, the individual living in the north Interlake pays the entire cost. It will be up to \$50 or more than \$50. They pay the entire cost of the escort accompanying them.

My honourable friend says northerners do not want to contribute towards getting accessing medical services. [interjection] My honourable friend, in interjecting, says they do not want to get nailed. Well, I want to tell you, this same case is made by the citizens of Swan River. They do not want to pay the costs either, but they do. They do, and I did not see my honourable friend the member for Thompson raising a great hue and cry that the citizens in Swan River Valley should have any contribution towards their accessing of medical services in Winnipeg.

They left the ambulance formula grant as is. At least we had the decency and compassion as a government to provide to the people of Swan River substantial offset of a \$500 and \$600 ambulance bill from the Swan River Valley to Winnipeg because we knew that cost was inordinate.

But individuals in Swan River still pay upwards of several hundred dollars per trip to Winnipeg by ambulance, something that my honourable friends' constituencies do not. The air ambulance provides that kind of service absolutely free of charge.

So, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, when my honourable friend makes the case that northerners should not contribute anything to access medical services, I have to say to my honourable friend, I disagree. That was one of the reasons why we brought in the Northern Patient Transportation Program contribution of \$50.

We put in checks and balances to assure that medically necessary treatments would not be impacted by this policy. That has worked. My honourable friend is concerned about this policy. He wants it reversed because he wants it free and gratis for residents of northern Manitoba.

Well, then I say to my honourable friend, why did the government that he was part of not make ambulance services and costs of accessing medical services in Winnipeg free and gratis for all citizens of Manitoba? My honourable friend did not do any such thing, (a) mainly because he knew he could not do it. All we are doing is putting some fairness of asking a contribution of modest amounts, \$50.

Now, let me deal with several other issues. The people who have contacted me from northern Manitoba have said, yes, we recognize there had to be changes to the program.

* (1610)

They are willing to work with us in making those changes more effective. Now, I want to tell my honourable friend, is he disagreeing with patients now seeing doctors in Thompson, so that they have an opportunity to build a practice and stay in Thompson, or would he prefer to revert back to the old system where Thompson is down to eight doctors or seven doctors, because people are using Northern Patient Transportation services to come to Winnipeg to see physicians?

That is a totally objectionable reversal of bad policy that my honourable friend is proposing.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine):
Order, please.

Mr. Orchard: So I have to tell my honourable friend—

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine):
Order.

Mr. Orchard: The policy—

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine):
Order, please. I would remind the honourable members when they are speaking to speak through the Chair. This is not a time for debate, I would ask that the honourable members—the honourable minister, finish your remarks.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I just want to indicate to my honourable friend that northerners have indicated that they do not like the \$50 user fee, but they recognize the logic behind it. They are willing to work with government to make that fee work better, to make the program work better.

We expect that will be a follow-through and a following of the change of the administration of the program to the facilities in the North. They have made the case to us that they can administer the program more effectively than the previous administrative format.

We happened to think that is a reasonable approach. Now, the reason for Dr. Ip's letter was to make sure that there are no medical reasons why an individual would not be able to access services because of the \$50 fee. But the overriding concern that Dr. Ip has put on should mean something to members from northern Manitoba, particularly the last questioner, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Concerns have frequently been expressed regarding the high volume of call-backs of patients

by specialists in southern Manitoba. Patients who must travel long distance for medical care incur significant personal expense and inconvenience which might be avoided by having any necessary follow-up done by physicians in their home communities.

We are trying to build medical services in northern Manitoba, and my honourable friend the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wants to destroy those efforts and thwart them. I find that objectionable.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. I would remind the honourable members to please address the Chair when they are speaking.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I just want to go back to the same letter. I think there are many issues in this northern transport system that have to be explained. Because for us to make an informed judgment, we have to know the basis and then what was the outcome for the last one year. I just want to go to the second paragraph which is very self-explanatory that says: The patients whose travel originates north of the 53rd parallel on the west side of Lake Winnipeg or north of the 51st parallel on the east side of that lake are entitled to travel expenses for themselves, travel and reasonable overnight expenses for an escort.

The northern patient transport has become a large and expensive operation assisting almost 13,000 transports last year. Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that says that there is a lot of money being spent on that program that not only covers the patient's cost, the escort's cost, the travelling expenses. The issue here is whether we can deliver all those services in their own communities, and if we can try to provide the basic necessary care in their own community. That is why we would like to see something, you know, a study done in terms of what has happened for the last one year, how this \$50 fee had an impact, if any, first of all. Secondly, if somebody was ever denied medical services. To the best of my knowledge I do not know and I just want the minister to tell us.

Probably the best thing is when the health care reform is going to take place, when you are going to end up having more services delivered in the community. For example, the dialysis is being done in Thompson and I think there is also a plan in terms of making sure the specialists are being flown so

that they can see the patient in the communities. That will be less expensive.

I think those things all have to be taken into account. But to make a judgment call—what has been the impact of the \$50 fee? We would like to have some more information. If the minister can indicate to us how much money actually came to the Manitoba Health Services Commission—part of the \$50 fee—I think then we can probably debate this issue, because to me the issue is not very clear. Because, it has been, how many, nine or 10 months now, and we want to know the impact of this \$50 fee.

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I gave my honourable friend some sense of where elective transportations—Dr. Ip's letter indicates almost 13,000 transports last year. Our actual figures for 1990-91 were 12,098, and we have preliminary figures and we think these will be quite accurate in the final analysis, that out of Thompson, The Pas, Flin Flon, Churchill and Winnipeg for elective it has decreased to 8,973. Now, I do not know of any compromise of patient care because of this, but I do know that more services are being delivered by physicians in northern Manitoba.

That to me is absolutely positive, because I think there is another paragraph of Dr. Ip's letter that I would like my honourable friend the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to consider. The reference is to almost 13,000 transports last year. Dr. Ip further says: Of this volume a considerable number of transports are for follow-up visits to consultants in Winnipeg. This involves a considerable disruption to the patients who are sometimes subjected to very time-consuming travel, an issue that my honourable friend the member for Thompson has said is a problem for northerners accessing Winnipeg medical services, between their homes and your offices in the South. We encourage physicians to consider the effects of this travel on their patients, and whenever possible to encourage the physicians in the patient's home community to do follow-up assessment.

What we are trying to do is deal directly with the case that the member for Thompson made, that the costs of coming to Winnipeg are time off work, are expenses involved in meals and accommodations, et cetera. If we can avoid those by providing the service in Thompson not only have we saved the \$50 they are going to have to contribute towards the

Northern Patient Transportation Program, we have saved for the taxpayers the entire cost of that. We have saved for the individual any accommodation, any meals anytime-off costs, and we have provided services in the community, closer to home, which everybody says is the direction of health care reform. My honourable friend the member for Thompson wants to argue against all of those things that are beneficial to the residents of his community. I find that shameful, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, can the minister make a commitment in terms of having this whole program reviewed and see if there are any hardships being done? Secondly, to make sure, I think the aim has to be tried to deliver all the services in their own community if possible and that is not going to be 100 percent possible. It does not matter what the government will do.

There are going to be some problems, but as long as the necessary medical services for primary care are covered I do not see any major problem. I just want the minister to explain or make a commitment in terms of next year in the Estimates process that he will give us some indication, so we can make a judgment. I think that will be helpful for us to decide either way, whether we like it or not, or if we do not like the whole thing. I think that is the way. You have to have some evaluation, some study done and some kind of feedback from the communities as well.

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has said there have been some mishaps in some cases. I think there are some mishaps that could happen in any place. I think, when we have the new system put in place, as long as the people in Thompson and other areas are going to get the primary health care services in their own community, that is the best thing possible.

The other issues, if people of Manitoba would know that anybody who is coming from northern Manitoba, they are getting all the coverage, everything paid at the same time. They get their travel expenses paid, they are getting the meal expenses, they are getting—

* (1620)

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Cheema: No, it is there, it is in this letter. I just want some time to explain this thing. It is very essential, because I think the message has gone very wrong in terms that there have been drastic

changes. This letter clearly defines the policy of the Health Services Commission report, and says that somebody who is coming to Winnipeg, their expenses for travel are covered, their reasonable overnight expenses are covered, their reasonable expenses for meals are covered, their expenses for escort are being covered. That is the reality of the policy by this government.

I mean, that has been in place when the previous government as of 1986 or '85, and the money has substantially been raised to meet those needs. So I think the issue here is that whether people in the North are getting services in their home communities and the government is doing everything possible to make sure they will get the services. As long as that is possible, and we have now only six months into this \$50 fee, I think we need evaluation, we need to have further assessment done.

I think the minister should make a commitment to come back to us. [interjection] No, it is not a question of we are supporting or not supporting. I just wanted to have some clarification that we still have to discuss it. I want to see what I am doing here. I just wanted to be very careful. I am not going against anyone, I just wanted to make an informed choice. I wanted to know whether we are doing the right thing for the taxpayers and are we reading what the policy is.

I just cannot presume things which are not there. I just have to see what is in front of us, how many complaints the minister's office had. There were 13,000 transports last year, and there has been more in terms of the health care services in their own communities.

We have not heard of a shortage of physicians in Thompson, now there are about 20 or 22 physicians and there are more physicians in some of the northern communities. I think what has to be done is to have a system where the specialist could be flown to some of these communities and that had been done in the past. It was very successful, rather than having everybody flown to Winnipeg if you can set up a special day and that has been done in every part of this country.

It is not an exception to only Manitoba. That has been done in Ontario and B.C. and in Newfoundland, every place. That is the policy in terms of trying to maximize your resources. I want a commitment from the minister in terms of, if he

would come back within a few weeks and give us some report on this very important issue, so that we can make an informed judgment at that time.

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, yes, we will have more final details on how this has impacted on the program, probably in about three weeks time I guess. [interjection] No? But when the year-ends come in from the various regions, we will have an analysis of how the program has impacted in its first year. Let me share with my honourable friend a couple of other features.

We have attempted to provide a greater level of service availability in northern Manitoba. For instance, that is why we implemented kidney dialysis in the Thompson hospital, and it has been a very, very much welcomed program for northerners who no longer have to come down as they did previous to 1988. They had to come to Winnipeg to access dialysis services. Now that care and that treatment can be accessed in Thompson, and that is at a considerably greater convenience for those northern Manitobans.

Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, Manitobans in Thompson and Thompson region did not have the accessibility of a community mental health service, and we established, in co-operation with the Canadian Mental Health Association, the first community residence for those suffering from mental illness in northern Manitoba, something that had eluded the grasp of the previous administration, for whatever reasons.

Those are just two examples in two areas where we are trying to provide a greater level of service closer to home. Further improvements in the reform of the mental health system in terms of the reform of the health care system in general, I think we will see a greater trend of patient-service provision closer to home with a significant impact on opportunity for practice and service delivery in northern Manitoba, Thompson included.

I think all of that is very positive for the people of Thompson. I do not know whether it will be accepted by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) as positive, because he does not like to admit when we do things right. But that is all right. We will continue to work on behalf of northerners.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

In terms of specialists, one of the capabilities of the Northern Patient Transportation Program, and this is I think something my honourable friend the

member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) would be interested in knowing, is that we can use funds from Northern Patient Transportation Program to bring a specialist from Winnipeg, for instance, into northern Manitoba so that they can, for instance, avoid the dislocation and inconvenience of, let us say, 20 people coming from Thompson to Winnipeg, paying \$50 each. We will use that money where we can bring a specialist in, and where there is the justification around costs, support the travel costs of that specialist going to a northern community providing those kinds of services.

What a progressive program. Here we are, for those individuals that my honourable friend the member for Thompson was so sincerely concerned about, the costs that they were going to have of taking time off from work, travelling to Winnipeg, paying for overnight costs and meals and other costs, and the \$50, and at the same time the taxpayer is picking up the balance of the tab on transportation. Now we have a program in place where those specialists can go up there and avoid all of those costs to his constituents. What a progressive policy by this government for northern Manitobans.

* (1630)

Yet what have we heard from my honourable friend the member for Thompson? Nothing but criticisms. We have been trying to build services to northerners closer to home. I guess in the eyes of the member for Thompson that effort ought not to be pursued, that we are providing bad policy when we do that for northerners. I disagree with him. I say the policy direction we are taking is good for the citizens of northern Manitoba.

Mr. Ashton: As usual, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has not changed, and he enjoys this, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I quite frankly have grown rather tiresome of this. It is the height of intellectual dishonesty for the minister to put words in a member's mouth—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would like to remind all honourable members that some of the language that is coming forward this afternoon has been borderline unparliamentary, but the last aspersion that the honourable member did bring forward would be ruled unparliamentary. So I would ask the honourable member to retract the last statement that was made.

Mr. Ashton: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if need be. The Chair asked me to withdraw the phrase. I withdrew the phrase. If it needs to be, it needs to be—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Now we are going to get back to a little bit of decorum within the committee meeting.

The honourable member has retracted the statement. I will allow the honourable member the time to debate the motion.

An Honourable Member: You cut off the member for The Maples.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: One moment please. Order, please. The honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) did have the floor prior to the honourable member for Thompson interjecting into the dissertation or the debate on the motion, but I have recognized the honourable member for Thompson. I will revert to the honourable member for The Maples after the honourable member for Thompson has put his debate on the motion forward.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was referring specifically to the comments made by the minister because it is an insult, not so much to myself but to northerners, for the minister to stand there to say to members of this committee that in any way, shape or form, I or any of the northern MLAs have opposed additional services in the community.

He should remember the discussions in this very committee in 1989, when concern was expressed about the extremely low level of physicians. He will know, if he cares to put accurate information on the record of this committee, which is something that he does not always care to do, the fact that we now in northern communities have additional physicians is something that has been welcomed by all northerners.

I mean, I am a resident of Thompson. I have grown up in Thompson. I know what it is like in terms of the medical services of Thompson. I am concerned about the medical services of my community. When I came before this committee to express concern in 1989 about the low level of physicians, it was done in that sense. Period.

Indeed, there had been a lot of recruiting efforts and everyone involved, whether it be the minister's department or the local hospital board, deserve credit for that. You know, this is classic of the

minister, because for the last hour he sat here and he has avoided the motion, he has avoided the issue.

The issue is not whether more medical services are being provided in the North or less, because indeed as the minister knows we are far better off than we were in 1989. I have always acknowledged that, and when any progress is made I always comment on that progress. If the minister doubts that, he should talk to the people of the city of Thompson and surrounding area, where I have always indicated that one of the things that greatly concerned me three years ago was the shortage of physicians and the fact that now, at least for the time being, we are in a far better position. I give full credit to everyone involved in it.

The fact is, according to the minister's own statistics, 12,098 northern Manitobans had to access the Northern Patient Transportation Program because they could not receive those physician services in their own community. I would hope that the minister would understand what he has said by putting the facts on the record today by referring to the fact there were 8,973 elective cases.

I assume by that the minister said these are the people that paid the \$50 user fee. Well, who are those people? They are people like the individual I referenced earlier who has had to pay 10 times over the last four months to go and have the kind of medical care that is not available in Thompson.

He is not on dialysis. They are trying to keep him off dialysis. They are trying to give—he is a diabetic. He is a borderline in terms of requiring kidney dialysis, but because he is not on kidney dialysis, he is considered as someone who is going for an elective matter. Elective, Mr. Deputy Chairperson? Someone who is going to Winnipeg to see a specialist to see whether he can be kept off kidney dialysis, is that elective? I ask you, is that elective? These are the kinds of people the minister is hitting with a \$50 fee, 8,973 applications of the minister's policy last year, over \$440,000 I calculated—and the minister can correct me if I am wrong in terms of the figures and we appreciate any information—\$447,650 essentially that has been raised by this initiative, because otherwise that would have been covered.

Those are the people, and to the member for Kildonan, for The Maples (Mr. Cheema)—the former member for Kildonan for members who were not

here prior to 1989; he is a former member for Kildonan and I still think of him that way perhaps—the bottom line is, it is not a question of providing physician services or not. It is a question of the 8,973 northerners who have been taxed by a Tory user fee, a \$50 user fee, and if the Minister of Health wants to talk about Swan River, let him address those concerns.

Is this going to be the Conservative philosophy, that if there is an inequity in the system what we do is we eliminate the kind of equity that exists with everybody else? We make it inequitable for everyone? Is that what the Liberal member wants? I am sure he does not. I am sure he rejects the rather tiresome debating techniques of the Minister of Health that have nothing to do with reality.

To the member for The Maples, if he has any concern about what is happening, what happens is this, and I will tell you what has happened in the case of this individual who has paid 10 times. He has gone—he went first of all out of his own pocket. He has now had to go to welfare, and eventually he will not have to pay for it, and I say this to the member for The Maples, because eventually if he continues to have to go and pick up the cost of patient transportation, he is going to have to be on welfare, period.

You know there is one great thing about our system that has been set up by the Minister of Health. If you are on welfare, you do not have to pay, but if you are a working poor or you are on unemployment insurance you have to pay, and you have to pay once and twice and any number of times.

This system is not based on equity. This system is not based on a deductible or paying it once or twice. This system says that if you have to go 10 times through no fault of your own, this, a borderline case of kidney dialysis, if you have to go through no fault of your own you still have to pay it anyway, and you have to pay all the additional costs.

So let the minister not distract from the fact. It is not a question of physician services in the north or not, it is not the question of the member for Thompson saying this or saying that or saying the other. He knows full well that every single thing that he put on the record in regard to what I have said in this debate or the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has said in this particular case is not accurate. Absolutely inaccurate. He once again put false

information on the record, was misleading this committee, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and I chose those words—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member is reaching far beyond the necessary terminology that has to be brought forward. He is moving into the false words which are being ruled unparliamentary under Beauchesne's Citation 489, and he has used a number of other aspersions upon the member and I would ask the honourable member to retract the statement.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is not unparliamentary to say the facts, that the member has put misleading information on the record. I stay to that. There is clear precedent in that regard.

It is also part of our parliamentary rules in the case of Beauchesne, that statements made by a member concerning themselves are to be accepted by the committee. When I say that what the minister said about myself, speaking on behalf of the people of the constituency of Thompson, was not accurate, the committee should accept that fact and not the kind of diatribe we heard from the minister. The statements I have used were not unparliamentary; they were accurate. If you are going to rule that any particular word is unparliamentary, I would appreciate that. I have always abided by the rulings of this House in terms of rulings and I will follow that, but I would urge you to look at our rules. Most of the statements are very clearly in order, and are truthful.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. As I have advised the honourable member, and also under Citation 491:

"The Speaker has consistently ruled that language used in the House should be temperate and worthy of the place in which it is spoken. No language is, by virtue of any list, acceptable or unacceptable. A word which is parliamentary in one context may cause disorder in another context . . ."

I am asking the honourable member to not use those words in the context they are being brought forward today, because I am ruling in that context that it is out of order. I ask the honourable member to [interjection] The word "false" is the one I am ruling out of order, and I would ask the honourable member to just retract the word "false."

* (1640)

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Is it your ruling that when I said that the member had put false information on the record, that was unparliamentary?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: My ruling was exactly that, that when you put the word "false" on the record, it was unparliamentary.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I challenge your ruling.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: All those opposed say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: In my opinion the Yeas have it.

Mr. Ashton: I would ask for a recorded vote, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member is aware we need two people to ask for a recorded vote. The honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcya-Leis).

A formal vote has been asked for. We will recess and I will inform the committee in the House, and a formal vote will take place.

* (1430)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): 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 and Training. We are on page 40, 3.(c) Native Education.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Native Education: (1) Salaries \$621,500.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Chairperson, I wanted to continue where we left off last night, asking about the evaluation in the classroom. This is a section of the department

whose primary purpose is to develop curricula, and yet the only evaluation mechanisms seem to be informal. I believe that is what the minister was saying at the end of last night.

I wonder if the minister would like to elaborate upon that and perhaps suggest some ways in which evaluation of her department's major function in Native Education could be developed more precisely.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Chairperson, I would just like to say again some of the points which I said when we were last together. First of all, in terms of formal assessment, we as a department do provide some provincial assessment. However, we do not in that provincial assessment ask people to designate ethnic background, for instance, and therefore we do not in our provincial assessment collect specific data relating to native students.

However, native students are all students within a school division, and they are the responsibility of that school division. Therefore, through the other process of evaluation that we had spoken about, we are able to measure some of the success. To be a little bit more specific, we in the department and the consultants in the Native Education branch do have the opportunity to speak with superintendents and principals and teachers in those school divisions. Those individuals know who their at-risk students are, and those individuals are able to provide us with some information regarding the success and the retention rate of native students, for example.

In addition, our measures are not specifically by assessment, which the member raises, but they are then by direct contact with those divisions, by also measurable behavioural changes. I mentioned the last time we were together, the involvement of parents within the school system, and that was one of the very specific objectives named when we first began speaking about this branch, that there would be a greater parental involvement.

Primarily, this department—and maybe this is for a point of clarification—its role is to develop supports to assist school divisions and schools in their adaptation of curriculum. They do not specifically develop and evaluate curriculum alone, but their role is a support.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chairperson, I think the minister perhaps misunderstands my question. Her responses on ethnic and identification were not the

ones I was raising at all. This branch develops curricula and curricula support and identifies the needs in the Manitoba school system for all students in native studies. Some of these will be native students and will have different needs in native studies. Others are in different programs throughout the school system.

That is what I was looking for, is: How are you evaluating the effectiveness of the gaps that you have identified, the needs which you have fulfilled and whether in fact these are the appropriate curriculum materials that the schools desire, whether they are for native students or non-native students?

* (1440)

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, again, we do not have formal mechanisms in which to measure. However, I have discussed some of the other mechanisms by which we measure.

I appreciate what the honourable member has raised, though, in that we are looking at the effectiveness of the programming, not just for the native students but also for all students, and that certainly was part of the discussed mandate of this particular branch.

Now, I believe the member is also raising or suggesting that perhaps there should be a formal mechanism for measuring. So at this point, I will say that I am certainly willing to look at that. The mechanism that I would use to do that is through the Native Education advisory committee, which has been set up, and part of that committee's role is also to assist in looking at the effectiveness of the programming. If that is a specific issue of interest, then I will raise that with that committee.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister explain, over the past year, which needs have been identified in the curriculum and how the department has met those needs?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that over the past year a series of priorities have been developed. The first one was English language development, and that was identified through consultation with the field, through teachers working in the field, through our Student Support branch, through our Native Education Branch and through consultation with native groups.

The second area identified was native language programming, or literacy within their own language, and again identified through a series of the same

mechanisms as I mentioned—thirdly, academic success in the core programming.

Those three areas are specifically measurable through an assessment at the local school level and a reporting by the local school.

A fourth priority which has been identified is native culture and awareness. I think this is one of the priorities that the member may have been alluding to, because it deals with cross-cultural awareness, it deals with native awareness among native groups as well as among other students in the school. That has been much more of a subjective measure, and it is more of a reported measure by school personnel.

Ms. Friesen: Well, let us take that last one then, the native culture and awareness. That is one of the priorities, and it is one of the needs that the department identified. What steps did the department take? What were the visible results, the tangible results? What booklets, articles, meetings, were undertaken to meet that need?

Mrs. Vodrey: I did read into the record when we were last together, and I am certainly prepared to read it again, a summary of the '91-92 in-service activities, which are an example of the steps taken to deal with some of the issues. In terms of native awareness, the number of sessions offered were 111 sessions of specific in-service training; the number of divisions affected was 23; the number of schools was 50; the number of personnel reached was 250; the number of students affected, 4,100; the number of parent or community members reached was 200; and other organizations involved were 15.

I have similar figures for in-service activities relating to native studies and native language, English language development, the career counselling, early childhood issues and community liaison.

In addition, we have also provided some professional development opportunities for teachers to increase their effectiveness in native education, and native students' rate of academic success does challenge educators. There is a recognition that teachers require assistance in curriculum design and implementation, also in teaching strategies and the cross-cultural understandings to meet the needs of native students. As schools increase their requests for assistance, resources are sometimes limited.

The Native Education Branch is moving in the direction of prioritizing its support for professional development and in-servicing for those schools who are committed to some long-range planning and implementation and follow-up to address the systemic change, and that then becomes a measurable effect when we can look again at the actual systemic change within the school, the behavioural change and the structural change that is noted within a school or a school division.

The branch does play a leadership role in school planning, but it does encourage schools to take ownership for their decision making and to establish a school community network which is integral to native education initiatives. I think that is another very important point. If the in-servicing activities were strictly provided by the department and seen as more of a performance without an interactive and an actual ownership of the issues, then perhaps they would not be so effective. But, when schools and divisions are able to demonstrate a sense of ownership and also a sense of interest in establishing their own school community network, then the in-servicing process becomes more effective.

Also, in addition to the school-based in-service delivery, Native Education Branch has collaborated with the University of Manitoba's Continuing Education division for teacher training. I did mention yesterday that the branch co-sponsored the Thompson-based native language instruction certificate program, which graduated 22 instructors in June 1991, and it is participating in the delivery of a second course which runs until 1993 in Winnipeg.

The Native Education Branch co-operated with the Winnipeg Education Centre to deliver the first native education summer institute in July of 1991, and it provided the opportunity for 60 early- and middle-years teachers who enrolled in a six-credit course to interact on a daily basis with native academics and elders. Their final evaluation rated the course as the most meaningful professional development that they have experienced.

Also, the assistant deputy minister has met with the native advisory group which I have spoken of. They have met three times, and the topics have been a review of the current programs. There is a major workshop with the native advisory group, which will be taking place on May 18, and the topic of that workshop will be major policy issues.

In addition, school divisions deliver the programs that have been designed by this branch and the measurements again would occur in the local area for their effectiveness.

* (1450)

Ms. Frlesen: Madam Chairperson, I think we started out this by saying that, yes, you are meeting with many teachers. My problem was, how is that being translated into the classroom? The answer is only in informal ways. Do you have any sense of measurement of what is happening in the classroom? What is concerning me is that we have a dramatically changed situation in Manitoba. We have a very different population base than we did 10 years ago, and it is affecting obviously both rural and urban areas. It is something which is province-wide.

My concern is, how are conditions in the classroom changing? How is the material in the classroom changing? What different kinds of high school graduates, both in terms of their knowledge, their understanding and their levels of tolerance are we producing?

Your program here is directed towards curriculum and curriculum changes. How has that curriculum changed? How have the children in the classroom been affected? Can we approach it from another angle then? What are your goals? You obviously cannot evaluate anything if you do not have any goals. So what are the goals for children? Let us say, take it two benchmark levels, Grade 6 and at the end of Grade 12. In what way are those students in Grade 6 and Grade 12 different from students who graduated 10 years ago in Manitoba schools? What new material has there been in the Manitoba curriculum at all levels that would make that difference so that those new Grade 12 graduates are able to cope with a Manitoba workplace and society where one in four people is going to be aboriginal?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the honourable member seems to be continually saying that we have not had a way to actually look at any concrete measurements. I will remind her that I did say I would take her concerns to the native advisory committee. However, I was able to provide her with some examples where there are very specific measurements available, the area of English language development being one area, the area of literacy and native language programming. I

believe that is a change from the past 10 years. We were able to look at academic success within the core programming. So there are certainly areas of concrete measurement, and I believe that we have been able to demonstrate those.

In addition, there have also been changes as the native support branch, Native Education Branch, is also assisting teachers to look at methodology that would in fact be more useful for them, more effective for them, in the various parts of Manitoba where the local issues present themselves. I think that has been, in fact, a very supportive and positive goal with this Native Education Branch in that it has been able to try and look at what is happening in various local areas.

We also talked about another very measurable change, that being parental involvement, and that is certainly measurable, and I have already discussed that.

Now, the strategic plan that the department has looks to some of the issues which the honourable member raised, but we are looking to those issues of performance for all students across Manitoba. We do have that plan in place, and we would not want to specifically segment one group when we recognize that the issues of performance are important across all of the student bodies.

The honourable member also asked about some of the goals that we have in the Department of Education. I think it would be important to provide her with some of those goals and some of the indicators that we are also looking at.

We are looking at increased levels of literacy skills and other basic skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. We are looking at increased rates of program completion for students, a measurable initiative.

We are looking at increased numbers of graduates from the education and training system with marketable work skills, increased numbers of graduates with the ability to be enterprising, to persevere with hard work, but to take risks and to be diligent in all of their efforts, increased level of knowledge and skills in science and technology, the increased knowledge of and the concern for the environment, increased student involvement in and the responsibility for their own learning, increased respect among students and teachers, increased student understanding and demonstration of fundamental values such as fairness, honesty,

respect, esthetic appreciation and social responsibility and greater integration of the components of the education and training system, more articulation and collaboration between educational institutions, more involvement of all partners in education and training and more integration of subject disciplines.

We are also looking for improved standards of student performance and increased participation of all partners in education and, in particular, increased participation of women and aboriginal people, immigrants and other underrepresented groups.

Now, in the Native Education Branch, the very specific objectives are: to evaluate educational programs designed for native students; and secondly, to recommend priorities in policy for Manitoba education related to K-12 native education and to co-ordinate the planning, development and implementation of the departmental programs and curricula for and about native students, and to promote the participation of native parents and communities in the education of their children and to act as a broker of services to support native education.

Now, in terms of the results that we would be looking for and the assessment criteria, in the area of curriculum and support materials, the key results would be the availability of native-oriented classroom support material for integration with the core provincial K through 12 curricula and the availability of effective program models for at-risk students.

In the area of delivery of teacher in-servicing and training, the key results that we are looking for is a proactive approach to organizing effective professional development for school divisions with a significant native enrollment.

In the area of communication with the field, the key result is a proactive approach to establishing and maintaining regular contacts with school organizations and native communities to gather and to disseminate current information related to native education and acting as a broker of services to support effective native education.

Fourthly, in the area of community participation, the key result that we are looking at is the organizing of school, parent and community education awareness workshops which stress the role of parents as partners in the education of their children and establishing school-community partnerships for

at-risk students. I have given the honourable member some of the numbers available around that particular participation.

In terms of the future directions, I think it would be very important to look at, first of all, the area of administration and support; support implementation of the Native Education Branch programs which have been reorganized to reflect the decentralization and current priorities. Secondly, to focus on interbranch linkages, to implement department wide aboriginal education priorities identified in answering the challenge and in building a solid foundation. Thirdly, to expand liaisons with external education, aboriginal and business organizations, for example collaboration for a Native Education conference for the fall of 1992. Fourthly, to co-ordinate the functioning of the Dauphin office to strengthen the education network in the region. Fifthly, to provide technical support to the native advisory committee, to the ADM of PDSS; to examine the potential for distance education programs for middle and senior-years native students.

* (1500)

In the area of native awareness, future program directions are an ongoing focus on the provision of resource people and cultural displays for regional school in-services and community workshops. In the area of native studies, the future directions: ongoing development of K to 12 resources with a focus on senior years core curriculum support; to participate in PDSS students at risk and Stay in School initiatives; to participate in the planning and the delivery of a summer institute on native education in co-operation with the Winnipeg Education Centre; and to participate in a PDSS committee to develop material selection guidelines.

In the area of native languages, to participate in the development of a provincial native language policy with the Manitoba association of native languages; to finalize the Ojibway 3 through 6 enrichment programs; to develop enrichment programs, Cree 7 through 12 and Ojibway 1 through 6; to provide a draft teachers' guide for 1 through 12 enrichment; to develop a new high school native language fluency testing resource; and to continue support for the U of M native language southern certificate program in Winnipeg until January 1993.

In the area of English language development, to continue a collaborative approach to program

planning and assessment with divisions funded under the ELDNS; and to continue to facilitate the inter-branch advisory committee to review division proposals and evaluate the program.

In the area of career guidance, the future direction, counselling to expand a career awareness model in the Parkland region that incorporates representatives from Education, native organizations, local businesses, parents and students—

Ms. Friesen: Yes, perhaps the minister would like to answer the question.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley.

Ms. Friesen: I am sorry to interrupt the minister, but I do not want her to get too far off topic. I think we have been going for some time now with that particular list.

My question was directed at two benchmark levels, Grade 6 and Grade 12. How are the students—and I am trying to get at the classroom implications—what changes has this government and these policies made in Manitoba?

How is that child in Grade 6 different than the one four years ago or even 10 years ago, if she would like to answer that, and how is the one different in Grade 12?

What kind of a different Manitoba education are we giving these students in the area of native studies and native culture—and we are still under that heading—that will enable them to cope with the new labour force, the new proportions of native and non-native people in rural communities and the growing preponderance of native people in large sections of the urban area?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I believe that the honourable member must have a very specific answer in her mind, because I have, I think, very carefully and very broadly answered the question which she has brought forward. I have spoken very directly to the issue that she raised of goals and objectives when she asked what they were and how they could be evaluated. I have read those goals and objectives into the record, so that there would be no mistake about what those goals and objectives are.

In addition, Madam Chairperson, I have also read into the record what the future objectives of this department are, and I have also then spoken to a

series of very quantifiable and measurable results which are measurable at time frames other than just Grades 6 and 12. I have spoken about the native language programs which are currently within the system, and I have spoken about future directions of those native language programs. I have spoken about the parental involvement and the encouragement of parental involvement, which, I am sure, the honourable member understands is a change within the last 10 years, and I have explained to her very carefully how that measurement can be obtained through discussion with school divisions. I have explained to the honourable member our goals in the area of literacy for native languages.

So I am assuming that there is a point that she has in her mind which, if she could express more fully to me, I will be glad to try and respond to, but, at this point, I have I think explained both goals and objectives. I have explained quantifiable programs. I have explained behavioural measurements which are available. I have explained future directions.

If there is something specific, I will be happy to try and answer that specific question.

Ms. Friesen: The minister has talked about measurable elements of parental involvement and of literacy. I would be pleased to have the numbers. She has talked about the fact that they are measurable, but she has not given us any indication of changes. So I would be glad to receive those, and you could table those at a later date.

The specific question I am asking now for the third time is based at the classroom level. What do you expect as a Minister of Education? What are your goals for the child leaving elementary school, a Manitoba child? What do they know about Indians? What do they know about Inuit? What kind of behavioural attitudes have they incorporated? How is this curriculum different than it was five years ago, and what has been the participation of the department in that?

Second of all, the next bench-mark level, a high school graduate in Manitoba—what do you expect him or her to know and understand? How is their view of our past different than it was four years ago or ten years ago, and what has been the contribution of this department which develops curricular and aboriginal culture and history and—what else does it say here?—languages than it was four years ago and ten years?

I am not sure I can get any more specific than that.

* (1510)

Mrs. Vodrey: Well, I am informed that an important starting place to look at this is to say that 10 years ago there simply was no program; and that today we do have a Native Education Branch; that the Native Education Branch is focusing on issues which we have discussed, such as native awareness and native studies; that these are being implemented throughout the province; and that the Native Education Branch has been working directly with more than half of the divisions.

I think a second very important point, and perhaps this speaks to what the member has been particularly interested in, is that we have not developed a specific and single curriculum for native studies, but instead we have integrated into the social studies curriculum, which all Manitoba children then would study, an area of native history and aboriginal information.

I think it is important, when the member talks about, what is it that we expect young people will have learned at the end of their time in school?—we do expect, through this social studies curriculum in particular, that they will have a view of the extent, and a more accurate view, of the history of aboriginal people both in Manitoba and in Canada; and that they also—and this particularly speaks to teachers—are aware of some of the stereotypes which are in some of the literature; that they are then—teachers, in particular, and administrators—able to identify some of the bias; that they are able then to select support material which does not have that same bias, so that students come out of our public school program knowing about native people in a more realistic way.

We also have made and worked at a number of major initiatives in the area of antiracism. There has been a willingness, and we have seen as a result of the in-services a greater willingness of children to simply live together. Now, that is an issue that needs to be continually worked at.

Then, I think very importantly, the Native Education Branch has been assisting schools simply in the area of school climate, a school climate that is more consistent with the aboriginal culture. Traditionally, some of the climate has been very competitive. What may be more consistent with native culture is the more co-operative climate.

That has been identified and there has been an attempt to assist schools in developing that climate.

So those are some of the examples which we expect students, having studied within the system and as a result of the work of the Native Education Branch over the past 10 years, to have some very specific results.

Ms. Friesen: That does begin to get at some of the issues that I was trying to get at. So training of teachers, particularly to recognize and deal with racial stereotypes, changing the atmosphere within schools and taking account of different native processes, all of those, I would think, could be measured in an informal way.

Could we look at the curriculum, in particular? The minister says that she does not have a particular native studies curriculum, although, indeed, native studies classes and courses are taught in schools, so I am not sure whose curriculum they are using.

Specifically, could we get from the Grade 6 to the Grade 12 level? What do we expect students to know at Grade 6, and what changes then, what progress and growth do we have by Grade 12?

Mrs. Vodrey: Just in response to a portion of the member's question, some of the curriculums which she refers to, the native studies curriculum, are locally developed curriculums. Then I would also like to point out that, when we look at the responsibility for measurement of progress, to remind her in education, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to measure progressive students' attainments against the individual curriculum objectives.

But now to give her a very specific tracking of expected outcomes in a curriculum, I would like to use a social studies curriculum by way of example, and in a broad sense to start by saying that, if we are looking at one of the goals being levels of awareness and tolerance, to remind her that students at the Grade 6 level might have the same end goal, but cognitively their ability to express it would be significantly different than those students at the Grade 12 level. So the goals may be similar, but the measure and the expression of understanding would be somewhat different.

* (1520)

To track a specific course, we can start with the Grade 6 level in terms of social studies. Grade 6 focuses on Canadian history, and it is about the

peopling of North America. It has been important to note that there has been included in that the aboriginal view and a view that aboriginal people put forward about the history and the growth of the population for North America, not just that native people were here and then history began with the influence of other settlers, but, in fact, a view also of what native people put forward.

When we move into Grade 7, the focus of the social studies program is of people as stewards of the planet, and there is an integration of aboriginal views contributed to this particular portion of the social studies program. In Grade 8, it is a view of people through the ages, and this is an opportunity for information regarding the development of aboriginal societies to be included in this portion of the social studies curriculum.

In Grade 9, it focuses again on the area of Canadian studies, and there is a focus in this area on multicultural education and on the role of multicultural groups within Canadian society. There is also a focus in this area on the Metis people and on their particular role in Canadian studies.

In Grade 10, the social studies curriculum then moves into the area of geography and the use of resources in North America, and this can then integrate issues such as aboriginal land claims and some of the economic issues relating to native people in that program.

When you reach the Grade 11 program the issue of Canadian history is again picked up, but this, as I pointed out earlier, becomes a requirement to look at some of the issues of Canadian history at a higher cognitive level, but picks up on a theme which had been begun in Grade 6, developed and picked up again to be more fully developed in Grade 11.

In Grade 12, social studies is an optional course. It tends to focus on world issues, and in this area the issues of aboriginal people certainly become an issue to then be discussed among world issues.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chairperson, I want to come back to the question that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) asked right at the beginning of this section, and that was on textbooks. The integration of aboriginal material throughout the curriculum I think is important. I think it is also important to have an aboriginal curriculum for aboriginal students, but it seems to me that one of the difficulties that teachers face is the fragmentation of materials. It does not matter at

what level they are teaching, I think they find that particularly with aboriginal materials. I think the preparation of a textbook, such as a number of other provinces have done, for an aboriginal history of a region or a province is a useful goal. I am wondering if the minister is considering this, has considered it, rejected it. What are her thoughts on this?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the textbook that the member references was a textbook being considered to be developed by one specific band and a very specific history. I think she may be asking a broader question: Have we considered developing a native education text for the province of Manitoba, a wider view than particularly one band?

If I am correct there, I am informed that Alberta has just gone through a multiyear collaborative project and has been able to develop a series. In Manitoba we have given some consideration to doing a project such as that. However, it has been very difficult to find a local publisher willing to undertake the project, because it is an expensive project. Also, we would need to bring in the stakeholders, and Manitoba does have a smaller market in terms of the expense of the project and the marketability if the project was to be very Manitoba-specific.

So at this point the series which has been developed in Alberta is certainly available as a resource. Whenever we do choose new social studies textbooks, we do expect the content of those textbooks to pay attention to the issues which I addressed in my last question of the series of aboriginal issues through the K-12 curriculum.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chairperson, it is my concern about the fragmentation of material, so that you have the situation where most Manitoba graduates cannot think of the Metis in any terms beyond Louis Riel, for example. They have very minimal materials, and those which they have are not fitted into a larger framework.

So it is that sense of a larger framework that is important. Certainly, the specific textbook proposal, the Anishinabe one that was made reference to earlier, is not just specific to one band actually, it is specific to a larger group of people. I believe that it would have had the opportunity to be marketed in a broader range. The Anishinabe people are spread from the Great Lakes to the

Saskatchewan border. Some of the histories would have been in common.

I accept what the minister is saying in the sense of Manitoba is a small market. Yes, it is absolutely desirable to have a local publisher, and those do present difficulties. But where will we start? Could we not start, for example, in the way that the Yukon has done? The book there, Part of the Land, Part of the Water, is a combination of archeology, of elder stories, of historic myths, contemporary history of land claims.

It is one source useful for high school students and for teachers which we do not have available. Could we make a beginning somewhere?

* (1530)

Mrs. Vodrey: I am advised that we did in fact, as I mentioned earlier, consider the development of a textbook, but for the reasons explained we were not able to do that. It was very costly. We did not have the resources. So the step that has been taken by the Native Education Branch is the poster series, which I am sure the honourable member has seen. The poster series is also supplemented by approximately 100 pages of back-up notes to look at some of those issues which might be addressed through a textbook, but it was in a way that we could afford.

Actually, I know the branch is very proud of that particular poster series, and then in addition we also have, and I will remind the member again, the Native Education advisory committee which meets with the assistant deputy minister.

I think that this committee has taken a very important function to avoid the fragmentation concerns that the honourable member raises in that this committee's role is to look at a number of issues holistically affecting native education in Manitoba. So we are looking to that committee for the most complete advice that we can receive.

Ms. Friesen: So what the minister is saying is it is too expensive at the moment to produce even the first textbook for teachers and high school students in native history in Manitoba.

It seems to me that this is an important issue. Would the minister indicate whether she has any plans to develop such a book? Can we phase it in over five years? Can we begin now to develop the planning for it and produce it in three years or five years?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, I did not say it was too expensive. I said, however, that it was costly. I think that is a very important recognition. I also said that we are looking at this matter, we have looked at this matter and we are now, through our Native Education advisory committee, looking at this among other matters. We are looking at a holistic type of advice to avoid the fragmentation that the honourable member has been discussing.

Now a very important point in the area of education, not simply in the area of research and the producing of a book, is that a teacher in education is not dependent on a specific book for teaching success, but that a good teacher does integrate a whole number of materials with support from the division and from the government and from the materials available. So, in terms of success, I would also like to remind her that teachers, good teachers, would be making known to themselves the other materials that are also available.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chairperson, nobody would be more appreciative than I am that teachers develop and depend upon a variety of materials, but in most subject areas there is a framework. In this subject area it is still being developed, and most teachers need, I think, that basic structure and then the option to bring in other materials, and to use a variety of audio-visual or oral histories or a variety of other means. It is the framework.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, maybe we are coming to some agreement then that there is, in fact, a basic framework; that the basic framework is the curriculum; and that through the curriculum, the curriculum of social studies, and language arts and history and geography, there is within that curriculum awareness and sensitivity to aboriginal issues; and that the support to the curriculum—as the honourable member described, an appreciation of supports to the curriculum—is support in the area of notes, in the area of videos, posters—all of these things are identified specifically in the Manitoba Textbook Bureau.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Madam Chairperson, I have a few questions that I would like to just clarify and ask the minister. First of all, it is very interesting to hear the minister state that the native advisory committee meets with the deputy minister, and it sounds like on a fairly regular basis, and offers advice to the government.

So, on that note, I would just like to ask the minister who is on this committee? How many members and who are they?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would just like to correct the honourable member to make sure that he understands, that is the assistant deputy minister of PDSS—not the deputy but the assistant deputy minister. This was in response to Strategy 24 in Answering the Challenge, and it does commit Manitoba Education and Training to the establishment of the advisory committee. This committee is advisory to the assistant deputy minister of PDSS. It is composed of representative native people, and the committee will assist in the identification and the implementation of educational goals and objectives to improve academic achievement levels of native students.

* (1540)

I am happy to inform the member of the committee membership. We have a teacher representative, Sophie Ledoux, who is from Winnipegosis, representing Winnipegosis and Duck Mountain area; consultant Eileen Beaulieu from Sandy Bay; trustee George Dram from Frontier; an administrator, Arnold Dysart, from Thompson, Mystery Lake School Division; a representative from the universities and colleges, Lloyd Thomas, from Red River Community College; a representative from the MMF, Audreen Hourie, from Winnipeg; a representative from the AMC, Mary Richard, from Winnipeg; a representative of a parent community group, and that is Lorna Apetagon from Norway House, Frontier School Division; a representative of business and industry, two, Tim Cloud from Waywayseecappo band and Marshall Murdock from Winnipeg; and an elder, Flora Zaharia from Winnipeg; and then supported also by our director of the Native Education Branch, Juliette Sabot.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, I am extremely pleased to hear the names and some of the individuals on that committee. There are a lot of very highly skilled individuals, and just from the calibre of that committee I am sure the assistant deputy minister must get some awful good recommendations. Those recommendations could be passed on to the government and the government act on them. I feel very confident that good things will happen for aboriginal people in the education field.

I would just like to ask how many times this committee meets per year and when was the last time this committee met?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that this committee has met three times since it was appointed in November. They met in December, January and May. Their plan is to meet approximately six to eight times per year, and they will be meeting with that frequency until they have a draft policy to present to government. There is an expectation that the draft policy should be able to be submitted by early '93.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, again, I have to say that a committee that meets six to eight times per year is a very committed committee. I just look forward to seeing the copy of their recommendations in their report. Hopefully, that will be tabled in 1993.

The other question I have is—it is sort of a concern I have through some of my own personal past experience and stuff, and that is with the whole area of the native cultural and awareness programs that are delivered to teachers and some of the schools within Manitoba. If I heard correctly, there were 111 in-service programs that it was delivered to and also to 50 schools. I hope that the 50 schools that we are talking about, I hope it was not just a few grades here and there, that it was all the population of all the classes. The reason I say that is because a lot of time when you get people who are prejudiced or racist towards different cultures and different identities it is because they do not have an understanding and appreciation of the differences of those peoples.

I would just like to ask the minister if maybe it might be a long-range plan, whatever years it takes, but will these cultural awareness programs be introduced to all schools in Manitoba—I am not just saying in one year, whatever it takes—and to all students whether there are aboriginal students in those schools or not?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I appreciate what the honourable member has said of the desire to reach out to as many Manitobans as possible for a desired effect of both information and, hopefully, then behavioural and attitudinal change.

I am informed at this point that the department and this branch in particular is working at this point where the interest has arisen, where there has been expressed interest and, as a result of that expressed

interest, then making attempts. When that information then is spread out as being effective, that interest will also be developed from other community areas and school communities also.

So in responding to requests for assistance which have come from the field within servicing and professional development, the Native Education Branch does give priority to school divisions across the province who are committed to a long-term process that will affect this systemic change. The Native Education Branch also works in collaboration with other Manitoba Education and Training branches and community agencies and provides leadership, but schools are encouraged to develop plans that will fit with their particular needs in their local area.

For example, during the past year, the branch's new Dauphin office has concentrated its efforts in the Parkland region to co-ordinate a series of parent participation workshops which brought together service deliverers from Corrections, Manitoba Education and Training, the Western Region Tribal Council, the Dauphin Friendship Centre, the Dauphin Ochre and Frontier School Divisions and native parents to develop support strategies. This approach was intended to discourage that sort of quick-fix sense of native education and to promote instead the involvement of the key education stakeholders who truly can make that significant difference in the academic success.

That goes back to the point that I had made a little bit earlier about a sort of one-shot in-service where a community who is not ready may not be as effective as a community who has expressed a commitment and who has then asked for the support of the Native Education Branch, and the changes then can be more systemic than simply a one afternoon informational setting.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, the reason I raised that is because if you go on responding to requests only, it is a hit-and-miss game. If it is delivered to all schools, whether there is aboriginal participation in those schools or not—and sometimes you would touch on an individual who might be the one who grows up later in life and would join organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and what have you.

That is why I raised that issue, to hopefully hear the minister say that eventually she—even if she said that she hopes it will be introduced in all the schools,

that would give me some form of hope for aboriginal people.

* (1550)

You walk down Main Street right now and you see how much prejudice and racist attitudes take place there. Aboriginal people are faced with that almost on a daily basis, just like the blacks are and a lot of the visible minorities, because people do not understand and appreciate the differences in the cultures and values of another culture. I hope the minister will consult with her staff and possibly look at hopefully addressing that somewhere in the future.

Like I said, even if it takes 10 years, as long as there is hope for visible minorities and aboriginal people somewhere down the line, I think that is all we are asking.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, first of all I appreciate what the member is saying about the role of education and the benefits of education in terms of breaking down some of the difficulties which he discussed.

I would just like to highlight one of the difficulties that occurs within a school system in that we cannot simply invite ourselves in or coerce schools to accept a specific program. We have to instead make sure that information is available to those schools and that those schools, at the point at which they are at, then wish to avail themselves of the service offered. There is then an opportunity for—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): The minister is factually wrong. The government of Manitoba, the provincial government, is responsible for schools constitutionally, not the school divisions nor the schools themselves. It is the province that is responsible.

Madam Chairperson: The honourable member for Kildonan does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

Mrs. Vodrey: In responding to the member for Point Douglas' (Mr. Hickes) question, the point that I was making to him was that he had said he would like to make sure that schools and students across the province had the opportunity to avail themselves of programs offered by the Native Education

Branch. My point to him was—when he asked about would it be possible for all students—to say that at the moment we have prioritized the delivery of that assistance to those areas where they have identified where their starting place may be.

What I was suggesting, and I think this is very consistent with what members on the other side have said, is that these matters involve both attitudinal and behavioural changes. Those are something where you have to start at the point where the community is. Starting at the point where the community is, then we look for the interest to continue to develop and to make that offer to the community and not to attempt to coerce a community beyond a point at which their starting point is.

Mr. Hickes: I would just like to follow that up from sitting here and hearing the comments from the minister, that some of the schools will be involved in the aboriginal language program, aboriginal cultural program and on and on. I think, and I hope, the minister will reaffirm that the education of aboriginal history and aboriginal culture and the value system for aborigines will not be delivered only to aboriginal students. If that is the case, if it will be delivered to all students, then part of that whole curriculum development dealing with aboriginal culture and concerns, the whole aboriginal cultural awareness workshop, could be tied into that curriculum for all schools.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would just like to start by saying that a little earlier this afternoon I did discuss in terms of the provincial curriculum the integration within that curriculum of information regarding native history, and through the geography program issues relating to native economics, native land claims and so on.

However, in the area of professional development, for instance, school divisions then identify what some of their areas of particular interest are to match their local needs. That was the point that I was making to the honourable member about having local areas also identify where they are in the process and what their local needs are and to prioritize what they would like to see in that area.

Mr. Hickes: I guess I would have to ask the minister, what are the goals of the government if the school felt that they wanted additional information and the cultural awareness workshop or even a session to hopefully reinforce a lot of the curriculum

and stuff that people are reading out of books? If we have the resources in Manitoba to bring in a cultural workshop so people can actually see and experience it, it just reinforces the learning that has taken place from, hopefully, the updated history books that the students will be using. I have a difficult time understanding why you would have to wait to get a response from the school in order to deliver that kind of a program.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, there seems to be an element of misunderstanding from my honourable friend, so let me try and clarify here.

Initiation is in fact a two-way street. Perhaps he is asking me what kind of in-services we as a department, has the Native Education Branch in specific, put forward to assist on some of the concerns that he has raised. I am informed that for 10 years we did sponsor an annual Native Education conference. That conference I am informed is now discontinued because the evaluation was that it would in fact be more productive to tailor that on a regional basis to the very specific issues raised region by region. That has been done in co-operation with the local superintendents and local school divisions.

In addition, we also sponsor regional workshops. There is one going on at this very moment in Duck Mountain, and it is focusing on cultural awareness, anti-racism. In that particular area, I am informed that there is in fact a specific Metis population who has expressed concern about those particular issues of racism and, therefore, this was a workshop that was developed jointly by the Native Education Branch providing leadership and by the school division expressing a concern and a need.

* (1600)

In addition to school-based in-service delivery, the Native Education Branch—again, I remind the member—has collaborated with the University of Manitoba's Continuing Education division for teacher training. The branch co-sponsored the Thompson-based native language instruction certificate which graduated 22 instructors in June of 1991 and is participating in the delivery of a second course which runs until 1993 in Winnipeg. The Native Education Branch also co-operated with the Winnipeg Education Centre to deliver the first native education summer institute in July of 1991 which by the reports of the participants was extremely successful and satisfactory to them.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, maybe I should clarify my point and my concern. I am not overly concerned about the in-services and stuff that are taking place in communities and in the schools. That is great. What I am very concerned about is the understanding and the realization and appreciation of a different culture that is instilled into children when they are at a young age, so that the children who are attending those schools not only read about what happens in a curriculum, but also have a say as to why aboriginal people believe this way or that way or why do aboriginal people do this or that. So that way, the children before they start getting negative attitudes or prejudice in their own heads, will have an opportunity of making their own judgment concerning aboriginal peoples. That is my point.

If that was happening in schools at a very young age, then the children, as they get older, hopefully will have a much better understanding and appreciation for aboriginal peoples. That was the point I was trying to make.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, well, that certainly is our intent and that has certainly been what I have been endeavouring to communicate to the honourable member. It certainly has been an effort of that particular branch.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, I guess we had been communicating in a different language. Probably sometimes that is the problem where people do not understand one another's intentions or languages and you feel frustrated at times. So this should be a good example to all of us. At least, I feel that I have learned something from just this small experience.

I would like to go a little further with your answer where you said the government and you have been trying to go to the appreciation and to instill the aboriginal language program, the culture, hopefully the spirituality, and the value systems, why aboriginal people are different, and why aboriginal people should be very proud to be aboriginal. Before I do that, I have one very small question, and I hope I will get a positive answer.

You have mentioned, at least since I have been sitting here, three times about 22 native language instructors who were trained to be native language instructors. I hope that the government has guaranteed jobs for these people. How many will be hired?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the participants in that program were currently employed, that they were released by their division or their band school, and that they then participated in a series of one-week-long programs over a two-year period. Then in the period of time in between those one-week sessions, they were back in their school putting into practice some of the things that they had learned.

I am also informed that of those 22 graduates in June, we believe there was only one exception, but our figures show 21 of those individuals were re-employed in their position.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, it seems like it is a very worthwhile and a very successful program. When you have classroom training and then reinforce it in the classroom, you are getting the experience before you get all the training in one place. One program that delivers their training like that is the New Careers program. It has been a very highly successful program by using that model.

The other thing I would like to ask the minister is—I would like to go into a different area. I have heard the minister stating about the native affairs branch, the support systems that were built into it, the delivering of teacher in-service programs and this kind of support and that kind of support. It all sounds very, very positive to the individuals who will be teaching in the classrooms.

One area that I would like to ask the minister is, is there anything developed and put into place in all the schools pertaining to a lot of the children who live in poverty, are a lot of aboriginal people, visible minorities or anyone who is living in poverty—is there in place a proper lunch program for these students to make sure that they are eating adequately for the day? As we know, if you do not have proper diets and if you do not have the proper foods, your energy level is not there. Your concentration level is not there. So all the support systems that you put in place, a lot of it will be wasted unless you have say a lunch program to stimulate the body and the mind.

Is there such a support system put into place for these schools where the highest concentration of people are living in poverty?

* (1610)

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I certainly understand the point the member is making, that young people who are in school of all ages can benefit certainly and can concentrate better by

programs which provide nutrition. I need to point out to him that those programs are decisions made at the local level. They are not programs funded directly by the department but rather initiatives undertaken by local divisions.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, I have a few more questions. I would just like to ask the minister about the language training programs that are in place in K to 12. We have, or at least I have heard the minister stating about the language programs, how important they are to aboriginal people. I have to fully agree with that statement. One of the programs that was in place that she is fully aware of that had their funding cut was the Abinochi preschool program. When we talk about language programs, and I know their responsibility will be that it is a preschool program, but when we talk about language programs and we talk about aboriginal values and culture, I have to keep going back to the language, because if one does not understand the language they have a difficult time understanding who one's self is. This is a program that is leading the way and is a role model hopefully from other jurisdictions.

I would like to ask the minister if she has had any discussions in possibly looking at either funding or assisting in the funding of this very worthwhile program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I know the member has raised the issue of this particular program a number of times and certainly makes a point about some of the very valuable things which have been happening in this program. However, I do have to remind him that it is not within our mandate to support such a program, and we have just gone through an extensive process of legislative reform in which there has been extensive public consultation.

At this time I will wait for the report of the legislative reform committee, but I would like to remind the member also that since the inception of the Abinochi preschool program the Native Education Branch has provided consultant support on request.

Again, the preschool funding is a question to address under the area of legislative reform, which I know he understands that we currently are in that process.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the minister: When she said she provided a consultant assistant to the Abinochi preschool

program, in what form was this consultant consulting, in what form had it taken place?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the native language consultant was involved fairly extensively. The native language consultant provided assistance in program planning, provided assistance in curriculum development and with actual content and also acted as a resource and also acted as a resource for methodology in the preschool years.

Mr. Hlckes: I would like to ask the minister, in conversation and meetings that I have had with the Abinochi parent council, they informed me that the access study was \$16,000 from the Department of Education for curriculum development. Is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, the Department of Education and Training through the Inner City branch, not the Native Education Branch, did provide one-time-only funding of \$16,000 to cover the cost of a consultant to assess needs and to assist with the curriculum requirements to June 1991.

Mr. Hlckes: Could the minister tell us who this consultant was?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the grant of \$16,000 was provided to the Abinochi preschool for program planning and for evaluation. That was how the money was to be used.

Who the consultant was, who that individual was, I am sorry, he would have to ask the Abinochi preschool.

Mr. Hlckes: I would just like to refer back to one of the statements that the minister had made about land claims, that it was being taught in the Grade 10 geography class. I would be very interested to know which schools it is being delivered in.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the point made about issues relating to, by way of example, land claims in the geography program, the point is that information is integrated into the core curriculum. Therefore, it would be taught in all high schools, but I have additional information which says that we also have a curriculum support book called Aboriginal Rights, Treaties and Land Claims.

* (1620)

This support book could be used in areas where there is an optional program of native studies and, by way of example, two school divisions, Brandon School Division and Frontier School Division.

Mr. Hlckes: Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the minister if her department has provided any materials to these schools to ensure that for the Grade 10 geography class that the proper and right information is—because land claims are a very serious issue right now. A lot of them are very outstanding. If people are not given or if the latitude of the teachers is so great that they could almost say and do what they want and start giving students wrong information, I think that could get right out of hand.

So I would like to ask the minister if her department has provided any information for these curriculums or to the geography class. If so, what information?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, we certainly acknowledge that the issue of land claims is a very complex issue, a very complicated issue. With that in mind, it is our intent to have students examine a variety of materials, to not just put forward a single position, but instead to have students have the opportunity to examine a number of positions.

In that case, we then make sure students have the opportunity to view primary documents, commercial documents, plus this section, which the member referred to, which was prepared by a Brandon University professor.

Mr. Hlckes: Madam Chairperson, the reason I raised that, is there a way the minister can guarantee that the graduates come out of Grade 12 with a proper and full understanding of aboriginal land claims, because right now it is so politically volatile if given the wrong information and misinformation, and there are so many that are still outstanding.

Almost every province have their own land claims and wish to settle it in various different ways. Part of the answer was that they are looking at all papers and presentations or legal papers that are presented. So I would like to ask, is there a form of certain guarantee that the student that graduates from Grade 12 has a fairly good, complex understanding of the aboriginal land claims?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am not sure to what standard the member would like that guarantee to be made. It is very difficult to make the kind of guarantee with an absolute degree of certainty in this particular area that the member may be asking, but we are providing what we believe to be very credible resource materials. We do believe as well that we

have very credible teachers, and we believe that we have effective teachers.

I bring him back to the point that I raised earlier, that 10 years ago we had nothing and now we are making a start. We are in the process of attempting to make sure that some of these issues are, in fact, dealt with within the curriculum. In terms of the issue of guarantee, I am not sure if the member is asking then that we institute a province-wide assessment.

Mr. Hickes: Madam Chairperson, I was not implying the qualifications or the skills of the teachers. I am sure that they are all highly skilled and that they do, hopefully, deliver the best curriculum possible. I just wanted to know what was happening in the classrooms pertaining to aboriginal land claims, and I am glad to hear that it looks like it is very positive. Whatever governments can do to ensure that students are given accurate and up-to-date information. That is all I was asking for.

The other thing that I would—it is not even a question; it is more of a statement. I hope the minister will look at updating a lot of our materials we have in the classrooms, especially for our younger-age aboriginal students, where a lot of what has been ingrained in their minds is the cowboys and Indians you see in movies. I think we have gone way beyond that stage, and to update the textbooks, curriculums that these students are using and look at some modern, positive aboriginal people across Canada. We have a lot of good role models that, if you look right across Canada, are out there, that are aboriginal people, for children to look up to and, hopefully, follow in some of their positive footsteps and not having to just look at what happened 100 years ago.

That is only just a statement. It is not question. I just hope that you will look at it and, hopefully, will address that.

Mrs. Vodrey: We are aware of the stereotyping. We are aware that some people do hold outdated viewpoints. We are making every effort to deal with that. I would like to extend an invitation to the member to visit the Native Education Branch at 1181 Portage to look at the resource centre. It is a very interesting centre, and you may find some resource materials that would be extremely consistent with the points that you have put forward today.

Madam Chairperson: Item 3.(c) Native Education: (1) Salaries \$621,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$183,000—pass.

Item 3.(d) Manitoba School for the Deaf: (1) Salaries.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I do not have many questions in this area, but I would like to know if it is only foodservices that are provided for the Manitoba Youth Centre, if that is the reason why there is an increase of \$85,800 in cost recovery or whether additional services are now being provided at the centre.

* (1630)

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, I am informed that it is food catering, full-cost recovery.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell me whether the catering is done at the centre or whether the food is prepared there and is then transported to the Youth Centre?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the food is prepared at MSD, and it is transported to the Youth Centre.

Mrs. Carstairs: I was hoping that maybe our Youth Centre young people would get an experience and a very lovely dining room at the Manitoba School for the Deaf. Perhaps that can be something the minister can look at into the future.

In terms of the 85 young people who are now being educated at the School for the Deaf, can the minister give me a grade level? I know that at one point they were spread over a number of grades with a very definite emphasis on the nursery-kindergarten program. Can they give me a comparison rate of that now.

Mrs. Vodrey: I do not have the information available at this moment, but I will get it to the member as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Carstairs: That is fine. I can wait for it in my office. I do not have to have it today.

What I really want to know is, is there a continued emphasis on the younger children with more integration for the older children?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the trend is that young people who do start at MSD tend to stay, though there are students from MSD who are integrated into the neighbourhood schools. I am also informed of probably three trends across the province, one being that there seems to be a movement for a larger number of

young people to be integrated into school divisions; secondly, at MSD there tends to be a larger number of multihandicapped young people now with more than just deafness; and thirdly, that the rural population has tended to prefer that their young people remain at home rather than move into the institution.

Mrs. Carstairs: Last time I visited the Manitoba School for the Deaf, which was some years ago now, there seemed to be very large numbers of children in nursery schools and Kindergarten. I knew that the older children, once they started being in Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, tended to stay at MSD. At that point I was told that many of the nursery children and the Kindergarten children were then mainstreamed. Is this no longer happening?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that MSD has not had nursery children probably for the last five to six years, that those children now attend the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, and therefore they have not shown up at the Manitoba School for the Deaf. But in the years previous to that five to six year period, there were nursery children at MSD and those young people then sometimes remained at MSD.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister give enrollment figures right now for the Manitoba School for the Deaf and, if possible, comparative figures with respect to the last year?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, yes, I have some enrollment figures for the last few years. Starting in 1986-87 the total enrollment was 102 students with 17 of those in residence; 1987-88, total enrollment was 96 students with 16 in residence; 1988-89, there were 89 students with 17 of those in residence; 1989-90 there were 90 students with 15 of those in residence; 1990-91 there were 88 students, 13 of those in residence; 1991-92 there were 85 students total enrollment, with 12 of those in residence. Projected for the next three years, we project 81 students.

* (1640)

Madam Chairperson: Item 3.(d) Manitoba School for the Deaf: (1) Salaries \$2,661,300—pass; 3.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$523,900—pass; 3.(d)(3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$301,800—pass.

3. (e) Child Care and Development: (1) Salaries.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I have a number of questions in this area, and I would like to

commence my review of this particular area by asking the minister if she would table, as the minister did last year, copies of the ADAPs for members on this side of the House?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that we did not table the ADAPs, that tabling is not appropriate but that divisions may make the ADAPs available to their public.

I will just refer to the special education in Manitoba booklet and guideline: School divisions and districts shall submit their annual plans to Manitoba Education and Training for review and shall make these plans available to the public upon request.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, last year the minister tabled in the House copies of the status of each school division in meeting the provisions under the green book that was published. It was a summary portion of the—I am wondering if the minister can table that.

I will find a copy and pass it onto the minister, so she could have an idea of what I am requesting. While I am at it will the minister table a copy of the staffing at CCDB outlining all of the staff positions?

For purposes of clarification, last year the minister tabled in the House for our use some retabulation of ADAP responses dated May 30, 1990. I asked him when the 1991s would be available. He said, shortly after, so I assume the 1991s are available, and that is the document that I would like the minister to table.

Mrs. Vodrey: I just wonder if the honourable member would allow me to have a look at what he received last year so I am sure I am understanding what it is he is requiring this year.

Mr. Chomlak: I would be happy to provide the minister with the copy. While I am awaiting review of that document perhaps the minister can provide what has been provided the last several years, which is a staffing summary of the Child Care and Development Branch that has been provided to us the last several years.

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, I will table a staffing summary. I thank the member for submitting what he received last year, and I do have the information to May 30, 1991, to table for him now.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister said that the Human Resources Committee of cabinet was dealing with issues of a co-ordinated approach to many of the areas that we are dealing with in the CCDB, and I

am wondering if the minister can give me a brief summary of what areas specifically that committee is looking at.

Mrs. Vodrey: I am pleased to provide an update on the interdepartmental-interbranch collaboration. Some of the issues that we are dealing with are: the issue of violent and aggressive behaviour; behaviourally disturbed students, the reason being, perhaps, emotional disturbance. In addition, the government is responding to the brief from the four educational organizations; in addition, the department is looking at the transition planning process for students with special needs, making the transition from school to adult living.

This process is an example of the interdepartmental collaboration that is necessary between the Department of Education and Training, Child Care and Development Branch, and the other branches involved with those young people.

* (1650)

Mr. Chomiak: Can the minister outline for me what the status is of the Preschool Consultation program which was co-ordinated between Health, Family Services, and Education? It was a collaboration between Child Development Clinic, the Department of Health, and Family Services, by the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Health Sciences Centre. I asked the same question last year, so the minister should have a note on that.

Mrs. Vodrey: We are having a little bit of difficulty hearing on this side of the House. If the member could repeat his question for us, that would help us.

Mr. Chomiak: Certainly, Madam Chairperson. It is the Preschool Consultation program, which was co-ordinated between Health, Family Services, and Education, and it consisted of a collaboration between Child Development Clinic, Department of Health, Family Services, and the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry unit at the Health Sciences Centre.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, we will look into the status of that particular report.

Mr. Chomiak: I have been advised that there is up to a one-year wait for speech therapy for children within the school system. I wonder if the minister might update me as to what the status is with respect to speech therapy as it relates to children in the school divisions.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Deputy Chairperson of Committees): Madam Chairperson, a ruling of the Deputy Chairperson that the words "false information" were out of order was challenged in the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). A voice vote was taken and the ruling was sustained. Subsequently, members requested that a formal vote be taken.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. A formal vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (1750)

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The question before the committee is: Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 25, Nays 24.

Madam Chairperson: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

Order, please. The hour being past 5 p.m., committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again. I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Six o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [Agreed]

The hour being 6 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Tuesday, May 5, 1992

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