



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
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
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
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
MANNES, 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
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	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
<i>Vacant</i>	Rossmere	
<i>Vacant</i>	Rupertsland	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 8, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Plohman). 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? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Canadian Wheat Board has played a vital role in the orderly marketing of Canadian wheat, barley and other grain products since its inception in 1935; and

WHEREAS the federal Minister of Agriculture is considering removing barley from the jurisdiction of the Wheat Board; and

WHEREAS this is another step towards dismantling the board; and

WHEREAS, as in the case with the removal of oats from the Wheat Board in 1989, there has been no consultation with the board of directors of the Wheat Board, with the 11-member advisory committee to the board or the producers themselves; and

WHEREAS the federal minister has said that there will be no plebiscite of farmers before the announcement is made.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Manitoba Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) to consider conducting a plebiscite of Manitoba farmers on this issue as soon as possible.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Ms. Cerilli). 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? [agreed]

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

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same 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.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report 1992 for the Department of Rural Development, the Annual Report 1992 for the Manitoba Municipal Employees Benefits Board and the Annual Report 1992 for the Municipal Board.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Monsieur le président, I have, for the Legislative Assembly and my honourable friends my critics, Supplementary Information for Legislative Review 1993, Departmental Expenditure Estimates for the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba.

* (1335)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today members of the German Lander Parliament and Business Delegation.

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

Also with us this afternoon, we have from the Minnedosa Collegiate twelve Grades 10 and 11 students under the direction of Mr. Bob Pineo. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer).

Also, from the Earl Grey School, we have twenty-six Grade 6 students under the direction of Ms. Pam Shay. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Framework for Economic Growth Employment Creation

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

Last year, Canadians were given a copy of a Tory theory paper called the prosperity paper, issued by Michael Wilson. Today, Manitobans were greeted with a similar Conservative theory, a document issued by the Premier, a very self-serving document, I might add, in terms of not dealing with some of the real and total economic

challenges we are facing. It deals with partial economic challenges, but does not deal with some of the reality of what people are facing in Manitoba.

It does not talk about rising social assistance and a strategy to deal with that. It does not talk about rising unemployment and a strategy to deal with that. It does not talk about out-migration and the problem of people leaving the province of Manitoba and an action plan to deal with that, Mr. Speaker, six budgets after being elected, very reminiscent of the Michael Wilson document.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier why there is not a specific action plan in the document tabled after six budgets by the Conservative government to deal with the rising social assistance in the province, to deal with the fact that after the Premier announced his Economic Committee of Cabinet, we have 15,000 more people unemployed, and to deal with the fact that now, unlike in 1990 when 5,000 people were unemployed for six months, we have 13,000 people who are unemployed for over six months in the Manitoba economy.

What hope do we have for those people in the strategy document tabled by the Premier today?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the Leader of the Opposition, of course, is narrowly focused on a short-term strategy. He has no long-term vision and no view of how we take Manitoba through a very difficult and very challenging process that is being faced, I might say, by countries throughout this world.

Mr. Speaker, it is a coincidence that we have guests from Germany in the gallery today, because they know full well that this challenge that faces people in terms of restructuring their economy is a worldwide challenge. It is not a challenge just for Manitoba. It is not something we have to come up with a quick fix on, that is going to see us deal with these problems within the next few months.

Mr. Speaker, many of the things we are doing, of course, are paying dividends. There are 7,000 more people employed today than were employed last August in this province. That is good news. That is not good news for New Democrats. They do not want to hear anything of that nature.

Many of the comparisons show the massive progress we have made in terms of competitiveness, where we used to be, of course, the

highest in terms of our personal income tax rates, and we are now the fourth lowest in the country—comparisons all the way through the piece in which we are now the second lowest sales tax rate in the country.

These are the kinds of positive things that people are looking to, as they want to have a foundation upon which to fund their investments, to base their investments on in the future. These are long-term strategies, a framework that involves all Manitobans working together.

Manitobans are not looking for the kinds of little, cute-kid quips that you see in Laurie Mustard, that you get from the Leader of the Opposition. They are looking for a long-term framework for the future growth of this province, and, Mr. Speaker, that is what we have given them.

Unemployment Rate Government Statistics

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): The Premier forgets to tell Manitobans that Manitoba was in last place the last time economic statistics were released, of all provinces in Canada in 1991, and we are projected to be in seventh or eighth place in 1992 and below the national average again in 1993, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier: Why does his Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) send internal documents and letters, which I will table in the House, to Ottawa stating that conventional unemployment statistics for Manitoba are significantly understated, when his public relations document that he releases today does not deal with the understatement of unemployment statistics, and what is the real unemployment rate according to the government?

Is it the understated statistics of his own Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, or is it these glowing numbers the Premier released here today in the report he tabled?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, Manitoba continues to have the third lowest unemployment rate in the country. In the first five months of this year, overall, Manitoba has had the second lowest unemployment rate in all of Canada, and these factors do prevail.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition wants to point to a year like 1991 in which we exercised

severe public sector wage restraint, a year in which we kept our spending down, as we have done consistently. This document tells about it, that we have been the third lowest in increases in spending throughout our entire period of six budgets in office.

We could do what the Leader of the Opposition preached and practised when he was in government, which is to simply spend taxpayers' dollars to artificially create GDP growth, because for every 3 percent of increase in spending, that increases our GDP growth by 1 percent.

They practised that year after year after year. They were getting virtually no real growth in the economy. The only growth was based on public sector spending, and all that left us with was the debt, the debt that we are now having to pay interest on, Mr. Speaker, the debt that is choking our ability to provide social services, the debt that is choking our ability to provide for health care, the debt that is choking our ability to provide for education.

That is all we are left with, with that artificially fuelled GDP growth from government spending of the New Democrats. That is not the answer, Mr. Speaker.

Framework for Economic Growth Interprovincial Migration

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): You know, it is a wonder the Premier can keep a straight face after running a deficit of \$862 million last year, the highest in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier did not answer the question on real unemployment. [interjection] It is okay; he is too busy developing a retreat on the Children's Dental Program. He is a little agitated here this afternoon.

The Premier did not answer the question about dealing with the understated unemployment according to his own letter signed by his own minister.

There is another issue in an internal document sent to the federal government that is lacking from the strategy document or theoretical document tabled by the government six budgets after they were elected, and that is the whole issue of the loss of population from Manitoba, the people leaving the province of Manitoba.

His own government's letter states the reality of interprovincial migration which masks the symptoms of regional disparity. It must be considered alongside unemployment to accurately measure the ability of an economy to create jobs.

I would like to ask the Premier: Why has his government failed so miserably to keep people in this province, and what strategy in this paper can Manitobans look to to get hope to have their careers in Manitoba and to raise their families in Manitoba with opportunity, rather than social assistance and unemployment?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that Manitoba's net interprovincial migration losses have declined steadily over the last three years. The member knows full well that the most recent population statistics for Manitoba released on January 1, 1993, was estimated to be 1,099,700 persons, the highest population in the history of our province. The member knows full well, if he wants to read the statistics, that this is what they are.

The fact is the information we have provided as the basis for our economic framework is realistic, that it is straightforward, Mr. Speaker, and that it provides us with a framework and a long-term vision of where this province is going. It is not the eight-second clip that the Leader of the Opposition is so good at, but, then, of course, that eight-second clip reflects the kind of thinking that goes into their long-term strategies.

We saw what the short-term, make-work approach to government was in their office—debt, debt and more debt, and that is all we are left with. We are not left with jobs. We are not left with industrial growth. We are left with debt, and that is all we have as a legacy of the short-term thinking of New Democrats.

Framework for Economic Growth Education Priorities

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the authors of this Framework for Economic Growth must have had their tongues in their cheeks when they wrote this one. On page 6 we find, quote: The immediate challenge is to identify educational spending priorities and to broaden our commitment to lifelong learning.

Mr. Speaker, this government has identified its educational priorities; first of all, private education, and second of all, building better golf courses and car dealerships in Workforce 2000.

I want to ask the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey): Did she not tell the authors of this report that the percentage of gross expenditure on education in Manitoba has declined so that we now rank ninth or eighth last year out of 10 provinces across Canada, whereas under an NDP government, we were sixth, and that we are constantly 10 out of 10 in educational support for post-secondary—

* (1350)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, regrettably, all we find in the questions from the member for Wolseley is her taking every opportunity to try and feather her own nest, because she speaks in terms of one, of course, who is always arguing that those who work in education ought to be paid more in order to improve the quality of education.

I reject totally—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I was waiting to make very clear what the First Minister was saying in his comments, and once again the Premier is taking the low road in not answering a question. He has broken our rules which indicate that one should not impute motives in this particular case.

I would like to ask him to withdraw that inappropriate comment made about the member for Wolseley immediately.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order. I do not believe the honourable First Minister was imputing motives.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable First Minister, to deal with the matter raised.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is the member opposite is constantly trying to equate the quality of our education with how much money

we pay those who work in education, and that is wrong, wrong, wrong.

The fact of the matter is we have to start judging the outcomes from our expenditures. This nation, as a proportion of its gross domestic product and on a per capita basis, spends more on education than almost any other nation in the world and does not get the results, does not get the results because that member, like every other member, wants to try and equate the value of those who work in education with how much they are paid, not with the results.

We have had some 50,000 people since May of 1991 trained under Workforce 2000 to improve their skills so they will be better able to meet the needs of the jobs in the workforce today. That is the kind of value that we have to evaluate, not just how much we pay those who work in education.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, it is just like Estimates, the minister answering for his Minister of Education.

My question for the Minister of Education was: Did she discuss with the authors of this report her views that she presented to the Northern Economic Development Commission, that Manitoba's shrinking revenues mean that the principal area in which this government can exercise restraint is in the college system? And restrain she has, \$10 million out of that system—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The member has put her question.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, we see the problem that New Democrats have when they cannot look beyond their own self-interest.

All they are talking about is how much money is paid to the people who work in education. They do nothing to try and evaluate the results of that education. They do nothing to try and evaluate the outcomes of education, and as long as they are on that track, they will never be able to prepare our students for the challenges put forward in this document and every other analysis of where the future challenges and opportunities in growth and investment in this world will be.

Ms. Friesen: I do see where part of the problem is. We have a Premier who can only see education costs in terms of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley, with your question, please.

Ms. Friesen: Perhaps I should address this question to the minister since he seems intent on answering all this.

Did the First Minister explain to the authors of this report the central role of the University of Manitoba in attracting research and development dollars, as reported in the Hogan report? Did he explain the impact of his cuts, his clawbacks, his 50 percent reduction to the infrastructure of universities, on the research and development future of this province?

* (1355)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting point the member for Wolseley makes. As a former university professor herself, she is arguing the cause for her own people, saying only—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne's 484, Citation 3, indicates very clearly a member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections or to impute to any members unworthy motives for their actions.

This Premier, the Leader of the party of Bob Kozminski and Arni Thorsteinson, to talk about that in this House, is despicable. The party—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, what the Premier said, and I think everybody heard him, was to do nothing but state the facts. He did not, in any way, impugn motives on the member—[interjection] No, he did not.

Mr. Speaker, the member was asking a question, certainly understood by us, and in view of asking for money for the faculties, for all the faculties, not specifically for herself, that is a statement of fact.

The opposition House leader certainly did impugn motives with respect to the references he made to certain individuals. So the very rule the House leader opposite quotes should be directed to him, and he should apologize to the House.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable opposition House leader, I indeed thank the honourable government House leader for his remarks on this matter.

I am not exactly sure what was said, so I am going to take this opportunity to take this matter

under advisement. I will peruse Hansard, and I will come back to the House with a ruling.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable First Minister, to finish his response.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, with respect to investments in capital, during the past five years, this government has put more money into the capital of the universities than any previous government in the history of this province, so let her not try and make an issue with that.

Go and look at the figures and you will find out that this government has put more into capital, because your government, when it was here in office in the '80s, stripped all the capital out of it.

So for the last five years we have been repairing the steam tunnels. We have been repairing the buildings. We have been adding to all of the infrastructure in those universities, Mr. Speaker, and that is the truth.

Framework for Economic Growth Education Priorities

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the document released today looks very nice and it sounds nice.

Mr. Speaker, producing these is surely one of the biggest growth industries in the province, but once you have looked through it, it becomes painfully clear that all the words are nice and the rhetoric is finely tuned, but the substance is not here in this document.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the First Minister. The fact is at page 6 the document speaks glowingly about: Skilled workers are becoming the single most important factor in production. The immediate challenge is to identify educational spending priorities and broaden our commitment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the student social allowances program was cut. The bursary program was cut. The Advanced Education and Skills Training budget was cut. The labour adjustment branch was cut. Universities were cut. Literacy was cut.

Where is the substance? What is the plan to achieve these glowing, wonderful ideals in this document? What is the plan to do it?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the plan is to ensure that all Manitobans understand

what is happening with respect to the shift from an industrial economy to an information economy, that all Manitobans understand that this is a fundamental sea change that has not happened in the history, perhaps, of the world.

In looking at it, Mr. Speaker, we have to do many things to put us in a competitive position. Among those things, we have to obviously have our tax load on individuals and on corporations made much more competitive. We have to ensure that information and innovation drive the economic opportunities of the future, that we identify the target-segmental areas of our economy in which the greatest opportunities will be for the future, because we cannot stop the changes that are taking place.

We cannot stop the wind, Mr. Speaker, but what we can do is prepare for the future by ensuring that we know where the opportunities lie, what our vision is of future growth and economic development in our province, and provide for that.

* (1400)

Private Sector Involvement

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): With respect to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, I think the thousands of unemployed Manitobans do understand the world is changing and that it changes quickly, and that the global economy affects this province and the unemployment situation. What they are looking for is some leadership in retraining and in getting them back into the workforce with dignity and without the loss of income over the long term.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. He talks about a co-operative approach. He talks about bringing in the various sectors of the economy, and government cannot do it alone, and I agree. Government, he says, does not have money to do this, and I agree.

My question is: Has he brought them in? What commitment has he gotten from the private sector to help him? Have they committed dollars to this kind of retraining, because if they are not going to do it, and he is not going to do it, who is going to do it?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, during the past year, the Round Table on Environment and Economy has held at least half of its meetings outside of the city of Winnipeg,

throughout the province, meeting with groups and individuals at every time we did it. During the past year, the cabinet of this government has met in communities throughout the province, held its cabinet meetings in four different locations throughout our province in addition to the work we normally do.

In addition, in November of this past year, the Economic Innovation and Technology Council held a major forum in Winnipeg on economic strategy for the future. It is a forum, I believe, that was attended by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) on behalf of that member's party.

In February of this year, we held a meeting with respect to Total Quality Management in health care, again sponsored by the Economic Innovation and Technology Council that talked about opportunities not only for reforming our health care system, but getting investment in it. In March of this year, in Portage la Prairie, the Economic Innovation and Technology Council held an agriculture forum, getting all of agribusiness together to strategize and develop the opportunities for the future.

Of course, in April of this year, the Economic Innovation and Technology Council, along with the Department of Rural Development, held a rural development forum in Neepawa, bringing together hundreds of people to help develop the strategies.

So I say to him: Yes, yes, the stakeholders are prepared to make a commitment. Yes, the stakeholders do want this kind of leadership and vision, and, yes, the stakeholders do want this kind of framework as the basis for their future actions.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier and the government have had many meetings and forums around the province. I have been to some of them. They are all nicely organized, and I was at the one in Neepawa where the First Minister flew in and blew off and flew out and did not listen to anybody, gave his speech in the morning and then took off. I was there. I have been to those meetings.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the First Minister, however, is: I think Manitobans are pleased they have come out to see them, but where is the commitment from the private sector? Where are the dollars? Where is the time line for this? Where is the commitment?

Our friends are here from other countries. They have commitments from the private sector, hard commitments, commitments for retraining programs and a co-operative approach to get people back into the workforce.

My question for the Premier is: Where is the time line? Where are the dollars? Where is the commitment to co-operation, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I think all Manitobans appreciate that I have responsibilities to look after. When I participate in a forum—and I have; several ministers and a large number of my caucus there for the entire day and the entire forum—I am not expected to be in all places all the time.

Having said that, I can tell him, yes, there is a commitment from people throughout this economy to do their part in terms of training and retraining. That is why 50,000 people have been retrained and trained through our Workforce 2000 program, courtesy of joint investment not only of the government of Manitoba but of countless employers throughout the economy.

That is the kind of significant commitment we are seeing, because they believe in the process, and they believe that government can be a facilitator in helping them to ensure their employees have the skills and the knowledge necessary to be successful in today's work world.

Framework for Economic Growth Aboriginal Education Programs

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, in reading this document titled Framework for Economic Growth, it would be interesting to see where it is filed in the library, most likely under fiction. I hope it is not submitted as a prospectus to any potential investors, because it is full of falsehoods and inaccuracies.

I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) how he can reconcile statements in the report that aboriginal education and training have been improved and that this government has set up an improved working relationship with aboriginal people—both of those are direct quotes from this document—when they have cut New Careers, they have cut the ACCESS program, they have cut friendship centres, they have cut funding to First Nations.

How can he reconcile the statements in this document with the reality of cuts to education for aboriginal people?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to respond to the member for Thompson.

This Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government have resolved many outstanding difficulties and claims, whether it is the Grand Rapids forebay resolve which is in the community of The Pas, where the member represents, whether it is the Split Lake community where there is a \$47-million outstanding claim that has been resolved with the co-management of land. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), in many areas, has developed co-management—real hard issues, taxation issues, gaming issues, leadership roles dealing with native people, something that has been long outstanding and long overdue.

That member sat as a member of his government and was unable to do any of those kinds of things. I am proud of our record, and it is accurate, what is in that document.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, if this Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is proud of his record, that is scary.

I will ask this Minister of Northern Affairs, since he wants to answer the questions instead of the Premier (Mr. Filmon)—I guess the North is not important enough for the Premier to answer them.

I would ask the Minister of Northern Affairs: Where was he when this government cut New Careers funding, when it cut the ACCESS funding, when it cut the funding to aboriginal friendship centres and when it cut the funding to First Nations? Where was he?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I was there putting money in recreation programs through the Department of Northern Affairs and the Citizenship department, 20-some additional jobs to help the northern people.

I was there when we did the research and the work to put hydro into some nine communities where they had not seen hydro in northern Manitoba. I was there. Where was he when his people were living in Third World conditions in northern Manitoba? That is his record.

Northern Manitoba

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the member did not answer the question in terms of education and training.

If he wants to talk about where was he, where was he when this government cut the funding in terms of job creation for the Northern Youth Corps Program, where it has cut funding in terms of capital spending in the communities, where it has left many communities now this year with no summer jobs for young people?

Where was that minister when those decisions were made, and where was the Premier (Mr. Filmon), by the way, who writes nice, glossy things in this document while northern Manitoba is going through the toughest times it has ever seen?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we were introducing programs for the mining sector, for the prospectors and developers, mining tax holidays for people to go and get meaningful jobs in northern Manitoba, not just depend on government and social welfare that they continue to holler for.

We were doing real things for the people of northern Manitoba.

Anishinabe Respect Funding

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education.

I hope she will answer this question, because aboriginal people have fared very badly under this minister with all the cuts she has made to training programs for aboriginal people across Manitoba.

Since Anishinabe Respect, which is an employment preparation program, has recruited 26 students who have been left in limbo since November, I want to ask the minister when the Anishinabe Respect will be getting word about their funding.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, we are beginning the process of Advanced Education and Skills Training Estimates, and I will be happy to look at the details of that during the Estimates process.

* (1410)

Anishnabe Respect Funding

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier because he gives a much better answer. The people have been waiting since November. They are recruited. Their families are left in limbo. They do not know if they will take a job or not.

I would like to ask the Premier if he will ask his minister if she will take a visit to Anishnabe Respect, which is located on Selkirk Avenue in Winnipeg, if she will go there and meet with the staff and students, go through and see the valuable work they do, to give her a better understanding, if she will meet with them to discuss their funding proposal.

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

Literacy Programs Private Sector Involvement

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Education.

We have a budget in which there is a decrease in terms of literacy programming, training and so forth. I think it demonstrates very clearly this government's approach. We have a classic example of a lot of fluff the government has introduced earlier today, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Minister of Education is: On the one hand we see fluff, then we look to the province of New Brunswick, and they have a creative idea that includes the private sector getting involved in terms of training, getting individuals involved in community programs to make them more literate.

My question to the Minister of Education is: Will the Minister of Education make a commitment today to seek co-operation from the private industry to ensure that we do have a literacy program that will get Manitobans back into the workforce?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, as that member knows, the whole issue of literacy is of great interest and importance to me. I chaired the task force on literacy for this province, and from that task force we did set up our Literacy Office and also our Literacy Council.

I think during the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training, we will be able to talk about the total amount of program dollars which are still being funnelled into community-based programs in literacy, and I think he will find that those dollars remain extremely substantial for Manitoba.

Let me also tell him, as he has spoken about partnerships with the private sector, that Workforce 2000, which was spoken about earlier today, has levered over \$18 million from the private sector.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting in terms of what the Minister of Education is saying. In the province of New Brunswick, we get two and a half times as many people graduating from literacy programs than this particular government does, yet they invest approximately the same amount of dollars.

The question quite specifically is: What is this government doing to ensure that there is a private sector involvement in literacy programming?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I am quite happy to go over the literacy programming this province does support because we have very extensive literacy programming. It is community-based programming. Much of it comes from the ideas of the community, and it meets with the hours in which participants are actually able to take part in literacy programming.

I will be more than happy to speak to him about the numbers and types of literacy programs which we have in this province during the course of the Estimates, and I believe we are ready to look at Advanced Education and Skills Training beginning this afternoon.

Literacy Rate Government Statistics

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question is to the Minister of Education.

When I had contacted the department in terms of trying to find out what the literacy rate is in the province of Manitoba, I was unsuccessful in getting any sort of response from it.

I am wondering if the Minister of Education can tell the House, what is she basing the literacy rate on in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, as the member

knows if he has kept up to date on this issue, the whole matter of percentage of literacy rate is now a matter of some discussion because the actual method of measurement has come under some discussion itself.

The actual literacy rate can be measured partly through self-reporting, partly through graduation from schools and through assessment which we do within our K-12 section. It also comes from reporting within business, industry and labour. It also comes from screening which occurs in community-based programming.

Social Policy Government Position

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, two reports in the last two days reveal disturbing trends in terms of the direction of the federal Conservative government in social policy.

The Caledon Institute of Social Policy report called *Setting the Record Straight*, released yesterday, and *Towards 2000: Eliminating Child Poverty*, released today by the subcommittee on poverty of the House of Commons, both spell out the direction of the federal Conservative government when it comes to social policy. Those trends and directions are dismantling the social safety net and eliminating poverty by changing its definition.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services: Will he stand up for Manitobans and call on the federal government to stop eroding the social safety net in Canada which affects, adversely, many low-income Manitobans? Will he even call on the new federal Leader of his party and ask them to change direction—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member did put his question.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the privilege of meeting with my counterparts from across the country. The major topic we talked about was income programs for unemployed people and social allowance recipients. There certainly is agreement that the measurement tools used by Statistics Canada and more specifically the low-income cutoffs are not an adequate measure to measure the income of Canadians.

There was general agreement that there needs to be some refinement of the measurement tools used in that area. Ministers from all provinces

have committed themselves to working with the federal government to look at ways of enhancing both the education and training for unemployed people and also the benefits that accrue to those people.

Child Poverty Rate Federal Government Initiatives

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Family Services write to Barbara Greene, the chair of the subcommittee on poverty, and tell her that eliminating child poverty by changing the definition does not eliminate poverty, does not help people who are vulnerable to unemployment and to cutbacks in federal programs?

Will the minister encourage her instead to do something real and something concrete to enhance the income, particularly of families with children, which is the only way to eliminate poverty amongst children by the year 2000?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I would ask the member opposite to do his own communication with whomever he wants to write to. We will continue to address these issues on an annual basis, as I have indicated in the past. The member has been very supportive of a number of the enhancements and reforms we have brought to the Social Allowances Program.

I will maybe just take the opportunity, since he has asked the question, to mention a few of those. We do address the rates on an annual basis, and our rates are comparable to other jurisdictions in Canada.

We have consistently said that there is a difference in the cost of living in Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg. The Statistics Canada documentation does not recognize that, so we would support any new measurement tools that are brought forward, and we will continue to address a number of these enhancements on an annual basis.

Social Assistance Employment Creation Strategy

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, it seems that this minister agrees with Barbara Greene and wants to redefine poverty in order to eliminate it.

I would like to ask the minister, since employment is the best way of enhancing people's income, if he will talk to his colleagues in cabinet, particularly the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), and support the proposal by the City of Winnipeg for infrastructural renewal in order to hire people who are on City of Winnipeg welfare, the 17,000 or 18,000 cases of people who are employable and who want to work.

Will this minister support the proposal to get those people back to work?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I completely reject the member's preamble where he is putting his own interpretation on my words. He can certainly read that in Hansard for the correct version.

The Minister of Urban Affairs has indicated it is an issue that is before government and one that government will be dealing with in the near future.

HIV Infections Blood Transfusions

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): My question is for the Minister of Health.

The House of Commons subcommittee on blood and HIV recommended that the provinces compensate those who got the disease through their blood. Mr. Speaker, the governments of Nova Scotia, Quebec and, today, Alberta, have announced they will compensate people who got the disease through this process.

Can the Minister of Health make a commitment to make sure that people are compensated on compassionate grounds on this issue?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Commons committee on this issue also urged that the federal government revisit their compensation package. I have indicated to the House and to those who have inquired that in September of this year, Ministers of Health will be discussing the issue.

I think it would be an important initiative to undertake those discussions collaboratively with the federal government, because one of the things that we attempt to do in this nation is provide some consistency of program support from sea to sea.

The current environment where two provinces have made announcements, one to negotiate and the other one to commence negotiation in Quebec,

independent of the other two provinces, tends to reinforce that you can end up with a diversity of responses and, Sir, the difficulty where we may well create an environment where the federal government is left not participating in any additional compensation which may be forthcoming, as recommended by the Commons committee.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak); Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), for Wednesday, June 9, 1993, for 7 p.m.

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, 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 Springfield (Mr. Findlay) for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik); the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) to fill the vacant spot.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, if you were to canvass the House, I believe or at least I would hope you would find there is unanimous consent for me to make the following necessary adjustments to the Estimates sequence tabled on March 15. They are to relocate the Department of Northern Affairs in the sequence so that it will be considered outside the Chamber immediately after Education and Training, and delete Native Affairs.

Secondly, just a minor name change, Industry, Trade and Technology to Industry, Trade and

Tourism, and thirdly, add to the list to be considered outside the Chamber immediately after Allowances for Losses and Expenditures, et cetera, the items, Allowances for Salary Accruals and Emergency Expenditures.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to alter the sequence as outlined by the honourable government House leader, and also for the name change?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: That is agreed? Okay, there is agreement.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce a number of committees. The Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections will hold public hearings to review The Freedom of Information Act on Tuesday, June 22, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, June 26, 1993, at 10 a.m., if necessary, in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

The Standing Committee on Economic Development will meet on Tuesday, June 15, '93, at 10 a.m. to consider the 1992 Annual Report of Manitoba Mineral Resources. The Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs will meet on Tuesday, June 15, 1993, at 10 a.m. to consider the 1992 Annual Report of the North Portage Development Corporation and the 1992 Annual Report of The Forks Renewal Corporation. The Standing Committee on Economic Development will meet on Tuesday, June 15, 1993, at 7 p.m. to consider Bill 4 and Bill 23 in Room 255.

Next, the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet on Wednesday, June 16, '93, at 7 p.m. to consider the 1992 Annual Report of the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Corporation; the Standing Committee on Economic Development will meet on Thursday, June 17, '93, at 10 a.m. to consider the 1992 Annual Report of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation; and the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet on Thursday, June 17, '93, at 10 a.m. to consider the 1992 Annual Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, whether or not there is a willingness to waive private members' hour and continue in Estimates today.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): 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 Education and Training.

When the committee last sat it had been considering item 4.(a)(1) on page 39 of the Estimates book.

* (1430)

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, under the first section, Management Services, I am interested in finding out a little bit more about The Private Vocational Schools Act that is highlighted in a couple of places in the Supplementary Estimates as part of the activities of the Management Services in terms of administration and negotiation of federal-provincial agreements and training agreements and the private vocational schools that exist in the province in compliance with the act.

Can the minister tell us how many of the private vocational schools exist in the province of Manitoba? Are the 640 full-time equivalent students in six private religious colleges all there is or are there additional ones, and could she name each of those.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): There are 43 private vocational schools registered in Manitoba. The member has asked them to be named: the Academy of Electrology, Academy of Learning-North, Academy

of Learning-South, Advanced School of Hairstyling, CC Manitoba Driving School, CDI-Career Development Institute, Cambrian Business College, Canadian School of Floral Art, Classic Hairstyling Academy, European School of Esthetics, Fine-Art Bartending School, Genie School of Electrology, H & R Block Canada Inc., Herzing Career College, Hi-Way Florists, Jacks Institute, Karen's School of Floral Design—

Point of Order

Mr. Plohman: If the minister wants to read them all out into the record, she can. We know that she is quite capable of doing that but, if she wants to table them, that would be satisfactory as well. We do not need to take the time of the committee reading all of these. I thought there was far fewer than that.

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

* * *

Mrs. Vodrey: I am certainly more than willing to table it. The member had asked me to read them and that is what I was doing. Let me provide you a copy now and if you would make copies for the members, thank you.

Mr. Plohman: Is Success commercial college one of those?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, it is.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can the minister give the committee some idea of the scope of studies offered at that institute and the number of staff at the Success commercial college?

Mrs. Vodrey: The correct name of the private vocational school is Success/Angus Business College, and it provides training in the areas of administrative secretary, legal secretary, medical secretary, private secretary, general secretary, computer accounting technician, business administration, stenographer, clerk typist, dictaphone typist and receptionist, travel, word-processing administrator, travel procedures as an evening course, accounting technician as an evening course, legal secretary as an evening course, medical terminology, word-processing operator as an evening course, sales marketing, microcomputer applications, computerized office systems and legal secretary as an accelerated program.

The information regarding the number of staff is considered to be confidential information to that particular institution and, through our private vocational schools area, we simply monitor that they are in compliance with the act.

Mr. Plohman: Does the department, in monitoring whether certain colleges or private vocational schools are in compliance with the act also keep statistics on the number of graduates from each of the colleges? If so, does she have the number for that college?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do have that information on file. It is to enable us to make sure that there is compliance. We have information regarding grads and enrollments. The information is not made public, because individual schools would not want to have that information made public to others in the area.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister tell us why she would honour that request or that wish?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because in the case of these schools, we do not fund those schools. We simply make sure that the schools are in compliance with the act.

Mr. Plohman: What are the major features of the act where compliance is monitored by staff?

* (1440)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in terms of the private vocational schools and monitoring under the act, certificates of registrations are issued on the calendar year. The registration process requires a submission of an application fee; an application form signed by a commissioner of oaths; teacher declaration forms to ensure instructor qualifications comply to the minimum of the regulation, signed by a commissioner of oaths; course outlines; valid security, example, a bond to ensure consumer protection; financial statement prepared by a public accountant to ensure financial viability of the school; copies of the application, contract, certificate, diploma and all advertising material, sales literature, circulars, calendars and collection forms, also application forms for the person or persons who act as agent, sales person or representative of the school all signed by commissioner for oaths.

In the area of security, schools are required to post a security for tuitions refund in the event of school closure in the amount obtained by a formula based on peak student enrollment or in the form of

a bond from a guarantee company or a personal bond with collateral.

In the area of curriculum review, schools are required to submit a course outline for review by the Private Vocational Schools Program Review Committee, which recommends approval to the minister or designate who approves the course. The committee is composed of a Manitoba government employee or employees, owners or operators of private vocational schools registered under the act, of a private vocational school registered under the act, and person or persons engaged in the activity and with expertise in the area submitted for review, example: licence hairstylists for review of a hair stylist course.

The area of administrative duties, the unit provides support services associated with the act and regulation to students, private vocational schools, operators, the general public, the minister, senior administrators and the division.

In the area of a monitoring process, schools are monitored by the private vocational schools' administration through the review of the Manitoba Gazette, urban and rural newspapers, print and audio advertisements. That has been an important area in our monitoring. Also, investigation of information from the public, screening of the registration applications, annual on-site visits to all schools excluding the correspondence schools and, also, periodic student surveys.

In the area of complaint resolution the private vocational schools' administration assists both students and private vocational school operators with the resolution of a complaint if the charge is determined to be a contravention of the act or a regulation. The private vocational schools' administration designs and develops policy in response to both government and the private vocational sector and the unit staff also participates on committees and provides liaison with major stakeholders in the public and the private sector, for example, the Manitoba Trucking Association Education Committee, the National Accreditation Commission.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister give any indication of the number of violations of the act over the last year?

Mrs. Vodrey: In the area of complaints statistics, in 1992, the year which we have completed, there

were 28 complaints received. Of those, one complaint was withdrawn and 27 of those complaints were resolved. In 1993, again we have not completed the year, there have been 14 complaints received, 10 complaints withdrawn and four complaints resolved.

Mr. Plohman: Any charges laid on any of those?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in 1992, acting on four complaints, there was one charge. In 1993, there have been none.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister say whether tuition fees are monitored and regulated in any way?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, yes, tuition fees are monitored and regulated in that they ask for approval to increase.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister indicate whether there are any standards among the colleges for similar courses or are they allowed to go at whatever they can justify on the basis of cost or what is the criteria?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, on private vocational schools entry into business, they do set their own fee. By and large, it is set by what the market will demand. It is a private enterprise, however. We have found that they seem to set comparable fees to other schools that offer the same type of training. Where private vocational schools wish to raise their tuition fees, we do review the tuition, and we do have the right to ask for some justification for a tuition fee which seems to be an extremely large raise, especially if perhaps they have had tuition fee increases over the immediate number of years.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, on this question, can the minister indicate the comparative rates between the community colleges and the tuition fees charged to the private colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: The community colleges are subsidized in what they offer in terms of a training program. So, for example, a community college fee might be \$850, a private vocational college fee might be in the range of \$5,000.

Mr. Plohman: The minister is saying that an individual having to take the course in a private college might have to pay six times as much.

* (1450)

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that in 1993, students at Red River College, for example, pay approximately 8.5 percent of what is the cost of the course, whereas students in private vocational colleges do pay a fee or a tuition more reflective of the true cost.

However, with that comes the ability in many cases to take a course at an accelerated rate, sometimes, at an ongoing entry as well, as opposed to fixed entry points.

Mr. Plohman: Well, obviously, the costs are much greater in the private colleges for the reason stated by the minister.

Under that circumstance, knowing that students have to put out a lot more from their own pockets to take the courses, does the minister have any consideration of that reality when making a determination whether to reduce the enrollment allocation for courses that are offered in private colleges, or is there any correlation between what is offered in private colleges and what the government considers to be necessary at the community colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, when courses at community colleges are being considered, we do look at a number of factors, but one of the most important changes—I know we will talk about this in the Estimates process—is that the colleges have now moved to college governance and, with the ability to now make more decisions at the local level, then the community colleges and their boards will be considering a lot of this information.

What is offered by the private vocational schools, again, are market-driven courses in many ways. Students who attend some of these private vocational schools sometimes receive sponsorship from places such as Workers Compensation, Indian bands or Employment and Immigration Canada funds.

Mr. Plohman: So there is public money going into these schools. The minister said there are no direct grants, but there is support for students enrolled in those schools.

Mrs. Vodrey: There is some funding available to students as they wish to pursue their course, but I think he is drawing the distinction between some of the cost of underwriting courses at the community colleges versus the private vocational schools and funding which students may access to attend a private vocational school.

Mr. Plohman: I just want to ask whether the numbers of graduates or students going through the private vocational school system are growing vis-à-vis the community college system. Could we look at a trend over the last three years? If the minister can provide that at the next sitting, I would certainly like to have it. She does not have to provide all that information at this time if it is not readily available.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, in terms of the private vocational schools, in 1990 their enrollments showed a decrease of 12 percent; in 1991, they showed an increase of 11 percent; and in 1992, they showed an increase of 20 percent.

The substantial increase in enrollments in 1992 and '91 may be due in part to the increase in sponsorship programs such as the fee payer program sponsored by Employment and Immigration Canada. This stems from the unemployment insurance changes from the passive income support into the active training support.

Also, we have noticed that there have been Manitobans in the past few years who have been seeking to upgrade their skills in a number of areas. In the community colleges, in 1992-93, there was an increase totally of 2.3 percent; and in 1993-94, we have an estimated decrease of 2.4 percent. Part of that would be reflective of the changes of the Government of Canada and how they will be funding programs at the community colleges. We use that estimated number because we know that the community colleges, now with their boards of governors, may be looking to negotiate directly with the federal government for courses to be offered at the community colleges.

Mr. Plohman: Well, the minister did not give comparative figures. In 1990, did she not have it, and '91? She started '92-93 for the community colleges, so it is not as comparative as I would like to have had it.

* (1500)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I have the actual numbers of '91-92, but I do not have anything to compare that with for the year previous. So what I did was I gave the member, based on three years of the community colleges enrollments, the increase for '92-93 and the decrease, which is only projected at this time because we do not know how the community colleges will deal with the

Government of Canada, although we understand that they will be speaking to the Government of Canada on behalf of perhaps reinstating some of those programs directly with the colleges.

Mr. Plohman: Could the minister provide us with a table of the courses that have been discontinued at the community colleges over the last three years, and the total number of graduates or percentage increases and decreases over the last three years for both? She has given us for the private colleges. There are a couple of years missing for the community colleges, and the total courses that have been discontinued, the names of those courses and the number of graduates that were coming from those courses in the year prior to their discontinuance. Can we get that information at another sitting?

Mrs. Vodrey: What the member has asked for is extremely detailed information, and that detailed information would be available through our Colleges Secretariat, which is Appropriation 16.6.

Mr. Plohman: That is fine, as long as the minister knows that we want that information. If she can have it at that time, that is fine.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Deputy Chair, I wanted to continue with some questions on private vocational schools, and to ask the minister about the retention rates in those schools.

Mrs. Vodrey: We do keep that information within the department in our private vocational schools area. I can tell the member that it does vary. It varies depending upon the industry. It tends to be very school specific.

It is not information that is released because again we do not fund these schools and this information would be particularly valuable perhaps to their competitors.

Ms. Friesen: The minister said they were school specific and industry specific where she identifies problems in retention rates. Am I correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: I did not speak about problems. I did say that we kept statistics. The statistics are school specific, and what I said was that there seems to be a variance in the area of students withdrawing. Sometimes it is dependent upon the industry; sometimes it is dependent upon the school.

Ms. Friesen: Well then, could we look at it by industry? As I understand the minister, she is

saying that there are varying retention rates in schools across different industries. Could she give us some more information on that? Where are the high retention rates, where are the low retention rates?

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, that is information which we do not disclose publicly because this is not government money which funds the schools. Therefore that information is determined to be private.

Ms. Friesen: That is exactly why I took the more general of the two options that the minister essentially offered, and that is to look at it by industry rather than by school.

Again, although the minister says that there is no public funding of these institutions, I believe that many people who go to these institutions are there on some form of student loan. So indeed there is public money in these schools in quite a large way. I would think in some industries, if you are looking at CEIC money and student loan money and Workers Compensation money, there is a very large amount of public money in these.

So it seems to me that looking at it overall, maintaining the kind of private company confidentiality that the minister wishes to, I am asking about comparisons across industries. Where are the high retention rates? Where are the low retention rates?

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, we do not give out the information by industry because some industries are very small, some schools offering particular training to support an industry may be very small. There may only be two, for instance, and with the release of that information one school may know that it is not them, and therefore they will have a very good idea of what is happening within another school.

So again it is not information which we provide publicly. We do monitor that information as we look for the schools to comply with The Private Vocational Schools Act, however.

Ms. Friesen: As I see it, there are probably about four or five industrial areas that you could look at. There is an esthetic area, driving schools, recording, broadcasting schools, modelling agencies and florist schools, where there might be more than one certainly. In those, for example, it would seem to me that the minister's argument that it would be betraying confidentiality does not hold.

There are certainly more than one or two hairdressing schools, more than one or two driving schools.

Is it possible to obtain the information about the uses of public money, which is essentially what these schools are doing, using student money, to give us some idea about what their retention rates are? Retention rates are an indication of the academic and professional training standards that are maintained in these schools. They are not the only ones by any means, but they are one of the ones that are measurable.

Mrs. Vodrey: It is the students who have accessed public money; it is not the institution nor the private vocational school, which the member seems to have implied in her question. Students, having accessed that money, have a choice of where they wish to apply to take that particular program, and I am not sure if the member is opposed to that kind of choice which is available to students. On behalf of the schools which we are discussing at the moment, I have explained to her why we do not release that information.

* (1510)

Ms. Friesen: It is exactly that element of student choice which does concern me. One of the ways in which students must weigh up the kind of school which they go to or the kind of training, which industry they are going to apply to, would presumably be some element of comparison and some element of assurance of the kind of education which they are going to receive. So it seems to me there should be something publicly available, and Estimates is one place to begin that, of the academic evaluation of these schools.

One way of doing that is to look at the number of people they retain. I think if anybody in Manitoba was intending to go to a private vocational school, particularly at the charges which are made, the \$5,000 to \$6,000 fees per year, one of the things that they would want to be assured of was that there was a reasonable likelihood, statistically, of their completing the course. So it seems to me useful information for exactly the reasons that the minister has suggested.

(Mrs. Shirley Rønder, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: On behalf of the students of Manitoba, that is why we do have a private vocational schools administration act, and that is

why we also provide monitoring to those schools. That is why those schools are licensed. I did go through earlier in the day how we monitor the program right through the registration process, the security, through the curriculum review process, and also the ongoing monitoring process which we do.

I did comment, when I spoke about the monitoring process, that part of the monitoring that occurs by our Private Vocational Schools area in Education and Training is a review of the Manitoba Gazette which would then reveal if there had been any legal action. In addition, we also look at the advertisements which occur in the rural and urban newspapers. We also monitor the print and the audio advertisements, and I think the member is acquainted with that, and knowing that it was because of the scrutiny of our private vocational schools area that we were able to avoid some problems and have been able to avoid some problems in the past.

So that is the kind of scrutiny that is provided on behalf of students to licensed schools. Then it is up to the students to make a choice based on the information that they obtain, and they can know that the schools have passed through the same process of registration and licensing and then they will make their choice.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, the students then can base their choice upon the absence of legal action and the self-advertisements of the schools involved. It seems to me that it would be advantageous for students, as well, to have a reasonable expectation that there was a high level of completion in these schools.

Now, the minister is essentially saying that is part of the monitoring process. I want to confirm that. Is the retention rate of schools part of the monitoring process? At which level must the retention rates reach in order to maintain a license? So, for example, is there any penalty involved for the schools in very high dropout rates?

Mrs. Vodrey: Well, certainly, students may check with this individual school where they are paying their money to attend to look at the attrition rate. The member asks if there is a penalty for a dropout rate. The penalty is a very direct one: the schools lose money. So in that regard, yes, there is a penalty that is available but it is a very

direct one in that, again, they do not receive payment for the courses that they offer.

The member is asking, it seems, for some kind of a percentage. Again, as I have explained, in some courses there may be, for instance, four people. If two of those people for some reason found it necessary to withdraw, it would appear that there was then a 50 percent dropout rate, and that in fact may not actually reflect the quality of the course that is being offered.

So I would remind her that students may check with these schools. These schools obviously want students to attend, and if students are not satisfied the schools will lose money—a very direct penalty.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Acting Deputy Chair, well, yes, in a market system in education that is exactly what happens, but the role of the government, I would think, is to ensure that the public money that students are using to attend these colleges was well used and that it had a payoff in fact for the economy as a whole and for the Manitoba community.

The minister does collect these statistics, and, yes, of course, they can be misleading when it is 50 percent of four people, but I think most reasonable people can read those statistics. They can be explained. I do not think that is really an excuse for not releasing them or for enabling students to recognize that there is an area of alarm here, that they should be asking these questions.

One of the difficulties, I think, is that the students who apply to private vocational schools are sometimes people who have had very little experience in educational institutions. The very idea of asking for these kinds of criteria from schools would be both threatening and probably would not even occur to most people. It seems to me that there is a role for government there which is, through the students, expending a fair amount of money in this market education system.

I ask the minister again. She collects this money, she collects the information, the statistics. Why can it not be made available on an industry basis? If the numbers are good, then we will all celebrate and say, yes, this particular industry is doing a good job. If the numbers are not as good, then we should be able to say to students, look, you are interested in that particular area but these are the kinds of questions one should ask.

Why is that so unreasonable?

Mrs. Vodrey: First of all, no excuses have been provided. That terminology is quite incorrect.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

What I have provided is information for the member on the process of registration and monitoring of our private vocational schools. As I have said to the member, that is why we go through this process of licensing, why we go through the process of monitoring where we check the kinds of advertisements that are being made available to students against the kind of curriculum that we know is available.

So we do provide that kind of check and balance which I know the member is interested in. Also, we would assume that the private vocational schools then also want to provide realistic training at a realistic cost; otherwise, they would not remain in business because, as I have said to the member, the very direct penalty for failing to do what they say they will do is that students will withdraw.

So I am not sure how much more information I can provide her, because I have explained the process that Private Vocational Schools area goes through to assist Manitobans. It is a process that we believe is one which does protect the interests of Manitobans, but students themselves will have the opportunity then to make choices among those places where the courses are offered.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just to go back to an earlier question. I asked whether retention rates had any effect upon the maintenance of licences, and the minister did not answer it directly. So I just want to pose it directly, and I assume the answer is no, because the minister replied that it was essentially a market system and they would lose students. So the answer is no, it does not affect their licence.

* (1520)

Mrs. Vodrey: The dropout rate, or the withdrawal factor, is not a factor in the actual licensing, though if we see a very high dropout rate, I am informed that certainly the Private Vocational Schools would be willing to work with that school if there seemed to be some difficulty.

What would affect the holding of a licence is a failure to comply with the law. So we look at making sure that the private vocational schools are in compliance with the act, and that is the way we

assure—and I have gone through the process of what the act requires, and that is the way that schools maintain their licences.

As I have said before, the dropout factor is not a factor in maintaining the licence. It may, however, be a factor in maintaining the business.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, so when a situation does arrive where a flag is signalled for the minister, then the information, which is being denied to the public through this committee, is then forwarded to an advisory committee which is concerned, which does look at overall standards?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me take a moment to introduce Monika Oepkes, who is the manager of the Private Vocational Schools Administration.

If there is a very significant dropout rate at a private vocational school, that information is noted by the department and then—it is not a committee, but it is, rather, the manager of our Private Vocational Schools Administration, Monika Oepkes, who then goes in and meets with the private vocational school and is able to decide if there is any kind of support which can be offered to assist the school.

Ms. Frlesen: Thank you for that clarification. It sounded as though it was the whole advisory committee which would have access to this information.

Does the minister know whether an application for freedom of information on this would be successful, using just industry-wide numbers?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, some freedom of information requests have been received and, again, a number of those requests are severed releases where the information if, No. 1, competitive or if, No. 2, affects a third party, that information is most certainly blacked out.

Ms. Frlesen: In the minister's view, does this information that I have been requesting here affect a third party?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, it could. It could affect the school.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have been asking for industry-wide numbers in areas where there is more than one school and certainly more than two schools. Again, this whole discussion has been conducted on that basis.

So, again, could I ask the minister if a request was made for freedom of information for areas of the industry where there is more than one school, more than two schools, where there would be no mention of individual schools. Would the minister still consider that not available for freedom of information?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member asks again another hypothetical question. I would say to her simply, then she may have to try.

Ms. Frlesen: I wanted to ask a similar question about the claims of private vocational schools to employment records. Again, proceeding from the minister's basis of freedom of choice for individuals and an informed choice, one would hope, these claims of 70, 80, 60 percent success in employment rates are obviously one of the ways in which these schools attract students to them.

What kind of monitoring is done of those claims?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as part of the monitoring process, the private vocational schools area does, where they see the percentages, frequently check exactly what the meaning of that percentage is to the school. Some of the questions they may ask is, is the percentage used percentage of total enrollment or is it the percentage of graduates in that particular course area?

If it is found to appear not to be as accurate, then the private vocational schools area does ask that be changed.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when the private vocational schools section looks at that, is it looking for comparable numbers across an industry, or is it simply looking at the claims of a particular school and ensuring that is written very specifically and very clearly?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, each school does its own advertising, and so we look at the individual ads of each school.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what does this section do to actually verify the claims that are made? I can see that it is relatively easy to say, well, are you looking at enrollees or are you looking at graduates. When an 84 percent or a 60 percent success rate in employment is looked at, who checks up on those individual employment records? How long do they cover them for? Are we looking at sort of employments three years out or two years out or one year?

* (1530)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do not check the individual employment records. There is a contact made with the school. The first contact is usually by a phone call, though there may in fact be a visit. Schools will be asked to verify in writing the claim that they are making.

Ms. Friesen: Have there ever been any complaints in this area where the minister has had the opportunity to compare the schools' claims with the real world, the actual facts, or has there ever been an occasion where we could at least have an example of some check?

Mrs. Vodrey: There have been some complaints, as I gave the member figures of complaints received. This complaint around actual employment often is one of a number of complaints which a person might put together about a private vocational school.

I am informed that on checking specifically on the area of employment rates, Education and Training has found that the schools have been honest.

Ms. Friesen: I promise a couple more questions. The minister did read out a list of the number of complaints. Could she tell us, first of all, how many involved claims of—I cannot quite say false advertising because I have not seen the claims, but essentially the issue of whether there is an accurate representation of the percentage of graduates finding employment?

Second of all, could she tell us what procedures, what methods her department followed in essentially determining the number of graduates and over what period they were employed?

Mrs. Vodrey: In the complaints procedure, there is a process that a person would provide name, address and phone number of the person making the complaint, name of school, course, date of the course, state the complaint, but I am informed that there never has been a single complaint around the issue of advertisement re-employment. In fact, that has been a part of other complaints that have been made.

However, it has only occurred maybe twice in terms of the information that we have. In terms of checking on that particular area, as I have explained to the member, there is a direct contact with the school, sometimes a visit to the school. Then the school will have to verify in writing. They

will also have to discuss exactly which statistics they are using.

I am not sure if the member was asking about how a total complaint was investigated.

Ms. Friesen: No. I am asking specifically about the claims of many of these schools to employment rates. What I am understanding is that the minister simply discusses with the school their claims and the basis—not even the basis on which they are making the claims, but simply the level of claim they are making, whether it is a percentage of graduates or numbers of people enrolled.

In the event of a complaint which does involve those kinds of claims, is there no checking on the number of people who have been employed, where they have been employed, how long they have been employed? I mean, how else do you check it?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, as I have explained to the member, the process of checking is to check with the school exactly what statistic they are using. Is it a statistic of graduates? Is it a statistic of total enrollment, and then, does the employment actually reflect that percentage of that particular statistic?

As I have said, where it is found that it does not, where the schools cannot verify in writing that it does, then the schools are asked to change that particular percentage or claim that they are making, but as I have said earlier as well, we do not look at the employment records, the individual employment records of students.

Ms. Friesen: So just exactly what is it that the schools are required to write to the minister that would satisfy her that X school has, over the past three years, had an 84 percent employment?

Mrs. Vodrey: What schools are required to verify in writing is the course, the number of students, the number of students who have graduated and then the number of students who have become employed.

Sometimes schools do in fact provide where students have gained employment. Sometimes, as part of their advertisement, they also do that, but the information that we have documented at the minimum is, again, the course, the number of students graduated and the number of students who have become employed.

Private vocational schools do focus on making people employment ready, but very few schools actually—I cannot think of any schools, if I am right, that guarantee jobs. Schools do not guarantee jobs. They do speak about an employment rate.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, so essentially, the schools are not required to say where their students are working and how long they have been working there. They can simply write to the minister that X percentage are employed, and the minister, who is now acting upon a complaint, requires no further evidence.

Mrs. Vodrey: I am certainly informed that where we ask the schools to say where the students are employed, the schools provide that information to us.

Ms. Friesen: So the minister gets a letter then saying that X graduates of our school, these are the years of their graduation, this is where they are employed, and this is how long they have been employed there.

* (1540)

Mrs. Vodrey: They do not provide us information on length of employment.

Ms. Friesen: Does it refer then only to existing employment, that is, people who are in jobs at the time of the receipt of the letter from the minister?

Mrs. Vodrey: It depends upon the date that the private vocational schools area gives to the employer. If they ask upon graduation or if they ask as of a certain date, the schools will comply with whatever the date required is.

Ms. Friesen: I want to look at dispute mechanisms within the schools and to ask if this is an area of monitoring by the department. Students who are in dispute over marks, teaching, conditions of the schools, a feeling that they may not have received what they had anticipated they would receive as a result of the advertising: What does a student do who has a complaint in a private vocational college registered under the act?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the schools themselves may have appeal mechanisms or mechanisms to deal with complaints. Some schools do; not all schools do. However, most schools do not want to lose the students, so they do provide a way to deal with the complaints or appeals that are required of them.

The private vocational schools administration only becomes involved when there is determined to be a contravention of the act or a regulation.

Ms. Friesen: When the government monitors these schools or when it has an annual inspection, is the presence or absence of dispute resolution a factor in the evaluation?

For example, do you ask that question? Do you consider it the role of government to advise on the desirability of having such a resolution?

Mrs. Vodrey: Under the act, specifically, it does not require schools to have the appeal mechanism, but in terms of certification under The Private Vocational Schools Act, certainly we speak about all areas of those that the school wishes to speak about.

We also provide advice and points for consideration of the schools, but in this particular area, it is ultimately up to the schools how they wish to deal with the particular matter of dispute mechanisms or advice or appeals.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, what proportion then of the private vocational schools do have such procedures?

Mrs. Vodrey: We do not keep those statistics, however I am informed that certainly most of the larger schools seem to have those appeal mechanisms.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us what the education level is of students who are applying to the vocational schools or who are taken into the vocational schools?

Mrs. Vodrey: Some of the schools require high school. Others will accept an equivalency or the GED. Some schools accept the completion of Grade 8 level.

Ms. Friesen: The minister spoke in her evaluation of, I think it was in the evaluation section of these schools, the requirement for student school contracts. Is that right?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, I did make reference in the registration process to the registration process requiring a submission of the application fee, application form, and then one of the other areas I also spoke of was copies of the application, contracts, certificate, diploma, all advertising materials, sales literature, circulars, calendars, and collection forms.

Ms. Friesen: Would it be possible for the minister to table a specimen contract with the name of the school removed, or something that the minister considers to be average industry standard?

Mrs. Vodrey: The regulations of The Private Vocational Schools Act determine what that contract should look like, and I refer the member to the act and the Regulation Section 46(1), and it is page 24.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, I do not have a copy of that act in front of me. Could the minister tell us whether there is a cooling off period, as there is in many consumer agreements for students?

Mrs. Vodrey: Under the regulations for the signing of this particular contract, there is not a cooling-off period required. The member may have to check with the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in terms of whether or not that is the standard practice for this type of contract or, in fact, only in some other kind of sales.

But where a student decides after the signing of the contract that they would not wish to carry on with attendance at the school, the school may keep the registration, but the school would be required to return all tuition.

Ms. Friesen: After what period would the school return that tuition?

Mrs. Vodrey: Up to completion of two-thirds of the course. Beyond two-thirds of the course, then they would not be required; then it would be prorated. What was returned would be prorated to the student.

Ms. Friesen: I think I would like to be a bit clearer on this, because I think there are a lot of students who do not know this. Maybe I should let the minister explain it again, but you could be, for example, in a yearlong course. You could decide after having completed two-thirds of that course that you are going to withdraw from that school, and that up to two-thirds the school would refund you two-thirds of the tuition, and that for the last third they would refund it on a prorated basis? Maybe we could take that example of a one year to explain it.

* (1550)

Mrs. Vodrey: Let me try and make that answer a little bit more clear. In terms of the return, before a student has actually attended the program and wishes to withdraw without attending any part of the

course, then the school may keep the registration fee, but the school would be required to return the tuition fee.

When a student actually begins the program, then there is a formula which is in place in the regulations, and up to two-thirds attendance at the course, then the student would pay a prorated amount and would receive a refund on the other part of the tuition, the remaining amount of the tuition. After two-thirds completion of the course, the student would not receive a refund.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, that clarifies it, although I am still not sure that many students actually are aware of this. Certainly, with some of the cases that I have dealt with, it would have been useful for the students to have known that from the beginning.

What proportion of the total fee is the registration fee on average in these cases?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the registration fee is 20 percent of the course cost or \$100, whichever is the lesser. The maximum amount is \$100.

Ms. Friesen: That is by regulation, is it?

Mrs. Vodrey: That is correct.

Ms. Friesen: I asked last time in this section about untrained teachers in this industry, and I believe two of the Maritime provinces, I think it is Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, both require in their vocational schools regulations that teachers have some kind of training.

Manitoba does not have that in its act, and I believe there are a number of these industries where untrained teachers are the norm. I was wondering if the minister had any indication of the numbers on that. What proportion of the teachers in these colleges are untrained, and does, again, that vary by industry? For example, are we looking at trucking, which we looked at last time under this appropriation, where there is no requirement for training at all? It is simply a particular type of driver's licence and the maintenance of a clean driving record. For example, is there a difference between that and the business colleges where training might be more of a norm?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, under the regulations of The Private Vocational Schools Act, a person who teaches in the private vocational school must fall into one of five categories. No. 1, they must possess a bachelor's degree from a

university in Canada or an equivalent degree from a university outside of Canada in a subject directly related to the subject or vocation to be taught, and also have 12 months actual occupational experience in the vocation to be taught. Or they must be a graduate of the community college established under The Education Administration Act or an equivalent institution outside of Manitoba in a subject directly related to the subject or vocation taught, and they must have 24 months of actual occupational experience in the vocation taught. Or the teacher must be a graduate of a private vocational school registered under the act or a predecessor of the act, a trade or vocational school registered elsewhere in Canada or an equivalent institution outside of Canada, and have 24 months actual occupational experience in the subject or vocation taught. Or the teacher must have 36 months experience as a teacher in the subject or vocation to be taught or must have 48 months actual occupational experience in the subject or vocation to be taught.

Ms. Friesen: And none of that requires teacher training?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, these have not required the Bachelor of Education degree.

Ms. Friesen: Nor have they required any other short courses in training the trainer.

Mrs. Vodrey: The private vocational schools are advised that these courses are available for their instructors. They are not required to have taken that particular course.

Ms. Friesen: In the evaluation and monitoring of these schools, which this section of the branch conducts, is there any recording of the number of staff who might have taken up such shorter training courses? Is that a criterion?

Mrs. Vodrey: That is not information that we collect; however, the private vocational schools are required to submit a notarized teaching declaration. On that declaration, they then must declare exactly what are the areas of qualifications, academic and teaching experience and also occupational experience. With that, they also have to submit references, and those references also would include employment experience references.

Sometimes, I am informed, in addition to providing this notarized teaching declaration, in some cases, there is also a résumé attached regarding each of the teachers.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, do we know what proportion roughly of students in private vocational schools are receiving public assistance—for example, those which come from this minister's department, student loans?

* (1600)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I do have a number which is a global number because the number includes not only private vocational schools, it also includes Bible colleges, schools of nursing, aviation schools.

This particular statistic is the number of students who have collected the—and this is the Canada Student Loan. We have the numbers for the Canada Student Loan, and then we also have the numbers for the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance. For 1992-93 school year, that global number is 2,546.

Now there are awards also given to students attending other institutions such as the Universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Brandon University, the three community colleges. This global number, then, is those students who have access to Canada Student Loans for institutions other than those, but excludes those students who have received Canada Student Loans to attend out of the province.

I have a number again in that same global categorization for students attending, as I said, private vocational schools, schools of nursing, aviation schools, and the Bible colleges and accessing the Manitoba government bursaries and loan rebates for '92-93, and that number is 1,079.

Then the Manitoba government grants and awards in the third area, third category, in the other section: 280 students is the number for 1992-93.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, I thank the minister for those numbers, but they are not very helpful. I assume those are the ones that we have with us.

The issue that I am looking at is the student body composition of the vocational schools, which is the line that we are looking at. In Saskatchewan, for example, a province which is often compared to us in educational practices and in population composition, of the students enrolled in private vocational educational schools which come under their act similar to ours, close to 40 percent—it is about 37, 38 percent—of those students are on student loans.

So what you have is a picture of a good proportion—I do not think you can it is necessarily typical in the sense of average, but certainly a high proportion of students in those vocational schools, first of all, do not have the resources to make it on their own. Forty percent of them are on student loan.

As the minister has said, there are other forms of public funding. CEIC, Workers Compensation would add to that. Second of all, they have anywhere from a Grade 8 to a GED kind of qualification, and perhaps some of them have high school.

They are entering a system where they are required to sign a contract for which we do not know whether there is a cooling-off period or not, which is written, I presume, in formal legal language. They are entering a system where they have to face advertisements that argue that there are 70 and 80 percent employment rates and for which the government has no standard way of verifying those numbers until there is a complaint. They are entering a system where there is no requirement and, indeed, no recording of whether their teachers have any training.

It seems to me that we are looking at a large number of areas of vocational schools where students with less education, fewer economic resources than other post-secondary education students, are entering a system where they have relatively few protections. Now, obviously, in some industries and in some schools, there is not going to be a problem, but in some there may. I wonder, has the minister ever considered some kind of consumer instruction, some kind of consumer booklet which says to students, look, buyer beware; you are entering a system where you are essentially entering a commercial contract and for which I would have a number of concerns?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, we have discussed a lot of information this afternoon that does act to provide a level of standard for private vocational schools and also the ongoing monitoring of private vocational schools. In the member's question about, will there be something provided to students so that they can look at the schools, and perhaps discuss them with an employment counsellor, the answer is, yes, through our Manitoba Prospects, which we distributed for the first time this year.

In the next Manitoba Prospects—the circulation is in the area of 100,000—we will have an area which focuses on private vocational schools, and which will help students look at some of the issues of awareness which they will need in choosing a private vocational school, and then it will provide them with some information that they may wish to continue some discussion about attendance in a private vocational school with employment counsellors, or with other trusted friends or relatives.

Ms. Frlesen: The issues that we have discussed today, the absence of information on retention rates, on graduate employment, on dispute resolution, on absence of teacher training, on legal contracts with no cooling-off period—will all of those be included in that article? Will all of that information and concerns be shared with the employment counsellors?

Mrs. Vodrey: The Manitoba Prospects article will focus on how to go about assessing decisions regarding enrolling in a private vocational school. It is that process of decision making that I think students need to think about and also would perhaps like to have the opportunity to discuss with people who are close to them or whose advice they rely on.

I would remind the member that some of the information which she is requiring for private vocational schools may not be available as well at other institutions such as our universities.

* (1610)

Ms. Frlesen: I do not believe that universities advertise by their employment records, nor is there an absence of dispute resolution, nor formal ways of dealing with a variety of issues.

Point of Order

Mrs. Vodrey: I did say to the member that a number of schools do have dispute mechanisms and a mediation process in place. I did say to her that we do not keep the statistics on that. However, many schools do have, and students certainly would have the opportunity to look into that dispute mechanism, as they do at the universities.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable minister did not have a point of order.

* * *

Ms. Friesen: The point I am making, obviously the minister understands that in a public institution which is publicly accountable and where there is public information available through public schools and every other area of our public education system, there are certain guarantees and certain standards that are understood and accepted by the public at large.

The difficulty with private vocational schools is that these cannot be taken for granted. That is why I am drawing these to the minister's attention. I will look forward to seeing that article in Manitoba Prospects, and also, of course, looking at the circulation of that magazine or that newspaper, which, I hope, will encourage students to look very carefully at the kind of system that they are entering into.

I wanted to move on from vocational education and ask about the religious colleges.

An Honourable Member: Where are they?

Ms. Friesen: Still under the same line, I think.

What I wanted to ask about the religious colleges is, are the grants provided under this line or are they included in the UGC, and what is the particular relationship of this section of the department to the private religious colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the private religious colleges do receive their funds flowing through this particular line of the Estimates process, and I believe the member's question is: Why are they not funded through a line of the Universities Grants Commission? The reason is the UGC Act does not provide for the funding of private religious colleges.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, has the minister received any recent applications for new religious colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, there has been one request.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, could the minister tell us where that request has come from, how many students it would add into the private religious college system, and is the potential for approval of that included in these Estimates?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are still in the process of reviewing the request. We need to check with the universities regarding eligible courses. Therefore, it will not be included in the funding for '93-94.

Ms. Friesen: I am making an assumption. I assume the minister does not want to name the school, but it is one outside Winnipeg. Have there been any approaches to the minister on behalf of what is being called the Jewish campus, and is that likely to evolve into a private religious college?

Mrs. Vodrey: The answer is no, no approaches.

Ms. Friesen: Have there been any applications to affiliate with Brandon University?

Mrs. Vodrey: The answer is no.

Ms. Friesen: Before we move to pass this, I wanted to ask about the reduction in the number of staff in this department. We have seen a 20 percent increase in private school vocational enrollment. We are seeing an increase or an additional application in religious college. What are the implications of reducing the staff in this area?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, as the member knows, there has been a recent reorganization of the division, and that has resulted in the amalgamation of the Administrative Support function for the ACCESS programs and the former Post-Secondary Career Development and Adult Continuing Education branch into this new line, the Management Services branch.

So the work again has been subsumed or has been taken on by those people who are currently working there. The workload, I can say to the member, has been fully redistributed through the remaining staff of the Management Services branch and the viability of programs has not been affected.

Ms. Friesen: Has there been an overall reduction in management and administrative support in this area?

The minister has redistributed the work. She has redistributed the personnel, but taking the total amount of the total lists of responsibilities and looking at the number of staff who were formerly employed in that, do we have the same number?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, there has been a reduction of three SYs in the Professional/Technical area and two in the Administrative Support area.

Ms. Friesen: Were those people reassigned within the department, or are those people who were, to use the euphemism "let go," fired?

Mrs. Vodrey: All five individuals whose positions have been reduced have either been redeployed within government or taken the VSIP or have resigned voluntarily.

* (1620)

Ms. Friesen: How many resigned voluntarily?

Mrs. Vodrey: One.

Ms. Friesen: I ask also about the expenditures of this section of the department. I notice there are two areas in particular where there have been large reductions, in Transportation and Communications, Transportation reduced by about 50 percent and Communications by considerably more. Again, I am looking for the impact of this on a department that does conduct annual inspections and that presumably has a mandate that takes it through much of the southern part of the province.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the Transportation line has been reduced due to the college governance and the travel related to college governance, and the Communications line has been reduced, again primarily due to the community college programs and personnel advertising now budgeted within the community colleges budget.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister also tell us what else has been taken out? How much has been taken out of this budget as a result of community college changes? For example, you have an increase—no, I will get to that later. Let us look at the decreases. The reduction in Professional Fees—[interjection] I will come back to it. It is interesting because it is an increase in rental and maintenance. I am quite happy to ask the minister about that as well, but if we are just looking at it systematically, perhaps the reductions first and the relationship to college governance.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, there has been a reduction in all areas for the community colleges that totals up to \$250,000 through this line, and it is a one-time nonrecurring.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister give an explanation of the reduction to Professional Fees? Is that related to community colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: The reduction in Professional Fees of \$7,900 is related to college governance administration.

Ms. Friesen: Does that mean that last year's \$38,860 was entirely devoted to college

government administration contracts? Is it what is taken out that was the colleges', or was the entire line formerly available for colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not sure if the member had referred to the line correctly. In the '92-93 expenditures the Professional Fees were 15.4, not the 38. Thirty-eight is from the line above.

So the 15.4, this year 7.5—the decrease is 7.9, and that is accounted for by the College Governance administration.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I thank the minister for the correction. That is right, I had not got the lines right. But the question I was asking is still the same. Does that mean that last year 15.4 was spent entirely on College Governance contracts?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the money which was not used for Professional Fees or not earmarked in the year previous for Professional Fees was money available to be used for things such as short-term contracts to help prepare us for governance. In some cases, they may have looked at details of accountability as we moved into the governance process, and now we are in the governance process.

Ms. Friesen: So of that 15.4, how many contracts were there? Who had those contracts and how were they defined?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, of that amount of money available, we believe that, in fact, it was not spent, that that money was not needed in that particular year.

This year, we have budgeted some funds in the event that we may need to look at some additional areas this year.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, so \$15,400 was estimated, but not expended. Could the minister tell us how much was expended then on that line?

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, I am informed that the province has not totally closed the books for this time period, so we will need some time to provide a reconciliation for the member. I will certainly provide that information as quickly as I can.

* (1630)

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister have enough information with her now to tell us whether it was close to \$15,400? We are looking at a 50 percent less, or 75 percent less, or 25 percent less?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, I would prefer not to estimate, and I will provide the reconciliation for Thursday.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, the reason I am asking this question is, of course, that it looks like a substantial reduction. Can the minister tell us what she is estimating spending the \$7,500 on? If last year there were some problems with expenditures in the sense of overestimation, then how has that been corrected this time?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, in the year previous, I understand that some of that budgeted money was—we were able to do some of that work internally. The Department of Finance did some of the work which we thought we might have to contract out, which is why some of that money had been budgeted and not expended.

In this year, we are expecting to have some expenditures in this area. It may be in the area of some technical reports. It will be certainly in short-term contracts in the area of some technical reports. It may also be in the area of reports for computer capabilities.

As the member knows, we are moving to a new program with our Student Financial Assistance in Manitoba, and it will require some implementation and some computer capabilities to make the adjustment.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): Item 4.(a)(1) Salaries \$480,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$407,300—pass; (3) Advanced Education and Training Assistance \$1,679,100—pass.

Item 4.(b) ACCESS Programs \$9,926,000.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, let me take a moment to introduce the staff of the Advanced Education and Skills Training area: Dominique Bloy, who is the assistant deputy minister of this division; Mr. Bob Gorchynski, who is the acting director of Management Services; and Mr. Earl McArthur, the acting director of Labour Market Policy, Planning and Analysis, and Mr. Bruce Proctor, the co-ordinator of the ACCESS program. As the member knows, we have gone through some restructuring and some changes of title.

Ms. Friesen: The obvious thing that leaps out at you from this page is the reduction from \$11,100 to \$9,900 in this area. I wonder if we could hear the minister's defence of that, of a program which has made Manitoba renowned in the area of particularly aboriginal education, but not only that, and for a government that has just produced a report, which claims that of its 10 strategies, education is one of them, and another one is the close and amiable relationships that they have managed to maintain with aboriginal societies in Manitoba.

None of that seems to be fulfilled by the straightforward reduction that we see in ACCESS programs. There is a good deal that I think we shall want to discuss about ACCESS programs. There certainly are a number of members of our caucus who have some particular concerns, both regional and community concerns, that they want to raise about the ACCESS programs. But maybe we should start at the beginning. We have heard the minister many times talk about—essentially blame this on the federal government.

Two years ago, the federal government did withdraw from some aspects of ACCESS funding, and the minister did at that point continue the grandfathering, continue support for students in ACCESS.

So I wonder if we could put that argument to one side. We know that the minister did take up some of the slack that the federal government—the federal government, her Conservative colleagues—did drop. But, putting that on one side, the minister this year has taken \$1 million or more out of ACCESS programming. It really seems to me very inaccurate to describe this as a result of the federal government action. Two years ago, yes. We accepted that. We understood what the minister was doing, and yet in response to every question on this she has continued to maintain that this is the fault of the federal government.

Last year the minister claimed that she was stepping in to cover the actions of the federal government; this year she has not. So there has been a change in policy.

* (1640)

Mrs. Vodrey: I know the member would like to not look again at the facts regarding the federal government funding, but that is a very important piece in terms of the funding for the ACCESS programs. The member will know, as I have said

several times, that last year this province did step in and supplemented where the federal government would not, to the amount of \$1.1 million. The province is not able to continue picking up where the federal government has not been able to support students. So this year we do look at a reduction in the area of \$1.2 million, and this year the province is not able to pick up that extra money which, in fact, we did in the year previous.

So, as I have said, quite correctly, the reductions are primarily a result of the federal offloading relating to the funding of Status Indian students under the Post-Secondary Student Support Program of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, but the province is committed to ongoing support of this very worthwhile family of programs.

I will tell the member that there were 712 continuing students in the ACCESS programs as of April 1, 1993. So we have certainly made every effort to assist those students who are currently in the ACCESS programs.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I also want to raise a number of concerns related to the ACCESS programs. The ACCESS programs are amongst the best programs of their kind in the country, if not this continent.

The bottom line is that there has been an extensive number of students graduate in the last number of years. In fact, I recently had the opportunity to attend the Social Work Program graduation in Thompson, and there are a number of additional graduates now graduating from that program, also the Northern Nursing Program. There have been a series of programs that have really established a new model for accessibility to education.

I am concerned, though, with some of the recent developments in terms of ACCESS programming. I talked to people at the Social Work Faculty in Thompson last week, and they have been cut to four funded spaces from the previous number of 11. There are students that were previously under the—in the days when we used to have a Northern Development Agreement, until the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) bungled the process and negotiations. We no longer have—[interjection]

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we no longer have a Northern Development Agreement, and that is one of the problems. [interjection]

For the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) to talk about useless rhetoric is, I think, an interesting contradiction in terms in here. Perhaps he should read some of his speeches from the Department of Agriculture.

This is not rhetoric. The fact is we no longer have a Northern Development Agreement. The fact is students that were previously receiving assistance under the then-NDA funding for the ACCESS programs had, up until this point in time, been maintained at the assistance levels under the NDA levels. I have been advised that they will now have their student assistance cut back because they are no longer being grandparented under the previous amount. So it is having an impact on the students. This is on very short notice, and the students are very concerned about this. It is going to have a significant impact.

There are also other concerns, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. One of the major factors for the ACCESS programming in northern Manitoba that is key to the success, given the fact that you have many single parents in the program and other parents, is in terms of accessibility of child care. On Friday, I had the opportunity to attend the opening of the new child care facility set up in KTC, the Keewatinowi Awasisak, which is the child care facility that has been the result of a lot of work going back to the Limestone Training days.

The problem, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is they had some start-up funding from the federal government. They have no funded spaces, and they have been caught in the recent developments with the Department of Family Services whereby the number of spaces has been frozen. Assessment is being done, and we will then determine where we go in terms of funded child care spaces. Without funded child care spaces, the programs cannot and will not function. So the combined impact of these various aspects is hurting the ACCESS programs and is creating a great deal of concern and uncertainty.

What I would like to ask the minister on these items is, first of all, in terms of the cutback and the number of funded spaces, if she can confirm that it has been cut in northern Manitoba to four spaces in terms of the—in fact if she could give a list of the

overall number of cutbacks. The second question I have is in terms of the allowances for the students that were previously under the Northern Development Agreement levels as to whether the Minister of Education can indicate why now they are having their assistance cut back, which is quite a significant hardship. The third is as to whether the Minister of Education has had any conversation with the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) in regard to either the Keewatinowi Awasisak Child Care Facility or child care generally to ensure that there are enough funded spaces in place for students in the ACCESS programs.

I realize I have given the minister several questions, but in the interest of time I thought better to give notice, and also to staff as well, for the response. But the bottom line is people who are part of the ACCESS programming in Thompson and northern Manitoba as well as in Winnipeg are very concerned about the combined impact of these changes, the funding cuts, the number of spaces that have been cut, the child care cuts, and the overall direction that we are headed to in ACCESS. I would appreciate if the minister could provide us with information on these very important concerns.

Mrs. Vodrey: As I said in my previous answer, we have certainly maintained a commitment to the ACCESS program. As the member can see, the budget line is \$9.9 million. It is over \$9.9 million. That is still a very significant contribution to the students who are in that program.

Mr. Deputy Chair, 712 students are currently in that program, and we do have a commitment to see those students through the program. In addition, we have also taken new students through the intake process. The intake process is somewhat smaller this year. However, we have continued our commitment to the program through continuing to fund those students who are currently in the program and by taking in new students through a new intake. So I think it is important for the member to look at it and to see where the commitment on two sides occurs.

Had there been no intakes overall, then I would say the member may have raised a concern, but we, in fact, did take new intakes into the program. But, as I have said, with the change in funds available by the federal government and with the amount of money available, yes, there has been some reduction in the numbers of new students

taken in but there still have been new intakes brought into the program.

Then, in the area of the grandfathering, the province did have to make a decision in order to maintain its commitment to students who are currently in the program as well as a commitment to new students, because we did want to show a commitment to the program by taking in a new intake. We had to do that, all of it, with the backdrop of a substantial loss of federal contribution to these programs over the past years.

* (1650)

What this does is the decision now results in a uniform bursary rate for all ACCESS students. There were some grandfather students of those 712 students in the ACCESS programs who were receiving more money than was available to other students who are part of the ACCESS program. This, in fact, now provides a uniform rate to those students who are part of the ACCESS program and to those new students who will come in through the new intake.

Let me remind the member, in terms of the support available, that the student financial supports, in addition to that bursary rate, consist of rental subsidies, regardless of what the member may have read or heard about. Those rental subsidies continue to exist. We recognize the need to support those students.

The total amount of support available then to students who are within the bursary program, the overall nonrepayable annual support rate, is in the range of \$10,600, and that includes the bursaries. That is a significant contribution level which is available to students within the ACCESS programs. In terms of the difficult decision to eliminate the grandfather but to make all students at an equitable point in terms of what they accessed in terms of bursary funding for the ACCESS programs, and because of the federal government's reduction, then decisions did have to be made.

However, if the member knows, those students would be eligible for other types of assistance. It would be in the form of the Canada Student Loan or the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance, but recognizing that these students are in post-secondary programs, so they are looking to be trained in an area of post-secondary education. As other students, they may then decide that they

do need to supplement with the Canada Student Loan.

But I stress now that the bursary money available is now equitable across some programs. I would remind the member that the community colleges did not have students who were eligible for that additional rate, that grandfathered rate. So now it allows students within all of the institutions to have an equitable bursary rate. The total amount available for students based on their need and the additional funds which they might wish to access is in the range of \$10,600. That is a significant commitment, and it is made to the students currently in the program and it is made to those students who will be new intakes into the program.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I did have the question on the child care facility and I will just restate that in a moment, but I am concerned about the minister's definition of equity. What the government has done is the government—the rate after the NDA rates was lower than the NDA rates. People were told that they entered the program on a certain rate and that would be maintained. That is no longer being maintained. The people who are on the NDA rate are having their rate cut, period, on very short notice. There are people, and my understanding—and the minister can put on the record exactly when, but it will come into place as early this summer.

Believe you me, if the minister thinks the current rates are overly generous, the minister might wish to talk to some of the ACCESS students about some of the costs they face and also recognize that the ACCESS students, by definition, come from economic circumstances, social circumstances, geographic circumstances where they do not have the money and the ability, in the financial sense, to pursue a normal process of education. That is the whole basis of the ACCESS program.

So I am concerned when I hear the minister talk about creating equity, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I suppose this is the Conservative version of equity, what you do is you flatten everybody down to the lowest rate. I would have thought equity would have been looking at the rates—[interjection]

An Honourable Member: That is the socialist way.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I notice the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) here talks about the socialist way. We do know that the Tories—and

we have seen this in some of their corporate programs—believe in socialism for the rich. That is their style. This is, I think, very much an indication of the lack of equity in this particular case. Those students, on short notice, have now had their rates decreased, when in fact the rate should be assessed.

I am also very concerned about the minister's statement that the amount that is being given here, quote, in terms of bursaries, is a significant amount of money.

Indeed, it is a significant amount of money, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. So is the amount that would have been paid in welfare to people who would not have been able to continue their education.

I wish the Conservatives would get their bookkeeping straight when they look at issues such as this, because that is what is happening in this province. On the one hand, they are cutting back in terms of the New Careers programs, in terms of ACCESS programming, in terms of programming in the community colleges, in terms of universities. On the other hand, there is one area of growth in the budget. It is welfare, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

I just attended another graduation. I have had the opportunity to attend many of the graduations. I have even had the opportunity to teach a number of the students over the years and I have seen that—[interjection]

Well, I value that experience, and I am proud to have been associated with Inter-Universities North and with the ACCESS programs because I have learned a lot from the students in those programs. Believe you—

An Honourable Member: They were teaching you. You were not teaching them.

Mr. Ashton: Maybe the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) should enroll in one of the classes. He could learn a lot, I am sure. He certainly is in need of it.

The point I wish to make with the ACCESS programs in northern Manitoba is how significant the impact has been. We often talk today in society in very cynical ways, but if there are any heroes in society, it is some of the people whom I have seen go through the ACCESS program, people I have known personally who have undergone tremendous odds to now be practising professionals, most of them in northern

Manitoba—there are many in the North—and who are providing a real role model to people.

Last weekend, I was in Nelson House and there were 19 high school graduates. I think very much a part of that is the fact that in that school there are a majority of the teachers who went through the BUNTEP program. A majority of the teachers are from the North. In fact, the majority are from Nelson House. That is how important these programs are. Nineteen students are graduating from Nelson House this year.

I can take the minister into virtually any remote northern community which has high school, and if you talk to people, the key factor is the people providing the role model to those students, and also some hope that when they get out of high school, there are some possibilities that are in place.

What the minister has failed to recognize in her comments is what she said earlier about some reduction. Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I asked her for the specific numbers. The minister perhaps can give this when she has the opportunity. I asked specifically, because the information I received in Thompson is it is being cut to four funded positions. They have been cut to four funded positions in Thompson and I wish to—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just on two points of order: one, there are 712 students who remain in the ACCESS program, with 25 new; and, secondly, let not the member leave on the record that I have—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I cannot hear the honourable minister. The honourable minister has the floor. She is speaking to a point of order. I am having trouble hearing the minister.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let the member not leave on the record that I have not had communication with the ACCESS students or with the New Careers students because, most certainly, I have had communication with those students.

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

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Before I was interrupted, I wanted to point out that the ACCESS programs are in jeopardy, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because of the combined impact, the cut in number of funded spaces, the cut in terms of overall funding, the—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The hour now being five o'clock, time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

* (1430)

HEALTH

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

This section of the Committee of Supply is considering the Estimates for the Department of Health. We are on item 1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries, on page 77 of the Estimates manual. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, I wonder if the minister has the documents that he promised he would be tabling during this sitting of the committee.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Chairperson, I will check, and if my honourable friend wants to continue with his questioning, I am sure I can respond during the course of the discussions this afternoon.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, just finishing off from some questions that arose yesterday during the debates, while the minister is looking for the material that he is going to table, will he also table for us statistical material that was offered to him to justify the decision to move all of the in- and out-patient surgical services from the community hospitals to the Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, that information was given to my honourable friend last night, directly to him, and in terms of a response to the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) as well.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I believe last night the minister provided us information from his perspective that justified the expansion of the program at the Health Sciences Centre and justified, from his viewpoint, the argument that the Health Sciences Centre, the Children's Hospital could accommodate the expanded service. He

did not offer any evidence or any information to us, nor has he ever in this House, statistical reasons to indicate why the decision was made to go from the community hospitals to the Health Sciences Centre.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, my honourable friend is being naive in the utmost if he believes that the information I gave him in terms of accommodation of the consolidated pediatric program, as put on the record last night twice, in Question Period several times, does not underpin the decision. If my honourable friend believes that is not sufficient information and justification to underpin the decision, I cannot help him anymore.

Madam Chairperson, while we are on the topic, maybe my honourable friend the critic for the New Democratic Party (Mr. Chomiak) might, after having enjoyed a sleep last night, can tell us if he and his party agree or disagree with the decision of consolidation. My honourable friend has been hectoring around the edges in terms of process around the decision which he can make the criticisms that he so wishes, and that is fine.

But my honourable friend refuses to indicate whether the decision was appropriate or not, whether the New Democrats agree or disagree; and, if they disagree, what they would do should they be government to reverse it. Surely, my honourable friend owes the House, the people of Manitoba, health care planners, Urban Hospital Council members—the people that made that decision, as to what would be the fruits of their labour should his province ever be—

An Honourable Member: Unfortunate.

Mr. Orchard: That is not strong enough—should the NDP ever have Mr. Chomiak as the Health minister in the province. Let us find out what they believe in terms of the decision. Is the decision right or wrong? Will you take a stand on that issue? Will you tell us what you believe in on behalf of the New Democrats?

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister tell us why he is afraid to table the report, the final report of the Urban Hospital Council? While he is at it, why is he afraid to tell us the statistical basis, the operations for the past five years at the community hospitals and St. Boniface Hospital, and the comparative figures for those at the Health Sciences Centre in order that we could understand the statistical basis upon which the

decision was made, and why the minister is afraid to do that? If the minister can, between now and next sitting of this committee, provide that information, we will be happy to accept it during the next sitting of the committee.

Mr. Orchard: While we are speaking of fear, why is my honourable friend afraid to accept the information that has been given to him twice last night, several times during Question Period in response to questions, and, more importantly, why is my honourable friend afraid to say whether the policy of consolidation to Children's Hospital pediatric services is right—and they agree with it, or wrong—and they do not agree with it?

Why is my honourable friend afraid of that very simple statement of support or nonsupport of a program initiative that is working effectively on behalf of the children of this city?

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, since the minister refuses to provide us with that information, that is, the statistical justification for why the decision was made to consolidate inpatient/outpatient surgery from the community hospitals to the Health Sciences Centre, we must assume that what I had earlier indicated, last night, the decision was made for reasons that I still do not understand, and probably will not ever be understood, because the minister is refusing to provide the basis for that information.

He must have a list of all studies, reports, documents, et cetera, that are presently in process or being reviewed by his department at this point in time. Does he have a general list that he could table with this us to allow us to know what reports, studies and other ongoing consultations are occurring in the department?

Mr. Orchard: Now, Madam Chairperson, I really am quite dismayed at my honourable friend's line of questioning. He opened his remarks saying that we do not do any consultation, that we do not do any invitation of position, that we do not invite consultation, that we do not ask the opinion of everybody else; now he wants a list of all the consultation that is going on. Will my honourable friend make up his mind?

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I can assume from the minister's answer he does not have any reports of consultations.

For the minister's interest, I can indicate that I have dealt with several ministers in several

departments, his colleague, the former Minister of Education, for Roblin-Russell; I dealt with the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae)—all who had the courtesy and all who had the wherewithal to provide us with a list of ongoing studies and reviews carried out by their department in order to allow us to question some of the priorities and the direction of the department.

Every department I have ever dealt with since I have been in this Chamber has been able to provide that. Now the minister is saying he cannot provide that and we are sorry to say that. I am sorry to hear that, Madam Chairperson.

I am wondering if the minister will perhaps reconsider. There are three conclusions that could be reached, Madam Chairperson: the minister is unwilling to provide the information; the minister does not have the information; or the minister is simply, for whatever political reasons, trying to play some kind of games.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, there are no games being played by myself. My honourable friend asked those questions Thursday afternoon. Has he forgotten that I indicated the nature of the committee, the time line of reporting? It is in Hansard. I have already answered my honourable friend. Has he such a short memory that he has forgotten those responses already?

My honourable friend is wasting the time of committee by asking a repeated question from Thursday last to which he received answers in terms of what the committees were and the time lines for reporting. My honourable friend is suggesting that information was not provided to him Thursday last.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister therefore state—and I have to assume from his answer that all of the committees and all of the references I made on Thursday last to studies and consultations are an all-inclusive record of all of the reports that are being undertaken by his department, and there are no other external or internal studies, reviews, task forces or reports that are being undertaken by his department this year, other than the ones that I specifically, some half dozen to perhaps eight, referenced last Thursday during the last meeting of the committee.

Is the minister saying that there are no other outstanding reports, studies, consultations or

ongoing studies that are available in the department?

* (1440)

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, no. My honourable friend well knows that there are ongoing reviews for instance by the Health Advisory Network. My honourable friend has indicated his interest in receiving some of those reports. Hopefully, we can accommodate that request.

In terms of the reports that my honourable friend asked for on Friday, and the committee members, yes, we intend to help my honourable friend by providing him with that information. That was the essence of the discussion Thursday last, information to follow.

My honourable friend, for lack of something better to do, reinvents questions.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, the minister has had in his possession, as I understand it since the end of 1992, a report on midwifery, which, as I understand it, suggests that midwives have a key role to play in the delivery of good obstetrical care.

Other provinces have moved aggressively and they have developed such services. I am wondering, can the minister tell this committee why the report has not been released and what action will be taken by his department in this regard?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, with the qualification that should the information I provide my honourable friend not be the current status, I will refresh the information at the earliest opportunity. We have received a report on midwifery which was developed by the committee on midwifery. It is my understanding that they are now in the process of examining the legislative framework under which midwifery could be introduced in the province of Manitoba.

Lest my honourable friend leaves these discussions with the penchant to say that this government and this minister and this ministry are not interested in midwifery, I want to make sure my honourable friend does not make that factual error. From the outset, we have expressed an interest in midwifery as a delivery choice for women in the province of Manitoba.

Basically, in terms of the study of how it might be incorporated and implemented into the system, I have only placed basically two criteria on the study

committee and the implementation analysis committee, and that be that we ensure that midwifery can offer a safe and effective choice for women in terms of birthing and, secondly, that the introduction of midwifery as a birthing choice would not be an add-on to our health care service budget, that it would be a replacement in terms of cost within the budget.

Given those two criteria which I think are both reasonable and logical if one considers them, I look forward to recommendations on how we might guide the implementation of midwifery in the province of Manitoba combined with a legislative framework to ensure the professional standards will ensure a safe and quality service choice for women.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I take it from the minister's response that the recommendations of Frank Manning and the obstetrics group will have an interplay and interaction with respect to the midwifery decisions that are forthcoming.

Mr. Orchard: That may be a possibility. I have not received Dr. Manning's report, but the midwifery investigation is independent of Dr. Manning's report on where obstetrics might be appropriately provided as a service to women in our urban hospitals.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, in the health reform update in November '92, a target reduction for hospital savings in '91-92 was cited as \$12.1 million which was not achieved. In '92-93, the target reduction not achieved was cited as \$10 million. The total target for savings for '92-93 was then cited as \$43.8 million.

Can the minister advise us how many of these cuts and services were actually achieved by the end of fiscal year '92-93?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, my honourable friend, in terms of his phrasing of the question, is inappropriately describing the budgetary process, and I cannot reply to my honourable friend's premise of cuts in service.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, how many jobs have been lost as a result of this restructuring by the end of fiscal year '92-93?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, I am not certain of what my honourable friend is referring to. Is my honourable friend referring to the downsizing at the two teaching hospitals? If so, is my honourable friend also wishing to know the number

of jobs which were created through the reallocation? I do not know what my honourable friend's indefinite question is aimed at.

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I would like the answer to both questions.

Mr. Orchard: That is agreeable.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, by his response is the minister indicating he will table those responses? Or is the minister indicating that he will provide those responses forthwith?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, is the minister having trouble understanding the question, or would he like me to repeat it again?

Mr. Orchard: No.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister tell this committee exactly how many staff of hospitals and nursing homes have been laid off during the last 12 months by staff category?

Mr. Orchard: I think my honourable friend asked about personal care homes?

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I asked about both hospitals and personal care homes.

* (1450)

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, we will attempt to make that information available to my honourable friend forthwith now that he has asked for some additional information in terms of personal care homes.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, on the line item expenditures I note that the Professional/Technical support of the minister's office for the four staff years is up by somewhere in the vicinity of \$22,000. Can the minister outline why that is the case?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, it might help my ADM of Admin and Finance if my honourable friend could go to the Estimate book and identify an operating line from whence he is questioning.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, under the category of Salaries, subtitle Professional/Technical staff years, four. Total salaries are \$180,400 this year. Last year four staff years were \$158,100. Sub-Appropriation 21-1B, in the Main Estimates Book, page 23.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, these are reclassifications that have been undertaken in compliance with the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate what the salary is for the deputy minister this fiscal year?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, \$100,400.

Mr. Chomlak: Perhaps the minister can clarify, in the expenditure Estimates, it is shown as \$104,000 last year. In response to the member for the Maples (Mr. Cheema), the minister indicated his deputy minister's salary was \$96,400, I believe. I am going by memory. It could have been \$96,000-something-or-other, but in that range. The Estimates book for last year shows \$99,200. I wonder if the minister can clarify what the salary level was last year and this year, therefore.

Mr. Orchard: I think the Estimates book this year reflects the Adjusted Vote.

Mr. Chomlak: So is the minister saying that last year's salary for the deputy minister was \$99,200 rather than the \$96,400 that he provided this committee last session?

Mr. Orchard: That may well be because, as the Estimates books are printed, it is current. If there is an increment during the year, that is reflected in the Adjusted Vote at the end of the year, and if the increment was naturally an increment, it would reflect a higher salary. That is the process that my honourable friend will often see throughout the printed Estimates. Where the SYs are the same and the salaries are going up, it will be because of one of two initiatives, the increment, if any is eligible for the individual, and any reclassifications that have been undertaken during the course of the year, all of which are printed, I believe, reduced by the effect of the 10 days without pay, the 4 percent reduction.

Mr. Chomlak: I can assume that the deputy minister's salary has increased from \$99,200 of last year, or \$96,400 as previously printed last year, to \$1,400 this year based on, not reclassification because it is clearly not, but based on an increment to the deputy minister this year.

Mr. Orchard: That would seem appropriate, provided my honourable friend had \$100,400 not \$1,400, and secondly that my honourable friend would acknowledge that there are two factors: the potential of an increment; plus the 4 percent reduction. It ends up in essence being a wash.

Mr. Chomlak: I wonder if the minister can give us an update as to the status—it may be not appropriate at this appropriation line—if the minister could advise me of the status of the

integration of the Manitoba hospital services commission together with the department and how that is functioning. What new initiatives have been undertaken in that area, or would he rather do it at another appropriation?

Mr. Orchard: I am at the beck and call of the committee, Madam Chair.

Mr. Chomlak: Perhaps the minister can give us an update, therefore.

Mr. Orchard: In essence, the amalgamation into the ministry of Health is completed. It was completed approximately 12-15 months ago. There has only been one change in senior positions as a result of that, and that was not a change in individual but a change from acting to confirmed statuses—assistant deputy minister. I think that is the only change—pardon me—with the exception of the addition of the assistant deputy minister for reform.

Mr. Chomlak: I have a number of questions on the task forces and the various studies, so they are awaiting the actual documents so that I can review them more concisely. But when the minister made his announcement of health care reform, he indicated that he thought that reform would cost net approximately 100 jobs or in that vicinity.

I am wondering if the minister can advise us as to whether in fact that figure still holds true.

Mr. Orchard: Would my honourable friend care to indicate in what presentation—I have made a number of them—that my honourable friend is quoting the 100 net. Which area of reform, because there are a number of initiatives ongoing?

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, I will in fact reference for the minister the documentation in which that was indicated.

It was in presentations that were made at the time of the announcement overall of the health reform package. When it talked about the shift of the urban hospitals, it talked about the bed shift estimated net staff affected of 230, but positions available for redeployment of staff 130, and essentially with a net figure of 100 as a result.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, it is my understanding that net figure of affected individuals is very, very close to what actually happened with the downsizing of Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface.

Mr. Chomlak: Well, I look with a good deal of anticipation to the documents that are going to be forwarded to us by the minister in terms of the loss of jobs, and I asked for the number of loss of jobs at the hospitals and personal care homes. I might add, can the minister outline therefore—which will obviously make his case from his comments—will he also outline the number of jobs that have been created at each of the hospitals and personal care homes by staff category?

Mr. Orchard: We will attempt to provide the information.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister earlier took notice and indicated he would provide us with information concerning how many staff at the hospitals and nursing homes had been laid off during the past 12 months by staff category. I am not entirely certain if the minister is going to provide it, but I am asking him now to provide it. Will he also provide the numbers of jobs created in each of those facilities by staff category as well?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, we will attempt to provide as full information as we can.

Mr. Chomlak: On March 21, 1992, Dr. Ross indicated that there were approximately 2,600 Manitobans waiting six months or more for eye surgery. I wonder if the minister can provide us with an update as to what the waiting list at the present is regarding eye surgery.

* (1500)

Mr. Orchard: Yes, I will attempt to provide that, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister spent a few occasions and a fair bit of time attempting to define the opposition's position concerning Total Quality Management. I wonder if the minister might outline for us how he understands the operation of Total Quality Management as being apparently implemented by Ms. Connie Curran.

Mr. Orchard: First of all, I would caution my honourable friend to solely associate Total Quality Management with the APM consultants contract under the guidance of Dr. Connie Curran.

Secondly, am I to anticipate that now my honourable friend supports Total Quality Management and its opportunity for input by staff into decision making at our facilities, or has he maintained the traditional New Democratic opposition to that?

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I take it from the minister's answer, therefore, that Total Quality Management is being implemented notwithstanding or in spite of our—in conjunction with efforts by Connie Curran.

I return to my initial question to the minister. Will he please outline for us his understanding of Total Quality Management and its implementation in the health care system of Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Well, my honourable friend does have it right this time. It is an independent process. It started some year and a half—I guess, 18 months—ago, in terms of the process of Total Quality Management and its role in the changing health care system.

I might indicate to my honourable friend so that maybe he can—some of the mystique and some of the aura and some of the resistance by the New Democrats in Manitoba might be allayed around Total Quality Management.

My honourable friend might take some comfort in knowing that the Council of Deputy Ministers for the provinces has undertaken the initiative of Total Quality Management and its implementation within the health care system. Manitoba has taken somewhat of a leadership role in that initiative, but not a singular or sole leadership role.

My honourable friend would be quite, I think, intrigued and pleased to know that the Ontario government, under the leadership of Premier Rae, is working diligently in terms of implementing Total Quality Management within their respective health care facilities.

I know that that may confound my honourable friend the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), who has stated and staked out turf politically in Manitoba that the New Democrats in Manitoba are against Total Quality Management. While that position may be maintained by New Democrats in opposition, New Democrats in government are proceeding with the implementation and the facilitation of Total Quality Management as a good management initiative within their respective provincial responsibilities in health care.

Sometimes, Madam Chair—and I should not say this because it might provoke my honourable friend the member for Kildonan—but sometimes, I think, NDP stands for new dinosaur party.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, the minister did not answer the question again. So I will simply

ask him, will he state what his understanding —[interjection] The minister says he forgot. Perhaps he will now state what his understanding is of the Total Quality Management, as being implemented in the health care system of Manitoba.

Mr. Orchard: I would be pleased to do that for my honourable friend, Madam Chair, because there is a significant, I think, history that needs to be revisited around the issue of how our health care system has evolved and emerged over the last number of years.

My honourable friend, if he has spent very much time talking to care providers in our institutions in particular but not singularly, he will find a fairly common observation proffered by those individuals in that they do not have an opportunity for input into decision making; their voice never seems to surface past their supervisor; good ideas that they may have never get a forum and an opportunity for discussion.

I think in many ways, Madam Chair, you might recall the unfortunate strike that Manitoba had in the month of January 1991 where, in a contract dispute, the Manitoba Nurses' Union was on strike for approximately the full month of January.

The reason I mention that is one of the key issues that nurses expressed consistently from east to west, north to south, the province of Manitoba, was that they did not believe they had an opportunity for input into decision making. They made the case, as did many other health care service deliverers and workers in the health care field, that the current system is not structured to encourage input from caregivers from hands-on patient-working people, if that is the appropriate phraseology to use.

When that sort of observation is made consistently by nurses and other caregivers, one has to start looking at and analyzing two things: No. 1, Is that a real criticism? Is that a real difficulty with the system? No. 2, Why? Then try to seek a potential solution.

Well now, as part of the two-year agreement that was struck after the 1991 strike with MNU, we had nursing advisory committees—I believe was the formal phraseology—wherein there was to be an interface between management and the union in facilities to try and resolve problems, but I think with all of the hope that was attached to nursing

advisory committees, I think, by and large, they probably did not meet the anticipated goals of either nurses or management in terms of a genuine opportunity for input.

It was at approximately that time, two and a half years ago, that the whole issue of Total Quality Management and its opportunity as a management style in our health care system was being investigated by deputy ministers, by the Province of Manitoba in particular.

Two things emerge. First of all, the observation that within our institutions in particular, we probably have a significantly layered decision-making structure, with many layers of management within our respective facilities. I think one can see, if one candidly observes and thinks about it, that layered structure of management and reporting would do little to encourage grassroots up input into decision-making suggestions for how to better manage, et cetera.

* (1510)

That was one of the focuses that we started to analyze and tried to take appropriate action around in terms of flattening management structures within our institutions. My honourable friend nods his head, so I presume he is familiar with that initiative.

Secondly and more importantly was an attempt to determine through investigation that we ought to try and create a management process which would invite and welcome input from caregivers at all levels in the system, that not only "managers" would make decisions, but people with hands-on knowledge of patient care, patient flow, service provision would have an opportunity to observe how improvements could be made within the existing structure.

That in essence is Total Quality Management. Total Quality Management is a vesting down in an organization's decision making, an input into decisions, not a concentration at the top of the management layering but a vesting of decision making down, a greater responsibility lowered into the hierarchical structure, the chimney-silo structure of management decision making within institutions. That is Total Quality Management in simplistic terms by no means completely explained.

That process we believe has significant value in the management structures of our health care system. I think we find, if not universal, certainly very broad consensus amongst the CEOs that

Total Quality Management is an appropriate initiative to try to bring more opportunity for decision making and partnership and decision making at all levels of staff and care provision within the institution, so that is Total Quality Management.

My honourable friend probably made the attachment of Total Quality Management to the APM contract and Connie Curran's initiative within the hospital system. I can understand where my honourable friend would make that analysis inappropriately because that was the essence of some of the print reporting coming out of the Total Quality Management Conference, wherein my honourable friend might recall the conference invited Dr. Curran to be one of the presenters at the conference.

The attachment of the restructuring processes undertaken and initiated by APM was linked directly with Total Quality Management. They are not isolated initiatives, but they are not the same initiatives. Restructuring deals with how we break down those chimneys of management structure or those silos of management structure to get more interaction at management levels, and how we reduce compartmentalization of service delivery in our institutions, where you have a number of service functions very much departmentalized and compartmentalized, both in physical structure and in nature of delivery, where a more appropriate reorganization would have an integration of that service delivery centered around the patient in a care-giving team.

That is the essence of restructuring that the CEOs and boards of both our teaching hospitals saw as such a significant opportunity to (a) contain and reduce costs within their respective facilities, maintain the level of patient care and improve the opportunity for hands-on caregiving by nurses and other caregivers by simplifying the work process of giving more responsibility and giving more opportunity for time not to be wasted in moving materials and/or patients to services, but providing those services in a more confined area of the hospital so that you provide care where care is needed in as many opportunities for restructuring as is possible.

So I hope that helps my honourable friend and now, given the background particularly that New Democratic governments in other provinces are implementing Total Quality Management, maybe

my honourable friend might consider his party's opposition to it from the comfort of opposition.

Mr. Chomlak: Ms. Curran was also under the health organization work restructuring program to select 16 project sites. I wonder if those sites have been selected and whether or not the minister would table that information for us.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, that is not in the current initiative.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister just outline for us the status of the nurse-managed centre care model structures that are being set up I believe by Ms. Curran?

Mr. Orchard: That issue is under current discussion. If the process is deemed of value it will move to the striking of a working group or investigation committee with the potential opportunity, if we proceed, for reporting later on this year.

Mr. Chomlak: Did the minister state therefore that there will be a committee struck that will be reporting on the issue of nurse-managed care later this year?

Mr. Orchard: That is correct. If we see value to that process which, as my honourable friend has indicated, is currently under discussion as to how and whether it will appropriately fit in a reformed system and is worthy of pursuit.

Mr. Chomlak: I was under the impression that the nurse-managed care model was a go in the department. Is the minister saying that it is not a go and it is still being considered? Or is the minister saying it is not a go while the structure and the make-up of it is being discussed?

Mr. Orchard: What I am saying to my honourable friend is the concept is being explored to assure ourselves it has the stated outcome in terms of effectiveness, of care delivery within the Manitoba health care system, and should that be the case, it will be pursued in the fashion that I outlined in my first answer.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, APM Consultants is basically undertaking, as I understand it, five basic projects. Can the minister outline what the status is of each of those projects?

Mr. Orchard: Nearing completion of the first stage, which will quantify deliverables that all parties must agree to.

Mr. Chomlak: Is the minister talking about negotiations with Ms. Curran, or is he talking about the actual projects. There were five appended schedules to the contract. Schedule A: Achieving Sustained High Performance through Operations Restructuring at St. Boniface Hospital. I am asking the minister what the status is of that particular proposal, or does that fit in the generic answer that he gave previous?

Schedule B: Achieving Sustained High Performance through Operation Restructuring of the Health Sciences Centre; Schedule C: Review of Home Care Operations; Schedule D: Review of Purchasing Procedures at the Urban Hospitals; and Schedule E: Review of Management Structure of the Urban Hospitals and Ministry of Health.

Mr. Orchard: My answer is consistent. All of those projects have been through the investigation stage with the identification of deliverables which will, if we proceed to the major stage of the APM contract, must be signed off by all parties to whom those respective five initiatives apply.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate how many representatives of APM Consultants have been brought in to work on these contracts at this point?

Mr. Orchard: There have been seven people in developing the deliverable stages.

* (1520)

Mr. Chomlak: The Review of Home Care Operations project indicates that data is supposed to be gathered regarding home care operations in Manitoba, et cetera. Has that data-gathering process commenced?

Mr. Orchard: The data-gathering process has been commenced.

Mr. Chomlak: On a relative scale can the minister indicate which of the five projects are in the order of completion? Which are furthest advanced? Is it the restructuring of the two hospitals or is it the home care or is it the purchasing procedures?

Mr. Orchard: They are all at approximately the same stage of development.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate in terms of the home care study what status specifically the study is at in terms of

the data preparation, the data accumulation? Where is the study at?

Mr. Orchard: As I indicated previously on two occasions, nearing completion of the first phase as provided in the contract.

Mr. Chomlak: Which would entail, in that particular instance, the data collection.

Can the minister indicate specifically where the contract for review of purchasing procedures at the urban hospitals is presently at?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, at the same stage as previously indicated in three responses.

Mr. Chomlak: Is the minister saying that that particular project is now building on strategic plans, developing operating visions, service goals and financial targets?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend has the entire text of the contract with APM in front of him.

If what he just quoted from is representative of completion of the first phase in terms of development of deliverables within that particular contract on purchasing, then that would be accurate. However, I cannot comment because I do not know where my honourable friend is quoting from.

I am telling my honourable friend that all five projects are nearing completion of the first stage, which identified deliverables, which must be agreed to by all parties participating in the particular contract area and signed off. That is the essence of the contract. That is why the contract is unique.

My honourable friend will have to be satisfied that the work done to prepare the deliverables is nearly completed and, as I have indicated now on a number of occasions, is very close to completion, deliverables identified and opportunity for review and sign-off by those participating institutions as well as the ministry, as well as the consultant.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate whether or not an income tax ruling with respect to tax payment by Ms. Curran has been received and what the status of that might be?

Mr. Orchard: No, I cannot, Madam Chair.

Mr. Chomlak: Does the minister have any idea at this point in time, that is, today's date, how much money has been paid out to Ms. Curran?

Mr. Orchard: No, but it would certainly not exceed the contractual agreement less the holdback.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate at what point a decision will be made whether the contract will be continued or whether the contract will cease and desist?

Mr. Orchard: Upon completion of the first phase with the deliverables at each of the projects identified and if those deliverables are satisfactory to all the proponents, government, APM and the respective institutions, then the contract may well be signed off and, at that time, the completion of the second phase and the major phase of the contractual arrangement. That process is nearly completed, as I have indicated to my honourable friend.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister indicated in Question Period yesterday that offices were not renovated at the Health Sciences Centre to accommodate the consultants for APM and associates. Actually the minister's response was not clear.

Can the minister indicate whether or not offices have been renovated that will be occupied by APM and consultants and/or associates?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend, should he take the time to read the contract, will find one of the requirements of the contract is that suitable office space be provided at both Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface.

I believe that has, no doubt, been undertaken because of the seven people that have been working in those respective institutions. I cannot confirm or disaffirm my honourable friend's rumoured speculation as to cost.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, so the minister is indicating that, in fact, as we indicated in Question Period, offices are available in Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital for Ms. Curran, and that renovations have taken place. But the minister is not saying is, he will not advise us to what the cost of the renovations were. Is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: No, that is not correct.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister advise whether or not he will provide us with information as to how much the office renovations at Health Sciences Centre cost?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend if he were—and I know he is an intelligent man and listened to my response. My response was, the part of the contract that he is thumbing through indicates that St. Boniface Hospital, Health Sciences Centre shall provide suitable, I believe is the phraseology, office space for the consultant during the period of time the consultant is working within the respective institution.

I would assume, since the consultant has been working at those two institutions, that suitable office space has been provided. I cannot confirm or deny my honourable friend's rumour and speculation around (a) whether there are renovations and (b) what the cost of those renovations is.

I indicated to my honourable friend that should he wish to find that out he might wish to contact the respective hospitals, because the Province of Manitoba globally funds the two institutions and they are responsible for making decisions within the global budgets in that regard.

We neither direct them to do same, nor have the opportunity to comment on whether, in fact, my honourable friend's rumours and speculation are accurate. But there is a process my honourable friend can undertake to determine that.

Madam Chair, clearly my honourable friend has the contract in front of him in which provision of suitable office space at St. Boniface, at Health Sciences Centre is part of the arrangement undertaken by the hospital government and APM Consultants.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I take it from the minister's response that he is not going to undertake to provide that information to this committee.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I think I was very clear in my response to my honourable friend as to how he might confirm his rumours and speculation.

* (1530)

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, in a review of Estimates last year, the minister talked a lot about the amount of money provided to hospitals and chastised the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) for—well, I will not get into it. It is quite evident from the minister's style. Yet the minister saw fit to claw back considerable funds from the hospitals, up to 20 percent for administration and supplies before the end of last

fiscal year. I wonder if the minister could outline specifically how much money was clawed back from each facility as a result of the January initiative on the part of the government?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend brings up a very interesting topic last year, and I look forward to him outlining his position on behalf of the New Democrats. Last year's singular focus by the critic for the New Democrats was in more institutional spending out of, how would I put it delicately, one side of the mouth or on the other side of the mouth, they said they need to move away from institutions.

The sole focus last year for some 32 hours of debate was how much money were hospitals going to get, how much less were they going to get in some areas and decrying government for reducing spending and reinvesting that spending in community-based service provision.

I certainly hope my honourable friend has a more enlightened approach to health care reform than his predecessor. Maybe that is the reason why we have a new critic for the New Democrats. [interjection] Yes, I think it is about No. 5 now.

Madam Chairperson, I want to indicate to my honourable friend, just so he understands, the process of the January directive to all of our institutions in terms of a request for spending reductions which I believe was 1 percent of the fourth quarter supplies—I think that was the reduction in funding—a disallowance of fourth-quarter depreciation and a request to not undertake discretionary spending and travel—initiatives which we had undertaken within the ministry and had virtually eliminated all discretionary travel. The only travel that was approved was I travelled and my deputy travelled to some ministerial undertakings and initiatives, and senior staff participated in, not that many, but a few committee meetings on the national level to do with reform initiatives nationally.

The reason for that directive in-year to the hospitals, I want to remind my honourable friend, was because in preparing the Estimates for fiscal '92-93, we had received projections of transfer payments and revenue sharing from the federal government. They based those projections on the projected growth of tax revenue for the Canadian economy based on each provincial economy's projection of growth and the tax revenues thereby generated.

Midyear with the incredible weakening of the economies of central Canada, Ontario in particular, the federal government found themselves with a significant downturn in revenues which they reflected in terms of midyear adjustments downward to each and every province. I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was informed of approximately \$100 million or \$110 million, I forget the number, millions less in transfer payments from the federal government approximately October-November of last year.

We had to undertake measures across the system to try and recoup a portion of that from all of our funded agencies and all of our activities of government. That is why in the third quarter we put those three directives out to our institutions and, in fact, removed those dollars from their respective budgets. I cannot give my honourable friend the numbers that represented, but I will certainly make every effort to provide that to him. The alternative was an even higher deficit.

My honourable friend I know is quick to condemn the size of the deficit, as all people in this House are, from last year. Had we not undertaken that initiative in fourth-quarter funding with our funded institutions, the deficit would have been that much higher. So I would like to ascertain for my honourable friend, does he believe in retrospect that request for co-operation and that budget directive to our institutions was wrong in the fourth quarter of last year, and we ought not to have done it, thereby driving the deficit higher, that my honourable friend so often criticizes? Or is my honourable friend, by the nature of the questioning, concurring with the unfortunate circumstances that the downturn in the Ontario economy foisted upon the federal government and all of the provinces in terms of a lessened share of federal revenue?

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate whether—I know we will be getting, I am certain, into this in much more detail, but the base reduction, the base budgets of each of the hospitals that were reduced accordingly in the fourth quarter last year, I assume that same reduction is in place for this year as well as the additional reductions that have gone to base funding to each hospital. Is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, with all the respect I can muster, it might be appropriate that when we get to that line and I have the appropriate staff that

we can undertake a full discussion of those questions and that issue.

Mr. Chomlak: On December 4, 1992, the head surgeon and chief of the Health Sciences Centre wrote to the board of directors outlining some concerns regarding surgery and surgery services as a result of 51 surgical bed cuts from the Health Sciences Centre and related matters. I have highlighted numerous, numerous concerns that were raised by the head of surgery concerning the Health Sciences Centre. There was subsequently a reply from Mr. Thorfinnson dealing with—and in fact there was a petition attached to that initial letter—respect to some of the concerns. I am wondering if the minister might give us an update as to the status of the surgery and that surgery issue at the Health Sciences Centre.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I wonder if my honourable friend might avail me of a copy both of the letter and the response, and I might be able to more fully reply to that issue.

Mr. Chomlak: The minister does not have a copy of those letters, has not seen those letters?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, if I understand my honourable friend's preamble to the question, my honourable friend indicated it was a letter to the board of Health Sciences Centre responded to by the CEO of Health Sciences Centre to the board. That correspondence was not directed towards me. Hence I ask that my honourable friend might provide me with a copy of both of those letters so that I can more appropriately respond to whatever issues he is raising.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I will provide the minister with that information so we can continue this discussion when we next meet or a subsequent meeting by the committee.

This is simply an aside, in terms of I am not sure if it is an appropriation, but it had been rumoured for some time that the pediatric heart surgeon would be leaving the province from St. Boniface Hospital. Is the minister aware whether in fact that took place?

Mr. Orchard: I am not aware of any departure of a pediatric surgeon from St. Boniface Hospital.

* (1540)

Mr. Chomlak: I believe it was Dr.—actually I should refer to my notes, but I believe it was Dr. Kim Young.

I will get those documents in terms of the surgical services to the minister in order that he might provide us with an analysis.

During Question Period several months ago, I provided to the minister some statistics regarding the size of surgery rooms for pediatric surgery at the Health Sciences Centre. The minister took some umbrage with the tabling of that information, particularly because it was shown and demonstrated that those particular facilities were below the optimum sizes recommended by the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

Can the minister indicate what has been done in this regard concerning both the sizes and the facilities for pediatric surgery at the Children's Hospital?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I have some of the information that I believe was requested earlier on.

Mr. Chomlak: I will repeat my question. Perhaps the minister did not hear my question. Several months ago I tabled in the House data indicating that of the five pediatric surgery rooms at the Health Sciences Centre, four did not meet the standards as defined by the minister's own department. I am wondering what steps have been taken to remedy that situation by the department since that revelation.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, it is my understanding that pediatric surgery is proceeding in safe circumstances without endangering children, and I hope my honourable friend is not on another one of his what-ifs and rumour speculations wherein he might lead parents of children in Manitoba to believe that the facilities at Children's Hospital are inappropriate or unsafe, because neither case is accurate.

Mr. Chomlak: So I take it from the minister's response, the obvious conclusion is there has been no change in terms of the facilities for children's surgery at the Health Sciences Centre, which indicates that, of the five operating rooms, four do not meet the minimum standards as defined by the minister's own department, and the fifth meets minimum standards, but not for complex surgery as defined by the minister's own department. I take it that no change has been made in that regard since we raised the matter in this House several months ago. I take that from the minister's response. Is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, when my honourable friend makes such a sweeping statement, naturally it is fraught with some inaccuracies. There has been very significant change in surgical capacity at Children's Hospital, as I explained to my honourable friend last evening. We have the opportunity for 50 hours of additional surgery in Children's Hospital to serve pediatric surgical needs for children previously receiving that service on both an inpatient and outpatient basis at St. Boniface and other urban hospitals.

Yes, there have been changes because one of the changes that I indicated to my honourable friend was the renovation and making available of an additional surgical theatre. Those surgical theatres are operating effectively and safely, delivering patient care as configured since 1983.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Madam Chairperson, my time has come now. I am going to ask the Minister of Health, from the Health Action Plan, some of the policy questions.

Can the minister tell us what is going to be the role of each and every hospital in terms of how the hospitals are going to fit into this Action Plan?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot give my honourable friend specific details, because I would suspect that some of the emerging roles of the hospitals will be determined as we receive reports from the number of committees that are investigating various programs and, in particular, from the obstetric services committee and the surgical services committee. For instance, right now the committee is in the process of finalizing recommendations, for instance, around ophthalmology.

What is clear that will happen in terms of ophthalmology is that the program will be no longer offered at St. Boniface and will not be offered—I have to be careful in terms of Health Sciences Centre. Their service provision will be trauma.

The services currently undertaken at both those two hospitals will be vested to—and this is where the committee is coming to grips with where they will be relocated—and the two hospitals that are being considered are Misericordia and Seven Oaks. There are some decisions yet to be completed around which hospital and in what fashion would they be impacted with this consolidation of ophthalmology.

Now, similar discussion is undergoing in terms of obstetrics where there are a range of options in

terms of two plus zero, two plus two. My honourable friend is probably more familiar with some of those. We have not received recommendations on that program realignment, but as an overview, if I can give my honourable friend an overview of what I see as being the end result, let us say, a year and a half from now or two years from now, I think it is fair to say that each hospital will see a change in the services that they offer. In some cases, that change will mean that a service previously offered will no longer be offered there but will be consolidated at another hospital in attempting to emulate a centre-of-excellence concept within our urban hospitals. It will mean an expansion of programs in certain areas in certain hospitals through consolidation. We think that there is opportunity for some pretty significant program operational advantages in terms of expediting access to the surgical program.

If the pediatric consolidation is any example, we also think that that consolidation and the amalgamation of administration around those surgical programs being concentrated in one or two hospitals rather than several ought to achieve some operational savings that we will have the opportunity to either reinvest or remove from the respective hospital budgets.

In terms of—and I am not trying to avoid my honourable friend's question because his question is an appropriate one—in terms of what each hospital will have in terms of program and service delivery, I cannot answer that right now because we have not received the advice on any program with the exception of pediatrics where we have been able to make a decision on reconfiguration of program.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, I think it is fair to assume then from the Health Action Plan and the changes which are happening, that the role of each and every hospital is going to change. It is not going to remain the same. That has been made very clear.

In terms of how that role is going to fit into the service delivery in terms of the consolidation of services or establishing centres of excellence, I think that is the question, that in terms of which hospital is going to be providing, for example, ophthalmology services or orthopedic surgery or major surgical procedures. I think what everyone is asking now is simply just to reinforce that we cannot do everything in every hospital. So that

was the one basis, the trial for consolidation of pediatric services.

That is already two months into the effectiveness and that is helping in terms of improving the efficiency. That is going to be beneficial, ultimately save dollars, plus improve the quality of care because you are going to be providing under one roof all the services. Basically, the concept which everybody talks, the community concept in hospitals, that part of the community and if you are going to combine all those resources under one roof, whether you want to name a hospital or a community centre, that is what it is. That is why everyone is changing that.

We were very impressed when we met with the Misericordia Hospital. They are very much advanced in their thinking what they are going to be doing in two or three years. They are already thinking of an expanding role, expanding the role of that hospital, build up community levels, going to the clinic or other community action plan and making sure that they will fit into the new Action Plan.

* (1550)

I think that is very, very positive, because they know their hospital role is going to be changed. It does not matter who sits in that chair. We wanted to make sure that from our caucus point of view, from our party's platform point of view, we want to reinforce that.

The hospitals of excellence is not a choice, but it is a must. The service delivery as far as the primary care is concerned in each and every hospital, that should be maintained, but some of the services—for example, if somebody is travelling from Thompson to get cataract surgery, they can safely either go to Seven Oaks or some other hospital. For them, that does not matter. If somebody is going for a trauma surgery, they can go to Health Sciences Centre or to St. Boniface, just to give an example.

If somebody is getting just a surgical procedure, it takes 20 minutes in this city to go from one end to the other. That is the average travelling time. Any other city comparative to Winnipeg, for example, Calgary, Edmonton or even Vancouver, Toronto, that is the minimum time. So we are not doing something which is going to really cause problems with the health services.

The example is all in the communities. In terms of your own community, the patient has to travel half an hour even to see their doctor. It is not a question of getting the service within the hospital. So I think that concept has to come.

So, basically, we want to make sure that each and every hospital and the communities surrounding that hospital know their role and the health care providers in that given hospital or institution know that role so they can adjust to the changing need. The question here is—one media report came that Victoria Hospital was going to be doing orthopedic surgery. Time will tell whether that is going to be realized, but the question there was, when these kinds of things come out without proper information, they can leave wrong impressions. I think those are the dangers when those things come out.

We want to make sure, if that is going to happen, then the government should be upfront in explaining those things, because that is a necessity that would benefit the patients. I think that will help to cut down the waiting list, which has been a case in many, many instances, that the waiting list has been padded because, if the one physician is working in two hospitals, you are booking the patients in both. So that has been the case in some instances. I think that can change.

So I think even that will help, which was outlined in the Health Action Plan, that you are going to set up a committee which is going to look into different areas of the waiting period, and that committee was supposed to bring this report. I will ask about that report. I want to reinforce the issue of excellence of hospitals. Again, making sure that the patients and the public and the health care providers, if they are involved from Day One, I think it will make your job much easier, because I think that is what they would like.

It will be easier for orthopedic surgery to be in one hospital. At the same time, they can get the other support staff. I think it will help the training part as far as the post-graduate training is concerned, if you are going to consolidate that aspect. I was talking to one of the very well-known orthopedic surgeons in Manitoba, and I think that is their view, that those things have to happen. The minister knows we have no choice. If you involve them from Day One and get the input in that thing, I think it will be very helpful.

That is why I wanted to know if the government has any definite plan in terms of which hospital is going to be doing what kind of services in the long run.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, I concur with my honourable friend's direction and the indication of where the system will shift and change, because that is most helpful and, quite frankly, refreshing. I just want to indicate to my honourable friend that although we have not got the reports on surgical and obstetrics and a number of the other committees, the to-date findings, if you will, of the committees were shared at the retreat some, I guess, six weeks ago now, and that was in an attempt to bring the stakeholders up to speed with the current level of investigation and understanding.

Let me tell my honourable friend the danger in that. We had that meeting in reform, and it was mid-week following that the rumour mill—and I am surprised the member for Kildonan did not pose the question, because the rumour mill was really flying in Victoria General Hospital that there were going to be some pretty significant program changes, and that is always the dilemma we find ourselves in.

As we provide more information in order to assist reasoned input into the decisions we are trying to achieve, you will have those individuals—and in this case, I have to be very direct. I hope my honourable friend the member for Kildonan does not take offence, but this is where the New Democrats sort of thrive on confounding the process of change, because they will pick up a document that may be several months old and say this is what you are going to do, because someone has provided it to them maybe in the last few days, and cause a great deal of consternation and fear and dismay to sort of wave over the system on inappropriate and wrong information.

If we do not share the information to get feedback, then we would legitimately be accused of making decisions in isolation. The more we share, the more we open our vulnerable side politically to having the official opposition, the member for Kildonan come to the House with the latest rumour and speculation about what is happening.

It really reached almost unbelievable proportions in January of this year. I mean, I had a couple of the print reporters phoning me on weekends

wanting my comments on the latest rumour that was floating around the health care system. I ended up simply refusing to comment on rumour.

You simply cannot run a department always commenting on rumour. In the case of the Victoria Hospital's concerns, my deputy went down and spoke to a fairly, I think, significant number of the staff that were gathered there, to point out, look, this is the process we are undertaking. The only reason why these rumours are now being run rampant is because we provided some current information in terms of investigation on a number of programs. That was translated, second, third, fourth hand, who knows how, into the rumour mill at the institution and had a lot of concerns being raised about program areas and pretty big changes which were not in the cards, were not even discussed, were not even specifically mentioned in terms of Victoria or any hospital for that matter.

* (1600)

My deputy, under my instruction, indicated that government cannot invite comment and advice from the stakeholders in the system, if every time we share current information or as much current information as we have the whole system just goes into a rumour frenzy. It is debilitating to the system. It is debilitating to the workers, the caregivers in the respective institution, because they do not know what is right and what is wrong when they hear so many rumours day in and day out.

We are really troubled with the conundrum of wanting to provide as much information as we can in terms of the process without leaving the whole system wide-open to continued rumour and speculation.

I have tried consistently, throughout every single step of investigation for five years, not to comment on interim reports or reports that are draft and have been circulated for comment. I will only react after the ministry has analyzed reports, made recommendations as to the process of acceptable direction that we can announce, and I make the announcement with as much backup information as I can around the process.

My honourable friend is right in terms of understanding the change in the system, in our acute care system, not only in Manitoba, but I think every province is probably moving in somewhat similar directions where there is going to be a

consolidation of surgical and other programs in given hospitals so that you can build upon the effectiveness of maybe a larger program with less management duplication in implementing that program, certainly eliminate the confusion around—let us consider a typical surgical slate for one of our busier hospitals.

If you have a number of programs, you know as well as I do that the heads of surgery for each one of those programs are going to be at the chief of surgery getting their block time in terms of surgery. If an emergency or trauma comes in, the system can get bumped and thrown off track, and there can be people at the end of the day whose elective slate is cancelled. Having so many programs and so many heads of surgery and program leaders to deal with in one institution does not make that scheduling process easier, it makes it more difficult.

I think the system understands and the key players and leaders in the system understand that if we can, in a meaningful fashion, create some consolidation of common programs in our hospitals in Winnipeg that we will have the opportunity to more effectively run the system to undertake our surgical procedures in a shorter waiting period of time with less opportunity for surgical cancellation.

As a small example of that, not a small example, but as a real example of that, I think, Seven Oaks undertook a management system in terms of patient flow where if I recall the discussion I had with Seven Oaks, I think it was a period of time of over a year where they had not cancelled an elective surgery. They had been able to maintain their slates through an appropriate facilitation of co-operation between emergency and the slating of surgery, et cetera.

That is an opportunity that is being explored across the system, No. 1, and fits certainly with program consolidation. I hope that the system can fairly quickly come around that investigation and provide recommendations to the reform team so that we can accept or reject those recommendations and get on with the implementation of any that we accept.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, I think at issue is the ultimate development of one-stop centres where for a certain specific procedure, a person can go there and the families can get all their treatment procedure done under one roof and try to get all of the support services which will

eventually save all the time and all the efforts. I think that is the one issue where I was trying to tell the minister.

The second issue there is where the minister has discussed with the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) about the Total Quality Management.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

There cannot be a better example than the quality management that is happening at Seven Oaks and some other hospitals. You have a program for physician managers; you have a program for the middle-management level; you have a program for the superior recovery of the hospital beds. All those things are part of our day-to-day life. If anyone in real life is opposing the Total Quality Management, I think they are just dreaming. They are somewhere else, because we do it in our own lives. I mean, we have to be efficient in whatever we do. So the same principles apply in all the different formations. So we want to make sure that the government knows that our party is on the side of Total Quality Management because it is going to improve the effectiveness and the quality of health care in the long run.

It may hurt initially because somebody is going to lose their job for the short term, but eventually they are all going to be working in the same environment, probably in a more efficient way and less costly. So I just wanted to make sure we put those things on the record.

I would like to ask the minister now, in terms of the ophthalmology program, I am sure the minister is getting the facts almost on a daily basis from Paula Keirstead and we get the same facts. There is a group of physicians who are advocating for Misericordia Hospital, and we understand both hospitals have made presentation to make sure that their views are heard. But I think, ultimately, the decision has to be made by the minister based on the facts which hospital is ultimately going to provide the expanding concept of a community hospital which will fit into the changing role in terms of where you have a teaching unit. For example, Seven Oaks has a teaching place for the Family Practice Teaching Program. The obstetrics was taken away from Seven Oaks Hospital, so you have the outpatient procedures being done there. The facility is there.

Certainly I am not speaking from my party's behalf, I am speaking as the local MLA of the hospital in my area. I think that plan looks very impressive. I am sure some of the individuals in the other hospitals are not going to like what I am saying, but certainly I am sure the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has done the same thing. We are both probably advocating to have the ophthalmology program in the Seven Oaks Hospital.

There was some concern in the past, and probably I was part of that, that there is going to be one hospital closed because we were told that. I think those internal reports and initial rumours come to haunt you afterwards because that may or may not be the real case at all.

I have learned from my own mistakes because sometimes it is not possible. You get a lot of reports. You go through them and want to try to quickly do something and I think you end up hurting the process in the long run.

So I just wanted to make sure that I put my comments on the record and ask the minister in terms of when the final decision is going to be made for the ophthalmology program to be given to a particular hospital.

Mr. Orchard: Within about 10 days we hope to have the report to the deputy minister and then by the end of the month to work through the decision-making process at my level so I can announce and support a decision that makes program sense. It will be, by all appearances—we have run into one glitch that we had to do a revisit—and barring unforeseen, which I think we have got those out of the way and behind us, I think we ought to be able to make a decision on ophthalmology this month.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I hope the decision will go into north Winnipeg and Seven Oaks Hospital because I think that will help the hospital's image of expanding role. Also it will benefit the teaching program for Family Practice Teaching Program at the hospital, and also will be able to use that space. The whole team is there.

As the minister knows, more cataract surgeries are done in that hospital than any other hospital as far as I can tell. I think that hospital is quickly gaining a reputation for a short surgical stay as well as the outpatient procedures. Those things will complement the programs. So we are hoping that

the minister will make the good news known to us shortly.

* (1610)

My next question is in terms of the strike. The strike was the emergency doctors' strike. Now, I am sure something has been learned from that strike in terms of—[interjection] We did not see any disaster in terms of the patients were diverted and, for the first few days, patients were not coming because they called a strike so let us wait.

Has the department collected any data in terms of was there really any lack of services in those hospitals in terms of the very, very acute emergency situations?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, again, during the time that the emergency physicians were on strike, there was a pretty significant effort at particularly the two teaching hospitals and Misericordia in terms of providing 24-hour service. The interesting thing was the circumstances and the timing of the strike in that Seven Oaks was not able to operate at all so that the northeast quadrant had to feed in to probably the Health Sciences Centre, I think it would be appropriate to speculate, or on the west side into possibly Grace Hospital, and then Grace Hospital, because of their shift to the newly constructed area, part of which was emergency, they were closed for 48 hours—I think, at any rate, a pretty significant amount of time.

The system was able to work through that strike and to the best of our ability, we do not know of any circumstance where the strike compromised medical outcome of an individual who needed emergency services. There was no question that because of the nature of the strike and the inability to prepare maybe contingency plans adequately that there is no question there was additional waiting times for some people who presented at emergency. That no doubt caused discomfort for those individuals, but we have reasonable confidence from all the reports and analysis we have done that the health status of those individuals was not compromised. It was an issue of quality in alleviation of pain immediately versus actual compromise of the outcome of the medical emergency.

One of the things, I think, that was found in terms of the emergency services strike is that individuals were seeking alternate service delivery. In some cases it was—I noted on television one night I think

it was the Sports Medicine Clinic—where an individual had taken her mother and was on the news doing same, indicating that, quite frankly, she had, if I recall the interview, been cared for quicker in that setting.

Now, I want to indicate to my honourable friend that the reform committee will be receiving the report soon, quite soon, and expect to be able to provide me with a recommendation for consideration by, say, mid-July in terms of operations of emergency departments. The report is slightly delayed in part because of some of the analysis my honourable friend has asked whether it was done to make sure that recommendations have opportunity and integrity. I should not speculate like this, but I think the report is going to suggest that we can reduce the hours of operation of some emergencies in the community hospitals and having that recommendation vetted through the reform committee and presented, hopefully we can make a decision circa mid-July in terms of any action we undertake in that regard.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think the minister anticipated my next question that I was definitely going to make. Are we going to have 24-hour service being maintained in all the hospitals as of July, or are there going to be changes after we see the report of Dr. Lerner?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I cannot prejudge and speculate on the report and its recommendations to the reform committee, but clearly the emergency services task force is looking at ways that we can reorganize and restructure our emergency departments, part of which may well be recommendations that reduced hours in some facilities can be undertaken without compromising the ability to deliver service.

At this time, I cannot speculate (a) what is in the report, (b) what might be synthesized from that report and recommended to myself for consideration of government, but, hopefully, barring any unforeseens, we will be in a decision-making position by mid-July and announcement of whatever changes have been recommended through the emergency services task force, the reform implementation committee and government, so mid-July looks like about the time frame.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am sure the committee is having a look at the Misericordia

Hospital model, where they are screening patients, which patient has to go through the emergency and which patient has to go through their own clinics, and I think that has been very helpful. The time delays have been reduced to a large extent. That was the information we got from the meeting we had with some of the staff there.

My next question is in terms of the Health Advisory Network. Can the minister tell us if there is any budget attached to that network now?

Mr. Orchard: There is budget attached, but it is part of one of the lines that is not specifically separated as it has been in the past, and that is primarily because, with the exception of, I believe, one ongoing committee issue, the Health Advisory Network has completed the majority of its work with the exception, I believe, of one report. What we will do is, in the process of discussion possibly as soon as tomorrow, if we cannot find it today, give the projected budget for the Health Advisory Network this year.

Mr. Cheema: The reason I asked the question is because that is one of the activity identifications in the area of the active support staff's, the minister's, the deputy minister's and ADM's level. They are supposed to provide the minister with some of the advice.

Can the minister tell us in terms of the Pharmacare card and the Smart Card, at what stage are we now, in terms of the planning? When can we expect to have the announcement from the minister's office to have the promises that were made in the throne speech, as well as later on, to make sure we have a Pharmacare card?

* (1620)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will try to briefly bring my honourable friend up to current status. We have set a target, and I hope it is achievable, of January 1, 1994, for the implementation of plastic card technology in the Pharmacare system, and we have further set target dates to have—and the reason for January 1, 1994, is the Pharmacare program is on the calendar year rather than the fiscal year, and then we are hoping that if we can move the implementation smoothly for the Pharmacare program, we will be in a position to facilitate the introduction of the plastic card technology in physician offices and other fee-for-service providers for April 1 of '94, at the start of the fiscal year.

Now, I say that with risk because of two things. This is a very significantly changing technology. I mean, even since we hosted the national conference on plastic card technology, there has been significant advancement in terms of technology and opportunity of utilization of the plastic card in the health care system. With this kind of changing dynamic, we had concerns, very serious concerns, as to whether we could stick to our deadlines of implementation of January 1, April 1, next year. My honourable friend—and I again want to thank the Liberal Party for giving me a pair in the House some two or three weeks ago.

My deputy minister and myself and another individual who is going to head this plastic card technology and implementation, because that is what we were missing in terms of someone who will take a hold of it and run with the implementation, we visited the State of Wyoming. The State of Wyoming has the first actual use, interactive use, of a Smart Card, and it was beneficial to have those discussions with people who have, in essence, some of the first experience in North America in terms of plastic card and Smart Card, in this case, technology. It gave us a greater level of confidence that our goals for implementation can be achieved.

Where we are at currently is we have identified system-wide goals in Health, and we are making sure that in developing those goals, we have—I do not know whether I am using the right terminology—basically, the software foundation identified so that if it is a Smart Card or a computer interlink system, if we had the software, to assure that we can implement the plastic card technology to progressively add dimensions or program service to it as we move down the road and as it is proven effective and appropriate. That is, I think it is fair to say, one of the major time consumers, because that has never been done before. I mean, other areas have taken specific program areas. We have chosen not to do that and try to make the card one of utility across a wider spectrum of service in the insured service division. That is going to make the implementation more complex but of more long-term value and more cost-effective, quite frankly, because the price of your card may range from less than \$1 to \$17 or \$18.

If it is at the upper end of the range, with a million Manitobans potentially, you can understand it is a

pretty big investment. So the more we can use it for, the better that investment is for the system.

We, having set the goal on identification of the software platform for introduction, the anticipated next step would be to put out a request for proposal, because I think it is fair to say that the easy part is the supplier.

We do not want to be married to a supplier first. That is the mistake that our honourable friends who are now in opposition made in terms of an agreement. They tied themselves to a supplier and then tried to design a program to meet the purchase commitment of supplied computer hardware and software.

We are doing it the opposite. We are designing the system we need, and we will put that out for proposal call, from which we expect to have aggressive and numerous vendors interested in providing the service, and I make no bones about it, it is a very tight time schedule but, hopefully, we can have that on-line for January 1, 1994. That is the reason why we passed my honourable friend's resolution earlier this session.

Mr. Cheema: I just wanted to make sure that there is a specific time frame and that was outlined in the throne speech. I think the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) statement as well as the minister's statement is reassuring, but things could change, as the minister has said. A few weeks, a few months is a possibility that could happen because of so many things that are going on, especially with the health reform.

Those things can happen but we just wanted to make sure the health Smart Card is coming so that it will help us in the long run in terms of achieving many goals. There could be some difficulties initially, as the minister has said. There has to be something which is going to meet our needs but, ultimately, that card can be used by some other departments also. I think that is the one experiment going on there. The minister shared that with me.

The social assistance and some other financial resources the patient and the senior citizens are going to be using have very, very useful technology. Ultimately it will trace some of the deficiencies we have. It will not hurt anybody but it will improve the quality and ultimately it will help us as taxpayers.

I just want to reinforce that just to make sure it will happen in a time when the health care reform is taking place to make sure some of the goals are being met simultaneously so that you do not get off base in many things at the same time so that you are at least achieving some of the things and make sure that the expectations are not raised to a level where you cannot meet all five things at one time because next year it is going to be two years in April for Health Action Plan as well as so many other expectations that are being built up.

So everything is taking place and we just wanted to make sure you do not end up in a mess if one aspect of the health care reform does not work. I think it is very, very important that the technology must be used.

I think that is where the other health care professionals have to play a role also, the health care providers also. They have to probably involved from Day One, and I am sure that some discussions are going on in terms of the Peer reform commission and so many other things that could be very effective in the long run.

The second thing is there are some issues of confidentiality, and I am sure that is going to be productive. That is very important because we all have cards from banks, and we all use them for the financial resources. That is a major undertaking. But the mishaps in that area are very, very rare. Financial information is important, but I think the personal health information is more important.

It seems from the experience from the various banking cards that these things can be done in a very, very effective way. I think eventually there could be some problems, but ultimately that will function. I just wanted to make sure that we are on the same wavelength as far as the Smart Card was concerned.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell us now in terms of some of the deadlines for the Health Action Plan, and I would like to go through them one by one.

One commitment was made that there is going to be an access review group to study the waiting list, and we were supposed to have the protocols set up in almost six areas of management. That was due in November of 1992. I think we are about four to five months late in that respect.

Can the minister tell us when are we going to have that report?

Mr. Orchard: We are delayed significantly on that, and I will have to try and get an update as to when we expect that report. That is the one that Dr. Ralph Brown's chairing? Yes.

* (1630)

Mr. Cheema: The Action Plan also asked for the setting of protocols, for example, for CT scanners. That issue has caused some controversy. I do not think there has been a clear statement from the minister's office to tell the people of Manitoba and the hospitals how the CT scanners are going to be functioning. Can the minister give us the update now?

Mr. Orchard: In terms of the issue, my honourable friend might recall there were two parts to the announcement about a year ago. The first one was the recommendations from, I guess it was called, the CT Scanning Committee and Dr. McEwan, as radiology consultant, his backup material in which he did the analysis around the waiting lists that were alleged to be part of the system and the waiting times, et cetera. That preliminary data indicated a number of things which pointed to a better managed system than what some of the commentary would indicate.

The current status is the committee is gathering information as to CT scanning requests and undertaken by individuals to determine where they are from; under what circumstances they are recommended for, for instance, CT scanning and the process by which they access it; where they access; the times for wait; prioritization of the patients who are being recommended for CT scanning so that we hopefully have some confidence that those with the greatest need receive the service first; and elective or an annual CT scan to check on certain medical conditions that are undertaken—but that people with more urgent needs or more pressing needs receive their service more quickly.

Now, that process of data analysis is ongoing right now and it is taking a fair bit of effort and time. It is hoped that in this calendar year—and I will try to get more specifics for, say, Thursday, as to when we might have recommendations in a report from the committee—but it will be, I am advised, several months. We will try to get a little better handle on a more definitive time estimate for my honourable friend for Thursday.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, on page 10 of the Health Action Plan, the minister has made a promise that under the section of Healthy Public Policy, the Human Services Committee of Cabinet and deputy ministers were supposed to be meeting and making sure that there is broad co-operation between the various departments of the government.

Can the minister tell us what those committees have done so far?

Mr. Orchard: Let me deal with the Human Services Committee of Cabinet. We have had a number of meetings over the past two years or two and a half years, I guess now. We have dealt with a number of topics ranging from program initiatives to legislative initiatives in terms of trying to provide a more facilitated and cross-departmental approach to issues.

At the same time, my deputy minister chairs the Healthy Public Policy deputy subcommittee, and has been likewise bringing issue focus across the jurisdictional responsibility of various ministries. I will be very candid with my honourable friend, the process is not by any means mature. There is a greater understanding and a greater degree of co-operation within government in terms of understanding the need to have a more interdepartmental approach on a number of issues.

I want to indicate to my honourable friend that—oh golly—again, I almost hesitate to give a time line, but within the next several months I hope to have ready for presentation a child development strategy that is developed in a collaborative forum bringing a number of stakeholders together around the issue of healthy child public policy.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

We have already undertaken a fairly significant amount of work in consultation and collaboration around the issue, and my latest update on that initiative indicates that we may well have a discussion paper and policy direction paper available certainly this year and hopefully sooner rather than later this year.

But again, I give my honourable friend the caution that conceptually we have, I think it is fair to say, a broad general agreement around the issue of Healthy Public Policy in terms of child development. Now, it is a matter of finalizing a number of program initiatives between departments, and we think we can achieve that in a

rather expeditious fashion with an appropriate document being available for public discussion and outline of where we think there are pretty significant opportunities in terms of healthy child public policy.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, on page 56 of the Health Action Plan there was promise made that the report will be made available for a drug cost and benefit study. It was supposed to be done by October of 1992. Have we got that report?

Mr. Orchard: No. I am going to have to check the specific reference in there, but, no, we do not have that.

* (1640)

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, it is on page 56 of this report, and it was the report on a drug cost and benefit study that was supposed to be released by October of 1992. I will ask the minister to check.

Madam Chairperson, on page 47 there was a major statement from the Health Action Plan that the health care professionals who were going to be dislocated, they will be given some assistance in terms of re-employment and retraining. Can the minister tell us, what are the mechanisms that have been put in place to make sure those people are given the opportunity to pursue their careers?

Mr. Orchard: That is one of our larger working groups with some 26 members which take us, really, across a number of—if I understand the membership appropriately, it has membership of 26 in total, Manitoba Health having one representative, 10 from the hospitals, one from the Manitoba Health Organizations, and other memberships include the federal government, the Department of Labour Manitoba. We have 11 unions represented on the committee as well as one consultant, and I am not sure who the consultant is—the chair is a consultant by the name of Leonard Schreyer.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, I will not ask what the relationship of the last name is, but I will ask—can the minister tell us how many individuals who are dislocated because of the health care reform have been re-employed again within the system?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, we do not have the specifics with us today, but that is part of the answer that we are going to try to provide on the basis of a question from the member for Kildonan

(Mr. Chomiak). We will provide as much information as we currently have.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, on page 21 of this plan, the promise was made to have an expansion of the antenatal Home Care program. Can the minister give us an update on that promise?

Mr. Orchard: That expansion has occurred, and since April the 1st, the expanded program has been up and running. What I will do is, if my honourable friend wishes greater detail, we could deal with that later on, but there has been an expansion of that program since April the 1st.

Mr. Cheema: We are just going through the promises so that we know. We just wanted to make sure the plan is being followed the way it was said. I mean there is a few weeks difference, but as long as the basic plan is still intact, that is my whole motive to ask those questions because it is very essential to make sure people who are going to be notified from us, so they will feel comfortable that the Health Action Plan is still intact. That has been my questioning since I started asking on the whole process.

Now, can the minister tell us, in terms of the outcome so far in terms of the whole Action Plan, is the minister's department satisfied with the major thrust as well as, not the thrust, but—how shall I say it—how the major achievements as far as the Health Action Plan is concerned? Are you satisfied with the progress so far which has been achieved? It is quite a broad question.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, in general, yes. I am going to qualify my "yes" in the fashion of my answer.

I think that without question, and in saying this, I am not denigrating the concerns expressed by some of the caregivers that were affected by the downsizing in our two teaching hospitals. There were some layoffs of nursing and other support staff in terms of the downsizing of the two teaching hospitals and that is regrettable, and the Labour Adjustment Committee has attempted to facilitate supportive initiatives to help those individuals.

But in general terms, I answer in the positive in terms of how we view the process to date. I think that was a fairly significant shift that took place at our two teaching hospitals, a pretty significant downsizing in both of them and a commissioning of replacement beds in three other facilities. I think it

is fair to say that that process went exceedingly well given that it is the first time a major shift like that had been undertaken.

I have disappointment, if you will, or concern, that some of the time lines that were identified in terms of certain investigations, we were unable to maintain the integrity of time lines that we thought were achievable when we announced the document.

However, I think my honourable friend is fairly understanding of the size of the shift and the change that we are undertaking and that some of these projections around deliverables were maybe optimistic at the time we crafted The Action Plan. But the one thing that is happening in terms of our implementation committee and the reform initiative and the staffing that have been attached to the reform initiative is that we are continually refining the process learning from, not mistakes—I think that is too strong a word—but learning how we can improve the process through trial and error, to some degree, and in taking approaches that we thought would work and finding out that there was a better way.

From that standpoint, I think it is fair to say that the whole ministry and staff have grown pretty significantly in terms of maturity around the process, experience and ability to deal with a pretty significant change agenda, something that, quite frankly, was intimidating to all of us, myself no exception. When we laid out The Action Plan, we knew it was a very significant and aggressive agenda. From that standpoint, that is why my opening remarks to these Estimates indicated a great deal of expressed content with the skill with which my ministry staff has undertaken this and the support we have received from individuals in funded agencies or professionally attached to health care as physicians, nurses or others, in terms of participation and support of the change agenda.

So I think, if I could be so brazen as to suggest, I do not think any other province has undertaken changes in as effective a fashion as we have in Manitoba. I am not denigrating the efforts in other provinces; I am simply saying that I think there was more thought, more professional focus and more commitment to the process of change in Manitoba than necessarily was there in other provinces. I think that has contributed to a reasonably successful restructuring and change exercise to

date, not without its glitches and flaws, but certainly in the end result, in a number of areas, I think, fairly successfully undertaken.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Chairperson, I think the whole process, as far as the time frame is concerned—and we discussed the target dates last night and the overall planning—that may have to be revised to some few months here and there that it is going to take place. So far, as far as we can tell—and I will repeat that again today because we have the ADM who is in charge of the health reform plan—the perception we are getting, it is on track, no question about that. There are going to be a few problems. We do not anticipate a smooth process.

* (1650)

As long as the public is being notified in terms of, not only the health care professionals who are an important part, but others who are not more but equally important. Through the meetings which have been taking place—I have gone through the list, and about 30 meetings have already taken place by the Department of Health—some were not very well attended. There were two, three individuals at some meetings and, in some places, nine or 10 or 20, and that is not very good. In one place, people are complaining that we are not being notified, and when you are there, they are not coming. So something is missing here.

I would like to encourage the department to have probably a wider campaign in terms of the information package, which can be easily understood, and people can come and take part in the reform process. When they come to the meeting, they are very upset and angry because something, they think, is going to be taken away. When they leave the meetings, most of them are either satisfied or some of their questions are resolved. I think that is very, very positive. We have gone through some meetings and sometimes we are under attack because we sit in this House so they think we are causing all those problems but, when you explain to them, things are very much improved by the time the participants leave the meeting.

I just want to reinforce that part. I did not want to repeat it, but since the ADM who is in charge of the program—he should also listen from my perspective and the perspective of many organizations we have met.

Their main concern is more participation. As the minister said, there is a danger in participation, because you do not know who is going to say what and how they are going to treat the whole process, but how many times are we seeing rumours and fear stories on the front page? We are not seeing those because it is changing. I think that is very, very positive and that is why I do not think you have to be afraid of explaining the change because if enough individuals would understand the change, I think things would become much easier and that would be helpful.

My next question is in terms of the obstetrical beds. That plan has been put off. Initially there were some individuals saying, the government is going to change its mind. When you have such a major plan, you are going to change your mind in as many areas as possible, especially in an area when you are going to shift the beds out of the teaching hospital to the community hospital, then some of the information was not correct, probably because one is looking from one angle. When you see the whole picture it becomes different. I think now Dr. Manning can at least bring more light to the major problem in terms of how you are going to shift those beds.

I just want to ask the minister: When are we going to see the final report in terms of the obstetrical services as far as the low-risk deliveries are concerned?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, the Manning report is not just narrowed in terms of its investigation of low-risk obstetrics. It will be the obstetric services in the city of Winnipeg. We are expecting about four weeks out that the implementation steering committee will receive the report and approximately three to four weeks thereafter will provide recommendations to myself. So optimistically we might look at the end of July, first part of August in terms of setting direction for obstetrics. It will be for all obstetrics in the city of Winnipeg, not just the low-risk initiative.

Mr. Chomlak: I want to start at the onset by thanking the minister for tabling the information that he had indicated would be tabled, particularly that relating to the various working committees and groups from the Department of Health.

Continuing along the line of questioning as it relates to the Quality Health for Manitobans, The Action Plan, I note that in the introduction the

minister said: "The government will not introduce user fees. User fees do nothing to encourage effective utilization of health services and they may serve as a barrier to needed services for some people."

Having said that, and having quoted the minister, I am wondering why the minister saw a need to introduce user fees this year into the health care system in the form of the user fees for the use of home care supplies.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I do not want to get into a debate on definition and semantics with my honourable friend, but surely my honourable friend must acknowledge that user fees are as debated and discussed during the 1984 amendment in terms of adding the fifth principle, I believe, of appropriateness to the Canada Health Act, or, no, accessibility, I am sorry, accessibility, wherein extra billing was prevented, extra billing being regarded as a user fee.

The prohibition in the Canada Health Act, 1984, subsequently parallel legislation being passed in this Legislature, I think, in '85 was to disallow user fees which would fit the definition of the Canada Health Act, i.e., for physician services and hospital services. Those are program areas that have been jointly funded, if you will, with the federal government under the historical presentation of medicare.

User fees are not the phraseology my honourable friend ought to get into in other program areas because my honourable friend would then have to explain why New Democrats introduced a user fee in Pharmacare, why New Democrats introduced a user fee in personal care homes, why New Democrats introduced other user fees, if you want to use that terminology, it is not the appropriate terminology. That is why I have separated the two issues. We are, yes, asking for consumer contributions on a number of program issues just as New Democrats have done in the past.

New Democrats always had consumer contribution in ambulance services as another example. The consumer contributions that we have introduced—I would be quite anxious to get into this debate on Thursday because time is going to run out on us today, to compare the relative program direction in Manitoba compared to Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C. My

honourable friend wants to do that. I want to remind my honourable friend that Progressive Conservatives do not govern in all those provinces, and we are making some of our program outlines and requirements quite consistent with those provinces wherein home care supplies are paid for in some of the other provinces. We will get into that detail, where personal care home charges are similar in other provinces. We will get into that detail where charges for ostomy supplies are similar in other provinces, et cetera, where the Pharmacare program for families, I believe, Manitoba's is the most generous in Canada.

We will debate all of those issues, but my honourable friend ought to be very, very cautious in terms of his position from opposition as saying everything is a user fee, because should my honourable friend ever get to be government, my honourable friend is going to be expected immediately to reverse all of those quote, unquote, identified user fees that he so protesteth about, would be the Shakespearean way to put it. That is why I am going to ask my honourable friend—I put him on notice now—that every single time he brings up consumer contribution and other program initiatives that we have brought in, I want my honourable friend to identify the New Democratic Party's stand on whether it is right or wrong and whether they will reverse it should they be government, because anything less is false bravado.

My honourable friend, so far in these Estimates, has failed and failed miserably even to take a position on the consolidation of pediatric services to Children's Hospital. I hope my honourable friend has the integrity and the ability, as critic for the New Democratic Party, to state his unequivocal position on behalf of Gary Doer and the NDP of Manitoba on what they would do with each of those changes in program, whether they would reverse them, because that sets the stage for an honest debate on health care, not a dishonest slippery debate that New Democrats are entering in right now.

My honourable friend is the author of one of the slipperiest pieces of communication that I have seen. I appreciate my honourable friend using such a nice picture of myself, but my honourable friend has got "An Urgent Message from Dave Chomiak, Health Critic for the New Democrats."

The quote is, we must save medicare, and it is "Dear Friend," and he goes through a litany of half truths, factual inexactitudes and other things that are not unparliamentary to state in this case, Madam Chair, but ends with the request of those poor, impoverished Manitobans, if you can consider making a contribution to our election plan and victory fund today, your donation of not \$5, \$10, they start at \$50, \$100 or \$200, will help us take our important message about health care to the voters of Manitoba. Your donations will be eligible for generous political tax credits.

A fearmongering document that goes around and asks those poor, impoverished Manitobans to donate to the NDP their hard-earned money. What a disgusting and disgraceful position my honourable friend is taking. That is why, every step of the way, we are going to ask my honourable friend to screw up his courage and to tell us where New Democratic Party members stand on policies of importance in health care. And none of this slip and sliding and not answering will be tolerated, Madam Chair, I can assure you of that.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

* (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 200—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), Bill 200, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Also, standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans) who has one minute remaining. Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 202—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), Bill 202, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation, standing in the name of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister). Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 203—The Health Care Records Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Bill 203, The Health Care Records Act; Loi sur les dossiers médicaux, standing in the name of the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner). Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 205—The Ombudsman Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), Bill 205, The Ombudsman Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'ombudsman, standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 208—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), Bill 208, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act;

Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer). Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 209—The Public Health Amendment Act

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to once again introduce this legislation, and I move, seconded by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that Bill 209, The Public Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I am pleased with the opportunity to introduce Bill 209 at the second reading stage, and I hope, since this is the second time, the second session running, that this bill is before the Legislative Assembly that we will finally hear some comments from members of the government, from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that we will finally have some debate on legislation before this Chamber on this particular important health care issue as well as others.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note for the record that there have been two private members' bills before this Assembly for two sessions running on very important health care matters that have received little attention and certainly no discussion from members of the Conservative government.

This Bill 209 as well as Bill 203, The Health Care Records Act, are two private members' bills that were introduced during the last legislative session as a result of hard work and study and input by various members in our community and concerned organizations in the health care field. They come out of a long-standing movement to try to address some outstanding issues in the health care policy field and to move us in the direction of greater consumer responsibility for health care.

It is regrettable that that kind of initiative from the community, that kind of forward thinking strategy from community-based organizations are ignored, ignored by this government. It is regrettable.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Nonsense.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The Minister of Finance says nonsense. Well, I would like to remind the Minister of Finance that many thoughtful individuals and organizations in the health care field on the community side have been trying for some number of years to get the ear of this government and to persuade this government to initiate some legislation in some very important areas. [interjection]

No, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance, these groups and individuals do not want more, they do not want more money. We are not talking about Finance bills; we are not talking about legislation that requires expenditure upon the part of the government. We are talking about legislation and ideas that simply require political will and commitment on the part of members opposite to do some very forward-looking initiatives in the health care field.

Mr. Speaker, we have been pursuing both The Health Care Records Act and Bill 209, The Public Health Amendment Act, which is legislation to require reporting of adverse reactions to vaccines, for very good reason. We are not bringing these bills forward for political points, because, in fact, we would be happy if the government would come forward with its own legislation and introduce bills of their own that encapsulated the ideas in these two private members' bills.

The bill before us, Bill 209, has emerged from a number of individuals and groups in our community who have faced the very serious downside of immunization. These are individuals and organizations who have recognized that there is a negative side to immunization, that in some children immunization does mean serious disability and sometimes death.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is by no means suggesting we question the practice of immunization in terms of it being a leading factor in the reduction of many diseases. This legislation is simply asking the government of the day to take the necessary steps to ensure that health care consumers, that parents of children have choices and have information about the possibility of adverse reactions to vaccination.

It is not asking for major overhaul of the health care system. It is not asking for increased expenditure on the part of the government. It is simply asking for leadership from this government to ensure that we can avoid, as much as possible, adverse reactions to vaccination.

There is significant evidence that immunization, notably whooping cough, measles and polio vaccines, cause disability and death in some healthy infants. I want to quote from a couple of affected parents who went through a horrible experience with respect to vaccination and hope that their words will move this government.

I quote: Granted the vaccine-damaged children and their families are a small percentage of the population, but they are a hurting percentage.

Mr. Speaker, I go on and quote from the Infectious Diseases and Immunization Committee of the Canadian Paediatric Society which stated: It is highly likely that even the most sophisticated vaccines will carry some risk of adverse reaction. It went on to say, although the number of people involved is small, the injury is tragic.

We are before this Chamber again this session with repeat legislation or proposed legislation calling for a safer vaccination program. We are simply asking through this bill that this government require all physicians, all the medical professionals, in the province of Manitoba to officially report any adverse reaction to any vaccine.

I do not believe that is too much to ask of this government. I do not believe that this is an issue that is so controversial that it does not warrant hasty passage through this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation also calls for a system for ensuring that parents of children, parents considering vaccination of their children, be offered, be provided the fullest explanation possible of the risks of vaccination in order that they may be completely informed about the benefits and the risks of immunization.

Again, does it seem that that is such an inordinate demand to be placed before government? Does it seem to be a controversial initiative? It seems in fact to simply be common sense. It offers parents absolute certainty that they will receive complete information, something that is not absolutely guaranteed in today's world.

I do not need to remind members in this Chamber that there are always cases of

professionals in our society that do not take the extra step and provide the fullest information necessary for individuals and families to be making informed decisions and choices.

The vast majority of medical professionals and doctors in our society today do take those steps and provide the information, but we all know some do not. Some parents remain ignorant about the impact of certain medical interventions. We are asking that this government go the extra step and entrench, enshrine in legislation, the requirement that all medical professionals, all doctors, all persons administering vaccinations and doing immunization provide the most information possible.

So, Mr. Speaker, you can see what we have before us is a bill that makes sense, does not cost this government a penny. It is not controversial. It does not threaten the medical profession in any way whatsoever. It simply requires two things: A mandatory reporting of adverse reactions to immunizations, and that medical professionals be required to provide information to parents making decisions about vaccinations.

I hope this time, in this session, this government will either pass Bill 209 or introduce its own legislation doing exactly the same thing. I hope also that in this session, this government will finally respond to the question of access to medical records.

Mr. Speaker, we do not understand why something as fundamental and as important as the right of access to one's own health care records has not been addressed and recognized by this government. Why is this government so reluctant to move on any issues that empower individuals, consumers and citizens in terms of taking responsibility for their own health care? Why is this government so reluctant to entrench in legislation what only makes sense, the right to have access to medical information pertaining to that individual?

There is a lot of questioning coming from across the way, Mr. Speaker, and I wonder if some of the members on the Conservative benches can answer that question. What is so wrong, what is so difficult, what is so problematic about entrenching in law the right of access to one's own health care records? Would it not make a lot of sense? If this government is concerned about

finding efficiencies in the health care system and seeking ways to improve our health care system, would it not make sense to empower the individual, to help the health care consumer understand more about his or her own health care so that person can then make informed decisions and take responsibility for improving his or her own health care status?

Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude by saying, I hope that when it comes to Bill 209 and Bill 203, two basic simple pieces of legislation dealing with health care, with access to health care records and access to informed choices, that this government will act and will not, as we saw in the last session, delay debate, delay decisions and prolong this issue. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

* (1720)

Bill 211—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that Bill 211, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I regret to advise the member for Swan River that Bill 211, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act, is out of order. Our rules and longstanding parliamentary practice provide that any bill which involves the direct expenditure of public funds or which involves taxation measures must be accompanied by a message from the Lieutenant-Governor. That message can only be provided to a minister of the Crown. Therefore, only a minister can introduce what is generally known as a money bill —[interjection]

Order, please. The object of Bill 211 is to amend The Municipal Assessment Act to add a specific exemption for the Swan River airport to the exemptions from municipal taxation now provided by Section 21 of the act. Such an exemption would increase the amount the government would have to provide to the municipality as a grant in lieu of taxes. A new exemption from municipal taxation obliges a government to increase the payment to the municipality and therefore constitutes a direct charge on the Consolidated Fund.

As I ruled in 1988, a bill which involves a direct expenditure of public funds or imposes a specific charge upon the public revenue or imposes a tax must be recommended to the House by a message of the Lieutenant-Governor. Our Rule 53(1) describes the types of bills which require a message as bills which, and I quote, "impose any new or additional charge upon the public revenue."

Further, our Rule 54(2) states that a motion cannot be moved by a private member if it, and I quote, "provides an exemption or increases an exemption from a tax or a proposed tax."

Therefore, as Bill 211 is not recommended to the House by a message and it is not being introduced by a minister of the Crown, I rule that Bill 211 cannot be proceeded with.

Point of Order

Ms. Wowchuk: On a point of order, I recognize that it has been ruled out of order, but this is a very important matter to the people of the Swan River constituency, and I hope that the government will look at the bill and look at some way they may be able to address this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has made her point, but she did not have a point of order.

Bill 212—The Dauphin Memorial Community Centre Board Repeal Act

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Swan River (Mrs. Wowchuk), that Bill 212, The Dauphin Memorial Community Centre Board Repeal Act (Loi abrogeant la Loi sur le Conseil du Centre commémoratif de Dauphin), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move for second reading Bill 212, The Dauphin Memorial Community Centre Board Repeal Act.

This bill repeals an act of the Legislature that has been in place for some 40 years. It was to be repealed a couple of years ago. The government had endeavoured to repeal it as part of its statutes translation, obsolete acts were to be repealed.

However, this act was not obsolete at that time and had to be pulled from that bill. So it is ironic that the ministers are sitting there and saying, well, I wonder if this is in order, because, in fact, the subject of this bill reflects an error that occurred a couple of years ago and that we are now attempting to rectify.

What we are dealing with at this time is an agreement by the three parties that were named in the original act of the Legislature. That act established a framework for the administration of the Dauphin Memorial Community Centre, and it was encompassed, under the act, that the Rural Municipality of Dauphin, the Town of Dauphin and the Dauphin Agricultural Society would jointly administer the complex.

This worked for some 40 years, and it worked reasonably well. But as times changed, new circumstances arose. The three parties found that the structure that was named in the legislation was too rigid, that, indeed, there should be some changes in the representation and the way that the operation took place, and so they decided that they had to negotiate a new agreement.

It was felt that an act of the Legislature was not required to accomplish the ends of the Memorial Community Centre and the administration thereof.

So there was a feeling that, by way of a legal agreement between the three parties, a new structure could be put in place. Until that new structure was in place, they wanted this act to remain in place. That is why they objected to it being ruled as an obsolete act and actually repealed a couple of years ago when the government was translating many of its acts, and of course that was done.

Since that time, the agreement between the three parties has been finalized. They are now working under the new structure and this bill validates all decisions made by that new structure since its inception some time last fall. They are

now working under that new agreement, but this bill, then, this repeal is, in fact, retroactive to the time when that new structure began and validates all of the decisions made by that act, so there can be no legal challenges to it.

It is my hope that the Legislature will pass this bill to validate formally the new structure that is in place in Dauphin between the Rural Municipality of Dauphin, the Town of Dauphin and the Dauphin Agricultural Society, and that this will be done smoothly.

They are anxious to know that this has taken place in the Legislature. They will want the support of all the members of the Legislature. They will want the support of the members of the government to repeal this act so that there will be a formal recognition of the new structure that is in place.

Now, they can continue to function without this bill, perhaps as they have over the last number of months, but it means and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should be aware that it is not advisable to have to make acts of Legislature retroactive to an extent that it is unreasonable.

I know that the government has begun the practice of making acts retroactive, such as with Sunday shopping. But in this case, I would not like to see that happen for an extended period of time. So I think it is important that the ministers who are sitting there find a way to support this bill.

* (1730)

Now, they have to remember that in the overall context of things, this bill may not seem as important to them as some others but, to the community in Dauphin, it is very important, and to myself as their representative therefore in this Legislature, it is very important.

It is my hope that we will have a co-operative response from the government on this bill when we finally complete this session and it will be one of the bills passed through. I know that it will be considered in the context of all of the bills that the government is putting forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I know that representatives of the three groups involved will be looking forward to the Royal Assent of this bill at the closing of this session of this Legislature.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would ask the members opposite to move it to committee as quickly as possible.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that debate adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

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

The hour being 6 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned till 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 8, 1993

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Reading and Receiving Petitions		Literacy Programs Lamoureux; Vodrey	3955
Wheat Board Barley Marketing Plohman	3947	Literacy Rate Lamoureux; Vodrey	3955
Children's Dental Program Cerilli	3947	Social Policy Martindale; Gilleshammer	3956
Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees		Child Poverty Rate Martindale; Gilleshammer	3956
Committee of Supply Dacquay	3947	Social Assistance Martindale; Gilleshammer	3956
Tabling of Reports		HIV Infections Cheema; Orchard	3957
Annual Reports: Rural Development; Manitoba Municipal Employees Benefits Board; Municipal Board Derkach	3948		
Supplementary Information, Health; Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba Orchard	3948		
Oral Questions			
Framework for Economic Growth Doer; Filmon	3948		
Unemployment Rate Doer; Filmon	3949		
Framework for Economic Growth Doer; Filmon; Friesen; Edwards; Ashton; Downey	3949		
Anishinabe Respect Hickes; Vodrey; Filmon	3954		
		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
		Committee of Supply	
		Education and Training Health	3958 3977
		Private Members' Business	
		Second Readings—Public Bills	
		Bill 209, Public Health Amendment Act Wasylycia-Leis	4002
		Bill 211, Municipal Assessment Act Wowchuk Speaker's Ruling	4004 4004
		Bill 212, Dauphin Memorial Community Centre Board Repeal Act Plohman	4004