



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
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, Cliff	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
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 24, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Western Premiers' Conference

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House, copies available for opposition members, as well as copies of communiques and reports from the Western Premiers' Conference last week in Gimli.

Mr. Speaker, I am tabling copies of the 11 communiques and two reports which were released during last week's Western Premiers' Conference in Gimli.

The range of topics covered in the communiques shows that the western provinces and territories remain committed to close co-operation and to working together on key priorities for the West and for Canada. Over the weekend, one commentator noted the remarkable unanimity in the communiques, and it is remarkable indeed.

What is particularly encouraging is the commitment by the western provinces and territories to move ahead together in several important areas, including development of a strategic investment plan for western Canadian infrastructure needs; the establishment of new western export consortia to ensure the West can compete more effectively for large international projects; confirmation of our continuing united position in opposition to tobacco smuggling; a commitment to strong co-operation on taxation and budgetary policies, as well as the national training and social security reviews; a recommendation to the Prime Minister that the Premier of Saskatchewan be the co-chair of the national forum on health; continuing joint work on

new farm safety net programs; development of a more proactive approach to advancing Canada's case in international trade disputes; a strong endorsement of the international Trade ministers' effort to negotiate a comprehensive agreement by the end of June on reducing internal trade barriers; a full-scale review of western transportation priorities to be led by Manitoba; confirmation of support for an ongoing formal relationship between the western Premiers and the western governors; agreement on the importance of moving ahead quickly with the federal government to reduce overlap and duplication and to pursue on a western regional basis co-operative initiatives in such areas as environment, emergency preparedness, health care and public service renewal and reform; unanimous support for the continuation of bilateral federal-provincial economic development agreements in the West and for the inclusion of the Northwest Territories and Yukon as full participants in meetings of western industry and economic development ministers with their federal counterpart; and finally, a call on the Prime Minister to restart the process of annual First Ministers' conferences on the economy, and in addition, to continue the practice started last year of consulting the provinces in advance of the yearly G-7 summits.

The other Premiers and territorial leaders were very generous in describing the success of the conference. I believe a large part of the credit should go to the hospitality provided by the people of Gimli and the surrounding community. They made everyone feel very welcome, and I believe they can be proud of the positive impression of Manitoba which our visitors took away with them at the conclusion of the conference.

I would like to pay particular tribute to the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), as well as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr.

Downey) for their contributions to making this year's conference one of the best and most productive our province has hosted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1335)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Premier for his statement to the Legislature this afternoon.

We would like to start and congratulate the people of the Interlake and the people of the Gimli community for what we have heard to be just a tremendous job in hosting the Western Premiers' meeting. We are all very proud of the job that Manitobans and members of the Gimli community provided to host this important meeting of western Premiers.

I would like to talk a little bit about the substance of the meeting and about the statement the Premier made to this Legislature and about other media reports that we have been able to glean over the four- or five-day period that the stories came from the meeting.

First of all, we think it is a very positive idea that the Premiers have proposed that Premier Romanow of Saskatchewan co-host the discussions on health care reform. When we consider the Premier's own Estimates in this Chamber, he was able to confirm that the federal government's reduction in EPF has continued past the Mulroney years and on now to the new government's years and budgets. This means that we are going to be down to about 70 percent of funding of health care from the provincial governments and down to 30 percent and less in declining amount of money from the provincial [sic] government.

So it seems to us that our first priority should be to get a strong national government and strong national standards and strong national funding as part of the health care reform. We believe very strongly in a strong partnership between the provinces and the federal government. To us, partnership also is not just talk, it is also action in the form of the federal budgets that we see in the province. So I think it is a good proposal, and we

wish the government well on having this kind of co-operative review of health care rather than a unilateral review.

We also note the recommendation on smoking, and I applaud the western Premiers on that issue. Certainly, the smuggling has gone from north-south to east-west. This, the Tuesday after the long weekend, I have talked to a Manitoba retailer over the weekend and, of course, we are suffering because of this change in policy. I am sure the government feels it in their revenues or will feel it in their revenues over time.

The whole issue of powers—there was a report on powers. Devolution of powers was one headline, other reports about rationalization of powers. We in Manitoba I believe continue to be committed to a strong national government, and I personally believe that we in Manitoba should present that view to the other western Premiers who have traditionally had a more decentralist view of the national government. I hope Manitoba continues to have a strong voice for the presence of a strong national government.

There are various decisions that have to be looked at. I happen to believe that we should have a strong national presence in environment. Ecosystems do not stop and start at provincial boundaries. They cross waters and air, and ecosystems cross provincial boundaries. I actually believe that rather than having the reaction we saw with the Oldman River in Alberta for more unilateral provincial powers in the environment, I believe we should have a stronger national and international view of that position. I would urge the provincial government to take that to the table, rather than the watered-down, shared position they have in the communique.

The whole issue of taxation is a very important issue. Manitoba has not presented a report or a position paper yet to the federal government on the GST. Saskatchewan has and the whole issue of fair taxation, I believe, will be a major issue in Canada as the GST debate continues.

On the issue of trade, we note that the communique is continuing to work towards a June 1994 resolution of trade. We believe that areas of

strong and high unemployment must be considered along with our needs of commerce, and northern and aboriginal communities must be considered in any communique or position that Canada does finally resolve.

Finally, on the issue of agriculture, we wish the government well. We do not note any strong, co-ordinated approach of the western Premiers dealing with the farm support programs. Some provinces want to proceed with the removal of the Wheat Board. Other provinces want to keep a strong Wheat Board.

That is the same kind of dichotomy we see between our western Premiers and provinces on transportation policies and other issues. I am pleased this government will look at the whole issue of transportation. How many jobs will we lose with CN and CP, with their merger? What will it mean for Manitoba? What will it mean for western Canada? What will it mean for our producers? We wish the government well in their ongoing dialogue on some of these areas of activity.

Thank you very, very much, Mr. Speaker.

* (1340)

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to join comments with the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in congratulating the people of Gimli and of the Interlake region for putting on a very, very fine job of hosting indeed. All reports were that it was extremely well done by that community. I do not think we would have expected any less. They have proven that in the past, but they have obviously shown their hospitality again.

Mr. Speaker, there are specific concerns about some of the documents that the First Minister has sent out; in particular the communiques which we had earlier received, and we are glad to have his comments this morning, but there are comments we have on some of those communiques which will come up in Question Period today.

By way of overview, Mr. Speaker, I simply wanted to say that I was, of course, pleased to see

that a large topic of discussion was the whole area of western co-operation, both on the economic front and in terms of the expenditures of government across this region. I have consistently maintained and continue to do so, that this region of the country still lags far behind other regions, most notably Atlantic Canada in recent years on that front, and there are many millions if not billions of dollars to be saved for our common taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, the other issue that I raise as a general statement here is that, again, and unfortunately in recent years—and I see the pattern unfortunately continuing—the whole genesis and the whole—what is contained more than anything else in these 26 pages of press releases, 11 of them. One wonders what else was done except write communiques; 26 pages in two and a half days is not bad.

In any event, the press releases either start or degenerate to largely continuing by the provincial governments to blame other levels of government, most notably, of course, time and time again, the federal government. No doubt there are always those criticisms to be made, but that has become an increasingly, still is, the *raison d'être* apparently of these meetings, is to do this.

What I would like to see, Mr. Speaker, what I think Manitobans would like to see is some concrete solutions, some things that are actually coming forward, that are actually being done by these provincial governments. There is a lot of hypocrisy in talking about offloading when this government has offloaded in every single budget that it has come in with—seven budgets in a row.

There is a certain level of credibility which I think is continuing to lack from the overall talk about co-operation and finding solutions. It does not appear to be reflected in these. There are a lot of communiques, 26 pages worth. The words “co-operation” or “co-operatively” are used 30 times. What do we have to show for it? Those are the tough questions for the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

Thank you.

* (1345)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report, 1992-93, of the Universities Grants Commission.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Wanipigow School twenty-five Grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Marion Taylor. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson).

From the Country View School, we have sixteen Grades 5 to 9 students under the direction of Mr. Brian Reimer. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger).

From the Ralph Brown School, we have thirty-four Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Ms. Cora Duffy. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Prime Motor Oils Environmental Clean up Costs

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

Last week, we were, unfortunately, given an Auditor's report dealing with the Hazardous Waste Corporation that indicated the company itself did not want any involvement of the Auditor in the affairs of public money and public investments in that corporation.

Previous to this, we raised questions in the House about Solvit and Prime Oil, two private waste corporations that have resulted in considerable concern in our communities for both the safety of these operations and the costs.

I would like to ask the Premier, how much did it cost the taxpayers to clean up the Solvit operation which was licensed from the provincial government, and did we recover any money from that corporation or take any legal action?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Solvit cleanup actually was not a large number. I cannot call to memory the exact number. We have attempted to take action to recover any possible dollars that are available from that site, but as you can appreciate, there is not a lot of value in the site.

I think the member will have to be a little bit patient, however, in terms of Prime Oil, because one of the things that occurred there is that we spent a considerable amount of time working with the owners to get the liability down and get as much of that site cleaned up as possible. Unfortunately, they eventually collapsed financially under not only the business climate they were in, but part of the pressure that we were putting on them in terms of bringing their operation up to snuff.

We have spent, I believe, about \$300,000 in getting rid of the initial amount of waste that was left onsite, but we have taken some very strong action to attempt to recover, and the courts will ultimately decide how much.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, Prime Oil is a company, and the amount of money we understand for Solvit is \$60,000, which is a lot of money in terms of all the other decisions government is making in terms of reduction in services.

The minister has indicated and we have Freedom of Information indicating that considerable amounts of public money have been spent on Prime Oil. This is a company that the government cited in its Fire Commissioner's report in 1989 and '90 as an exemplary company, and a company, of course, which they went and licensed, Mr. Speaker.

We have close to \$300,000 outstanding, and to date, there has only been one judgment against Prime Oil, and that is a judgment in February of 1994, of some \$65,000.

I would like to ask the government, how much will the total bill be for cleanup because the Freedom of Information indicates that this is not the total amount of money? What will the total amount of money be that the government will spend to clean this Prime Oil site up? How much money do we expect to recover, and what are we going to be short from another private operation?

* (1350)

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the implication is that we should have more public and less private operations in the handling of hazardous waste in this province, but in the soil cleanup at Prime Oil, there has to be some analysis as to what level of contamination there is. The whole area is being evaluated quite carefully to make sure we do not inadvertently overlook something.

The member should know that this is one of those situations where the owners—we have attempted and will continue to attempt to recover from their personal assets. Frankly, all of their personal assets, I believe, are likely at risk in attempting to recover the costs here, and the courts will ultimately decide what is fair.

Mr. Doer: The minister asked us what our position is, and we believe that this hazardous waste material should be handled in a nonprofit way by a public corporation where the safety of citizens is the primary consideration, not the profit of individuals. That is our philosophy on dealing with hazardous waste. That is why we are opposed to privatization and other moves by this government over the years and specifically this spring.

I would like to ask the government, what are they going to do to stop their licensing of private companies that has resulted in explosions, in fires, in material being left in the grounds and material being left in our communities and the government and the taxpayer being left with the bill at the end of the day? What are they going to do to stop this in the future? It is they who licensed these corporations. It is they who allowed these organizations to exist, and it is they now who are picking up the tab for cleaning up.

What are they going to do to stop this in the future? We have had two cases already. How are they going to stop this in the future?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition would take the approach in opposition to have the private sector come in and invest up to \$20 million in hazardous waste management and control in this province—that coming from the Leader of the Opposition, a party that supported Manfor for which we are paying a \$13-million environmental cleanup—\$13 million.

Does he want to go into the taxpayers' pockets for more of that kind of waste and ineptitude? I think not, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when we look to the Prime Oil development, the liability at that site began decades ago and has gradually built up until this government started to take some action to make sure they either cleaned up or they were put out of business. They have eventually been put out of business, and we are making sure that they pay everything that we can possibly get them to in terms of the cleanup.

Agriculture Marketing Boards Government Position

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wheat Board and marketing boards have played a very important role in the farming economy of Canada, as well as the economy of all rural communities. However, we learn that at the Western Premiers' Conference, there were some Premiers, particularly Premier Klein, who would like to see marketing boards gone and would like to see the Wheat Board monopoly gone, as well.

I would like to ask the Premier if he will let us know what his position is. Does he support the monopoly of the Wheat Board to stay as it is, as many farmers do, and does he support marketing boards in Canada?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we continue to believe and, in fact, I have indicated that one of the things we need to do is ensure that Americans understand what the role of the Wheat

Board is, that it is not, as they allege, an organization that engages in subsidizing wheat for export, that, in fact, it is a marketing agency that has served the farmers of western Canada well in the past and I hope will continue to serve the farmers of western Canada well. I at no time have advocated the removal or dismantling of the Canadian Wheat Board.

With respect to marketing boards, we continue to be supportive of marketing boards, and at no time have we suggested that marketing boards ought not to continue to exist in our province. We recognize that under the GATT agreement, certain changes will have to be made with respect to tariffication as the way of the future for marketing boards, but I have not been an advocate of the dismantling of marketing boards in Manitoba either.

* (1355)

Agriculture Marketing Boards Government Position

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that, and I hope that someday we can get this Premier to encourage the federal government to add more crops under the Canadian Wheat Boards's mandate, as farmers would like to see.

If farm support programs are to be successful, we believe that they should be national programs, where there is equality across the provinces. However, from the communique, we see that there are certain measures of protection that are not covered and still have to be defined.

I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture whether these areas that have to be defined yet will be tabled in this House prior to the Ministers of Agriculture meeting that is upcoming.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I cannot give the honourable member the answer perhaps that she is requesting inasmuch as a fairly substantial committee involving the provinces is currently meeting to place some of the questions before that upcoming conference that she alludes to, and decisions will not be made until

the first week, second week, of July when the ministers meet here in Winnipeg.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, surely, since other provinces have position papers, the Manitoba group must have some positions, as well.

Since Manitoba producers, Mr. Speaker, need to know the position of this government, we need to know what position the Minister of Agriculture has taken, will the Minister of Agriculture, prior to the meeting, table his position paper in this Chamber, so that we can look at what Manitoba's position is on safety support programs for farmers?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to be difficult with the honourable member. I am simply saying that I have listened very carefully to everything that our federal minister Mr. Goodale has to say about it.

He speaks in general terms about a whole farm program, I understand, and our officials are working towards that end, that it means, in many instances, perhaps an extension or enhancement of the NISA program in some cases, particularly in those areas where past programs, like the tripartite programs in beef, pork and other individual commodity items, are being dropped in this current year.

Mr. Speaker, these are issues that a very significant group of Manitobans, some 14 or 15 in all, representing virtually all the agricultural community, is engaged in advising me. They are participants in a much greater committee, consisting of some, I am told, 40 or 45 people from across the country who are meeting on a fairly regular basis to make these suggestions to the ministers when they meet in July here in Winnipeg.

Environmental Management Jurisdiction

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. As one read through the 11 communiqués, one I wanted to raise with the minister was Communiqué No. 9. This is about the 24th page of communiqués. This conference did

succeed in tripling the number of communiques from the last one.

This communique calls for the devolution of authority down to the provinces in environmental management framework and classifies that as an immediate priority, and *The Globe and Mail* of Saturday indicates, and I would like the minister to clarify that the western leaders identified a number of areas including environmental management in which the federal government could cede control to the provinces.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the First Minister: Is it his position, and did he join with the other Premiers in calling for environmental management and control of environmental reviews to be given solely to the provinces?

That strikes me as the one area in which it makes no sense to have the provinces individually regulate this in isolation, because we all know that air and water travel and environmental pollution and degradation is a larger issue than our borders as provinces allow us to somehow curtail the pollution.

My question to the Premier: Is that his position, that the provinces want full control over environmental management?

* (1400)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I must say that is the last area of communiques that I thought that the Leader of the Liberal Party would strike on, because he has been one who has constantly advocated our trying to remove the overlapping duplication between and among the provinces. He has always talked about the tremendous savings that would occur if we harmonized our efforts or if we combined into one commission or other things.

Mr. Speaker, this is precisely an area in which there is overlap. In fact, I have been one who has said that there ought to be consistent federal standards, but it seems to me that having federal standards or consistently agreed-upon standards across the provinces does not necessarily mean that we have to have two panels to review the environmental assessment for the same process.

This is direct overlap and duplication. If you set your standards, you agree on your standards, and then you require two different panels just simply because you have two different levels of government, that does not make any sense whatsoever.

So if we take that to the extent that he has been advocating in the past, that provinces ought to harmonize and get together their efforts, then you would have provinces doing the same thing. Where you have border crossings, you have two provinces agreeing to have one review panel conducted on the basis of agreed-upon standards. That would make sense, as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, we as governments are looking for ways to be innovative, to seek to accomplish the things that he says we should, and here he is the first one to stand up and say, ah, we should not do that. I cannot understand where he is coming from.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, more nice words. Creating 12 islands of environmental management in this country will do nothing to assist in the efficient and responsible management of the environment. This Premier is calling essentially, with the others, to have complete control over the environment. It is an international issue. It certainly should not be restricted to provincial boundaries.

Western Economic Co-operation Report Tabling Request

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): My supplementary question for the First Minister: In the communique from the November meeting in Canmore between these Premiers, it was specifically indicated that the Premiers had asked at that time for a report from responsible ministers on items raised at the spring 1994 Western Premiers' Conference on western economic co-operation. An inventory was supplied at that time, and the report was to be tabled.

We have, I certainly want to recognize, a report on learning and post-secondary education distance learning. Where is the overall report on the western

economic co-operation initiatives that was promised in Canmore back in November?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Speaking to the member's postamble, you do not have 12 islands if you agree on one uniform set of standards. That is the first principle, that you agree on one uniform set of standards across 12 jurisdictions, so you cannot possibly have 12 islands. I reject totally his postamble.

With respect to the areas of co-operation, Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Alberta updated the report which had been delivered in Canmore to indicate that there have been not only the more than 160 areas of co-operation that had been listed in Canmore but that we had a whole new series that were being catalogued; not only the report that he has referred to on the use of the electronic highway for distance education, but we have new areas of co-operation.

For instance, in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, we are having a common fire tack for early identification of fires so that they can then take action on the fires regardless of which side of the border they occur on. As soon as the fires are identified, these crews—the first group, for instance, is at Bakers Narrows, and it covers the northern Manitoba area near Flin Flon and Creighton, Saskatchewan.

There are a number of other areas in curriculum development in education that are being proceeded with. We talked about areas such as university level courses where it is now being acknowledged that we have far too many of the same professional faculties in some areas, and so we are looking at that.

The area is exploding so rapidly that the Premier of Alberta did not have an accurate handle on all these things, because it had only been less than six months since we had the meeting, for instance, in Canmore, and it was agreed upon that we would have a much more comprehensive review of all of these areas of co-operation for our next meeting.

Mr. Edwards: Again, Mr. Speaker, very nice words, lots of communiques, but the report

promised in November is not here, unless we are to take the 26 pages of communiques as the report.

Western Economic Co-operation Common Curriculum

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): I have a final question for the First Minister.

He specifically mentions curriculum and education. Just two months ago, the Atlantic Premiers announced a joint approach to curriculum in the core subjects across their region. They are going to come up with the same curriculum to assist not only in saving money in coming up with new curriculum, but also in the mobility of their citizens throughout that region.

My question for the First Minister: They made a commitment two months ago and set a timetable. What is the commitment, the real commitment of these Premiers in this region to do the same thing in that area that the Minister of Education mentioned just a few weeks ago was a good idea? What is the commitment? What is the time line for our region towards a common curriculum in the core subjects, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the Estimates review just last week, the protocols are in place as between the provincial governments of western Canada and the territories. We have gone some distance in one subject area, particularly in mathematics, and we are working collaboratively in the area of science.

I would indicate, Mr. Speaker, that we have some distance to make up. Manitoba is driving that process more so than any other province in western Canada. I expect as a result of the meetings in Gimli that there certainly will be greater desire from our provinces to the west to move on even more quickly.

I find it rather indifferent on behalf of the Leader of the Liberal Party to pose these questions when his critic of Education is challenging us for holding our numbers of people within curriculum development, because we are trying to prevent the

overlap and duplication, and we are trying to work to greater efficiency with our limited resources.

So the member is talking out of both sides of his mouth.

Maintenance Enforcement Program Service Access

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

Despite the hopes expressed by the Ombudsman in his 1992 report and promises by past Ministers of Justice, the Maintenance Enforcement Program in Manitoba is now apparently functioning even worse than ever. In the last couple of weeks alone, I am aware of several cases where recipients are not even returned messages; for example, one case where eight messages were left over 11 weeks, another case where seven messages were left over seven and a half weeks.

My question to the minister is, what immediate shakeup of the Maintenance Enforcement office can the minister announce to people like Tammy Williamson, who is in the gallery today, a very frustrated single mom, because she had to wait three weeks for a return call after leaving 20 messages with her officer?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, in the area of maintenance enforcement, as I have said in the House before, we are looking to certainly increase efficiency. We have been able to increase efficiency in some areas, and we are looking to continue to do so.

The specific case the member raises in the House, I would have been very appreciative if he had let me know the circumstances of that so I could look into it, because our concern for Manitobans is of the utmost importance. The member chooses to raise it here, so I have no idea how many of those calls were placed within a certain amount of time. However, it is always our effort to return the calls of Manitobans and to see that they get the information they need.

Mr. Mackintosh: Perhaps the minister would advise the House why, when a phone call was made on about April 5 to her office, her assistant

said he would get right on it and that person has never heard back yet.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, the member makes accusations in this House, accusations where, obviously, I do not have the information at this moment, but if he would give me more details, I will certainly look into that, too.

However, Mr. Speaker, just to assure Manitobans—because the member often seeks to make Manitobans fearful, and I would like to assure Manitobans that we have certainly taken action in the area of maintenance enforcement by increasing the number of officers. We have increased them by two more in this budget year.

We also have an enhanced computer system now so that we can—[interjection] The members opposite seem to have a great deal of trouble understanding or seem to think it is really very funny.

The information required by those Manitobans is information which we are seeking to provide to them very quickly. By putting it into a computer system, we are able to bring it up more quickly than finding that information manually. Members opposite have treated that also with disdain.

* (1410)

Mr. Mackintosh: My final question to the minister is, how can such plans work when the caseloads of some officers continue to grow, in fact, in one case to 1,930 files, another one to 1,188 files as of May 6—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, the information that I have about the caseloads of officers is in the range of 800 to 900, which is similar to officers across Canada. If the member has other information that would actually help Manitobans and help make this Maintenance Enforcement office function more efficiently, if he believes that there are always ways to make offices more efficient, I would be happy to hear that.

The information that I have from the office is as I have explained to this House. In addition, I have also explained how we are moving to an automated

system where people may be able to pick up the phone, press certain numbers on the phone and get the information, which thereby frees the officers then to deal with more difficult and more complex problems.

Education Facilities Asbestos Regulations

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour.

Back in June 1992, the problem of developing a plan of action to deal with asbestos in the schools was raised with this minister. It is clear from Regulation 53-88 under The Workplace Safety and Health Act that there is a requirement, among other things, that an inventory of substances like asbestos be filed and posted and that there be a management plan developed.

I would ask the minister why he has not taken action on this known problem of asbestos in the schools, particularly in ensuring an inventory is developed for St. James-Assiniboia School Division, and if such an inventory does exist, will he table it in the House?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Radisson should know, under The Workplace Safety and Health Act, the prime responsibility for a particular worksite lies or rests with the owners of that particular worksite.

So, in the case of St. James-Assiniboia School Division, they have a responsibility for the abatement of asbestos problems within their school division. The Department of Labour Workplace Safety and Health Branch is the regulator. We provide advice and assistance, and where action is not taken, we issue the appropriate orders and enforce them.

So, if an inventory in that school division exists, it would be the property of the school division. If we happen to have such an inventory, I will take it as notice to provide it to the member.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, it is this minister's responsibility to enforce Workplace Safety and Health regulations, and I would ask him, what is preventing him from doing this, to ensure that they

are enforced and that a program is developed, a comprehensive program, that is going to look at identifying asbestos in schools, that is going to look at the need for removal and is going to look at managing asbestos in certain situations so it does not have to be removed.

This is a program that is being followed in other jurisdictions—

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

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out to the member for Radisson, under The Workplace Safety and Health Act, the responsibility for dealing with a problem in a particular building lies with the owners of that building. We are the regulators, and we work throughout the province with many owners of buildings to deal with asbestos, but I would point out to the member that she does tend to bring to this House, from time to time, information that is inadequate.

A week or so ago, she asked me a question which I took as notice, and I do have that information to the member now, where she did come to this House indicating that a particular disease, I believe legionnaires' disease, had been found in a particular school, and from the latest report that we had, that there was only a screening test, not a diagnostic test that had revealed—that was one of a number of possibilities. Extensive air testing by the branch did not determine in any way that the particular organisms that caused that illness were present in the school.

I would also inform the honourable member, where she indicated that there had been changes in branch policy with respect to indoor air quality, the branch getting out of that particular business directly, occurred in 1984 when the member's party was in government.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary related to the issue of asbestos in the schools is, will the minister ensure that the code of practice is strengthened to deal with asbestos in public buildings, as I said earlier, so we can have a comprehensive program in Manitoba, enforced in Manitoba, as they have in other jurisdictions?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, one very important part of Workplace Safety and Health is risk management. The member for Radisson tends to bring to this House accusations of problems without any solid indication that there is a particular problem. I would suggest to the member for Radisson, if she has particular incidents that are not being properly handled now, that present a health risk to people in any buildings in this province, that she bring it forward to our staff, and we would be more than pleased to respond.

What we cannot deal with and what does not lead to, I think, good administration of health and safety legislation, is unfounded information, innuendo and anecdotes, just as the member brought up in this House, comments about another alleged spill in Pine Falls that were totally untrue.

Hay Report Implementation Report

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, in 1991, the Hay report on the Civil Service Commission was completed at a cost to taxpayers of \$140,000. Following the public announcement of the audit, the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission set up a committee to oversee the implementation of those recommendations and also promised an interim report as to the status of the government action on the recommendations.

To date, three years after the report was tabled, no report has been forthcoming. I am tabling in the House today a letter dated April 14 sent by the Manitoba Women in Government to the Premier asking for a report.

My question to either the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission is, why has there been no report of the action on the recommendations and the implementation of the recommendations of the Hay Commission?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, I can inform the member for Radisson that many of the recommendations of that particular audit have been implemented by the Civil Service Commission, that we have been

working with a number of people who have been involved in that project. I can tell the member that there have been some very successful projects launched out of that. One that comes to mind is the Executive Development Program in which a number of ministers of this government have participated.

So, to date, I think that the member's question with regard to a report is something we can deal with in Estimates in greater detail.

Ms. Barrett: Yes, the member for Wellington.

When will the government, either the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission or the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or anyone in the government table and report to the Manitoba Women in Government and the people of Manitoba what they said they would do almost three years ago, which was deliver on a regular basis an interim report on the government's actions on the Hay report and not just a question in Question Period?

The people of Manitoba deserve an interim report on what is happening—

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

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I do not particularly recall at that time the commitment that the member for Wellington raises today, that it would be on a regular reporting basis.

I can tell the honourable member for Wellington that many of those recommendations were implemented immediately after the process, which the Manitoba Women in Government were well aware of, and that we have ongoing programs or that they host ongoing programs that are improving the ability of women to advance in senior positions in government.

So the member's question is certainly a valid question, but I think much of the work has been done and is ongoing.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I was at the presentation where the minister did undertake to issue interim reports on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate.

Hay Report Implementation Report

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, will the Premier, in response to the letter of April 14 by the Manitoba Women in Government, now direct the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission to immediately table a written report about the implementation of the recommendations of the Hay report—not waiting for Estimates, but an immediate tabling of a written report so that we know what, if anything, this government has done about the recommendations of the Hay report?

* (1420)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this government has had more women on a percentage basis appointed to boards and commissions than the previous NDP government ever had. This government has more women working in senior officer positions with the government of Manitoba than any other previous government including the NDP, more appointments as judges, more appointments as Queen's Counsels, more appointments to positions of responsibility than any previous government, particularly the New Democrats.

They are all hot air and no action when it comes to that topic. We will have our record stand up against anything they ever did when they were in government, and they can get more information from the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission during his Estimates.

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

We know that there are numerous findings from the report that Peat Marwick Stevenson & Kellogg did in regard to ACCESS programs in Manitoba. Perhaps one of the most significant findings presented in this report indicates that the program has suffered because of the indecisiveness of government with respect to their commitment to

and the vision of the program. The program environment remains unstable because of a lack of funding commitment.

Can the Minister of Education tell us why he has reduced funding to the ACCESS programs which is in a direct contrast to the findings in his own commission report?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the exact passage quoted by the member for Crescentwood, but certainly the uncertainty with respect to funding over the course of the last five years could almost totally be directed towards the federal government, because we have stood in the breach year after year, and I can remember this first-hand through the budgetary process, and standing in and accepting millions of dollars of additional costs associated with the ACCESS program when the federal government unilaterally moved to withdraw.

Mr. Speaker, I am not as certain with respect to the clarity around the remarks referenced by the member for Crescentwood, but I would indicate that this government has certainly maintained its commitment in the area of ACCESS.

Report Tabling Request

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Education is so confident about his decisions he has made in regard to ACCESS funding, why will he not table the report so that all members of this House can discuss the findings of the report, and if he is confident, table it so we can have a discussion to find out if, in fact, his decisions have followed along his own report that was commissioned?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Crescentwood is at a disadvantage because she has been in Health Estimates at the same time as the review of post-secondary education.

As I indicated to the NDP critic in this area who posed the same question several, several times, it is my intention to try and have that report tabled some time in June. It is requiring some final

preparation. That is being done at this present time, and I will table it as quickly as I can.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure who is at the disadvantage. I am telling the minister about what is in the report, and he cannot seem to remember a particular passage that particularly refers to the fact—

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

Ms. Gray: My question to the Minister of Education is, is he prepared this afternoon to table the report so that we can have a discussion about the findings of the Hikel report in regard to the ACCESS program? Is he prepared to do that and prove to the people of Manitoba that his decisions that he made are, in fact, accurate and based on—

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

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, again, there was exhaustive discussion on this issue in Estimates review at that time. As I indicated to the many questions put forward that were similar, identical as a matter of fact to the question put forward by the member for Crescentwood at this time, we will table that report as quickly as we can. Today it is in a draft form and not ready to be tabled.

Health Care System Reform Nursing Consultations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, from the very onset of the government's health reform, it is very clear that the government was not listening to the public and to nurses in particular. Last week's announcement of the make-up of the medical services panel did nothing to dispel this notion, although doctors are represented on the committee, and there is no criticism of that specifically. Nurses and the public in general were not and are not represented on that committee.

My question to the minister is, what specific steps—and not just little fireside chats the minister has with various groups in his office—will this minister take to allow the public and nurses in particular to be plugged into the health reform

process and have real meaningful input, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, specifically, we will have two nurses on the advisory committee on mental health reform. We will have one nurse on the Manitoba Emergency Services Task Force. We will have 11 nurses on the working group to develop criteria for the application of triage definitions. We will have four nurses on the anesthetist working group. We will have eight nurses on the Nurse-Managed Care Working Group. We will have two nurses on the primary care medical transfer group. We will have six nurses on the provincial obstetrical services committee. We will have one nurse on the provincial surgical services committee. We will have one nurse on the Rural Health Advisory Council. We will have nine nurses on the steering committee for critical care nursing education core curriculum program. We will have four nurses on the short-term emergency program project evaluation committee. We will have one nurse on the Terminal Care Committee.

On many, many committees and implementation teams, we have nursing put to the ultimate.

Mr. Chomiak: What the minister does not say is on those same committees, he has 346 doctors and 248 members of his department, and of that total, only 6 percent are nurses and only 4 percent are consumers.

What will the minister do to redress this obvious imbalance, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, we are engaged in seeking the input of medical practitioners, of medial professionals of all kinds, and our bottom line is to seek the right answers for the people we are all supposed to be working for; that is, the patient, our fellow Manitobans, those people who need health care services in this province.

Those are the people we are working for, and nursing professionals throughout Manitoba have indicated their willingness, and we have asked them in large numbers to assist us.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of matters of House business. House leaders have met and agreed to set aside the remaining items in the Estimates of the Department of Health until the minister tables the Capital Estimates for that department and, in the interim, to proceed with the consideration of the Estimates of the Ministry of Family Services and/or other departments in the order listed. I believe that if you were to canvass the House, you would find there is unanimous consent for these changes.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to set aside the Department of Health and bring forward the Department of Family Services at this time? That is agreed. There is unanimous consent.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, would you please canvass the House to determine if there is unanimous consent to change the previously agreed to sitting hours for tomorrow evening from 7 to 11 p.m., currently listed, to 7:30 to 11:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: The House had previously agreed to sit tomorrow evening from 7 to 11 p.m. Now there appears to be a willingness to sit from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Is there unanimous consent for that change?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: There is agreement? It is agreed to.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, so for Estimates this afternoon we will now consider the Department of Family Services in the House, and Education continuing in the committee room.

So I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Education and

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Good afternoon. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training. When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4.(h)(1)(a) on page 42 of the Estimates book.

* (1430)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, before we begin I would like to formally correct an error on page 1447 of Estimates from May 10 when members and myself were discussing curriculum issues. I went on the record as indicating, or I left the impression on the record, that Mr. Macek was an author or had contributed to the new reference material on minerals as part of a supplementary reference in the area of science.

I was in error in suggesting that Mr. Macek was an author or one of the many authors. He was not. Certainly, though, he did review, after the fact the curriculum was released, and did find certain errors which he did bring to my attention. So in my full flight, I overstretched the fact somewhat. I apologize to Mr. Macek or anyone else for that oversight. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the minister for that information.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Deputy Chair, we have been discussing Workforce 2000 and particularly the strategic grants across industries and training grants.

The minister has also, on a number of occasions, indicated that he would bring forward some information on the IBM grant. It was \$50,000 to a corporation for training, a corporation which does

not maintain an educational department. It was a payroll tax rebate.

Could the minister, now that he has his staff here, perhaps give us some further information on what was undertaken by IBM for that rebate and what the total amount of the rebate was?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this was against the payroll tax offset. There was approved training cost of \$50,300, yet only \$22,000 of it was eligible as a tax refund, so the value to the company under this program was \$22,000. The training plan involved 438 hours of training to 87 Manitoba employees as follows: 51 participants and 105 hours of technical skills training, which included Information Systems Management, Application Development Methodology, Computer-Assisted Business Engineering; and 36 participants had 333 hours of human relations general skills training, which included Management Skills, Consulting Solutions, Management Interpersonal Conflict and Communications.

Ms. Friesen: The 333 hours for 36 people in human relations, could the minister give us some further information on the kind of training and the outcomes of that training?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot at this time.

Ms. Friesen: Would the minister undertake to table the training plan for that?

Mr. Manness: I have overviewed the training plan, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. The synopsis I have just read is an overview of that training plan.

If the member is asking for specific documentation as to what was filed on the application form, that is not information that is disclosed.

Ms. Friesen: Okay, so am I clear then from the minister that the 304 lines on the application form which indicate training plan is information which the minister is not prepared to release?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is a detailed plan which we have on file but which will

stay as a relationship between the department and IBM, in this case.

Ms. Friesen: In this particular case, could the minister tell us where the training took place?

Mr. Manness: I do not have that information at this time.

Ms. Friesen: Is the minister aware that IBM has no training section nor a personnel section in Winnipeg or in Manitoba, but that is all handled from Toronto? My question is, was the training actually done in Toronto?

Mr. Manness: We will determine as to whether that is the case, and we will report back.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us when he will provide that information?

Mr. Manness: As soon as we can find an answer to the question, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Ms. Friesen: I do remind the minister that I have asked for this information on two other occasions, and he has undertaken to provide it and not in that specific detail, but so far there has not been anything forthcoming.

Could the minister tell us what the precise formula is or what the general formula is between the amount of payroll deemed eligible and the actual amount spent? The minister in this case—for example, if we use this as the example, approximately \$50,000 of the payroll was eligible and then \$22,000 was eligible for the tax refund. So is that related to the number of employees in the workforce? How is that evaluated?

Mr. Manness: It is a formula in a refundable cost sense, as against payroll tax paid. The annual maximum is the lesser of \$100,000 or 0.3 percent of the company's payroll. So using that then as the basis, reimbursement is calculated on the basis of 75 percent of the first \$20,000 of eligible costs, and 50 percent of training costs in excess of \$20,000. When one applies that formula against the eligibility with respect to the IBM case just cited, the total offset I believe was \$22,000, even though the approved training costs were \$50,300.

Ms. Friesen: Who determines the total payroll costs? Is that a joint determination, or is it simply

the submission of a plan by, in this case, the employer?

Mr. Manness: The Department of Finance administrates this, but it is in after conversation, I understand, with Workforce 2000 to make sure the training plans are acceptable, but the Department of Finance does the administration with respect to this element of Workforce 2000.

* (1440)

Ms. Friesen: So the Department of Finance determines whether the proposed costs are in fact in line, acceptable, normal in the industry?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have passed judgment, firstly, with respect to the training plan. Once the plan I am talking about is acceptable to the government, then after that Finance receives information confirming actual training expenditures by June 30, following the year of application. They are processed and a tax refund is remitted to the employer, this is by Finance, where again the formula that I have just presented is in place, and then audits focusing on training-related expenditures occur.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister give me some information about the training plans submitted by Northern Blower?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in 1992 there were 29 participants who received 68 hours of training. In '93 that number diminished to 21 participants receiving 42 hours of training.

Ms. Friesen: How many hours?

Mr. Manness: Forty-two. Both the '92 and '93 training programs were in the technological category involving instruction in the introduction of new processes.

Course content included structured coaching, train the trainer, management planning, cascade implementation of quality-improvement teams and total quality management.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, could the minister tell us what category of employee was involved in this?

Mr. Manness: No, we cannot. Although if we were forced to guess, we sense it may be supervisory.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister indicate why he cannot tell us that? One of the criticisms which I have made of these programs is in fact the nature of selection for employees and the equality of access to training programs and to these kind of training programs in the workplace.

As I have said on a number of occasions, the issue is not workplace training, the issues are ones which surround that. One which we have discussed before is accountability and evaluation. Another issue, wherever these types of programs are introduced, is the ability of all employees to have access to publicly funded training programs. So who is selecting, in this case, the employees for training, and on what basis are they being selected? That is the reason why I asked for the classifications of the people involved.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is what was obviously different. The member has pointed out many times, management selects the level or indeed the strata of employee who they want to train. I guess over the course of all of the projects or indeed all of the training plans that have come forward across sectors, across individual businesses, we have seen all individuals, regardless of what their economic rank or position is with the company, who have been called upon to improve their training with this level of support. So it is a priority presented and developed by the company. That was the focus of Workforce 2000.

Ms. Friesen: So as far as the minister knows, it is management who selects, and as far as the minister's criteria for the delivery of public money, there is no criteria which would have employers presenting evidence that all employees in a particular category had had access to training. It is simply management selection.

Mr. Manness: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is management selection. This is a model that is obviously finding favour in other jurisdictions because of the fact it is flexible. It instantly, or as close as possible at least time-wise, takes into account the immediate needs of the firm and as

spoken through the management. By the way, the vast majority of funds, I think from the beginning we said that \$1 here levers considerable \$2, \$2.50 of training from the firm. If we were to impose rules and indeed regulations that dictated who should receive the training within the firm and under what conditions, then we may as well not have the program. But of course, that is exactly what the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) would advocate.

Ms. Friesen: The minister, has however, in defending this program, spoken of the empowerment of the individual. Certainly there is some addition for some people in some of the training received, but where is the empowerment for an individual when the employer, in fact by this program, is given public dollars for training and essentially can, may or may not have—I am asking the minister for evidence in fact—but certainly can cherry-pick who he or she wants to have access to training? That basis of selectivity is what I am asking about. Were there any safeguards, were there any indications to the people who were receiving this money that there should be quality of access in the workplace to training money?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, notwithstanding the fact that these are public funds that are put in training, the government has chosen not to challenge management's right to dictate where there will be the greatest return for dollars spent. We found out long ago that if you want to ruin companies, have a government edict or a decree come along and tell them how to manage their affairs. So, again, this is a philosophical difference between the member and myself.

This program has chosen to allow greater freedom for management to decide where the scarce dollars related to training should be directed taking into account not so much the individual needs of the staff, but the greater good of the company. Obviously, if the company does better, then there will be a greater opportunity for employment, there will be more taxes paid and the economy will be more productive. That is the way the theory works.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the other side of that coin of course is that when you reduce the opportunities at community colleges and when you increase the cost of certain types of training at vocational schools, then in fact what you are doing is reducing the opportunities for employees to find education, further training, further certification at public institutions. You have essentially added to the power of management with public money to determine who is trained and for what they are trained. So, again, it is the equality of access and the empowerment of the individual in that case which is the issue here and cannot be seen in isolation from what has happened elsewhere.

Mr. Manness: That is the issue with the member for Wolseley. The issue with me, and indeed with the government, is that private firms in many cases who are not training had no natural fit with the courses being offered at our formal institutions, therefore had very little value for them, but still needed training nevertheless. We are suffering—Manitoba was suffering as a result and needed a new system of training that empowered more greatly the management of the firm. That was the essence of Workforce 2000. So that is the issue, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in my mind, not the issue as put forward by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen).

* (1450)

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister give us an idea of what kind of training took place in the Kentucky Fried Chicken payroll plan? What was the curriculum? That was a human relations one, I think.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if that is the first time the member has asked about it, we have not developed a response formally to that, but we will endeavour to do that if the member wishes.

Ms. Friesen: Well, we are in Estimates. The minister does have his staff here. I have asked about a specific example, one that is in the current year, or the year just past, of payroll tax deduction. I would have expected that Estimates was where the minister was going to answer those kinds of questions. I have not raised that specific question before, but I have certainly used it as an example,

so I would have thought that it might have perhaps been monitored by the department or some evidence be available.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have with us 170 pages of briefing materials. If we were to bring along all of the files associated with Workforce 2000, we could multiply that by tenfold. So I did not know that this particular firm and its training costs were an issue with the member. I knew obviously that the IBM case and Northern Blower were, so there had been issue sheets prepared on those particular requested areas, and I will prepare issue sheets for any one. But I can tell the member that around every one of these firms which have received support under Workforce 2000, there is a myriad of information, and we have not brought all of that with us, because we would have to, of course, rent a moving van to bring the files with us. So the member can chastise us for not having ready answers to some of her questions, but the reality is, unless I know into what area she wants to delve, I do not have all that information with me.

Again, she points out it is my responsibility to talk about the past. That is not true. We are talking about the future. We are talking about money going to be spent in the 1994-95 year. Again, I am not going to belabour that point, but the member is out of order in many respects when she begins to ask questions about 1993-94.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, well, I have pointed out the logical difficulties of this. Since the minister does not table a list of grants which are about to happen which we could ask questions on, then presumably he has to answer questions on the year just past. I mean, logically, it has to be one or the other. If the minister was prepared to table a list of the companies which were receiving it in this coming fiscal year which we are examining, then I would be happy to ask questions on those. But logically, it has to be one or the other.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, logically, it does not have to be one or the other. Logically, it may not have been determined yet which firms are going to receive what funding. [interjection] Well,

of course. This is a dynamic program, and so if the member is saying—I mean, the member knows government better than that. If she says that April 1 of a new fiscal year the government knows exactly where every dollar is going to be directed by way of cheque to every firm or every person outside of government. If she is saying that is the way she thinks governments work, well nothing is further from the truth. We are seeking authority.

We are seeking spending authority to spend so many million dollars in this program area with the criteria in place, and through the year, ultimately there will be applications come forward. This is a dynamic process. It is not static.

Through that period of time, we will determine, rightfully or wrongfully, as the applications come in and it is measured against the criteria, whether or not a certain company warrants support. Of course, as the money is spent as we go through the year, through the fiscal year, sometime by late next fall and we see how much money is left and we see how many applications are left, by that time some number of applications will be denied.

The member is saying, no, you must know right now who it is all the money is going to go to. Well, that is a false argument, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and it is not in keeping with reality, because we do not know at this point. So we cannot tell her who are going to be the recipients of the money, that we are seeking authority, at this sitting, to spend in a global fashion.

Ms. Friesen: Well, I am sure as the minister knows, that is not the issue. The issue is what he was prepared to answer questions on and the logic of what he was prepared to answer questions on. In the absence of a list, understandably the absence of a list, and in the absence in this particular case of no criteria publicly available and no evaluations publicly available and no public accountability for this program, then the minister I believe ought to logically answer some questions on the past year.

Mr. Manness: I am not going to sit here and let the member say that there is no public accountability. Workforce 2000, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, was an issue of the Provincial Auditor. The Provincial Auditor looked into the

program, looked into the mission statement of the program, looked to see whether or not the program was delivering in keeping with that mandate. That is part of the record, part of the Provincial Auditor's statement. I do not know what higher authority the member wants to go to.

I know the Provincial Auditor has now been here as part of Public Accounts and has been asked to address certain questions surrounding Workforce 2000 but has written, most definitely. If the member is saying that the Provincial Auditor is not accountable and that that person now has done a shoddy job, then she is going to either have to accept what the Provincial Auditor has said or she is going to have to say that the Provincial Auditor basically has not done her job. She cannot have it both ways, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. This program has been through the public scrutiny, and it has obviously passed the test exceedingly well.

Ms. Friesen: As the minister well knows, the Provincial Auditor recommended that the minister publish an annual accounting of Workforce 2000 with his annual report. On several occasions on which I have asked him whether he intends to comply with that, there has been no clear answer and the minister has said he is considering it. That would be a start if he were in fact to comply with the recommendation of the Provincial Auditor. So that is the issue.

I want to ask the minister about Nygard company which received for 11 trainees, in Categories 1 and 3, total training cost approval for \$16,000. I wonder if the minister could give us a sense of what the training plan was in that case.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the answer is the same as that given with respect to the chicken franchise the member was asking.

Ms. Friesen: Well, I gather the minister's response is that he only has 150 pages of briefing notes here. Could he give us a list before we start of which ones he is going to answer questions on? Which ones has he prepared briefing notes on?

Mr. Manness: On the ones that were asked specifically of me in the House.

Ms. Friesen: So the minister means to sit here and to say that he is not going to answer any questions on any specific case of Workforce 2000 unless it had been previously raised in the House? What precedent can he give me for that in the process of Estimates that everything must be raised in the House before a minister will answer to it when he has his staff at Workforce 2000 sitting here with him?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would think the member would want me to read a synopsis, to try and do an overview of the training programs and agreements entered into as I did with respect to Northern Blower and also IBM. I have no problem doing that for any of the specific firms that the member wants to focus upon, but that has not been done yet. It is not a case of leaving that information back at the office. We do not and have not yet developed those synopsis sheets firm by firm by firm, and that is done deliberately.

I mean, I do not want this staff spending all of its time in a bureaucratic maze. I want them to deliver this program, and that is what they are doing. So if the member then wants to tell me which companies she would like to pose specific questions on, then I will try over time to give her the same synopsis that I did with respect to Northern Blower.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, over the last three weeks I have been asking about Northern Blower and IBM in the House. It has taken three weeks now for the minister to give, what I would call, not a full response.

* (1500)

Mr. Manness: I did not respond in the House on Northern Blower. I did use it—[interjection] I did so. I may have not taken as notice, but I did respond specifically on Northern Blower. It is on part of the record. I read part of the information today. I have already read that into the record, but I mean, let us not dispute that fact, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I will ask the member for Wolseley which firms she wants to focus upon, and we will try to develop synopsis sheets for her.

Ms. Friesen: Well, I would like to know about every one of them. This is public money. I want to

know about every report. I want to know the training plans for each of the companies who have received this. The minister is not prepared to table that annually with his report. He is only prepared to answer questions which have been raised earlier in the House. He has his staff sitting here with him.

I would point out to the minister that when people file a plan with Workforce 2000, there is a very brief synopsis which is written. They are asked to circle one, two or three, in terms of the training categories which are required. They are given a space of about four or five lines, in fact, to write a very brief outline of their training plan. I am interested to know whether that is, in fact, all they have to supply. They have to indicate who is the trainer.

Now there is a brief synopsis which it seems to me is not beyond the realms of possibility for any minister to direct his staff to keep in some kind of systematic fashion. I mean, I believe we do even have computers these days that might perhaps be able to codify some of this in some simple way so that the minister could, in fact, bring up the material very quickly, but it has taken three weeks even from the House to ask a question and to be provided with not what I would call a training plan. The minister has given me some categories of training but not a training plan. He has given me no information on who the trainer was. He has given me no information on what the outcomes of that training were, and he has provided absolutely no information on what categories of employees were selected.

Some of the very basic questions which I asked in the House, which after three weeks he has not supplied even now when he has his staff sitting with him. It is not beyond the bounds of reason to ask for the very elemental material on this program that I am asking for now in Estimates.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, for the record, we have provided reams of information already for the member. We have indicated the number of participants, by company name, the training area, and the member talks about the three categories. We have talked about the training costs that have been approved. So let not the record state

that we have provided no information. We have provided absolutely all the detail associated with the company: number of participants, the costs, the training areas, whether they are technical or technological, basic education, human relations.

I do not quarrel with the member's right to know even more detail, Mr. Deputy Chairperson; that is not at issue. But what is at issue is the timeliness with respect the member expects me to jump and to direct staff resources to preparing all of this information and providing training plans for the companies. If the member is saying now she wants all of that detailed information, I am saying to her, well, that now is going to take considerable time. I can respond issue by issue, one by one, and I will try and do my best to present an overview, a synopsis of the training, but if the member is wanting volumes of material and she wants it on her time, I am saying to the member, unfortunately, we cannot provide that because it is not prepared. It is a massively onerous task, and I think that it would be better if the member would direct her queries to some of the individual firms that she might have a specific interest in.

Ms. Friesen: Is this information kept on a computer?

Mr. Manness: We have some information on file, but the data base does not have any of the detailed information that the member is seeking.

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

Ms. Friesen: Can the minister tell us what is meant by human relations in the context of Kentucky Fried Chicken or anybody else who has trained in human relations? Are we training these people to smile more brightly? What on earth is it you are paying for?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is the third area, human relations, general skills under eligible training; time and stress management, enhanced presentation skills, negotiation and teamwork skills, leadership, management and supervisory skills and organizational strategies such as total quality management.

Now, if the member for Wolseley (Mr. Friesen) wants to take that to mean smiling, well, I am not going to be able to stop her. She has the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), who when technical training was going to support of mechanics, he of course diverted that to mean support of used car salesmen. So if the member for Wolseley now is going to take this broad area and mean that to training in smiling, if that is her approach to legitimate training that has helped so many Manitobans—97 percent of the training by the way, 97 percent of the public by the way, the trainees who are so supportive of the program—if she wants to in any way denigrate the training and call it smiling, a public relations exercise in smiling, well, so be it. She is going to have her day in court anyway. [interjection] Well, the member for Wolseley used that term.

Point of Order

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): On a point of order, I wanted to point out to the minister when he makes comments about me in regard to the grants to the car dealers, that last year in the committee, the minister at the time did admit that Keystone Ford got \$10,000 for training car salesmen. That is on the record, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): Order, please. The member did not have a point of order. The honourable minister to continue.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I can understand the sensitivity of this issue by the opposition. I mean this is a good program. It is being mirrored in other parts of the country. It recognizes the greater flexibility that industry has to have today if it is going to stay competitive, efficient.

In spite of the fact that this government has made significant contribution to greater governance at the community college level, increased funding this year, I know the members opposite feel very sensitive with respect to these training issues, because they want the rigid state system of control to continue to be in place. I guess

we have a difference in philosophy and they cannot quite handle it. That is their problem.

I am not going to deny those companies who make a tremendous contribution to the wealth of our province an opportunity to train in a short period of time employees who are craving for an opportunity to enhance their skills.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, the minister—I think I now have said this four times. I do not know how many times it takes for the minister to actually understand a simple principle. The issue is not workplace-based training. The issue is, in fact, accountability and priorities and equal accessibility to these programs, and that has been the direction of my questioning.

I wanted to ask the minister about Caron's Collectibles, which received \$10,000 of Workforce contribution in '93-94 to train two trainees for \$10,000. I wondered if the minister could give us some information on that one.

Mr. Manness: The answer is the same as it was before. We have not brought additional information with respect to that firm—

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): You have no answers. You are kidding. What do you think you are doing here?

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

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I do not need the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) to holler at me. I am experienced—

Mr. Plohman: Holler at you, you never heard hollering. You hear me whispering to you in the House.

Mr. Manness: Well, he can holler. He can make as big a fool of himself as he usually does on every other issue.

The reality is, as I said to the member before he came in, we are here reviewing '94-95 Estimates. The member for Wolseley is painstakingly putting questions, I might add out of order, with respect to money spent in '93-94. Then the member is critical of me when I do not have the detail associated with every file. I have invited her to tell me specifically

which of the companies she would like greater detail on.

The member said that she would like some more detail on Caron's Collectibles Inc.. In other words, the trainer name is Smart Products, this is CAD-CAM training, \$10,000 from Workforce, total value of training \$18,000. That means the company put in \$8,000. That training started on May 3, 1993, and completed October 28, 1993. That was under Class 1 as referenced earlier.

* (1510)

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, in that case, there was \$10,000 spent to train two employees in CAD-CAM training, training which is available in other locations, and a number of programs in fact were CAD-CAM training. Some were done in architects' offices; some were done in community colleges; some were done, in this case, two people for \$10,000.

Has the minister done any surveys to look at the efficacy of spending, the effectiveness of spending this kind of money in small workplaces? Are there economies of scale which used to be made by the community colleges, for example, or in this case, in parts of the program are made by the community colleges? How does the minister decide to train two people for \$10,000?

Mr. Manness: Well, we are always looking for efficiency, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. We are always looking for much greater efficiency. That is why we do industry training. That is why we encourage industries or sectors to come together as a group, so that there could be greater efficiency. That is why we try and do cluster training and direct, where applicable, to the institution that offers programming in the time frame in keeping with the requirements of the firms.

To repeat for the record—and the member says she repeats for the fourth time; I think I am repeating now for the fifth time—there are individuals firms, individual companies who do not fit under an industry banner, do not fit under a sector program banner, and that require an opportunity in fairness to have some specialized

training dealing with our set of circumstances. That is what happened in this case.

Ms. Friesen: What were the special circumstances then in this case which required spending \$10,000 to train two people? Why were other programs not available to them, or why were other programs not appropriate?

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, without being able to answer that specifically, I would say generally that this firm, looking at its workload and the availability of staff, the program, the training offered here had to be provided in a hands-on, specific, directed sense to this company, and it did not lend itself to being part of a larger, more efficient group of training or clustered training.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell me then: What was so specific about this company? What does this company do?

Mr. Manness: No, I cannot, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. I do not know what this company does.

Ms. Friesen: Will the minister undertake to find out what this company does?

Mr. Manness: I most certainly will, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson.

Ms. Friesen: Will the minister explain why \$10,000 would train two people in this case and why it had to be so specifically tailored to this particular company? I have been unable to find this company, by the way. I would be interested to know what it did.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, certainly, now that the member cannot find this, I will want to make sure that this company exists, and—

Mr. Plohman: Should you not have found out before? You gave it money. This is ridiculous.

Mr. Manness: Well, the loud blower from Dauphin says that I should have known this before. I mean I did not blow 27-28 million bucks in Saudi Arabia, like the member previous, but we will find out. None of this money is spent, as I have indicated on the record several times, not a dollar

is spent until after the training is done and the claim is presented to the department.

Ms. Friesen: The money may not be paid until after the training is done, but the minister, I think, has indicated in earlier answers that he does not have a systematic way of ensuring that the training has been done—50 percent provide personal evaluations, individual ones, another 10 or 20 percent have on-site visits, but the evaluation is not done in a systematic way. It seems to me that if it were, you might have a very easily available file of answers to the kinds of questions that I am asking. That would be certainly one way of providing it.

There are two general types of questions I want to ask, and I will, by the way, provide the minister with a very specific list of companies which I would like more information on the kind of training which has been done. I want to ask about financial companies. The minister, in his responses a number of times in the House and to the press, has indicated that financial companies have not received money from this Workforce 2000. Would he indicate what he meant by that?

Mr. Manness: They were barred from applying under the payroll tax offset, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. They are eligible to apply under the other two programs.

Ms. Friesen: How many financial companies have received grants under the Workforce 2000 program since its inception?

Mr. Manness: I do not have that information.

Ms. Friesen: In the last year of the Workforce 2000 program, the smaller grants, could the minister tell us how many financial companies received financing or received assistance in the last year?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I will try and share some broad numbers, and it falls into the sector finance, insurance and realty, the very broadest definition of the finance area.

Since the beginning of the program, there have been 119 contracts with small and medium business. I have, I should say, regional breakouts for the province. The provincial contribution has been, and this is since the beginning of the

program, roughly \$1 million that have levered almost \$3 million of training.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

The skill development has been in the total quality management training for finance and insurance firms, training in specialized real estate industry software for 42 employees, and again, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have nothing more than a breakout as to the number of contracts. Of the 119, 48 have been in the city of Winnipeg, 35 have been in the Westman area, 6 in Interlake, and 15 in the Parkland area for the member of Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

Ms. Friesen: What proportion of those were given to real estate companies?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not have that information with me right now. This was the only broad overview we have available.

Ms. Friesen: If this was the application or the teaching of the application of computer and software techniques to real estate, why would these be given to individual companies?

* (1520)

Surely the real estate industry in Winnipeg and Manitoba is a well-organized industry. It has a real estate board. It has an elected directorate. It is very well connected in terms of multiple listing services. Why would there not be one industry-wide program that could be used for that?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is again a debating issue. I am prepared to answer questions or try and find details specific to any agreement with any individual firm in attempting to reach out to the province as a whole. In this case or up to this point, I might add, we have not worked through an industry association, but probably we should work in that direction if we can in this area, particularly within the real estate area.

Ms. Friesen: But in the meantime, how much money has been put into individual workplaces in a program which could have been delivered much more effectively on an industry-wide basis?

I mean, why has it taken three years for the minister even to figure out that there was a possibility of dealing with the real estate industry on an industry-wide basis?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the members opposite are calling into question the whole program, and that is fine, it is their right to do so, but the government has put this program forward. It set into place the general criteria. It is fine tuning that area, the criteria area, and it supports the program.

Now the members are against it; we are for it. We have asked the Provincial Auditor to view the program to see that we are keeping in the context of the mission and the mandate of the program, whether or not we are delivering a program in keeping with the way government programs are delivered. We are given comfort from the Provincial Auditor that we are living within the spirit of good accountability and good management of the taxpayers' resources.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask about other financial institutions. Again, the same principles would seem to apply. If we are looking at computer-assisted software for financial institutions, the same principles of industry-wide application would seem to be there.

So I wonder if the minister could tell us, for example, Midland Walwyn, which has received grants two years in a row, was there something particular to that company which indicated that they could not participate with other people in the same industry in having some of their employees undertake some of this training?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we will undertake to find some more information with respect to Midland Walwyn.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister explain why the distinction was made between the payroll tax refund and the individual grants in the case of Midland Walwyn, in the case of financial institutions? There are other areas, for example, again, the Kentucky Fried Chicken, where some Kentucky Fried Chicken is receiving the payroll tax reduction, and in addition, some of the

franchisees are getting individual grants. So why was that distinction made in the case of financial institutions? What particular principle is the government applying here?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think we are a move short and a move down, you know, the hypothetical road. I just wish the member would ask specific questions, and we will try our best to give greater detail another day with respect to the question that she poses.

Ms. Friesen: The minister is perhaps achieving his goal and leaving me speechless. He will not answer questions on principle; he will not answer questions about specific cases. He does not provide the kind of information which I have asked for in the House.

Now we are told in Estimates, the basic place where ministers are responsible in a more informal, and in the spirit of some, kind of open discussion about the purposes of their program, and we are finding absolutely no information. This is a stonewall from the minister on a program which I must underline is the only educational initiative that this government has undertaken in the area of post-secondary training. When you have cut community colleges and when you have cut the other public institutions, this is the jewel in your crown.

Why is there not an annual report of this? Why is there not something which says, look what we have done for Peter Nygard, look what we have done for Simplot Canada, look what we have done for Bristol Aerospace, look about the 49,000 we have given to Cargill, look about the amount of money we have given to Boeing Canada and to Borland Construction and to Bristol Aerospace? Where is the pride in this program?

What on earth is the minister hiding? He knows that we have been interested in this in Question Period. He knows that we have a number of questions, some of which are specific, some of which are questions of principle. I am now asking, because the minister has literally stonewalled and refused to answer any questions on any specific question in these Estimates process, I am now directing my questions to questions of principle, to

questions of policy, and I find that the minister is not prepared to discuss the policy or the principles.

I repeat again my question: Why, in the area of financial institutions, did the minister make the decision not to allow them to apply under the payroll tax deduction fund, but only to allow them to have the individual one?

What is the difference in the minister's mind in those two programs that that distinction must be made? That is a question of principle.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was the Minister of Finance, I restricted them. I restricted them in the offset. I restricted them because I did not want them to have an offset against their payroll tax—as simple as that.

What was the principle? The principle was that they paid payroll tax, a significant amount, and I wanted them to pay that full amount and not less. The principle was that if you were in the financial circle, you did not get an offset against payroll tax. That was the principle and nothing more.

Now, the member can say we are not proud of the program, we are extremely proud of the program. We have said so over and over again. When you train 60,000 people, when you have the evaluations come back, when you survey people, employees, and survey the employers, and there is an 80 to 90 percent acceptance rate of how well the program is delivered and how well it has levered and brought about a new training culture and a corporate training culture. Then we say the program has been a success; that was the goal. The member can say that we have turned our back on the institutions. We have not. At least the member, why does she not dialogue with the private employers, and why does she not ask the question, well, why have the public institutions failed? Of course, all she can say is, well, it is money. You have cut money. It is a money issue, more money.

So I am saying, obviously there is a new model that has been wanted. The government saw this a few years ago as a result of the STAC review. This was the public crying out for a different model of delivery, not to one that was going to be at cross-purposes with the formal institutions, but the

one that was going to allow for shorter periods of training, more specifics and that would result in more expeditious training. That has happened.

The member says it is our jewel, well, the member can say it is anything at all, but the reality is, it has been an extremely successful program. We stand behind it. Furthermore, the member, of course, chastises me for not having a million and fifty details under my consideration, that I cannot answer all of her detailed questions; well, I am sorry, I am only a human being. I do not pretend to have all of that information at my disposal.

* (1530)

I have given overview information. I have tried to find answers out to her specific questions on specific companies. I still make that offer. I made that offer at least now for the sixth time, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I will continue to do that, but I am telling her, I did not bring along all the filing cabinets that have all of the details associated with every one of the firms that has received support under this program. Am I proud of Workforce 2000? As the government, obviously we are. Does it need some straightening up in a few areas? Obviously it does. I have said so, and we have made some of those changes and will continue to make some of the fine tuning changes. Overall the program has delivered as we have said it would.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would point out to the minister that he has not tabled a single training plan. He has not tabled a single curriculum. He has not given us a sense, in any of the examples I have asked, about any kind of outcome, of any evidence of outcome. He has not tabled his questions of evaluation. He has not even in fact evaluated all of the programs which have been in front of him.

There are ways, and I have suggested to the minister before, there are ways of providing some of this information in a very easy format. It does not seem to me to be beyond the abilities of the minister to direct his staff to do that, particularly for areas that are not currently in the program for those which have been completed. There is no evidence that the minister has done that or is interested in doing it or is going to comply with the

Auditor's recommendation that an annual report be published.

The question I asked before this was why financial institutions were exempt under the payroll tax exemption and were not exempt under the other. The minister essentially has given me the circular answer: because I said so when I was Minister of Finance. Could the minister now give me an indication of why he made that policy decision? Why were financial corporations, financial companies, to be required to pay the full payroll tax and companies of the scale, for example, of Simplot or Cargill or Boeing or any of the extremely large companies of Manitoba, which were able to have a payroll tax deduction? What distinction was the minister making in his mind at that point, when he made that distinction?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have alluded to this on several occasions, and the answer that I have provided consistently is that I have tried to make a determination as to which of our firms and sectors were contributing to the wealth of the province through outreach of exports and/or services outside of the province. That was the general principle that I tried to bring to bear when I considered, as the former Minister of Finance, a decision as to whether or not a sector, particularly, was eligible for offset as against payroll tax.

I always said Simplot, which exports so much of their product, bringing in foreign exchange into the province, into the nation, that I could justify and offset as against that type of activity no differently than Versatile Manufacturing, more so than I could with the financial institutions who are here providing a service that if they were not here would be probably provided by some other institution. That was the general principle behind the decision.

Ms. Friesen: So the guiding focus then for the payroll tax refund was export. Does the minister have any information on how that would apply to Kentucky Fried Chicken or to Chicken Delight or to Videon or Jim Pattison Sign Group Manitoba?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as far as Kentucky Fried Chicken, we cannot seem to find

that on the '93-94 list. Maybe the member can show it to us. If I am in error, I will apologize.

Ms. Friesen: I have Chicken Delight on the '93-94, and I have Kentucky Fried Chicken on the '92 list, to February '93 in fact. I expect that Holt Renfrew, for example, on the '93-94 one would perhaps fall into the same group, as would Pepsi-Cola in the '93-94 ones. I can see the minister's distinction that he is making about export, and certainly there is a considerable number on these payroll tax deductions which are export oriented, but there are some that are not.

So is the minister telling me or telling us that the policy has changed, that this is one of his streamlinings, that this is one of his distinctions he has made?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are really digging up the past here, but when I was the Minister of Finance in '91 when we brought in the offset, originally the eligibility criteria—and these are broad context—since '91 Manitoba firms engaged in goods producing industry, manufacturing, with payrolls in excess of \$600,000. That was the general eligibility criteria in '91. Effective '92, the criteria were amended to include service sector companies. That was in '92. In '93 the criteria were amended to exclude financial insurance companies. Of course, the payroll eligibility threshold increased to \$750,000 in synchronization with the move to exempt all those who had payrolls below that level. So that is the history associated with one aspect of the Workforce 2000 program, namely, the payroll tax offset or refund program.

Ms. Friesen: So that in fact, contrary to what the minister said a couple of minutes ago, in '92 service sector was added and is still there as a criteria.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this was done in '92 realizing that virtually all of the service sector was not paying payroll tax except from the large firms, and recognizing that we were trying to compete in the international world of call centres, as I recall, and that we were vitally interested per the framework for economic development, that we were trying to reach out to larger back-room

operations and activities associated with the call centres.

We made a decision at the time, given we had a payroll tax that of course we were totally opposed to, the NDP brought in and wanted to charge against everybody, virtually. We decided to include an element of the service sector because, of course, the number of people who would be eligible under this area would be minimal. We then realized that the banks were those who were beginning to show some interest, and then in '93 we tried to shut out the banking institutions.

Ms. Friesen: So what is the economic justification for Holt Renfrew training their people in human relations under the payroll tax deduction fund?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am trying to tighten the service sector up. We opened it to reach out to some specific areas, and all of a sudden Holt Renfrew came in, and what are we talking about? We are talking about refund eligibility of \$2,100 that was directed towards eight participants, 16 hours of training, instruction in human relations, general skills category, course content induced customer service, goal setting, communication skills, problem solving, decision making and stress reduction, so \$2,100 of a total value of \$4,700, so \$1 levered over two. I indicate to the member that this is where we are trying to be more specific and again trying to direct the training towards a greater sector or industry-supported activity. These are the changes that are being made in the program.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wonder if the minister could read over that list of training categories again. I do not think I got it all. Customer service, stress reduction, goal setting—

Mr. Manness: Communication skills, problem solving, decision making, would be the exhaustive list.

Ms. Friesen: I am sorry, I am trying to write this down at the same time. Communication skills, problem solving, and what was the last one?

Mr. Manness: Decision making.

Ms. Friesen: I wonder if the minister could indicate what Holt Renfrew did in these areas

before the minister's program emerged? Were there no goals set? Were there no communication skills? Was there no customer service? Was there no decision making or problem solving? What is the legitimate role in training—sorry, the legitimate role of the employer in training or the legitimate role of the company or the co-operative in training? I think this particular instance might bring some of those general questions about all of these types of programs into some relief. So could the minister indicate why that particular program was approved?

* (1540)

Mr. Manness: I cannot, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and I will say again for the fifth time for the record, at the beginning this program had a very wide intake, and some would say too wide. As I have indicated over the course of several months, over the years we have made more decisions that have caused greater restrictions to be put into place and such that some of the wide intake that occurred at the beginning is no longer occurring. The program did exactly what it wanted to. It was very well conceived. It wanted to move very rapidly in causing private sector training to take place, very specialized training, and with that went some risk.

The risk, as I have indicated publicly for the record, as I have been reported to have said, the risk it associated was that in a very, very small percentage of cases, hardly measurable, there were some maybe who took advantage of the program, and the training maybe was moved into an abstract area. So I say to the member there is nothing new here. It has all been part of the public record, and we are making changes accordingly. [interjection]

Now, the member talks about shredding files, the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). The reality is, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as part of the former NDP government he knows what shredding files is. We have the files, but we are not going to present anything other than general reviews of what was involved in the training, and, again, I reviewed the broad training areas that were provided in the Holt Renfrew case. The member has fun with them. She seems to get some enjoyment as I provide her with that detail. I am

hiding nothing, but I do have to have some time to bring certain information out with respect to a number of the specific firms because that is not with us today.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is the minister saying that he will provide further information on the kind of training that occurred at Holt Renfrew?

Mr. Manness: This was a two-hour training session. I have provided to the member. Sorry, 16 hours, two days. I have presented the broad topic areas of training that occurred over those two-day periods.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you. So the minister will not provide any further information on that particular case.

Mr. Manness: Today? I am sorry.

Ms. Friesen: I am asking a question of principle. How much information, how much public accountability is in these programs? The minister has read us a list of categories of training. I am asking, is he prepared to give us further detail on what, for example, customer service meant, what actual training took place in the area of customer service?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member again is asking us to lay before her copies of the curriculum. We do not have that. I have said that on many occasions. If we did have it, I do not know whether we would provide it to the member anyway, because it could very well be proprietary information, not of the government's but of the firm. Some of this training is very sophisticated. It is in-house. [interjection]

The member says, on what basis, principles. We have spent countless hours on Workforce 2000. That is the height of accountability. That is what accountability is all about, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I am very proud of the fact that staff has been here, and we have provided all the detailed information we have to this point now. We will provide more, as the member focuses in on the firms that she would like greater detail provided on.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister talks about proprietary information, but on other occasions he has talked about generic skills and empowerment of the individual. The minister cannot have it both ways, either it is one or the other. Perhaps in different cases, it is one or the other, but without the information, without the evidence, we have a really very difficult time making any kind of judgment on that. The minister is not prepared to provide any further evidence on, for example, customer service.

I did also want to come back to a theme that the minister raised in his last longer answer, and that was that in the early years of this program there was a wide intake. I would point out to the minister that this Holt Renfrew one was not in the earlier intakes but was in fact in the '93-94. So this Holt Renfrew—[interjection] No, '93-94, it says on my list. So this is not the original wide intake, this is the considered, streamlined, slimmed-down, precise program that the minister has come up with so far.

I would secondly point out that this is specifically the service sector, which the minister introduced in '92, not in that first year of wide intake, but in the second year, after—one hopes, but should not assume in this program—there has been some evaluation of the overall directions of the program, and so this is after evaluation. This is the most recent set of applications, and this is a program which is training people in customer service, goal setting, communication skills, problem solving and decision making.

I wonder what else Holt Renfrew does for its training staff that is not covered under this program. To what extent is this program in effect taking over the responsibilities of employers in the workplace for training and education? Does this enter into any of the criteria for the program? How does the minister view, in principle, in general, the responsibilities of the employer or of the management in training? What is the rightful role of the employer? What is the rightful role of Workforce 2000 or a program like this?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the program came into foster training across a wide

spectrum. It came in as a shock therapy to foster a training culture across the piece.

It is time to now redefine who is eligible. I share some of the sentiments of the member for Wolseley. To that end, I will be reviewing the criteria associated again, particularly in the service sector. The service sector, though, is very, very hard to define. Anybody who has looked at it from a Stats Canada measurement as to what it contributes to the economy is always horrified by the fact that now as a catch-all area, it measures 60-70 percent, it is now approaching 80 percent of jobs, 60-70 percent of gross national product, and yet it has no definition. It is a catch-all.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are trapped. We have some of the same difficulties when we try and develop programming that reaches into this sector, because I do not want to exclude everybody that comes under that label because there are many which border very closely to be export oriented. I think of the tourism industry particularly. Many components of it fall under the service sector side, and yet it is natural wealth creation to the extent that any individual can be encouraged to come to our province, spend their resources here and go home with less money rather than that with which they came.

* (1550)

Yet I do not want this program to be abused across the whole gamut of the service area, and I would think the example cited most recently by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) is one that bears greater insight, and I will do that, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I would think another year, certainly in terms of '94-95, that some of the examples cited by the member for Wolseley will not in themselves be candidates eligible for additional support under Workforce 2000.

But that is happening at this present time. It has happened since I have come into office, and the staff is—

An Honourable Member: We started asking the questions.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) again, as he

is akin to do, likes to chirp from his seat, says that this is happening as a result of questions being put by the member for Wolseley.

Nothing is further from the truth. I have brought a concern about a whole host of these issues to this office. I developed them when I was the Minister of Finance. Nothing has changed.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the minister perhaps lost the thrust of the general question I was asking, which is under Workforce 2000. What is considered to be the legitimate role of the company in training, and how is that examined? Where does that appear in the proposals of a company?

For example, the minister says he wants to deliver a shock therapy. Well, as I look to the larger companies of Manitoba, as I look at many of these companies, I mean, I know that companies like Simplot, for example, like D.W. Friesen, like IBM, have corporate training programs already in place. So where is the shock therapy? The minister is distributing money to companies which already have well-established training programs. Where is he drawing the line to say here is what the company should do, and here is where Workforce 2000 can make a difference in partnership with private industry in the workplace. Where are those kinds of criteria?

Mr. Manness: Well, the examples cited by the member are long outstanding and credible companies who pay a significant amount of payroll tax, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in support of all of the good activities. I do not know with certainty whether that is the program area in which they fall and have received support under Workforce 2000. I sense it is.

When you set your basic criteria as firms, whether they are doing training or not but who are paying payroll tax, who are making an incredible contribution to the wealth generation of the province by way of exporting, how do you deny them when there are smaller firms who are probably making a lesser contribution? So that is the rationale.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister give me an idea of the export contribution of Holt Renfrew then?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chair, I was talking about Simplot and D.W. Friesen. Those are the examples cited by the member for Wolseley.

Ms. Friesen: It seems to be that there are a number of criteria involved here and that they are each invoked on different occasions for different purposes. Either it is the shock or it is the fact that they are export or perhaps that they are not export and are service which is difficult to define and, hence, we must be all-inclusive, even in 1992. The minister understands I am trying to get a handle here on the principles behind the payroll tax refund program and its companion piece, the grants to individual companies, and the distinction the minister has made both as Minister of Health [sic] and Minister of Education over the years in defining these two programs.

So it is an attempt to try and understand those general principles that I would like to ask about Palmer Jarvis and associates, the advertising company, which had training costs approved in '93-94 for \$6,500 to train again in human relations 24 participants. Could the minister give me an idea of what the principles behind that were and what kind of training took place?

Mr. Manness: We have no more information that we have provided to the member by way of the overview, and as the member points out, it is Category 3 that the support was provided.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, could the minister tell me something more about the basic education which is involved in Workforce 2000? It is Category 2. For example, National Typewriter this year had basic education, so did McMunn and Yates, MacMillan Bathurst, Lemique Enterprises, Valmar Air Flo, Warehouse One Limited, Stylerite Department Stores, Redfern Farm Services, Unisource Canada Incorporated, Export Packers Company Limited, Carte International Inc.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, remember the history of this. It is more than Workforce 2000. The government has for many years been wanting to roll back the payroll tax, that

most vexatious destroyer of jobs anywhere on the face of the earth. We have taken thresholds forward. Today 90 percent of the firms no longer pay the tax. We did not have the money available to us, we could not forgo the revenue, so what we decided to do was to offer, as against the rate of 2.25 percent, a refund of 0.3 percent for those who had eligible training.

We talked about, in the first instance, recognizing basic skills, Category 1: literacy, numeracy, communication skills, problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, and learning to learn. That was our contribution through payroll tax offsets to the recognition that there is a minority, but still large element within the workforce, who have to have improved basic skills.

Secondly, technological skills. We said, okay, let us then provide relief in training for those companies who go through programmable factory automation, quality assurance, blueprint reading, technological upgrading, and computer skills at all levels, and that is a worthy skill to see build within the workplace. Our contribution to that would be, again, a fraction of the total payroll tax paid.

The member, of course, has talked and had some fun in the third area of human relations general skills. Again, the areas have been time and stress management, enhanced presentation skills, negotiation and teamwork skills, so on and so forth. That was done to try and complement our desire to see this payroll tax reduced completely. So that was the genesis of how we got into this program under Workforce 2000, the payroll tax refund program. That is the starting point, and every decision hence should be based at that starting point.

Ms. Friesen: As I understand it then, what the minister is saying is that the first priority was to get rid of the payroll tax. The second priority was to find something to do with it, something to offset it against in government programs. I may not have listened closely enough, but my understanding of the minister's use of tenses in that last answer was that, essentially, programs which were already in existence in adult basic education could then be

funded through a payroll tax deduction plan. So these were not new programs. These were continuing programs. Was that the case in any of these, that these were continuing programs?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the answer is yes. The only reason I say yes is that I am thinking particularly of Versatile. When they were doing in-training they were strapped and they were still paying this tax. That is what sold me on the offset, because I saw a company that was striving to maintain their payroll. I saw a company that was exporting an incredible amount of activity to outside areas and yet still was strapped by this payroll tax. So in some cases, yes, there might have been an offset as against existing training. Whether there needed to be a change, I do not know.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, here was a case in point, and I can even be more definitive with respect to the Versatile situation. They had an element of the workforce that was very short and basic needs, and they were spending a lot of time trying to bring their employees—and they either had to have greater support in doing that or they would have to replace those employees. So it was sensed that given that there was a level of experience that was obviously contributing greatly, that it would be better for the government to offset the payroll tax and let the training continue in the basic skill set of their employees.

* (1600)

So this is where Finance—I can remember as the Minister of Finance, this is where I came in on this program and was very supportive.

Ms. Friesen: So the argument that it attempted to be a shock to the manufacturers of Manitoba to put in place a training culture is not always the case. It is true in some cases, but not in all.

Mr. Manness: I did not say manufacturing. I said the business. I said the total private sector.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I should have rephrased that—to the employers of Manitoba so that the argument that Workforce 2000 is intended to be a shock to create a training culture is only true in some cases.

Mr. Manness: No, by way of the review that was done on the Skills Training Advisory Committee report, it was not some; it was the vast majority. Maybe that fits into the member's definition of some, but indeed the industry as a whole was calling for this and the representatives of the industry. It was happening in some cases where already people understood the importance of training but not near enough. There was not a majority.

Ms. Friesen: The minister or this department, I should say, over a number of years has promised a report on adult basic education. Could the minister tell us where that report is and how the workplace training in adult basic education fits into the directions of that report? Has that report been tabled? Has it been completed? Where is it sitting at the moment?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, some work has certainly been done on that report, a fair amount. Right now the department, under my direction, is waiting to see how it fits in, firstly, with the basic ed reform document and process that we are engaged in at this time and, secondly, with the whole federal review of the social safety net and training areas. We are trying to make sure that what we have done is in keeping with the general thrust in the other two areas.

Ms. Friesen: That report has not been tabled, has not been completed.

Mr. Manness: Not sufficiently, and in terms of making sure it is not outdated at the moment it hits the table and in the sense that it does not take into account what is happening within ed reform, and also within the federal strategy of social reform that would be the case. If it were true it would be tabled today.

Ms. Friesen: After four years, one would be interested in any report that came forward in that area which might indicate the department's overall conception of adult basic education. It has been a long time in coming. Here we have a series of grants going out to particular companies. I mean in another area of the department the minister talked about community-based literacy education as the way this department was going, yet here we have a

series of workplace-based literacy programs which are of quite a different nature, require different kinds of evaluations and have different needs to fulfill. So the idea of having an overall argument on adult basic education, one which might look at some of the cuts which were made last year in areas of adult basic education and which might have a sense of what the needs of the province were, would have been very helpful.

I sense the minister is using the same argument that he has used in other areas: What a relief, quote, unquote, that we have not actually done a report, because it just might be out of date now that we have a federal government that might be interested in doing something in the educational area.

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

Mr. Manness: That is nonsense. All governments across the land are trying to deal with the literacy problem within the resources they have. We have talked previously about—when I was under questioning by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux)—with respect to our thrusts within the literacy area, whether it is at the workplace or within the community at large, or what strategies are put into place to first of all reduce its numbering as a result of better standards and uniformity of standards in the public school system. We all are working on this, and the member for Wolseley can try and say that it all is dependent upon a report. That is nonsense. I mean if a report in itself would guarantee that we would have instant success in this area, then obviously it would have been tabled long ago. It is much more complicated than that.

Yet I ask the member to be mindful of many of the statements that have been put on the record previous with respect to this year's Estimates.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the issue with every report of course is its availability for public discussion and for policy direction. It is the same with the Hikel report. It is the same with the adult basic education report. It is the same with the absence of follow-up in many areas from the

STAC report that we have looked at throughout these Estimates.

It is not a question of success or not success or absence of success. The issue is, how do you debate public policy when there is no information available on the direction that the government is taking or the evaluations which it has done or the policy options that it is looking at for the future?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, nothing is further from the truth. We have been debating public policy now for the last several hours, and all the additional information that the member would want, firm by firm by firm, which we will try to provide, once she indicates the firms that she wants, is not going to change the public policy discussion that we have been having over the last number of hours.

The member is opposed to this type of training. The government proudly supports it, with some of the changes that need to be made around the criteria. Those are being made. So, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the member is not going to back us off our support of Workforce 2000, and the member may bring in questions of accessibility, may bring into question whether or not the training reaches or ultimately delivers, in her terms, anything more than a smile. The reality is, well, when the member says, if the member, to paraphrase her, uses the term: is that what they are teaching, a smile? That means, in my mind at least, she senses they are not learning anything more than that.

It may be to her political advantage to try and put that spin to those examples. The reality is she cannot argue with the fact that 78 percent of the companies surveyed indicated their company's investment in training would have been less without the participation of Workforce 2000. She cannot argue with the fact that 71 percent of businesses increased their competitiveness, and 64 percent of businesses increased their profitability as a result of Workforce 2000. She cannot argue with the fact that 97 percent of employers stated the Workforce 2000 training had been either very effective or somewhat effective in developing skill requirements of workers.

Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, she cannot argue—and this is the one number she cannot argue with is—that 85 percent of businesses surveyed in October '93 stated that training increased their productivity. These are all part of the record, so the objective as studied by the Provincial Auditor is clearly defined and consistent with the mandate, linked to key result areas and reflected in the plan's organizational structure. The training activities are appropriately organized and controlled. Performance criteria are in place to monitor achievement of results. Management decisions are timely and relevant, and the program provides accountability reporting on financial activities. This is what the Provincial Auditor has said.

* (1610)

Yes, the member would like us to provide more detail. Another year when we table the plans or indeed the annual report associated with this program, we will endeavour to try and provide greater evaluations at that time. There is no way we can table at that same time filing cabinets full of all the information and the detail which the member asks me to do today. I cannot do that. That is physically impossible.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, well, perhaps I should indicate to the minister then, now, on the record, that I would like that level of detail on every one of the '93-94 grants in both the payroll tax deduction and in the individual grants and in the industry-wide programs. I would be quite satisfied to ask of individual cases, but the minister really leaves me no choice in this matter but to ask for every one.

So I will put, now, on the record, that request for every one of those grants which I believe the majority of are now complete. It is not a question of ones that are in progress. These are ones that the minister has completed, should have the information on, should have some evaluation of and should be able—and as the Provincial Auditor recommended, he should be beginning, in fact, to put together his annual report that will accompany the departmental annual report next time. So I

would like, first of all, to suggest that to the minister.

The second was the minister put a number of percentages and numbers on the record just now. One of them was that 85 percent of businesses surveyed in October '93, increased their productivity. I wonder if the minister could tell us how many. What proportion of those people getting grants were, in fact, surveyed, 85 percent of what, since in the first place the minister has indicated that only 50 percent of the companies do evaluations or at least submit their individual evaluations. Was this 85 percent of 10 percent of the companies that are monitored? Is this 85 percent of the 50 percent who provide their own self-evaluations? Is this 85 percent of the 20 percent who might have an evaluation tabled by the same person who did the training?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the member is mixing up evaluation with monitoring, so she is inaccurate in her claim. The member, on her first point, says for the record she is now going to request all the information that she can get with respect to all of the firms. I am saying that if she wants that detail I think she should, by Order for Return, then bring it forward into the House and make it a debatable motion.

I cannot give her any type of a guarantee as to when all of this information might be ready. This could take several months, because I am not going to, for her request, pull staff off of trying to continue to meet the training needs of Manitobans. I am not going to have them pour through paper as a first priority when, indeed, they should be trying to reach out for the training needs of skills development of many of our citizens.

Ms. Friesen: The minister knows from my questions in the House that what I am interested in are the curriculum and the outcomes, exactly the same things which the minister is interested in, the public education system. I was quite prepared and came here with the lists underlined of the particular ones that I wanted to ask. I assumed that since the minister had his staff here that those kind of summary reports might not be available.

The minister said, first of all, that they are not available. Secondly, he said that he would be prepared to answer any questions individually at later dates.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I have now made that request, and now he has backed off and said that this must be asked for by Order for Return. I will point out to him that we do have Orders for Return still on the Order Paper from the member for Osborne who has since departed this House. Those have been on there for nearly 12 months as far as I know. I will be delighted but very surprised if the minister provides any answers to any of the questions which I will ask for a specific Order for Return.

The minister also said that he had 150 pages of briefing notes with him. Are there any particular answers there which he would like me to phrase questions to and that he will then answer? Presumably he came prepared to answer some of them. Well, I am prepared at this point to ask the questions for which he has brought the information.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, all the member needed to do, as I have said on several occasions in response to questions in the House, was indicate to me prior to today's sitting, prior to last week's sitting, which firms she was interested in. Given that the number was not all, and given that the number was workable, we would have tried to provide a synopsis, an overview similar to what I presented with respect to Northern Blower and IBM.

Now when the member is saying no, that she expects me to have all of this information at this sitting and that she was going to try and surprise us, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not have that information. Again, I could not ask staff to bring over all the files.

The member cannot have it both ways. If she wants to try and catch the staff by surprise—all she had to do was to tell me which companies she wanted additional information on for this sitting. She chose not to, and so she is upset now and indicates that she is going to now want the full

information on everybody. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that will take considerable time, unfortunately.

Ms. Friesen: This is the first time, this is the first meeting in which the minister has indicated that he is not going to answer questions on specific cases. I will say that for the record. There was no opportunity to provide the list beforehand. We had been discussing specific cases of industry-wide applications of this program at the last time we met. This is the time at which I began to raise the specific questions, and I am now told that he is not going to answer any of them. Now I am told that we can go to Order for Return, but as I said, the record in that of this government is not very promising.

Now the minister is saying that it will take a great deal of time to provide all of the information on all of the ones that I am asking for. That is quite true. It will. I would be prepared, and as I say again, I would be prepared to ask specific ones.

My intent is not to catch the department and is not to catch the minister. The minister has given me a list. He knows what information he has. He knows what list I am asking from. It seems to me that there should have been better preparation on the part of the minister to at least bring some of the information.

Let him say now. I have said which ones does he want me to ask on. I will ask on those now. Has he brought any information with him, question one? Question two: If he has not brought any information with him, how many questions is he prepared to answer on a case-by-case basis? If he says all of them is too many, it would take a great deal of time, how many can be done by next week? Would it be 10?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, first of all, let the record show that any of the questions that have been posed with respect to in the House, we were prepared for those. [interjection] I cannot remember Kentucky Fried Chicken. I apologize if I missed it. Let not the record show that I have failed to detail, with some sufficient detail, certain of the firms that have been focused upon by the member for Wolseley.

Here is the totality of contracts entered into under Workforce 2000: 992 contracts under the small-medium section; 27 sector initiatives industry wide; 1,815 payroll tax reduction applications. So the totality is somewhere around 2,800-plus of files that we have under Workforce 2000.

I say to the member, if she wants response on all of those, it is going to take us a long, long, long time. Now the member says, well, tell me how many you can do. I am saying to the member, tell us which ones you want us to do. I am not going to make a commitment of time. I am not going to get into a horse-trading exercise here. I asked the member to focus in on those firms that she wants specifically, and I will endeavour to try and provide, as I have previously, a synopsis of the type of training that was done, the number of participants. The member has the level of participants, and she has the total amount of public funds that were directed. I will try to provide that same information as I have with respect to IBM.

* (1620)

Ms. Friesen: I would remind the minister that he has not given me the job classifications in IBM, that he has not been able to tell me whether the training took place here or somewhere else, very limited information. He has given me a list of topics covered, but that is not a curriculum, and the minister knows it. He is not even prepared to table the training plan which IBM submitted. The minister's professions of openness and the minister's pride in this program ring very hollow with me.

Would it be reasonable to suggest to the minister—and I find it abhorrent that I am entering into this kind of question and this kind of negotiation. Is it reasonable to expect of the minister and his department to provide 10 answers in the next week to questions on specific cases?

Mr. Manness: I think that we certainly could do that in the next week.

Ms. Friesen: Would it be reasonable to expect 20 from the department?

Mr. Manness: You see, now the member is starting to push beyond limits.

Ms. Friesen: What are you saying?

Mr. Manness: We could do 20 in two weeks, I am sure.

Ms. Friesen: So we do now have a principle that the Minister of Education, whose most important program, his initiative in Education, his Workforce 2000, which he claims is accountable, which he claims is publicly open, is now prepared to provide information on curriculum and on outcome, the very principles which he is interested in in the public education system. He is prepared to provide information at the rate of 10 per week, which I think might take us 280 weeks to get through the amount that has already been distributed. That is approximately, I believe, about five years.

So over five years, the minister is prepared to deliver this kind of information. He has still not made a commitment to fulfill the Auditor's request which would go some way, not all but would go some way, toward meeting some of the requests which I am making, and that is to publish an annual report, an annual accounting of this particular program. He has still not agreed that he is going to do that. I find this all very surprising, and clearly there is not any point in continuing this kind of discussion with the minister.

But I do have one question, and that is to ask him about health and safety programs under this particular program. What kind of training has been done in the area of safety? The minister does not have a classification for it. We have technical, technological, basic education and human relations; and safety, it seems to me, follows a number of those areas. So I wonder how that has been classified.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in the payroll tax area, it would probably fall under the third classification, as a reduction to stress, with the greater comfort knowing that training is in place.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: the member went on and on and on talking about how long it would take. I remind the member that this department has

a total expenditure of \$990 million. We have spent considerable hours on one line of \$5 million. I indicate to the member unabashedly and say that my main priority as the minister of this department is ed reform. I will say that I will direct all of the time that I have, discretionary time, and indeed the time of staff, to that greater priority.

Now, the member may not see the importance of that. She may not believe that reform of the public school system is relevant or important, but I say to you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and to members of this committee, that is what will be consuming virtually all of my discretionary time and indeed that of staff.

So the member can make light of the fact that there is not a quick enough response to her questions of detail, but we will try to do what we can in the time we have available, given an annual report, starting to be filed with Workforce 2000. We will provide again some greater evaluations and trying to keep with the Auditor's recommendation. But other than that, we will have to agree, I guess, to disagree on how important and how successful Workforce 2000 has been.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister is attempting to divert the issue by talking about public education. We are on a line which is dealing with grants to employers for education. My concerns are what the effectiveness of that has been and what the accountability is and what priorities have been developed within that and how it fits in the broader sense of education in the province and whether there is equality of access within those programs.

There are two other things I wanted to come back to, one is the minister's response on the safety issue. I believe that he is classifying safety as human relations. Does the minister want to confirm that?—because I find that rather odd.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not think it would be fair to consider it as basic skills, and so that only leaves then the second or third area. I mean, those are the broad groupings that we have.

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister have an example of the kind of safety training which has been done under that Category 3?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, not with us, not offhand, no.

Ms. Friesen: Is the minister aware of any safety training that has been done in Category 3?

Mr. Manness: Not under payroll tax offset, no, but under industry-wide, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are trying to determine whether or not there has been a subset of an application that would apply to industry safety standards training.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that earliest statistic which the minister veered away from when I raised a question about it, the 85 percent in October '93 who indicated they had increased productivity, 85 percent of what? What proportion of people were surveyed at that point?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that evaluation involved 55 payroll tax refund employers, 161 small and medium firms under that classification, and six focus groups were assembled. Of course, there were related interviews with many of these very same players. So those were the groups of people who were part of the evaluation.

Ms. Friesen: So in terms of survey I do not think we can count focus groups as part of the 85 percent. I think they do give you some qualitative responses, but in terms of numbers, we are looking at essentially just over 200 employers who were surveyed out of 2,800 grants. So that for the minister to use the 85 percent number may be, strictly speaking, quite true, but perhaps is not an indication of a full evaluation of those who are satisfied by this program.

The minister talks about increased productivity. Were any questions asked about increase in employment, how many jobs were created under this program?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, first of all, the member is a student of statistics. Certainly she realizes that to make the comment she does, she has to pass judgment on whether or not the numbers that I have presented to her have been

chosen on a scientific basis and are representative of the global number. She, in her judgment with absolutely no facts, says that there is no way that can be the case.

Well, these were statistically chosen, scientifically chosen, and I say to her do represent a very good reflection of the global training under this program.

I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I forget the member's second question.

Ms. Friesen: My first question dealt with the 85 percent, whether in fact that indicated a scientific—well, actually I did not ask that, whether it indicated a scientific survey, but I thought the 85 percent number indicated perhaps a broader support than might be warranted given the number of people actually surveyed in a program that has had over 2,800 grants.

* (1630)

My other question dealt with productivity and whether, in fact, the question was asked about job creation in that survey. Did job creation have anything to do with productivity, or has there indeed been a question asked of any of the employers about job creation and how many jobs have been created as a result of this program?

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as best as we can determine, the program was caused to come into being, and again, now the scientific basis of this is in greater question because it was not tied into the evaluation, but the best we can determine, the Workforce 2000, besides maintaining so many of the jobs as a result of 40,000 or 60,000 being trained, has probably caused to come into being in addition anywhere from 200 to 400 jobs, depending on the methodology in place in the existing firms.

Now, the member asked a question about safety training. I just want to give an example of how it might be that this category in itself may not be set aside, but how it is that skill training and safety could become elements of Workforce 2000.

I think specifically under the industry training program, the Western Fertilizer & Chemical Dealers Association, we sponsored a pesticide

dealers' training project. Here the focus was to develop and deliver a pesticide dealers' training project for up to 500 employees of 402 independent fertilizer and chemical dealerships located in rural Manitoba. Training will ensure that standardized practices related to ag chemical storage, handling and distribution are introduced within the industry. ACC will deliver the program utilizing the Distance Education model.

Now, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is a prime example, and most of that thrust would be, of course, towards safety. So although it is not easy always to categorize under neat labels how it is that these programs will relate to some of the traditional program areas that we have in our minds, here is an example of one program training area that obviously had quite an emphasis, but not totally, on Workplace Safety and Health. The other comment dealt with job creation, and I have answered that.

Ms. Friesen: The minister did give me an answer on job creation. That was that 200, perhaps, had been created. Last year I think the Minister of Education was less certain. I think the number she mentioned was in the 80s. I wonder if the minister has any evidence. He seems convinced that jobs were maintained by this program, and that is possibly true in some areas, but there has also been a number of these large companies which have downsized in this period. So is the minister convinced that the net result is a 200 increase in jobs?

Mr. Manness: I did not say net increase. How could I say that? I said increased jobs, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I mean, some of these might be new firms that have come here and never had jobs here before, so the reality is, it is hard to know, except what again that the employers tell us, if this had not been in place, the reduction in jobs within their industry or where their firms may even have been larger than they might have otherwise been.

Ms. Friesen: Does that type of question compose or comprise any part of the evaluations or questions that are asked of the companies?

Mr. Manness: Well, I am generalizing, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, but, again, through the

surveys taken within the program grouping areas and industry-wide human resource planning, when we posed the question, again with the respect to employment, the general statement is that Workforce 2000 is having a positive impact on employment within some participating sectors, obviously, not all, but within some. When we asked the same question under the payroll tax refund, we were told that the payroll tax refund has only a limited effect on employment creation. However, this incentive has had a positive impact on job retention. That is the same point I was trying to make earlier on with respect to its being hard to measure, but we do not know, that in many cases it has caused jobs to be retained that otherwise would not have been. Again, there is no science that can really measure this in a macro or global sense.

Ms. Friesen: I agree with the minister; it is difficult to evaluate those comments on retention. There are obviously too many areas there, of those kinds of statements, which are not measurable, but could the minister tell us which sectors have experienced job creation or job additions as a result of this program? I think that was the first part of his statement.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, general areas, long-haul trucking under the transportation industry, sewing machine operators under the—and this was supported by the Manitoba Apparel committee, under agriculture, swine technicians, Manitoba Pork. These are three of the sectors I would focus on, and some under tourism in the guides area under the Northwest Communities Futures.

Ms. Friesen: So the minister's general summary then would be that in the industry-wide approaches there have been productivity increases, and there has been job creation. Does this indicate to the minister any direction for future policy?

Mr. Manness: Well, I guess it does, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. As I have said earlier, we have touched upon it coming from a number of different directions over the course of the discussion. Whether we talked about the efficiency argument, whether we have talked about trying to have more firms enter by way of umbrella sector or industry

agreement as compared to coming in with their individual set of circumstances, the thrust is still the same. We think there is greater efficacy of the program when there is an agreement struck as between the program and industry as compared to industry and firm.

Ms. Friesen: Yet I believe over the three years or four years of this program, we have only had 27 sectoral programs. Is that the case? Could the minister give his—first of all, maybe the minister should confirm that—but my second part of my question is: What are the goals for this coming year? How is that to be expanded or increased?

* (1640)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we sense that we are static around the 26-27 number, at which level we have been over the last two years, but of course, what we expect maybe is the number of employees within those sectors may trend slightly forward. As importantly as the sector initiatives is the total number of employees. We may have had a higher number at the very beginning, but obviously, there was not a maturity within the sectors or those sectors did not see the benefit of continuing. So we would sense we would not be increasing the level, as far as sectors, that we are at at this point in time.

Ms. Friesen: What has been the average experience over the last few years of the number of people trained in that program annually? The minister is looking for that to stabilize. I am looking for what level it is going to stabilize at.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, 2,500 roughly in the year just completed, and hopefully, an expected 2,600 this year.

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister anticipate advertising any of these programs in the same way that Industry, Trade and Tourism advertises its small-business programs?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have answered this somewhere along the line, at least I think we have, because we said that we would expect the industry associations to carry out the messages so that we do not have to rely on the

same level of advertising. It is better to deliver programming than it is to buy advertising.

Ms. Friesen: So this is one of the most productive, in the broadest sense of the term, areas of the program, and the minister expects it to continue at the same level of participation. He also anticipates that it will remain essentially by subscription, by membership, so that people who are members of the association are primarily the ones who will know about these programs and who will select the people to participate in them from their own companies.

Mr. Manness: Obviously not, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because there were 992, as I indicated to you, specific contracts, individual contracts, between Workforce 2000 and individual firms. Nobody is going to tell me that there is not a knowledge that this program exists.

Sixty thousand people have been trained. There are only 500,000 full-time equivalent positions or full-time jobs in our province, so nobody is going to tell me for one moment that employees and employers do not know that this program exists.

Ms. Friesen: I think the minister misunderstood my question. I am speaking specifically in the context of the industry-wide initiatives, the 27 agreements that the minister said have been made annually, of the 2,500 employees who were trained annually in that program. That is the one that seems to me, from the minister's responses, to have been the most productive, the one that he might be the most interested in, as perhaps he suggested in an informal way.

One of the drawbacks of that program seems to be that participation in it is limited to members in particular associations. The government itself has decided to allocate the responsibility of advertising those to the industry itself. So again, I am concerned about accessibility.

Mr. Manness: I have said over and over again that firms, first of all, are not members or, indeed, the firms that do not have a sector which lends itself to an association still can make application to the government. The member seems to be suggesting that if you are not part of the 27 formally, if you are

not part of the formal structure, you will not know about the program. I am just indicating that 992, the vast majority of which, I would think, have to fall into those 27 sectors.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this proves the statement of the member for Wolseley. I mean, how many sectors do we have in Manitoba? We do not have many more than 27. Obviously, the vast majority of the small-medium firms, who are in direct contract with the program, indeed are part of those 27 sector structures.

Ms. Friesen: So the minister then is quite confident that those sectoral programs are well known across industries in Manitoba.

Mr. Manness: We encourage other sectors to come forward, but we will not do all the work for them. I mean, they have to take ownership of this, and to the extent that they do, we will encourage and foster additional sectors that will come on. But there is no use doing all the work for the sectors. They have to, again, have an ownership by us.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have a number of questions, a few anyway on Workforce 2000, but I am wondering if the minister would indulge me to ask a few questions on the ACCESS Program?

Mr. Manness: I am prepared—I do not have ACCESS staff with me at this point in time. I am prepared to take questions, but can we leave it until sometime when we can bring back some of the questions in the Workforce? If they are general in nature I will try to answer them, but if they are specific, I probably do not have the information the member seeks.

Ms. Gray: They are general in nature. I have faith that the minister can probably answer the questions, and I apologize if some of these questions have been asked before. I am wondering exactly, with the report from Peat Marwick, if the minister has read through that report and what exactly he intends to do with it?

I know he has indicated here in Estimates that he considers it a draft report. Could he tell us exactly what he intends to do with it and if he has had a chance to read through the report?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Before the minister answers that question, is there leave of the committee to revert to dealing with a few questions from ACCESS, because we do need leave of the committee for that? Is there leave?

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member's colleague, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), did ask a number of questions on this. As a matter of fact, the answers are already printed in Hansard, and I think that the member, the critic for the Liberals, at this point would be well advised to read that first and then see where there are some holes that have to be filled in.

Then, if there was a very limited time spent on this—you know, I am hesitating to say this, because we have taken all afternoon on the right line at this particular time, I might add. We do not want to see us going over ground that has already been covered and passed by the committee. So I would not want to see us revert formally to ACCESS. If there is some leniency given for a couple of questions and then move back to Workforce 2000, I think my colleague the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) would not object too strongly to that, but not to have it revert formally.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not believe I asked for it to revert back formally. I asked the minister if he was prepared to answer a couple of general questions related to the report, and the minister had kindly agreed to do that.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Just to inform the honourable member for Crescentwood, we do need the leave of the committee to revert to any items that have been passed. That is why I was requesting leave.

Is the committee willing to give leave for the honourable member to ask a number of questions within ACCESS? No? Leave is denied.

Ms. Gray: Madam Deputy Chairperson—Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry. I have been in the Health Estimates for the last two weeks and we had a Madam Chairperson there, so you will have to excuse me.

I would ask the Minister of Education if he sees any relationship between Workforce 2000 and the ACCESS Program that he provides funding for.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry, I do not understand the question.

Ms. Gray: The question is, in the Department of Education and Training there is a focus not only on education but on training programs. The Workforce 2000 program specifically provides training to individuals who are currently, in a lot of cases, in the workforce. The ACCESS Programs, which are part of the institutions, provide education programs to oftentimes those individuals who have been employed in the past or who are now unemployed.

* (1650)

I wanted to ask the minister, as the minister who is responsible overall for the Department of Education and Training, and who likes to focus on the training component and also the training component of individuals who may be in a workforce or who are older individuals, individuals who may have worked in a particular company for five, 10, 15 years, and there are now requests for training dollars to go into that business—does he see a relationship between that and the ACCESS Program, where a lot of the individuals who are involved with the ACCESS Program as well are individuals who have been out of the school system for a number of years who may be unemployed or in a certain line of work and are now going back for what I would call retraining through the ACCESS Program. As well, a number of the individuals in the Workforce 2000 are receiving retraining.

My question would be, does he see a relationship between those two programs which come under the jurisdiction of his entire department?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I see a lot stronger relationships between other programs, because there is a myriad of programs, as the member knows, under this training section, and there is a much stronger interconnectedness or relationship between many of the other programs

than would exist as between ACCESS and Workforce 2000.

Workforce 2000, of course, is employer driven. It is driven for the needs of the employer. I mean, the employer and the firm of the employer, if it can be made a better firm because of new skills provided to the employee, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, then that is good for the economy and indeed for maintenance and job expansion as a whole, but the focus is on the employer.

ACCESS Program, of course, the focus is on disadvantaged people in our society who are seeking to have higher education and levels of training.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister has indicated that he is going to have the Auditor take a look at the Workforce 2000 programs. Can he indicate, is this standard procedure in his department, and did he ask or has he asked the Auditor to look at the ACCESS Programs?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have no power, nor would I want it, to direct the Provincial Auditor to look at any programs. The Provincial Auditor is a servant to the Legislature and looks at any programs they so choose.

Ms. Gray: Has the Auditor indicated to the minister if they plan to look at the ACCESS Program, or is it in the plans of the regular audits that are done on a yearly basis?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess the question would probably be better posed to the Provincial Auditor. At this point in time, we are not mindful of a specific program review of the ACCESS Program by the Auditor.

Ms. Gray: One of the questions I want to ask before it is five o'clock, because we are resuming this evening, is: Can the department or the minister provide us with information on the antistacking regulations?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the member is referring to government incentives with respect to drawing business to our province, I mean that is a general plan that is in place with respect to all considerations around economic development projects that go before EDB of

cabinet, chaired by the Premier. That is a general statement, but I am aware of it because I am a member of the Economic Development Board of Cabinet.

Ms. Gray: Would that general policy or those regulations then apply to the Workforce 2000 incentives as well?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think I know where the member is going. The 50 percent antistacking is the general rule. Special sets of circumstances start to move into those industries where you do not have near the degree or any hard assets. The asset becomes almost intellectual, an intellectual reserve, and there have been some circumstances where we have gone beyond that, taking into account that no hard assets have been brought into place.

Ms. Gray: Is that a yes or a no in response to the question? Do those antistacking regulations or if it is a general policy, does it apply to the Workforce 2000 incentives and grants?

Mr. Manness: It is yes. They are in place with respect to the traditional businesses and that traditional businesses are in the area of manufacturing and transportation and primary—where we think of buildings and hard assets and production machinery, where there is a specific economic development initiative. Once we begin to move into some other areas where there are not bricks and mortar and steel and production machinery, but indeed we are dealing more specifically with intellectual property, then at times, it depends on the set of circumstances surrounding the issue.

Ms. Gray: So if a company was involved in telecommunications, as an example, would that policy apply there?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if they were in telecommunications, and, again, the greatest asset was intellectual property, there could be certain circumstances which would dictate the easing of the 50-percent rule.

Ms. Gray: Has the minister to date, in Estimates, been able to table or indicate the various grants or

business incentives through Workforce 2000 that have been given to GWE?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have tabled all the grants to both parties, but we are certainly prepared to accept questions with respect to GWE.

Ms. Gray: Were some of those grants through Assiniboine Community College and then directed to GWE?

Mr. Manness: Yes, some of the money went to the Assiniboine Community College to respond to the training needs of GWE. As a matter of fact, I know that ACC has staff or has had staff as recently as a week ago searching out call centres in other parts of the United States to try and build a curriculum that reached out to this whole new sector so they could do some generic training in support of the industry.

Ms. Gray: Would that be common or how often would it occur that you might have businesses who would be receiving dollars through Workforce 2000 but also were receiving assistance, either financial or other, from either universities or in this example, our community colleges?

Mr. Manness: Well, it would not happen often but it happens now and then. Again, you are moving into the area of intellectual property. You are not talking about production machinery. You are talking about a new sophistication within the telecommunication industry.

Obviously, if there is no training culture in place, you may very well want to help that whole initiative by drawing upon some funding in Workforce 2000 and that has happened in a couple of instances, GWE being one of them.

* (1700)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour is now 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour. I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee.

The Committee of Supply will resume consideration at 8 p.m. this evening. Thank you.

FAMILY SERVICES

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

This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Family Services. We will begin with a statement from the honourable minister responsible.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): I am pleased to present to this committee the 1994-95 spending Estimates for the Department of Family Services for consideration. I look forward to a meaningful dialogue and positive recommendations as we proceed through discussion on these Estimates.

I do want to say out front, too, Madam Chairperson, that this being my first set of Estimates for the Department of Family Services and my first opportunity to dialogue with the NDP critic and also the first opportunity for the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) to have the opportunity to participate in an Estimates debate in this Legislature, I want to indicate that I am looking forward, with anticipation and excitement, around hearing constructive, positive recommendations on how we deal with the issues in the Department of Family Services.

Manitoba, as is the case with all governments in Canada, continues to face a difficult financial situation. In order to support our economic strategy of fiscal responsibility, we have directed our budget decisions towards ensuring that vital social services are maintained for Manitobans most in need while at the same time freeing resources for new initiatives that will foster self-reliance rather than dependence.

I feel that with this budget, totalling \$660.2 million for Family Services for 1994-95, we have accomplished this difficult balance of priorities. While this amount essentially maintains last year's funding level, it should be noted that it represents a 58 percent increase in total spending by this department since 1987-88. This increase is more than double the rate of inflation over the same period.

During the past seven years we have increased our support for crisis shelters and related services by 148 percent. During the same period funding for both child day care and social assistance has grown by 73 percent. These statistics underscore the commitment of this government to maintaining and preserving essential social services in this province.

During this period the demand for services has risen considerably. We have responded to meet that demand. The number of subsidized children in daycare has grown by almost 80 percent since 1987-88, and there are almost 3,000 more licensed daycare spaces today than there were six years ago.

As a result of the recession and federal unemployment insurance changes, there are more Manitobans on social assistance. The municipal assistance caseloads have more than doubled during the past six years, and provincial social allowances caseloads have increased by about 20 percent.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to indicate that Manitoba is not alone in this situation or circumstance. Right across this country, we are seeing higher and higher welfare caseloads.

More women and children have needed to use crisis shelters. These shelters have received the necessary resources to respond to increased demand and have been able to accommodate 58 percent more clients.

The funding increases that have occurred since 1987-88 have, in part, been to meet these greater demands. In addition, many program enhancements have occurred above and beyond the simple volume increases. For example, over \$30 million in enhancements have been made in the social assistance area alone since 1987-88.

The Income Assistance for the Disabled Program was introduced in 1992 and expanded in 1993. This initiative has involved a commitment of over \$9 million in additional benefits for disabled Manitobans on social assistance. Every major program area of this department has been the subject of significant new initiatives and funding

increases over the past seven budget years. However, we are all coming to realize that funding increases cannot continue indefinitely. Government revenues are not at the same levels as they were when many of today's social programs were designed in the 1960s and '70s, and they will not be increasing at the rates they did in the '70s and '80s.

The '90s pose a new set of challenges for governments, and we must be willing to reevaluate the programs we have in place. Are they meeting their original objectives? Are they creating unintended problems or difficulties? Can we do a better job with available resources? By asking these questions, we may be able to redirect and refocus existing dollars in different and innovative ways.

I am confident we can be more effective in meeting the needs of Manitobans. I have spent much of my time as Minister of Family Services asking questions like these when I meet with service providers, clients, community organizations and those in the private sector. Some of the answers they give are remarkably consistent. They know that changes are needed in our current set of services. They also know that government cannot act alone in making the necessary changes.

I believe that an important role of government is to foster and mobilize partnerships. There is a lot of interest, energy and willingness in the community to work with government in redesigning our existing programs and in working together to meet the most important needs of vulnerable Manitobans.

In the 1994-95 budget for Family Services, you will see this refocusing reflected in some of our spending decisions. To illustrate this, I will outline the major activities by each major program area of the department.

Within this year's budget allocation, we are continuing to ensure that social assistance is available for all Manitobans in need. I am pleased to say that the Social Allowances Program caseload has decline slightly. In the rate of growth in the municipal assistance caseload, growth has moderated considerably. Nevertheless, with

caseloads totalling over 49,000 across the province, welfare rolls remain unacceptably high. To deal with these unacceptable caseload levels, we are endeavouring to shift our focus towards initiatives which strengthen incentives to work, remove some disincentives and increase work expectations for employable Manitobans on welfare.

Accordingly, we have established a new \$3-million Welfare to Work appropriation. This appropriation will fund a series of pilot projects to test innovative and more cost-effective methods of reducing social assistance dependency through employment.

One of the first pilots will focus on single mothers. It will provide a co-ordinated package of services and programs to help them enter the workforce. Single mothers are a growing sector of our population. Younger moms, in particular, are highly dependent on welfare. We will work closely with the federal government to develop other major pilot projects and proceed in consultation with the private sector and community organizations. The new \$3-million Welfare to Work appropriation along with the earlier announcement of \$10 million over two years for infrastructure projects employing City of Winnipeg welfare recipients is expected to have a significant and positive impact on caseloads and expenditures.

* (1440)

In the area of Rehabilitation and Community Living, we are responding to the needs and wishes of Manitobans living with a physical or mental disability by changing the way we relate to persons with a disability. Services now give a new emphasis to community living and greater control by the consumer over support services. The 1994-95 budget provides an additional \$4.5 million for Community Living and Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. These new funds will provide care and support to allow additional numbers of adults with a disability to live in the community. Support will be available to more families with children with a disability, and day

services and transportation services will be provided to more adults with mental disabilities.

Furthermore, the 1994-95 budget provides for funds related to the new Vulnerable Persons' Commissioner's Office. Recruitment of the commissioner will take place in the very near future to allow for the commissioner to prepare for the implementation of the new vulnerable persons legislation. Our government is also providing an additional \$6.4 million in support of this province's Child Welfare system. We are coming to grips with the long-standing problem of increasing numbers of troubled children coming into care. We need to focus on early intervention and early childhood development to avoid placing children in care.

In 1994-95, Child and Family Services will focus on a strategic shift in service priorities to emphasize family support, family preservation and family responsibility. The shift is intended to support families at risk so that the movement of children from their natural homes is minimized while their safety and well-being are protected.

In support of these new directions, the Family Support Innovations Fund of \$2.5 million has been established. This fund will be used to develop innovative, new ways of providing up-front supports that will prevent children from coming into care. In addition, the fund will be used to allow and encourage the reunification of children currently in care with their own families. To further support these new goals and to make funds available for new services, the 1994-95 budget includes several initiatives that are designed to reduce the costs of providing substitute care for children and to redirect funds to family support programs.

Before concluding, Madam Chairperson, I should note that we are discussing the 1994-95 Family Services Estimates at a time when Canada is entering a period of public debate on the very nature of the social security system we want and can afford for future decades. The federal government has launched an ambitious social security review process which is intended to culminate in new legislation later this year. To

date, there has been only a limited opportunity for public input into this reform process through the parliamentary standing committee on human resources development. That committee plans to continue public hearings through the summer and early fall after the federal government releases a public discussion paper.

Since provinces are responsible for delivering many of the social services that have been included in the scope of this reform initiative, we are very interested in the upcoming release of the federal discussion paper and in the ensuing public debate. The federal government has indicated that federal-provincial discussions will be an important part of its reform process. The provinces provide an important perspective and are able to offer their analysis of current programs and options for the future. The Manitoba government will be an active participant in these discussions.

In closing, Madam Chairperson, I emphasize that by refocusing some of our programs and redirecting our available resources, we have presented a very balanced approach to meeting the social service needs of Manitobans. We have structured a budget that is directed towards improving the quality and effectiveness of our social programs.

This year's budget promotes employable welfare recipients and helps them gain financial independence. It provides additional supports to allow persons with a disability to live independently in their community, and finally, it places more emphasis on family support and preservation to keep families together. These goals are particularly relevant as we participate in this International Year of the Family. I look forward to questions and comments from critics in both opposition parties in the ensuing days and weeks ahead.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: We will now have the customary reply by the critic from the official opposition, the honourable member for Burrows.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Chairperson, I note with interest that this is the

International Year of the Family which the minister referred to, and we know that several hundreds of thousands of dollars have been committed to staffing for this office. They are spending a lot of time and effort in promoting things like posters and pins and sweat shirts and in promoting the International Year of the Family.

However, and I am not allowed to use the word "hypocritical" here, but if you contrast this government's rhetoric with their actions, I think there is a lack of credibility here with the government's commitment to the International Year of the Family, because even though they talk a lot about their commitment to the International Year of the Family and to families, there have been numerous budget cutbacks, even in this budget, not just in last year's budget, but in this year's budget; for example, the cuts to foster family rates of almost 52 percent which will be a particular hardship on aboriginal families, 80 percent of whom are placed with relatives, and the Child and Family Services per diems for 16- and 17-year-olds has been reduced by 25 percent, and there have been social assistance cutbacks which took effect April 1.

In fact, instead of the usual increase to keep up with the consumer price index on January 1, the government announced last November, I believe, that there would not be any announcement for January 1. Instead, the changes took place on April 1, and there was no allowance or increase to take account for the increase in the consumer price index, but instead, there were cuts, particularly to single people on municipal assistance. Also in this budget, this minister has taken \$300,000 out of the Child Day Care office budget. All of these things refer to family. That is why I selected them.

So we are disappointed that this minister, who talks a lot about her government's commitment to the International Year of the Family, would make these cuts that I have enumerated, all of which negatively affect families.

At the same time, her government gives grants to corporations under Workforce 2000, and some of them, I acknowledge, may be good and may be justifiable. We in our party are in favour of training

and retraining workers where it is justifiable, but we have great difficulty with some of these individuals grants, particularly grants such as one to Northern Blower of \$80,000 for worker training while their workers are on strike, grants to companies like Birchwood Motor Sport, \$10,000, and all of their subsidiary organizations—Birchwood Pontiac Buick, \$10,000; Birchwood BMW \$10,000; Birchwood Saturn Saab Isuzu \$10,000; Birchwood Honda Centre \$7,750; and Birchwood Honda Centre \$1,800; for a total of \$50,000 to train 29 people. The list goes on and on.

Centra Gas received \$177,000 in spite of the fact that they are regulated by the Public Utilities Board and are allowed to guarantee their investors a return on profit of 12 percent a year. Keystone Ford received \$10,000 a year. IBM, a multi-national corporation, received \$50,000 to train 87 people in human relations in spite of the fact that they have staff in their Toronto head office that do exactly that. Budget Rent-A-Car received \$10,000. We think that this government's priorities are askew, they are misguided, that the money that they are giving in corporate grants could have been directed to families.

The other area where this government's actions and budget do not follow their rhetoric has to do with both the throne speech by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Budget Address by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), and I would just like to quote from them because their words are quite lofty and idealistic, but their actions do not follow.

For example, the Premier said: "Social justice and our traditional values of sharing and fairness require that our most vulnerable citizens be protected through income support and social services."

* (1450)

How does this minister justify that kind of rhetoric and supposed commitment in the throne speech to the cuts in her department to vulnerable citizens be protected through income support and social services."

How does this minister justify that kind of rhetoric and supposed commitment in the throne

speech to the cuts in her department to vulnerable individuals? I do not think she can.

In the throne speech, the Premier said: "For six years . . . My ministers have worked hard . . . to renew the social programs which we all value so highly."

There are some new programs, but I think that they are just—well, some of them are new initiatives, but I suspect that maybe they have taken the money from some of the existing programs and put it into the new things to make it look like, and to give the appearance, that this government is doing something new and creative when, in fact, I do not think there is very much that is new and creative going on, but we will get into that later on in the Estimates.

Also in the throne speech, the Premier said: "My ministers have also worked hard to consult Manitobans on the many vital policy choices that will shape our future . . . commitment to accountability and citizen involvement . . ."

I would be very interested in knowing if this minister and her government have consulted citizens and organizations on anything other than the sole parent project, which we have heard the minister say in Question Period she did, and I know. I have talked to some of the people who were consulted, but I would be interested in knowing, for example, if this minister consulted anybody or any organizations, such as the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization or the Manitoba Child Care Association or the Manitoba Foster Family Association.

I know she meets with some of these groups, but were they consulted about the cuts and asked, you know, if we have to reduce our deficit, what do you think of this particular area? I doubt very much if this minister has had any consultation of that kind. However, we will get into all of these things in much greater detail in the rest of the Estimates when we go line by line.

I think at the end of the day, when we are finished this minister's department, we will find that there is not really the commitment there to family support and preservation that this minister

talks about because we know that their budget decisions, in many cases, have taken priority over the rhetoric of the throne speech and the budget speech.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: We will now have the opening remarks from the critic for the second opposition party, the honourable member for Osborne.

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Madam Chairperson, I, too, want to begin by saying that I do believe that it is a time for reform. For years, we have spent money with an expectation of outcome that has not always come to pass. We have, in fact, a situation now where many of the programs that we established are not meeting their objectives, and I am pleased to hear the minister talk about a new day dawning.

One of the things I think we have to recognize is that we are dealing with a very complex, almost like a jigsaw puzzle, and the pieces have to fit together, and what we do in one area of our spending can either move us closer to or further away from the objectives that we all would agree upon, some degree of quality of life, particularly for young children and for the families who are raising them.

I again want to begin by saying that it is an opportunity not to be lost. We are looking at this at the federal level. It is a time where nothing is going unchallenged, and I am pleased to hear that the province is looking for opportunities to have input.

We do know that the parliamentary committee looking at income support programs will be holding joint hearings with provincial governments in three jurisdictions, and it would be my hope that we in Manitoba could look at this approach, as well. Rather than sitting back and waiting until the federal government releases its plan and then having a critical input, is there a way in which we in Manitoba could go forward jointly with the federal government and examine the interface among some of these programs?

Again, I want to come out by saying that I think we should be looking for those areas of

co-operation, and it is not my intention to be critical of this minister or to sandbag her well-intentioned plans, because it would not be fair of me to start off doing that, at the same time to elicit her consideration for co-operation with this federal initiative. So I would very much like to look at the ways in which the province and the federal government could proceed together.

I think the other thing to recognize is that many of the programs that exist outside of this minister's portfolio actually have input back on what goes on, and we have been challenging the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), for example, with respect to the Maintenance Enforcement Program. Its success or failure winds up creating a liability for this minister's department, and when, in fact, parents who are obligated through court orders to provide maintenance support do not do it, either the quality of family life diminishes because the family has to manage on less income, or the alternative is that the custodial parent has to go out and get a second job, taking away the time from her responsibilities to her children, or alternatively, as is increasingly commonly the case, the person winds up going back to income support programs, and the defaulting individual's responsibility is then passed on to public support programs.

So I think that as we go into this Family Services Estimates process, we want to look very carefully at the ways in which other kinds of activities outside of the department are having a positive or a negative effect.

I also want to talk from the vantage point of some 17 years spent in the daycare system. I mean, I began to work in daycare at a time when people did not even know what the word meant. It was a time in which we said many of the same things that you have said today, Madam Minister, talking about ways in which we can spend the money up front and can prevent the terrible consequence.

I remember putting out a newsletter at one point in which we used an analogy of dragging children out of a river and resuscitating them and never having the time to be able to go upstream and see who has thrown them in. I think, in fact, that is

what we have to be about through this exercise of reform and review, is to figure out the ways in which we can develop the programs and services which support families, and keep them whole and keep them healthy, rather than coming in with costly and not always successful programs which try and bail out.

Just out of this daycare experience, I came to the conclusion that we know so much, but we do so little with what we know. For example, we know that a positive early childhood experience correlates positively with a number of positive outcomes. For example, the research which has gone on in quality child care interventions over the last 20 years has indicated that children who have this positive start have a correlation with successful completion of high school, and, again, successful completion of high school correlates positively with the ability to earn one's living.

Another thing that we find in the literature is that this early childhood experience also correlates positively with the likelihood of getting employment following education, that there is something that happens to kids when they get this early experience of seeing people work and work with them, that they become able to value employment as something to move into following education.

There is also a decreased likelihood of becoming a single parent. It is interesting that the research shows that if you have had an early childhood experience, you are less likely to wind up as a single parent and on social assistance.

The final one that I think is absolutely telling is the likelihood of a young person having had this experience, winding up involved in criminal activity and spending time in jail.

If all of these things are positive outcomes, and it is there in the literature, then the more we can invest in the early childhood experiences of young children, particularly breaking the cycle of abuse, poverty and neglect, then the more likely we are going to come to the point where our crisis intervention money is going to be less and less.

* (1500)

I think that is the rub. What we really need to recognize is that you cannot prevent the 20-year problem today. You have to spend it over 20 years. I think that is the challenge for all of us as we go through this exercise, is to figure out how we can get as much of that money into the front end of the system without compromising the meeting of the needs at the back end.

I would like to say that while I have been on record, and I know it has distressed some people, that I have been critical of some of the Year of the Family initiatives, that my approach throughout this Estimates process is going to be as co-operative as I can manage it, because I really do think the challenge is there for us and we have to do everything we can to get it working right.

With those remarks, then I am prepared to go into the Estimates process. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: I would remind members of the committee that we will defer dealing with the Minister's Salary 1.(a), until all other items in the Estimates of this department have been passed.

At this time, I would invite the minister's staff to please enter the Chamber.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, at this point in time, shall I introduce my staff? Facing my right hand, Roxy Freedman, the Deputy Minister of Family Services, and next to her, Wes Henderson from Administration and Finance, Martin Billinkoff, ADM of Management Services and Joanne Thibault from International Year of the Family Secretariat.

Mr. Martindale: I will start on line 9.1(b). Under Executive Support, we have some salary increases. I think the minister has a very good deputy minister, but I wonder if the minister could tell us what the rationale is for the salary increase. Is it a change in categories or—I am sure there is some reason. I wonder if the minister could enlighten us on that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is merit increments. I think this has been an issue that has been raised in other departments, the Department of Health being one of those. I think it has been explained by saying that right throughout the civil service, the decision

was made by this government that merit increases would be allowed, although everyone in the civil service has taken or will receive the 10 days off without pay. I believe there is about 40 percent of the civil service that does receive merit increments, because they are not at the top of their category.

Therefore, there are people within the department who are still eligible for merit increments until they reach the top of their salary level.

Mr. Martindale: Under Administrative, the number of staff years has stayed the same at seven, but there is an increase from \$219,000 to \$230,000. Are these merit increases or what is the reason for the increase in salaries there?

Mrs. Mitchelson: This is a combination of merit increases and general salary increments, GSI.

Mr. Martindale: Under Activity Identification, executive staff are responsible for management of the department's human resources, so I hope it is appropriate at this time to ask questions about a rather troubled building at 164 Isabel Street, where concerns have been raised. One of my colleagues wrote to the Minister of Government Services on February 1 and sent a copy to this minister.

The concerns are about the health of the employees working there, because of numerous problems, such as wasps in the building, mice, decaying ceiling tiles, only one fire exit from some parts of the building, roof leaking. My colleague identified four pages of problems to this building.

I would like to ask the minister, is her staff actively seeking a new location for these staff, or are you planning to renovate the building? What are the plans for 164 Isabel Street?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we are actively pursuing alternate accommodation. As a matter of fact, we have been working very closely with Government Services, realizing and recognizing that there are some real issues. We are looking—we have gone to tender already—for a new location. The tender call is out, and we will be awaiting responses to that call and looking

hopefully to a very positive resolution and some new accommodation.

Mr. Martindale: Does the minister have a time line for relocating the staff, and is the plan to rent alternative space or to build alternative space?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we will be renting accommodation. No specific time frame at this point, but we are looking to move as quickly as possible.

Mr. Martindale: This office serves a very large number of social assistance clients. Does the minister plan to relocate in the same neighbourhood, since this is currently a fairly accessible location? It is close to a large number of people who live in public housing. It is on a bus route and very close to the William Avenue bus route. Does the minister plan to find alternate space in a location that is accessible to the clients who need the services of the staff there?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it is very important, I think, that we remain in that vicinity for exactly the reasons that my honourable friend has outlined. I would imagine that the final result would ensure that it is an office that is accessible to the clientele that we serve and sensitive to their needs.

Ms. McCormick: I had in fact written on behalf of one of my constituents and had had an answer back indicating that the time line was July 1. Can you give me some indication how long beyond July 1 it is likely to be?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we are doing everything possible to meet that date. I am not sure whether it will be able to be accomplished. So I would hate to make that definite commitment at this point, but we are moving very quickly. If we can, we certainly will try to meet that deadline.

* (1510)

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, under 9.1(c) Children's Advocate, I would like to ask the minister if she can share some information about the Children's Advocate. I am not sure how much she can share because as we know the legislation says that the Advocate reports to the minister not to the Legislature.

However, I would hope that there would be at least some statistical things that the minister could share with us such as the number of people who requested help from the Children's Advocate's office, and, of those, how many did the Children's Advocate refer to other government departments? How many complaints were taken up by the Children's Advocate? How many of those were resolved satisfactorily? How many of those were not resolved satisfactorily? I would appreciate some detail if the minister can share it with us.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I am just awaiting the Children's Advocate to come in so that he can answer specific questions. As he walks through the door, I will introduce Wayne Govereau, who is the Children's Advocate. I will give a brief overview, and then if there are specifics that you would like Wayne to answer I will be pleased to get him to help me answer them.

During the period of January 1, 1993, to March 31, 1994, a total of 559 inquiries or complaints were received. A total of 429 cases were open for investigation and/or advocacy. The majority of complaints were with respect to placement issues; disagreement about Child and Family Services intervention; lack of care treatment plans for children; refusal of services; permanency planning issues; adherence to service standards; child's rights or views not being involved in decisions; access visitation concerns and professional conduct practices.

There was a specific question my honourable friend asked, and that was about how many of the inquiries or complaints that were received were referred to other government departments, I believe,

I am told that possibly about 20 were referred to other government departments.

Mr. Martindale: Since this is a relatively new office, more information would be helpful on how cases that are investigated are resolved. I guess that really gets into the powers of the Children's Advocate. I wonder if the minister could enlighten us on, I guess, the disposition of the investigations? Does the Children's Advocate have the authority to overrule department

decisions or to impose his own decision on staff, for example, in Child and Family Services, or does he negotiate an agreeable compromise or settlement between the people who approach his office for help and the department staff? I wonder if the minister could elaborate on this, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, it is mostly, I understand, by negotiation that the Advocate has the power to make recommendations.

Mr. Martindale: I know it is in the Children's Advocate's mandate to make recommendations to the minister. When you say recommendations are made, is this to directors of departments or to directors of agencies or to the minister or both? Where do these recommendations go? What happens to them?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it is a process of negotiation. If there is an issue that the Child Advocate determines needs to be looked at or discussed with the agency, with the supervisor or with workers who deal with children, it is a process of sitting down and negotiating and taking a look at a plan, how the issue might be resolved.

My understanding is that about 60 percent of the cases have been resolved to the Advocate's satisfaction. There is still some work to be done on the other 40 percent. That is a process that is ongoing where there is dialogue and communication around how to resolve the issues.

Mr. Martindale: I am interested in knowing if the other 40 percent are things that are unsuccessfully investigated or whether those are just ongoing cases.

Mrs. Mitchelson: My understanding is that they are ongoing.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister tell us if the Children's Advocate has made any policy changes or made any recommendations regarding policy changes to the minister?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I guess since I was appointed or accepted responsibility for the Department of Family Services, we have had an opportunity, I would say, to meet on a monthly basis, approximately a monthly basis, the Children's Advocate and myself, to discuss issues.

There has not been any policy change recommendations specifically that have been made. We have had dialogue and discussion around issues affecting children and I will be anticipating, I suppose, the first annual report from the Children's Advocate sometime in the near future that will be shared.

Mr. Martindale: Having discussions on children's issues sounds deliberately vague. I would hope that in the report there would be some specifics.

Rather than wait for the report, I think we should ask now. Is the minister telling us that there have been no recommendations from the Children's Advocate for changes in policy? If so, does that mean that everything is fine in Child and Family Services agencies and other organizations that the Children's Advocate investigates, out of 559 requests for help and 429 cases open that there are no policy changes being recommended?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As a result of dialogue around some issues, one of the things that we have had the opportunity to discuss when I was first appointed was the issue around a vision for Child and Family Services, a vision for the agencies and the department. I think we have worked through, in this budgetary process, a vision that does support family. I have talked about family support, family preservation and family responsibility, working within families, dealing with special needs issues, trying to ensure that we have the opportunity wherever possible to look at early intervention, early child development and preserving families, keeping families together.

* (1520)

We have had those discussions and I think we have addressed some of that issue around lack of vision. I would think you might find that the Children's Advocate would indicate that it is coming, that there is a sense there is a clear vision of what direction we want to take. I go back to the comments that were made, my honourable friend's comments from the second opposition, realizing, recognizing that we keep putting more money into the system on a yearly basis, massive amounts of

money in, we are still seeing more incidences of more children coming into care.

So more money does not necessarily mean that we are going to have better results. We have to take a look at refocusing the way we do business on the child welfare side of things and ensure that we look at new ways. Obviously, the old ways are not working. If they were working, we would not see more kids coming into care. We would not see circumstances and the situations that we are seeing today.

So there needs to be a clear vision. There needs to be redirection and a new focus. I think that focus has been clearly articulated through questioning in Question Period and with a new vision that—and the refocusing of resource dollars away from just supporting children and just allowing the money to flow when children are taken into care rather than having children supported within their own family unit if that is at all possible and trying to sense and identify children at risk up front earlier on so that we can put the supports in place rather than only allowing the dollars to flow once children are taken into care.

I have indicated, I think, in Question Period, and we can talk about it in a little more detail, that the Level I funding to the Child and Family Services agencies has been freed up. We used to only say we will provide per diems for you once you take children into care. We are saying, you can have those resource dollars, but you do not have to take children into care to use those dollars. So they will be able to look at new and innovative ways of doing things.

They are quite excited about that, and I think we have some really good people working within our system who, given the opportunity, can look at doing things differently. So that is one of the areas we have had discussion on.

I think we have managed to put in place and look at a vision into the future that is going to have an impact, hopefully, on preserving families, putting supports around families and asking families to accept some responsibility, too. Along with having a child, comes a responsibility. I think we all know

that. There is a responsibility to love, to nurture and to provide support.

I am thoroughly convinced that if we can put some of those supports around families and do some early upfront work and intervention that we are going to see a difference. We are not going to see a difference overnight, either. We got into this situation over many, many years of ad hoc programming, one program on top of another, nobody ever measuring or evaluating the outcomes, and, obviously, if we did measure or evaluate, we would see that we are not succeeding, that things are getting worse.

So I am hopeful. I am not extremely optimistic that overnight you are going to see major change, but rather than throwing our hands up and saying, things are going to hell in a hand basket, what can we do about it? Let us stop, let us take a look, and let us look at refocus, a new vision, a new way of doing things, and hopefully, we will see slow, positive results in the opposite direction.

Mr. Martindale: I am glad to see that the Children's Advocate has raised these issues with the minister, and I will be looking forward to getting into more detail further on in these Estimates because from what limited information the minister has been able to share to this point, I would have to agree with the analysis that I have heard so far, because I think a lot of people out in the field and observers of the Child and Family Services system, in particular, share a common analysis, and that is that when there is a mandated service and children are taken into care, huge amounts of money and resources follow, but if you try to put alternatives into place that have to do with intervention and prevention, there is not nearly as much money available.

If the minister can reallocate those resources or shift the resources or get the money into prevention in a substantially greater way somehow, if that actually happens, then I will be the first to commend the minister, but for now, we will wait and get more details on what she has planned in this area. I know she has been alluding to it, but we will get into more details later.

Ms. McCormick: Madam Chairperson, I would like to test out some of these 559 situations and just determine how far the Children's Advocate can go with respect to, for example, services being claimed on behalf of individual children.

My questions relate to, for example, the April 1994 directive which seems to indicate that the department is moving from a set-rate approach to a foster family—the payment for care in foster families—to a negotiated rate based on the level of need that children have.

I have had several meetings with the Foster Parents' Association who increasingly are concerned that the kinds of assessments and interventions and therapy that are necessary for kids, and that, in fact, have been promised as part of placement plans, never really materialize. Once the kid is in the home, the promises evaporate.

Would the Children's Advocate be dealing with concerns by the foster families for the claims that agencies have made—if I could have a scenario, for example, how that would then go back into the department for negotiation.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it is so very difficult at times through the Estimates process, when everything you have to receive is third hand, and maybe we could look at rule changes in the House whereby we could have officials respond directly, especially when it is very specialized issues, so that the opportunity to ask and dialogue, and sometimes when it comes back third hand, I hope that I have answered everything fully.

You will find this is a very frustrating process as we go through several hours, but I am told that yes, foster parents have come forward to the Children's Advocate indicating that they felt the needs of the child were above and beyond maybe the ability of the agency for whatever reason or the negotiated ability. I am talking around in circles here. Just a minute.

If a foster family has come to the Children's Advocate indicating that there possibly is not enough money to provide for the special needs or the circumstances surrounding that child, and he

will sit down and review that issue, and if there seems to be a concern will go back to the agency in question and try to negotiate with that agency a fair settlement.

Ms. McCormick: So I understand that this is what the Children's Advocate would see as a legitimate activity. Given that we now are likely to see a significant number of children, or a significant number of foster families going through this negotiation process with the cutback in rates to the \$10 a day and then an adding back on of amounts to meet children's special needs, do you see an increasing role for the department to conduct an appeal process or whether the Children's Advocate will be involved in more and more of these situations?

* (1530)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I think we may have a little bit of a misunderstanding of not being on the same wavelength regarding the relative rates for foster families or long-term placement rates, and I think what we are trying to do—we can get into this in greater detail as we get into Child and Family Services, but what we are attempting to do is ensure that there is some permanency planning around children so that they are not moved from one foster home to another.

If children are in a long-term placement and there is stability, but for some reason or another adoption is not an option at that point—and in many instances or circumstances it is not—that child does not need a lot of protection. They do not need a lot of interference or intervention from the Child and Family Services agency. You have a loving family that wants to provide for that child and wants a long-term relationship with that child.

That is where we are looking at the long-term placement rates. There will be less intervention, fewer visits from the agency. The foster family, if it has proven itself, will have the ability to care for and nurture that child in a more permanent setting with little chance of that child being moved from place to place to place if things are pretty good.

So, in those instances, that would be negotiated. The relative foster rate would be applied in those

circumstances, and I think in the best interests of the child. It allows that foster family to provide that support, we have indicated. So those would be negotiated. It is on a case-by-case basis, and they would be negotiated satisfactorily. Once that negotiation has taken place, there would really be no need for the Children's Advocate to be involved because both sides have to be happy with that agreement.

When it comes to the special needs component, that is, Level I, Level II, Level III, up to Level V, those will be negotiated, but it is determined then—as it is today. We are talking about the basic rate. The special needs rates are not changing. They would be still applicable with the Levels I to V. Special needs rates will remain the same. It is that basic component only that is changing.

Ms. McCormick: Madam Chairperson, I wanted to ask the minister then, given that the Children's Advocate is already performing a kind of an appeal function with respect to the level of service that kids can claim back from agencies, and given that there is—my understanding is, you have used the term actually, satisfactory negotiation. That presumes, I think, that once the rate is satisfactory it remains satisfactory for all time.

I am wondering, where is the point of appeal? Is there an appeal mechanism within the department for any foster family to challenge the level that they have been approved at given the child's changing circumstances, or would that necessarily have to go back to the Children's Advocate?

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Advocate, when he is dealing with an issue regarding a foster placement and if he does have a call, would be advocating and looking into the issue based on the best interest of the child, and ensuring that child's needs were met. So it really is not an appeal process for, you know, financial remuneration.

What has happened in the past is that foster rates have been set at X number of dollars, and special needs, yes, were another component based on an

assessment. The basic rates were set as they will be now, but there will be two different rates, one for long-term and relative placement and the other a foster family rate. There will still be those two rates, or there will be now those two rates.

What we will have to do is monitor the situation. As I said, it will be on an individual case-by-case basis that the agency will work with the foster family, and if it is in the best interest of the child to have a long-term placement with less supervision from the agency and it is agreeable to both sides, that would then be when we would look at that long-term placement rate.

You know, I am sure there are many families out there right now who are fostering children who would love to adopt or have a very permanent relationship with that child. Sometimes financially it is not possible to even contemplate adoption because there is no support, and some of these circumstances it could almost be like a subsidized adoption whereby we are providing support to a family who really does care and they do want a long-term permanent relationship with that child, and it does provide some additional income to make that happen. So I can see that there could be some very positive results as a result of the change, and that does then free up dollars to put into other early intervention programming.

Ms. McCormick: So I am hearing then, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that the minister anticipates there will not be an increasing demand on the Child Advocate's office, but that you will be monitoring this, and that, in fact, the Children's Advocate will still be that resource to deal with the availability of service, but the funding for the service will still be negotiated and appealed if necessary through the department, that you do have an appeal mechanism of some sort, where a rate is established and subsequently found to be inadequate given the change in the family circumstances or the child's circumstances.

* (1540)

Mrs. Mitchelson: From time to time, I do receive correspondence. I receive correspondence from members of the opposition who have had individuals cases raised with them, or my

colleagues, and people who just write from time to time. I would be interested in monitoring the situation very closely. If there are cases that come forward that we find there cannot be a satisfactory resolution, there is always the ultimate appeal to the minister's office.

Because I believe it is the right way to go, I really believe we are going to see children who are better served through the new procedures that we have put in place. I will be very interested in hearing any concerns that are raised. If they come to my attention, we will evaluate the process and see if we cannot resolve individual issues on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Acting Chairperson, under line 1.(d) Social Services Advisory Committee, could the minister table a list of the advisory committee members, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will read the names into the record. I will provide a list for both opposition critics very soon, but I will read the names into the record and I will provide that list very shortly. Caroline Sopuck is the chairperson. Judy Kendel is the vice-chairperson. She is acting as chairperson right now because Caroline Sopuck is away on a six-month leave. There is Elsie Janzen, Marnie Skastfeld, Nadia Davage, Clare De'Athe, Penny Fraser, Josie Lucidi, Eileen Forsyth, Tara Brousseau, Harold Sveistrup, Raymond Boors, Dennett Arnold, Grant Nordman, Verla MacDonald, and I will get a list for you as soon as possible.

Mr. Martindale: Can the minister tell us, please, what qualifications she looks for in individuals who are appointed to the Social Services Advisory Committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, these are people in the community that are appointed that have a sensitivity to issues surrounding social allowances. I personally have not had the opportunity to appoint anyone, since I have been Minister of Family Services, to this committee, but I do want to indicate that there is a fairly extensive training process when people are appointed.

They have to be informed of the situation or circumstances, the kinds of cases that they will be dealing with. As a result of their acceptance of an appointment, they are provided with an extensive orientation and training session provided by the administrative staff of the committee upon their appointment. As well, the members generally observe a number of sessions initially to further orient themselves to the various issues and pieces of legislation that they are dealing with prior to their taking on the responsibilities. The training process is an ongoing one as they become more familiar with the issues that the committee deals with on a regular basis.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister tell us how many individuals appealed social assistance decisions in the '93-94 calendar years, or I guess that is '93-94 fiscal year, and how many of those were successful and how many were unsuccessful? I hope that information is in the minister's annual report but usually there is a time lag before we get the annual report, so if the minister could tell us now, that would be appreciated.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, in the last year, there were a total of 1,401 appeals filed. Of those, 95 were allowed; 610 were dismissed; 489 were withdrawn prior to the hearing being convened; 137 were scheduled but the appellant did not attend; 31 were considered outside the jurisdiction of the committee and 39 are in process.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister give us similar statistics for other parts of her department? I understand that child care decisions are also appealable, and if there are other areas that the minister has statistics on, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Of the 1,401 cases that appealed, 751 were municipal assistance; 587 social allowances; 35 daycare subsidy; one daycare licensing; one daycare terms and conditions; 18 55 Plus; five residential care and three VRDP.

* (1550)

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister indicate, please, in how many of the 1,401 appeals the individuals were represented by legal counsel?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, 143 of the appellants had legal representation.

Mr. Martindale: I am interested in knowing if people represented by legal counsel had a higher success rate or not. The success rate for appeals is very, very low. Of 600—no, let me see now. Well, there are so many stats here it is hard to say. Six hundred and ten were dismissed and 95 were allowed. I think those are the most germane stats. So only about 15 percent of people who appealed were successful—less than 15 percent were successful. So I would like to know if having legal counsel made it any easier for people or if they were more successful in having their appeals upheld.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I think we have got it right. Ninety-five cases were allowed. Twenty of those had legal counsel. The rest did not.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to ask the minister if there has been any change this year as compared to recent years in terms of the number of appellants who were successful or unsuccessful, or is the trend fairly constant over recent years?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, if you look at over the last four years, we have a low of 5.3 percent allowed to a high of 6.8 percent allowed—6.8 percent being '93-94; 5.3 percent '92-93; 6.4 percent '91-92; 6.8 percent '90-91, so it has been fairly stable.

Mr. Martindale: Well, I am glad that the minister corrected my math. My percentage was away too high. I said less than 15 percent, and it is much, much lower than that. In fact, it is almost useless to appeal, with the exception of people where the appeals are withdrawn. I would be interested in knowing why.

I suspect that it is because the staff of the Social Services Advisory Committee intervene with front-line staff, but I do not know that for sure. I would be interested in knowing, first of all, if I am right that the successful appeals are much lower than what I said, because the minister has put the actual figures on the record, which I appreciate, and, secondly, why the 489 people withdraw? I am

sure there must be some sort of reason for that. I hope it is not because they gave up, but I assume that there is a good reason for it.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think I put some incorrect information on the record, and I must go back and apologize for putting wrong information on the record. I would like to clear the record right now.

You said out of the number of appeals, applications were received. If we look at the total number of applications that were received, the percentages that I gave were correct. If we look at the actual number of appeals that were heard, because those that are withdrawn or do not show up, do not go to appeal, then the percentages are considerably different. They are anywhere from 14 to 16 percent.

Mr. Martindale: The minister's retraction is accepted and appreciated. I am glad to hear that my arithmetic was correct.

I wonder if the minister could answer the second question that I asked, which had to do with the 489 people who withdrew their applications. I am wondering what the reason or reasons are for a large number of people withdrawing their appeal.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am told that in most cases, the issue was re-examined and a solution was found.

Mr. Martindale: I am interested in the 18 people who appealed their 55 Plus decision by part of this minister's department, and I am wondering if it has to do with the fact that the City of Winnipeg is now forcing individuals to apply for 55 Plus and then deducting the amount of money. I know this is of great concern to individuals. I am disappointed that the City of Winnipeg is doing this. I think I understand it. I think it is probably their response to some offloading by this provincial government, of finances, and also, the fact that it was this government, in fact, this minister's department, that reduced social assistance payments to single individuals.

* (1600)

I would be interested in knowing if the minister can give me a more definitive answer on why people were appealing the 55 Plus decision.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, of the 18 applications that were received, only six went to appeal. The rest of them were either withdrawn or the people did not show up. So there were six that were heard and six that were dismissed.

Basically, my understanding is that you apply for 55 Plus income supplement, and all of your income is taken into account. If you fall within the criteria and the guidelines, you receive that additional support, and obviously, as a result of the six being dismissed, they did not meet the criteria for the program.

Mr. Martindale: Was I correct, that the City of Winnipeg is forcing individuals to apply for 55 Plus and then deducting an equal amount of benefit from their city social assistance?

Mrs. Mitchelson: My understanding is that we have no direct knowledge of the City of Winnipeg doing that.

Mr. Martindale: I will have to check with the City of Winnipeg, I guess.

The people who are on social assistance who are employable are expected to look for work. On the other hand, I think it is reasonable that they should also be encouraged to do volunteer work because volunteer work has a number of benefits. It gets people out of their homes. Quite often, it is positive to the mental health of individuals because they feel better about themselves when they are out in the community and contributing to the community and to society.

I guess my question is if the minister agrees with me that people on municipal assistance, in addition to looking for work, should be encouraged or are encouraged by staff to do volunteer work—and frequently, it leads to paid employment, as well.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I agree wholeheartedly. I think we all feel very much better about ourselves when we are contributing and giving something back to our community in whatever way, whether it be through working or through a volunteer commitment.

I know that many of us on a regular basis wish we had a little more time to commit to volunteerism. I think people are much healthier

and feel much better about themselves and have a little higher self-esteem when they do have the ability to contribute something back. So I wholeheartedly agree that anyone, whether they be municipal caseloads or provincial caseloads, or indeed all of us who are working and have a few hours to spare, we all feel a little better if we can give something back to our community.

Mr. Martindale: Finally for this section, I would like to ask the minister what some of the reasons are that people are cut off municipal or provincial assistance. I think I know some of the policies and some of the reasons; for example, if people are told about work that is available, and they do not apply for it or do not actively seek out work, which is an expectation I think on everyone who is employable.

For both the provincial and the municipal systems, I wonder if the minister can tell us what some of the reasons are that people are cut off assistance. I know there are many, many reasons, but if the minister could summarize the major ones, that would be appreciated.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think we are sort of getting into the Social Allowances line, and so this discussion around that is not really dealing with the social services review committee, but, you know, I can say that the City of Winnipeg has its own process in place for assessing employable recipients.

I think they have a process that says if there is a job available and you refuse to take a job, they would disallow welfare. That does not mean there is not an opportunity to reapply, but I think if there is a job available and it is offered and they refuse, the City of Winnipeg does refuse to pay welfare. I guess it would, you know, in our instance, or I guess at the city level, too, if your assets increase, or if you have an income that exceeds the amount that you would make on welfare, that those would be reasons. Medical inadmissibility would be another reason, I guess. We can get into some detail on that as we get into the social assistance line.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Chairperson, yes, I am interested in pursuing the way in which this is

funded. Are Ms. Sopuck, or Ms. Kendel in her place, funded on a salary basis as chair, or is it all on a per diem?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, they are per diems. It is not salaried. The chairperson, 55 for the first session and 45 for the second. Those are half-day per diems, and 40 and 35 for other members of the committee.

Ms. McCormick: Have these rates been adjusted upwards or downwards within the last fiscal period?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There has been no change over the last number of years that I can remember. The rates have been stable, except there has been a slight reduction as a result of Bill 22 being passed on to boards and commissions also.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can you tell me how these remuneration rates relate to other similar activities outside the department? For example, paid to the Labour Board for appeal hearings, paid to Workers' Comp commissioners for their hearings, paid to the Horse Racing Commission, for example. Can you give me some indication of parity from department to department?

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

* (1610)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, when we came into government six years ago, many of the rates we see as per diems paid for boards and commissions are the same rates that were paid for many years previously. In the first couple of years, when government still had increasing revenues, we did take a look at boards and commissions, and there is no rationale or reasoning why one board is paid a certain per diem and another board is paid differently. We did look into that at the time, and it would have cost a considerable amount of money, I think, to bring some of the boards and commissions up to parity with other boards, based on what we determined was a fairly responsible role that they played.

Unfortunately, we got to a point where revenues flattened, or we were not seeing increased revenues, and for us, I can just imagine the heyday

the opposition might have had with us changing boards and commissions when they talk about—we all know the good work that a lot of people, especially on the boards and commissions in the Department of Family Services, do, the role they play in assessing and evaluating. Some difficult issues that we have to deal with. We know they are worth probably a lot more than they receive on a per diem basis.

I guess the decision was made by this government that, at a time where we were not increasing grants and we were reducing in certain areas, we could not look at paying members of boards and commissions more. So, there is no parity; there is no rhyme or reason. I do want to indicate, though, that they are not rates that we set as government. They are rates that have been in place for many, many years.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. I wonder if I might just ask the indulgence of the committee. I understand now we are on (d). I want to try and establish how this particular section of Committee of Supply wishes to deal with this, in terms of, do you wish to pass line by line once you have completed the (b) portion before proceeding to (c), or do you want to do all of 1. through to 6. and then go back and pass them? Just for the benefit of the Chair, I would just like clarification of what the will of the committee is, please.

Mr. Martindale: I think my colleague has one more question on (d), and then we are prepared to pass everything up to this point.

Madam Chairperson: Okay, fine. Then we will proceed into each section line by line. Thank you very much.

Ms. McCormick: Madam Chairperson, to the minister, when you spoke recently of examining the parity situation and anticipating that the cost would go up, has there been any thought to creating parity the other way? For example, some of the remuneration rates paid to other nonhuman services, boards and commission, may in fact, if these are not inflated, may be inflated. Has there been any discussion within your department or with other departments to creating parity by challenging some of the amounts that are paid to

boards and commissions under other departmental administrations?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I think boards and commissions right throughout government warranted examination. As I said, we did take a look at that.

An interesting comment that you make, because when we get around to some of the pay equity issues—and I think philosophically it might be interesting to have a discussion here with all three parties around what pay equity really means. I do not think you have ever seen, in any implementation of pay equity, that you take the lowest denominator. It is probably the highest. We have never seen salaries reduced as a result of implementation of pay equity. It was an interesting comment that you make, and I would be interested in hearing other party policies around that issue. I think this would be somewhat a similar issue. In many, many instances when we are looking at fairness and equal treatment it is always the upper level that is used.

I cannot tell you, because I was not a part of the process. I do know that government, internally, was looking at boards and commissions. At that point when it was looked at, and that was a few years back now, there might have been some sense that there were some boards that were too highly paid and should be reduced and others increased. I guess the decision was, at the time, that even trying to raise certain boards or commissions, which governments appoint—most of them are Order-in-Council appointments, and very often you get criticism from the opposition that they are political appointments, political hacks.

We certainly know that many of the people that work on our boards and commissions do a very admirable job and are not paid well. I go back to my days in Culture. Most of the boards in Culture are volunteer boards. They get paid out-of-pocket expenses, but many of them are volunteer boards.

We know there is not parity. I do not think government, at this point in time, is ready to look at implementation of parity. I would imagine that if you looked at that right across the board, because we have so many boards and commissions that are

nonpaying boards and commissions, there would be a cost. Even if we did take some of the higher paying boards and reduce some of the levels there, there would still be an additional cost to government and to the taxpayers as a result.

Ms. McCormick: I did intend not to ask another question, but I do want to ask one more. Before I ask my question, Madam Chairperson, I would like to preface it with the day I live to see the human services advisory groups remunerated at the same level that some of the—for example, the Round Table on Environment and Economy, the Horse Racing Commission and others. I think that will be a positive step. [interjection] Yes.

Anyway, I did want to ask a question with respect to legal support to the Social Services Advisory Committee. Is it still delivered through Civil Legal Services? Have there been any changes to the level of legal support required over the last fiscal year to this fiscal year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is my understanding that the administrative support is pretty well the same as it has been in the past. They do have access to legal counsel when that is required.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$474,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$80,700—pass.

1.(c) Children's Advocate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$200,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$106,200—pass.

1.(d) Social Services Advisory Committee (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$133,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$157,800—pass.

1.(e) Management Services.

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, could we take a five-minute break at this point?

Madam Chairperson: Is that the will of the committee? [agreed]

This committee will reconvene at 4:25 p.m.

The committee recessed at 4:20 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:25 p.m.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please reconvene.

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, under line 1.(e)(1), could the minister tell us what income for social assistance recipients is exempt when calculating their benefits or would you prefer to answer this under the Social Allowances line? We could do that. [interjection] Okay.

Could the minister then tell us how much money the government has saved as the result of last year's cuts to the drugs, dental and optical services for social assistance recipients?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, if we could leave that to the Social Allowances line, then we will have staff here that have that information at their fingertips.

Mr. Martindale: I think all my questions here are probably going to have to wait. Has the minister considered direct deposit for cheques for provincial social allowance recipients?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we will try to get appropriate staff here to answer some of the details on social allowances if you would like that. My understanding is, though, regarding your last question, that we have done some preliminary investigation into direct deposits, but there has been nothing that has come forward yet that has been conclusive as to what direction we might take. So that is in the preliminary stages.

Mr. Martindale: So I take it that this is being studied and, I presume, to see whether it is cost-effective, et cetera?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Martindale: That is all for this page.

Madam Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to continue passing, with the understanding that the minister will provide the details requested by the honourable member for Burrows?

(e) Management Services (1) Financial and Administrative Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,020,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$515,400—pass.

(2) Program Budgeting and Reporting (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$461,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$106,800—pass.

(3) Human Resource Services.

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, part of the Activity Identification for Human Resource Services is the attainment of affirmative action goals. Could the minister tell us if there is a staff person designated for affirmative action, and is this a full-time position, or does this person have other responsibilities as well?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we do not have one full-time staff that is dedicated to affirmative action, but there are many staff within Human Resources Branch that have affirmative action as a part of their responsibility.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister tell us what the goals are for affirmative action hiring, for example, in categories such as visible minorities, handicapped, aboriginal people and women? Are there some kinds of goals for various areas of affirmative action?

* (1630)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, government targets—I guess that is the question you are asking—are for females, 50 percent; the Department of Family Services is at 68.95 percent. Aboriginal target is 10 percent, and the department is at 6.56 percent. Physically disabled target is 7 percent, and Family Services is at 4.04 percent. Visible minorities, the target is 6 percent, and we are at 2.05 percent.

Mr. Martindale: Since this government has been in office six years, I would be interested in knowing if you are making progress in meeting your goals, since you are under your goals in every category except women. In that area, my guess would be that you are probably overrepresented by women in front line staff positions and possibly underrepresented in management positions. Perhaps the minister could provide more detail on the affirmative action in various parts of the hierarchy of her department when it comes to women.

Mrs. Mitchelson: The statistics on females in management have increased somewhat. We have a female minister now in the Department of Family Services, which if you want to consider that a management position, has increased the numbers. Excluding that, we are currently at 34.62 percent females in management in Family Services, and that has been fairly stable over the past. I realize our numbers are lower than the targets in some of the other areas. There always are some factors that do come into play in this area, and that is that not everyone does declare. We know it has to be a voluntary declaration, to be included in the target numbers.

Also, we have had low vacancy rates, rightsizing within the department, which does indicate that there has not been a lot of ongoing recruitment, but I do know that in all of our recruitment ads, affirmative action is given consideration.

We are working at it, and I know it would be nice to see the numbers increase, but there are not a lot of vacancies. There is low staff turnover, and we are not doing a lot of recruitment right at this point in time.

Mr. Martindale: When I was on a constituency tour and in the community of Thompson, I had two very interesting meetings. One was with the director of the social work program in Thompson, and I do not remember the exact numbers, but I believe I was told that 100 percent of their graduates from the School of Social Work in Thompson are currently still employed, and I think about 98 percent of them, or a very high percentage, are employed in northern Manitoba.

I met with one of the minister's staff in the government office in Thompson, and I was told that they have been hiring many of these graduates, that they are very happy with them and that there are many benefits to hiring people who are graduates of the School of Social Work. One of them is that, first of all, they are from northern Manitoba, and so when they gain employment in Thompson or other places in the North, they almost invariably stay in the North, which is quite a contrast from the past, when many positions were filled by people from southern Manitoba,

particularly Winnipeg, who stayed for two or three years and then left to go back south.

I think that is entirely commendable, both on the part of the graduates of the School of Social Work and this minister's department, that they are hiring graduates of the School of Social Work. But, you know, there is a very serious problem, and I realize it is not part of this minister's department, but this minister is part of a cabinet and part of a government and therefore has to defend all the decisions of her government.

The problem is that there have been cuts to the ACCESS funding for the School of Social Work, both in Winnipeg and Thompson, and the result is if students cannot find their own funding, some of them cannot attend school, and my understanding is it is also changing the composition of the student body. Whereas originally these ACCESS programs were designed for immigrants and low income people and women and aboriginal people, the result of the limits to ACCESS funding means that many of their students now are aboriginal students, which is good, but the reason they are there is they can get band funding, and many others cannot get funding and therefore either are not attending or are not attending in the same numbers.

On the one hand, the government has affirmative action goals, which are good, but the ACCESS programs, which will help this minister to fulfill some of those goals, the funding is being cut for those ACCESS programs, which is contradictory to filling those positions.

I am wondering if the minister can comment on that. Is that having an effect on your hiring in Winnipeg, contrary to what I understand is a very positive experience in Thompson? How have the changes to ACCESS funding affected your hiring in southern Manitoba, and does it mean that there are fewer people available for those positions or not?

* (1640)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, my understanding is that in our department there is

very little turnover in Winnipeg. Right now we are hiring very few staff in the city of Winnipeg.

I could not comment on what is happening in the Child and Family Services agencies in Winnipeg. We do not directly hire staff, but I do know that in the area of social work, a lot of people who do go into work in the Child and Family Services agencies have a social work background, but I could not comment because we do not specifically make the hiring decisions or choices for the agency.

Within the department, there is very little turnover, and there is not recruitment of any substantial amount going on in Winnipeg presently.

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, I think our concerns about the decrease in ACCESS funding are on the record, both in Question Period and in the Department of Education Estimates. So I will not belabour the point. However, I hope that the minister will continue to work on meeting the goals in affirmative action, because some of them are lagging behind.

Madam Chairperson, if I could just comment on the process. I was told earlier that my colleague, the member for Osborne (Ms. McConnick) had to go to a meeting, so I wonder if we can continue in section 1.(e) but not pass them and hold them open in case the member for Osborne has questions.

Madam Chairperson: If that is agreeable to the minister? Is that the will of the committee? Okay.

Mr. Martindale: Under section 1.(e)(4), could the minister tell us about the computer systems for Child and Family Services? I assume that that is what is meant by Child and Family Services Information System.

When the previous minister amalgamated the Child and Family Services agencies in Winnipeg, one of the rationales that was given for that decision was that there would be computerization of the system and that would enable staff to track families and children as they move from one area of the city to another.

I think this process of computerization took place over a number of years. I would like to ask

the minister if it is finished and, if so, what the results are. Have the goals been met that were set by this minister's department for computerization? Has it improved the flow of information? Has it improved the tracking of children and families? Has it meant that individuals and families have not slipped through the cracks? What is the result of this computerization initiative?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, presently we are still in process of getting things up and running. There are 270 personal computer work stations throughout the province, and over 300 caseworkers have been trained in the use of the basic system. The majority of the field staff in 26 offices have received their initial training and have begun to enter new cases onto the system. It is expected that the Winnipeg agencies will begin to input their data in September of '94 with full implementation of the system expected by December of '94.

We are in the process. It has been a major undertaking, and there has been a lot of time spent ensuring that staff are up to speed and properly oriented in the use of the system.

Mr. Martindale: Madam Chairperson, on line 1.(e)(5), could the minister tell us what policy issues staff have been working on in Policy and Planning over the past year, or what policies and planning issues have they raised with the minister?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the Policy branch has been actively involved. Of course, you know we passed the vulnerable persons legislation last year. They are presently involved in participation on the implementation committee so we can get that legislation proclaimed, the commissioner hired to work as a result of that.

They have been reviewing policy issues around Welfare to Work, a strategy that we are certainly talking about and actively pursuing. They are involved in the design and implementation of an evaluation of In the Company of Friends, which is our pilot project for the mentally disabled in integrating them, allowing them to purchase their own services. They also are responsible for assessing the claims to the federal government for

our cap cost-sharing arrangements and are involved in that agreement.

They have been involved in reviewing the services for single parents and assisted Child and Family Support branch in review of services for pregnant and parenting adolescent mothers.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister tell us, since I assume that it is the responsibility of Policy and Planning to evaluate and to analyze programs, which programs in her department have Policy and Planning evaluated or analyzed in the past year, in addition to what the minister has already put on the record?

* (1650)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, my understanding is that we have not done any program evaluation as such. I guess what the policy branch has been busy doing is sort of the work around implementation of new policy and new legislation, which is the vulnerable persons act, the community living pilot project and those kinds of things. So that has been the kind of work that they have been doing.

We have had a person from the policy branch who has been working very closely and diligently on the consultation process around implementation of pilot projects, of Welfare to Work, specifically around the single moms. So they have been actively involved in that process also.

Mr. Martindale: That is a very disappointing answer from this minister, given that under Activity Identification on page 38, it says that the responsibility of Policy and Planning is the preparation of policy papers. It says that an activity identification is to conduct policy research and analysis on social service and income security issues, also to undertake program analysis and assess the effectiveness of departmental programs.

Under Expected Results, it says: "The undertaking of social policy review and analysis in support of departmental priorities."

I would like to know why Policy and Planning, under this minister, are not carrying out the mandate which it is supposed to be carrying out according to the minister's own Estimates book.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I would say that the Policy and Planning branch has been quite busy, and we have been looking at—you have to take the new initiatives that have been undertaken over the last year, and that is the vulnerable persons act. There is a lot of work that has to be done in order to get that proclaimed.

There is In the Company of Friends, which is a new pilot project to support those in the community hiring their own staff. I mean, no longer can any government department anywhere look at implementation of new initiatives without putting an evaluative process in place. That is the kind of thing the policy branch has been working on.

We have to have a measurement of outcomes into the future. There will not be new programs. There will not be new initiatives unless there is an evaluative mechanism that goes along with those new projects.

They have been doing some work on, as we indicated, our Welfare to Work strategy. We have \$2 million in the budget from Family Services and another \$1 million from Education in a special Welfare to Work line. They have been very busy working on that looking at how we can evaluate and measure outcomes once we implement any new pilot projects.

The Family Support Innovations Fund is a new fund that we are going to look at innovative and creative new ways of providing service. I indicated earlier that we have changed the focus, and we do have a vision for Child and Family Services into the future.

That work would have been done in conjunction with the Policy and Planning branch to look at family support, family preservation, family responsibility, and how do we put in place the evaluative mechanism around the new family support fund to measure outcomes to see whether in fact we are making a difference with a new direction and a new way of putting money into our child welfare system. So those are the kinds of things they have been working on.

Mr. Martindale: I can appreciate that the staff are working on these new initiatives on behalf of the minister, and I appreciate that she says any new programs should be evaluated particularly as to their outcomes.

Given that is the view of this minister, which is a legitimate function of Policy and Planning, why would Policy and Planning staff not be involved in evaluating existing programs and looking at their outcomes?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, with respect to specific evaluation reports, if you are asking if those kinds of things have been developed over the last year, the short answer is no. Policy and Planning branch is on a regular basis involved in evaluation of programs. You have seen changes. You have seen new and innovative ways of doing things as a result of a new direction, whether it be on the community living side, whether it be on child daycare, whether it be in the areas of child welfare. There is a continual monitoring and evaluation. As a result of some of that process, we are trying to do things in new and different ways. We will be redirecting and refocusing financial resources in new ways to try to go along with new policy, new ways of thinking.

Mr. Martindale: I think the minister just contradicted herself. On the one hand, she answered my question with a fairly definitive no, and then she says that Policy and Planning is doing continual evaluations. I think it is either one or the other. Either you are evaluating current programs or you are not. Which is it?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, no, I said if you are asking for a written report, there is not one. What I am saying is we have changed our focus in many areas in the department over the last number of years.

We have changed the way we are funding child welfare in the province of Manitoba in this year's budgetary process. That just did not come out of thin air. We had to take a look at the way we were doing things, work with the Child and Family Services agencies. Policy and Planning is a continual and ongoing part of that process. As a result, we have a Family Support Innovations Fund

that is looking at new ways of delivering service and child welfare. We have the change of support for Level I. We no longer have to take children into care to provide that kind of financial resources. Those were all done in collaboration, and Policy and Planning is an ongoing part of that whole process.

When we look at the pilot project in the Company of Friends, that is a new way of doing business. It is the leading edge across the country in developing new ways of allowing those with mental disabilities to use the dollars allocated them to buy their own services. It is very exciting, and it is very innovative. Policy and Planning is an ongoing part of the process that has helped us to come to the decisions to change our way of funding.

I have indicated to you and we have talked a lot about Welfare to Work. I indicated that we had someone from the Policy and Planning branch that was a part of the consultation process that has been out listening to clients, listening to the community, listening to the private sector and to the service providers to see where the incentives and the disincentives are. As a result of that consultation, Policy and Planning has been involved on an ongoing basis.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that this committee will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): The hour being five o'clock, time for Private Members' Business.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 207—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Bill 207, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail),

standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Stand.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 10—Youth Job Creation

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that

WHEREAS the Government of Manitoba is committed to providing valuable career-related work experience for young Manitobans; and

WHEREAS CareerStart 94, a program offering financial incentive to encourage employers to create summer jobs for students and youth in Manitoba has been initiated by the provincial government; and

WHEREAS over 4,000 young Manitobans are expected to benefit from CareerStart 94.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House commend the Government of Manitoba and the companies participating in this worthwhile program for their commitment to our youth, the leaders of tomorrow.

Motion presented.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Acting Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and speak to an initiative that I believe is very important to the future of our province.

Careers used to be a thing that our parents, once they assumed their career, kept for the rest of their lives. We turned around in our generation and started going through two and three and four careers, and our children will probably go through a minimum of 10 careers in their lifetime.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think it is important that we take a hard and fast look at what careers are and what careers are going to be in the future. I think CareerStart gives us an opportunity to give our children that view on what education in the real world is all about.

When you take the opportunity to go out and work when you are in high school or in university, your secondary education, it gives you an opportunity to look into what type of career you are actually looking forward to in the future. I notice even during your high school years some students say, well, I want to be a fireman, or, I want to be a policeman, or, I want to—nobody ever says they want to be a politician at that age, I do not think. [interjection] Oh, Becky did—I mean, the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) did.

I think it gives them an opportunity to actually get out—[interjection] Just five years ago, right, Becky?

It gives them an opportunity, Mr. Acting Speaker, to go out and see what the real world is all about and take a look at reality and say, this is the type of career that I am looking forward to.

I know that when I was going through high school, I went to work in a number of different situations. I had the opportunity of working in a firehall for three months and decided I did not want to be a fireman. I had the opportunity of working with a group of farming organizations and decided that was not going to be my career. I did have the opportunity of working in a number of service stations and decided that would be my career, that I enjoyed mechanics, and I enjoyed the aspect and the challenge of it.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I chose my career in high school and it led me off into a profession which I was proud of. It was an interesting field. It gave me an opportunity of moving into my own business. I was proud of having that opportunity and proud that my teachers helped me and that the businesses within our community assisted me in deriving the positive results that I found, in the end, on that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, CareerStart gives us an opportunity to aid some smaller businesses with employing some younger people, out of school, and having them have that opportunity and getting those extra dollars that are necessary to aid themselves through the educational process.

I think one of the important areas we have got to focus on is the trades and technology area, Mr. Acting Speaker, because moving into the new era we cannot forget that the trades are still going to be there, and we have to assist our apprenticeship programs into the future. If we do not have some of our young people still looking at the trades, we are going to have a problem acquiring that workforce in the future.

I believe we still have to look into the carpentry and the electrical and the mechanics and remember that those are important trades in the future. We will always have to build homes, we will always have to repair vehicles, we will always have to do the plumbing and the electrical. We have to see we have those trained tradespeople within those areas.

The new technologies that we have to move into, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the computer age I think really fall into that education-in-the-real-world concept. It gives us an opportunity to really get the cross-curriculum effect that we are attempting to get within schools today.

Too often the students in schools push along, and they are in their Grade 10, 11 and 12 and they are saying, why do I need this when I get out into the workforce? Not until they have had that opportunity of really experiencing that real world do they know why they had to learn it. This gives them an opportunity to learn their mathematical skills out in the workforce and actually relate it to a subject, be it in carpentry, be it in plumbing, electrical, but they have an opportunity to express themselves using what they have learned at school.

* (1710)

I think it is important when they move into world issues, when they start dealing at different levels and moving into their secondary educations, it gives them an opportunity to say this is why I learned that subject, this is why it was important to me to be there for that curricular activity.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the CareerStart program is something that will be of benefit not only to the younger generation that is moving into place today, but it is opportunity for the generation that has already been there to learn from the mistakes

that were created in the past. You have to invest into that format where the younger generation is actually going to receive something for those dollars, and I believe this is one area that is very important.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have to remember that our future is these children that are moving into the workforce. Our future depends on what type of education, what type of aspirations and what type of goals we give those children to reach for. The true way to resolve a lot of the problems of today's society is to give goals and career orientation to these people who are going to lead us in the future. Without those careers, without establishing those guidelines, without giving them the opportunity to establish that goal, we end up with some of the social negative impacts that we have in society today.

That is why, Mr. Acting Speaker, when we look at society today and we say, why do we have these problems on the streets, we can relate it back and say because there was never a program established to give them a goal or establish a goal. This gives us an opportunity to work with business, in co-operation with business.

We cannot diversify ourselves away and say to the business world, you are on your own. We have to aid them, and this is a form of aiding the businesses without picking out a specific group. This helps each and every group throughout that spectrum and allows each and every one of them to establish a new-think.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is no longer the new verbiage that we have been talking of when we are talking cross-curriculum and career orientation. It has come to the real world. We have to decide what it is we want our children to do. Do we want them to be able to establish those goals? We cannot establish those goals for them. They have to reach out and they have to decide what they want for their future. I know for a fact, my daughter said, I do not want you to be spending those dollars that I will have to repay tomorrow.

When we got into the debate on the issue of funding within this type of a program, this was different because they were receiving something

for it. They feel that they are going to have to pay it back, but at least they are the part of the population that is receiving something for these dollars going out today.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, let us not say that we are expending dollars or wasting dollars when we move them into this type of program. Some people will say, because the dollars are going into a business, it is inappropriate. Well, these dollars are not going to aid business, they are going to aid our young people, to set their goals and set careers so that they can move ahead in the future and not depend on governments to do everything for them. Governments were never there to create the goals for people to reach out to. Governments were there to protect and create that environment for them to work within.

So I do want to have the opportunity to hear the other members within the Legislature today speak to this very positive initiative that has been brought forward by government. I know that the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) will be getting up today. He and I had an opportunity to discuss it, and I am really looking forward to it because I know within his past profession, there are a lot of younger people who would like to be able to move into that area, and now that we have the community-based police, we have actually got some of our people within our community, our youngsters, able to work within the offices of the community-based police, and they are deciding from there to establish their careers in the police force, and I wish them well.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do want to see that we leave an awful lot of time for the members to rebut to my statements. Thank you very much.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Acting Speaker, I just take the opportunity to put a few words on the record at this time, and I would say, first of all, we cannot disagree in principle with this kind of a program, because the CareerStart program is one that has been around a long time, and actually, it was initiated during the previous Pawley government. So it sounds a bit

self-congratulatory on the part of the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

An Honourable Member: Lyon even had the same program.

Mr. Leonard Evans: As a matter of fact, you can go even beyond that into the Schreyer years, and there were youth programs. Maybe the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) was a recipient, was a participant.

An Honourable Member: I was an employer of one.

Mr. Leonard Evans: He was involved as an employer. Well, whatever way.

An Honourable Member: Douglas Campbell was the biggest fan of it all.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, Douglas Campbell would be very unhappy with this program because he would say it was a make-work program. I am surprised at the honourable member waxing eloquent on how great a program this is because I have listened too often to the former Minister of Finance dump on these kinds of programs, saying we do not believe in make-work programs, and this is another make-work program where you give job incentives by government to business or to nonprofit groups.

At any rate—[interjection] Well, it is in keeping with the job creation initiative. Although it is for students and although it is for the summer, it is still of that philosophy of using government spending to help the private sector, help small business, help nonprofit groups to hire young people or old people, but now we are talking about young people. Essentially, we are talking about students, so we do not disagree in principle, but it was sort of self-congratulatory of the government, as this resolution is.

The only problem, the main problem I have with the resolution and with what the government is doing, Mr. Acting Speaker, it is too little. This program that is operating today is roughly half of what it was in the Pawley years. I mean you have got a very, very modest program indeed for the young people of Manitoba, for the students. Particularly, we should be concerned about this

because unemployment today is higher among the youth than it has been for sometime. There are a lot of statistics that are available on that, a lot of official statistics.

As a matter of fact, these figures are very disturbing, Mr. Acting Speaker. If we took the latest figures that we have, which brings us to April, January to April, the first four months of this year, the average unemployment for youth in Manitoba—that is those 24 years of age and under—is 19.2 percent. That is almost one in five. It is very serious compared to last year at this time when it was 15.1 percent, so we have had an increase of 14.1 percentage points, quite a significant increase.

What disturbs me most of all is when you compare us with Canada as a whole. Canada for this period of time was 18.8 percent. It was 18.8 percent, compared to 19.2 percent for Manitoba. In other words, the Manitoba youth rate of unemployment is higher than the Canadian youth rate in this first four months of this year. If you look at last year, the Canadian unemployment youth rate was 18.8 percent, so it stayed the same in Canada as a whole. Manitoba jumped from 15.1 percent to 19.2 percent.

What is happening in Manitoba? Why are we worsening compared to Canada? Canadian unemployment has stayed constant; unemployment for youth has stayed fairly constant. Manitoba unemployment has risen to the point now that our unemployment rate for young people is worse than the Canadian average. This is an historical switch because, Mr. Acting Speaker, normally youth unemployment in Manitoba is lower than the Canadian average, but that is not the case.

So I say, what we are getting from this government is simply an inadequate program. It is simply not providing the level of funding that is necessary to give our young people who want to go back to university or college or whatever enough opportunities to earn enough money to pay those higher tuition fees and tuition rates that they are being confronted with. As I said, it is not only a program. I agree with the member, it should be

designed to help that young person get ahead, even though a grant to business may help the business as well.

I would remind the honourable member, this should be a nonprofit component whereby you provide grants to various social agencies, the heart fund organization, the Canadian Diabetes Association or some other social agency that does require help. If you give some of those organizations monies to hire one or two students, you find they are much more efficient in what they are trying to do to raise money for whatever cause they are associated with. So there is nothing wrong. In fact, some of the jobs in the nonprofit sector are very excellent jobs, excellent training for the young people in question.

* (1720)

We say what we have here from this government is a very modest program indeed, and it is simply not adequate when you consider the unemployment situation we have.

I said that this type of program has been with us for some time. I remember back in the Schreyer years we had some excellent experiences helping young people. The member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) indicated some experiences and made reference to examples of young people who obtained worthwhile experience.

I can recall one young lady, she was a drama student at the University of Manitoba. She got this grant which virtually gave her a job for two months, July and August. What she did, she explained in her application, what she wanted to do was to work with young high school students to give them experience in drama. With that money she virtually went ahead and organized high school students who were free in the summer. They were at home, so to speak. They were not away at camp, they were not working, they were 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds, and organized a large group of them, I would say probably 30 to 40 of them, into preparing two major drama musicals or however you may wish to refer to them.

They were not only busy in learning their parts and singing and speaking and so on, but others

were involved in preparing tickets, selling the tickets, advertising and so on. It was generally a great experience and the parents were involved and the parents enjoyed it. It was a productive summer for those young high school students because there was this young university drama student who had the ambition to do this and was able to do it because we paid her salary for that. It was her idea, but she put it into effect and that money was very well spent.

You can go to similar cases under other job training programs with other grants, and the former Minister of Finance would criticize and say it is a waste of money. I tell you, there have been thousands of Manitobans of all ages that have benefited by the job training programs. It gave them a chance; it gave them a start. They got the experience, and it helped the small business in the meantime, or it helped the nonprofit. There were benefits. They are intangible in a way. You cannot say as you can with construction, well, there is a government building, or here is a bridge, and this is what we got for our money. It was not tangible, but nevertheless it was still real.

What I regret also is that this government has cut out other programs for young people. There was a program that used to exist called STEP, the Student Temporary Employment Program. I am not aware of it being available now. That was a program that enabled university and college students to work within the provincial civil service, strictly a summertime job. These were good jobs, too.

There were some very technical jobs that were made available through that STEP program, the Student Temporary Employment Program. Well, it varied from year to year, but we had 2,000 to 3,000 people that could be involved in that program, and you saw them in various departments, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Natural Resources, many, many departments that could well use the assistance of young people and give them the training and the experience.

Another one that I regret that is no longer is the Northern Youth program. That was something that helped young people in northern Manitoba,

particularly in remote communities, get the work experience. It helped the business in those areas and the nonprofit organizations, but that has disappeared. That is gone, and that is a shame.

So if you make the arguments that the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) does, and I agree with his argument for the program, if you make the argument for the program there, I say, given the serious unemployment situation we have, there is a terrific argument for these other programs to be reinstated.

We used to have another program called the Manitoba jobs and training program in the Pawley administration, and it had a separate youth component as well. So that gave us additional resources to provide work for young people, not necessarily young people who were going back to college or university, but nevertheless young people who could benefit from the training-on-the-job experience. When we did give grants to business in this particular program, it was to very small businesses. It would not be any more than one or two job positions.

Anyway, Mr. Acting Speaker, I say there is an argument to be made for this program being expanded because of the experience and the opportunities given to the young people, but also it does have a stimulating impact on the provincial economy. Goodness knows, we need that impact. I say that because we continue to get economic statistics showing the economy continuing in the doldrums. I do not see where this so-called economic recovery is.

If you take some of these economic indicators that are now made available, I find them very disturbing to say the least. If you take one key economic indicator, which is called the value of building permits, the value of building permits has dropped by 21.6 percent in the first quarter of this year compared to last year. Goodness knows, building permit levels have shrunk over the years. They are down badly over the years. Now we have them even lower than last year, 21.6 percent drop, which translates into Manitoba being 10 out of 10 in terms of building permits.

The change in building permits has dropped by a fifth. We are 10 out of 10 provinces in that area. I think that is very disturbing because it is the building permits that you look at to see a great component of the construction that would take place because of the issuing of the building permits.

You look at other areas, very disturbing as well. We have figures for retail trade. We only have for a couple of months, but nevertheless Manitoba ranks nine out of 10 in terms of what has happened in retail trade. If you look at capital investment, there, too, the figures are not encouraging, Mr. Acting Speaker. We rank eight out of 10 provinces in terms of capital investment.

As a matter of fact, when you look at the investment figures based on the reports put out by Statistics Canada that conducts these surveys, it is very disturbing because we see private capital investment declining by 4.8 percent in 1994 compared to last year. We rank 10 out of 10 in terms of capital investment, private capital investment changes.

So I say, how can we at all pretend that we are going to have these job opportunities, we are going to have these economic opportunities, if we do not get the private capital investment that this government says that it wants to get. We are going backward. We are obtaining disinvestment. As I said, we rank 10 out of 10 in private capital investment. Also, Mr. Acting Speaker, if we look particularly at manufacturing statistics, we see there is a decline of 15.7 percent in manufacturing investment spending in 1994 projected compared to 1993.

So I do not see any great economic surge on the horizon where we are going to be able to create those additional jobs that we all want. I continue to be concerned that as of this year, we still have fewer jobs than when this government was elected in 1988. In 1988, there were 494,000 people working. In 1993, it was down to 490,000 people working, a decline of 4,000, even though the population had increased slightly in the interval.

* (1730)

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, we do not have growth. We have shrinkage in the number of people working. We do not have much encouraging news in terms of building permit increases. As I say, they are decreasing. Retail trade is almost stagnant. Private investment is down. Manufacturing investment is down. So I say, all in all—and I could quote other figures, but I will not take the time, because I do not have the time—this type of program that we have here should be expanded.

We want to stimulate the economy. We want to help our young people. We want to help small business. We want to help the nonprofit sector. This is the way to do it. So I say, fine in principle, but let us have more money. I am not saying that in a reckless fashion because I believe, as the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) believes as well, that it is an investment in our youth. It is an investment in education. It is an investment in our economy.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Before recognizing the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), I would like to bring all members' attention to the loge to my left, where we have the former member for St. Norbert, John Angus.

* * *

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Mr. Acting Speaker, it gives me pleasure to talk to this resolution. Since the government side is doing such a good job of patting themselves on the back for an initiative that began long before they were in power, I would like to take this time to commend Manitoba business who have invested the time and money required to make the CareerStart program a success.

The CareerStart program is important for two reasons. First, it provides young people with money to put towards furthering their education. I am sure that all members of this House will agree that in today's job market, it is vitally important that our leaders of tomorrow have the skills necessary to excel. Higher education does not

come cheap. There is the cost of tuition, books, and for many, especially those from rural areas who cannot live at home, the cost of rent and food.

CareerStart also provides our young people with job experience. The help-wanted columns are full of ads that say experience is required. CareerStart allows young people to say that they do have experience in the workforce. It also allows them to experience different professions which is very important given the range of careers that exist today.

What the government resolution did not mention was a number of young people who are still looking for a job. There are many thousands of young people who cannot find a job in the tough economic times that this government has perpetrated. The youth crime and violence forum identified a lack of hope among young people about ever getting a job. We in this Chamber cannot sit back and think we have solved the problem of youth employment.

We should also not forget the bigger picture of unemployment in Manitoba. We must remember that economic stimulation and diversification are urgently required to assure these young people of a future in this province, that they will be able to find gainful, full-time employment here without leaving Manitoba as so many are forced to in order to find a job. That is because this government has failed to implement any economic strategy, any significant retraining initiatives to get Manitobans working again.

My office receives calls every day from people in The Maples who are looking for work. They are on unemployment. They are on social allowance. They are forced to rely on the social safety net, and they do not want to. These people want to work. They want to be independent. They want to be retrained, but they are told that the waiting lists for retraining programs are years long. These people are discouraged, Mr. Acting Speaker. They are discouraged by the economic conditions this government has failed to address in a real way. They are frustrated by the band-aid solutions this government has implemented.

I listened with interest when the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) talked about how this CareerStart program provides extra dollars to get students through their educational process.

This is ironic considering this government is the one that restricts the number of ACCESS students this year. This government is the same government that has cut back educational funding both to public and private schools and to universities. It is interesting to note that when this government took power the youth unemployment rate was 11 percent and has risen to a high in January of 21 percent, and still is at 16.2, higher than when they took office.

I think it is important to remember the words of the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), who said in the House the other day that government must stop taking credit for spending money on programs. It is not the government's money, it is the people's money, and we are deciding where the priorities are.

The federal government has instituted a comprehensive program, including the Youth Service Canada, the youth internship, summer employment programs including Canada Employment Centres for students, student business loans, native internship and other programs that are part of a comprehensive package to deal with this problem.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the resolution of the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) be amended by deleting everything following "WHEREAS the government of Manitoba" and substituting the following:

... should be committed to providing valuable career-related experience for young Manitobans; and

WHEREAS CareerStart '94, a program offering financial incentive to encourage employers to create summer jobs for students and youth in Manitoba has not been cut from this government's budget; and

WHEREAS over 4,000 young Manitobans out of the 16.2 percent of young Manitobans who are

unemployed are expected to benefit from CareerStart '94.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly commend Manitoba businesses who have invested the time and money required to make the CareerStart program a success.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): On the proposed amendment moved by the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), the amendment is in order.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I find this amendment very interesting. There are so many things about it. This amendment talks about the commitment to providing valuable career-related experience for young Manitobans, which all of us agree on, which the original motion spoke about, and commends the business community for the energy and effort they have undertaken to provide the 4,000 CareerStart student placements for this year.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what I find interesting is more what is not in this Liberal amendment than what is in the amendment. What is not in the Liberal amendment—if you were going to take exception to the resolution as originally brought forward by the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau)—is the concerns that were raised by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) about the fact that the CareerStart program has been emasculated over the past four years. There are fewer students who are able to take advantage of that program this year than last year and fewer than the year before and fewer than the year before. Not only that, my understanding is that the amount of money that the employer is able to access in order to take advantage of a CareerStart opportunity and placement is half of what it used to be.

Mr. Acting Speaker, why did the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), the Liberal member for The Maples, not talk about that in his amendment? Why did he not talk about the fact that, as the member for Brandon East did, there are a record number of unemployed young people in

the province of Manitoba, many of whom could take advantage of the CareerStart program?

One other thing, the resolution commends Manitoba businesses. Well, first of all, it is not just the business community that provides jobs for these young people. As a matter of fact, many, if not most, of the CareerStart programs are provided by nongovernmental, nonprofit agencies, not just businesses. So unless the Liberals are defining business in a very broad context, we have far too narrow a focus here for a commendation of who provides the support for the 4,000 students who are eligible to take advantage of CareerStart.

* (1740)

Why, Mr. Acting Speaker, if the Liberals were going to amend this motion, did they not talk about the kinds of things that the member for St. Norbert mentioned in his remarks when he introduced the resolution, when he made comments like, CareerStart gives students the opportunity to work, to look at careers, to choose a career in high school? If the Liberals had been really focused in this amendment, they would have taken great exception to the comments put on the record by the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), which assumes that individuals and students even have an opportunity to choose a career today.

The member for St. Norbert talked in his remarks about how students today will have eight or 10 careers rather than the three or four that other generations have had, or we could say my parents' generation, who had one career, who got into a career path and that was the expected career path. Now today we do have three or four or more career paths that individuals will take. That of course assumes that there is an element of choice or control in this whole process.

We all know very well from our own personal experiences, from experiences of young people and even not so young people in our constituencies that workers and students in the province of Manitoba and throughout Canada today do not have control. They are at the mercy of many forces that are tuning us to go into here. The government, in its resolution, and the Liberals, in their amendment, do not speak to the need for the

province to do whatever it can to assist as many students and young people as it can to find jobs and opportunities in-between school years, to enable them to continue on their career path or at least to continue at university or college to get a degree, so that they can maybe have a higher degree of control over their working lives than many of them feel they have at the current time. No, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Liberal amendment did not talk about that. The Liberal amendment did not talk about the kinds of comments that the member for St. Norbert made when he talked about the fact that CareerStart provided goals and career orientation necessary for young people today. No one is arguing about the need for goals and career options for young people today.

What this comment neglects again is the lack of those opportunities, the narrowing of options and opportunities brought about by many external factors but also exacerbated by the actions or inactions of this government. This government has done nothing in many instances, and in other instances the actions they have taken have had a negative impact on what is going on and the opportunities available for young people.

CareerStart was a good program. The reason it is not a good program today, and the reason the Liberal amendment is not a good amendment in my view is because it does not address the real problem with CareerStart, is that CareerStart is so much smaller than it used to be. The need is greater but the program is smaller.

This government has chosen, in its wisdom, to put \$13 million into Workforce 2000 programs to provide "training" for employees to learn how to sell used cars, "training" to enable employees to sell more fried chicken, "training" to enable golf course attendants to do better what they are trained to do, and the list could go on almost indefinitely. [interjection]

No, the Liberal amendment did not talk about those kinds of choices, those kinds of difficult choices that were made by this government, that have an impact on the fact that only 4,000 students will be able to access CareerStart. [interjection]

No, the Liberal amendment actually only said CareerStart is a good program, and that we should commend the business community for the work that they are doing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I agree we should commend the business community for what they are doing. We also, as I said earlier, need to recognize that many nontraditional businesses participate in CareerStart, that many nonprofit agencies have had over the years tremendous advantage out of the CareerStart program, and, as the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) mentioned in his comments, there are many agencies that have benefited from CareerStart, not only the students benefiting but the employers benefiting.

Mr. Acting Speaker, when I was the executive director of a nonprofit organization, which under no circumstances could be called a business, I had the privilege of hiring and working with two CareerStart students for a summer. I can state from personal experience, and I know other members of my caucus can, the positive impact that those students had on my agency's operations.

They were able to put together a program for children and a recreation program that those children in this organization would never have had the advantage of taking if it had not been for the CareerStart opportunity. Those two students now have gone on and were able, partly through the ability of CareerStart and partly through their own success, to have opportunities in the field for which they were training, namely, social work.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that organization and many others that I would say arguably are the largest beneficiaries of the CareerStart programming are not businesses in that context, so the Liberal amendment is far too narrow for our liking because it—[interjection]

Yes, as the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) has so aptly put it, it is unusual for a Liberal motion or amendment or comment to be narrow. They normally are very inclusionary, wanting to straddle both the left side and the right side. In this particular amendment I do not think they have managed to do either. They have taken a

resolution which in and of itself is not a bad resolution because it does talk about the CareerStart program and the positives that can come out of the CareerStart program.

We have always been in favour of not only CareerStart but other programs that provide the same kind of win-win situation for the people of Manitoba. We are concerned about the fact that it is too narrow in focus, the CareerStart program today. We are concerned about the fact that the government has eliminated many other programs and made choices that have not been positive for the people of Manitoba and certainly not for the youth of Manitoba.

I would also, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the time that I left, like to mention another failing or something left out of the Liberal amendment that I think should have probably been put in, in response to the member for St. Norbert's (Mr. Laurendeau) original resolution and his discussion of it.

The member for St. Norbert stated that before CareerStart, I believe, and I may be paraphrasing here, there was not a program to establish a goal, that young people need goals to be established and that CareerStart has been able to do that. When you do not have goals established, then you have social and economic problems with young people. If the Liberal amendment had been a true reflection of what I think their concerns should have been, it would have addressed the comments made by the member for St. Norbert when he made those statements, because I think it is far too simplistic to say that because young people do not have a goal established in their career path that that automatically leads to social problems and problems that some young people find themselves in today.

* (1750)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the reality is far more complex and wide ranging. We would agree that the ability to carry on with your college or university or whatever education you want to is admirable. We, however, do not think that even a program as good as CareerStart is, or was, and should be enough to take care of all the issues that

are facing the young people of today. I think the government runs the risk of trying to make simple a very complex problem.

In their actions, not only in cutting CareerStart, as they have over the years of their tenure, but in all the other cuts that they have made to programs that could directly help young people, while at the same time they are giving millions to Workforce 2000, they are advertising millions for the Lotteries Foundation. They are putting a great deal of money into programs that have very little perceived or actual impact, positive impact, for the young people of Manitoba.

I think the Liberals missed a golden opportunity in bringing some of these issues to the forefront, and it shows that, in our sense, neither the Liberals nor the government truly understands what is involved in the issues today, nor are they willing to take the necessary and sometimes difficult decisions that would lead to improved programming for young people, improved hope for young people, and an ability for those young people to actually meet some of the goals that they have.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise to participate in what I believe is turning out to be a very interesting debate on the history of the CareerStart program and various aspects of job creation for young people and various points of view that many members of this Assembly share.

I listened with great interest to the comments of our colleague for Brandon East constituency about the history of this program, and I think, in the banter across the House, we shared a few comments about the history of this program. I think it does date back at least to the Schreyer years, perhaps earlier.

I can remember as a young student, as an employer, this particular program in the '70s under Ed Schreyer. I think in those days the pamphlets were orange. The government changed in 1977, and the program, the pamphlets were now blue. In 1981, when government changed again, I think

there was sort of a neutrality that came over the program. The pamphlets were then green, but there was not a significant change to the CareerStart program.

I do remember though in the days of the Jobs Fund, in which the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) was involved as a member of cabinet, that one innovation, of course, was that everyone who used the program had to have a big sticker up on their workplace saying Jobs Fund program, et cetera. [interjection] And a sign that had to stand up, et cetera.

You know, for those who are observers of this place, one would say how the more things change the more they stay the same in some ways and that there is certainly I think a humour in, if one follows these government programs, how changes in government result in sign changes, name changes and colour scheme changes on various paraphernalia, but the programs live on because they have a value.

Some observations, Mr. Acting Speaker, someone who was involved with that particular program in a number of capacities, and in this Legislature we all tend to pick up on particular pieces of it and I believe exaggerate a little bit. But the comment about the numbers and the not-for-profit sector, there certainly was a value to that, and is a value to that, in that the program over the years provided quite frankly a pool of labour to a host of organizations and community organizations in our constituencies.

I am thinking of libraries, of municipalities, of various groups who otherwise, quite frankly, may not have been able to take students on for the summer, but one had to wonder—and I remember as a private-sector employer asking this question in the days when the nonprofit sector received the entire minimum wage subsidy in essence and private employers only received half, that if those dollars were applied to the private sector that one could create two jobs for every one that was created in the public sector side, and certainly that was a trade-off.

Then, of course, one always had that question of how many of those jobs of both private and public

sector would have been created even if that program did not exist. I am sure there were a fair number of those, and that goes across all governments that have been in power during the course of this program. That is one element to this, I am sure the member for Brandon East would agree, you never really know whether or not that particular subsidy would have led to the creation of that job, or was it the employer, private or public sector, grabbing those dollars in essence because they were available and one could justify them on the application form.

So the argument as to whether or not we are creating 4,000 jobs or 5,000 jobs, et cetera, really is one that is hard to fully define the reality of for that particular purpose.

The fact of the matter is that in some very, very difficult times for our province we have been able to maintain a healthy CareerStart program, and I would point out to members opposite, this government also, with the use of lottery dollars and the REDI program, created the Green Team which has managed to do a fair bit of work in our public parks and outdoor area and provide another youth employment opportunity for young people, Mr. Acting Speaker. Our Partners with Youth is also another program.

So although some programs have ended and been discontinued by this government or other administrations, others have been created. I think if one examines this somewhat objectively, you will find that over time all governments, to the best of their fiscal abilities in the times in which they are operating, have maintained a significant number of programs or positions in which they have made a contribution to employing young people. [interjection]

My friend the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) talks about election years. Well, I remember prior to this government taking Autopac rates and placing them in an arm's-length situation governed by the Public Utilities Board, that one can always predict that Autopac rates would be low the year leading up to an election, or so it seemed, and that they would go up in the year or two after the election to make up the difference.

So, again, an outside observer to this House might snicker a little bit at all of these type of issues, because that is one of the realities, I gather, of politics and of human nature.

I would say to members of the Liberal Party, Mr. Acting Speaker, though, members of this House who are not Liberals, I think all of us New Democrats and Conservatives are somewhat confused over where the Liberal Party philosophy and policy initiatives in the area of job creation, whether it be for young people or for adults, are really leading. In the last number of months although we have heard the Liberal Leader (Mr. Edwards) on occasion, on a rare occasion, talk about jobs being a priority, he has come to this Assembly and said that government should not be directly involved in job creation by providing business loans, whether it be to a company, a potential employer in Selkirk, or whether it be to the new Pine Falls paper company in my constituency, that government should not be doing that.

And he said very clearly on the record that the Pine Falls paper company by implication should not be continuing employing almost 800 people or Selkirk or any other community have an opportunity to develop jobs. At the same time, he said we should help them by way of tax breaks, yet if my memory serves me correctly, when this government provided a very important tax incentive for manufacturing in mining by way of the elimination over two years of the sales tax on electricity used in those processes, the Leader of the Liberal Party voted against probably one of the most innovative tax breaks that one could do without invoking a variety of tariff measures by other partners in which we trade. The Liberal Leader voted against it.

Yet on the other hand, the Liberal Leader then says he is against trickle-down economics as well, that it does not work, that the government should somehow play a role in job creation, so quite frankly we are not sure what he stands for—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) will have seven minutes remaining.

The hour being six o'clock, I am leaving the Chair with the understanding the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

