



First Session- Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
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ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
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CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
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DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
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ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
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MIIYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
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TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 15, 2000

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mr. Conrad Santos (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), that the report of the Committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Manitoba Service Excellence Awards

Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour): I have a ministerial statement for the House.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, June 14, the year 2000, I was privileged to attend, along with the Premier (Mr. Doer) and several Cabinet ministers, the second annual Manitoba Service Excellence Awards luncheon. Established through their service-quality partners and Service First Initiatives, the Manitoba Service Excellence Awards recognize the hard work, dedication and outstanding efforts of Manitoba Government employees who deliver service excellence every day.

Three hundred and twenty-five employees were nominated in five group and individual categories. The winners in each category are as follows: the Community Service Award, Elaine Stevenson, Department of Industry, Trade and Mines; Innovation Award, Canada Map Sales.com team, Department of Conservation, Winnipeg; Leadership Award, Tom Glenwright,

Department of Education and Training, Winnipeg; Individual Service Excellence Award, Laurie Canart, Taxation Division, Department of Finance, Brandon; and the Team Service Excellence Award, MKO First Nations Justice Strategy, Department of Justice, Thompson.

On behalf of the Government of Manitoba, I want to congratulate the nominees and the winners of the Manitoba Service Excellence Awards. They, along with all other Manitoba public servants, deserve our gratitude and appreciation for their excellent service to the people of Manitoba every day of the year.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to rise and congratulate this year's Manitoba Service Excellence Award winners. As I reminded the House on Monday, this week has been designated as Public Service Week in Manitoba. The Members on this side of the House would like to thank all hard-working public servants in Manitoba for their contributions to our province, and we would like to give special congratulations to this year's Service Excellence Awards recipients.

Community Service Award, Elaine Stevenson, Department of Industry, Trade and Mines; Innovation Award, Canada Map Sales.com team, Department of Conservation, Winnipeg; Leadership Award, Tom Glenwright, Department of Education and Training, Winnipeg; Industrial Service Excellence Award, Laurie Canart, Taxation Division, Department of Finance, Brandon; and Team Service Excellence Award, MKO First Nations Justice Strategy, Department of Justice, Thompson.

Again, to these individuals, to the 325 employees who were nominated and all public servants, we would like to wish them on this side of the House, the best of Public Service Week in Manitoba, and in particular these individuals who won these excellence awards.

* (13:35)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery where we have with us today from Landmark Elementary School 47 Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Mr. Russ Dirks, Mr. Tom Koop and Mrs. Janice Peters.

This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Lemieux).

Also with us today from Shaughnessy Park School three Grades 7 and 9 students under the direction of Mr. Mitchel Rygiel and Mrs. Connie Stewner.

This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Also with us, the executive and several members of the Good Neighbours Senior Centre from East Kildonan are in the gallery who are the guests of the Honourable Member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care System Bed Availability

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Despite the NDP's promise to end hallway medicine unequivocally by April 5 of this year, there are still patients in our hallways. The NDP cannot fool us anymore, and they are not going to fool Manitobans.

Will the Minister of Health tell Manitobans if the situation of patients in hallways is better today than it was at the same time last year?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): I thank the Member for that question because it gives us an opportunity to talk about the hallway initiatives that were undertaken by this government.

When we came into office we made available resources to open 100 beds, as well as expansion of the home IV program, fast-tracking in the emergency departments, as well as an expanded home care service that had been shut down the previous year when the members opposite were in office.

We expanded the funding for home care, and we have been recognized nationally by the Canadian centre for health care information as having done such a good job in hallway medicine. For the most part, we have been able to—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether we could interrupt and get our technician to turn the mikes on, please. Our mikes are not on.

* * *

Mr. Chomiak: I am very pleased to report that, for example, during the flu season, even though there were more patients reporting in emergency rooms, we had less people in the hallway by about I think it was 80 percent. If memory serves me correctly, than the previous year. We never promised perfection, but the situation is vastly improved over when members opposite closed beds and people waited in the hallways for days and days at a time.

Mrs. Driedger: Will the Minister explain to Manitobans why he continues to say that hallway medicine is over, why he continues today to say that things are better, that he is doing all kinds of wonderful things, when in fact we have information from his own sources that say that the latest statistics for the week of June 5 to June 11 show quite clearly that there were more patients in the hallway this time than there were during the same period last year? There is more hallway medicine now than in our time last year, and I would like to table this report.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner), I would like to thank the

Honourable Member for his information. The Honourable Member did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, as members opposite know, we have been putting the statistics of the hallway medicine figures on the Web publicly so the people of Manitoba will know what has happened.

Mr. Speaker, I would be quite prepared to compare our record for the first nine months in office over the last nine months for the members opposite's period in time. I would be very happy to compare that or compare any period during our time in office so far over the 10 years of the Tories cutting hospital beds and cutting programs.

*(13:40)

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister of Health could tell Manitobans what plans he has in place to ensure that the situation is not going to get worse this summer, because he unequivocally said there would be no hallway medicine. Hallway medicine last week was worse than it has ever been. What can he do to reassure Manitobans that we are not going to have a horrendous summer?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, first off, the Member is categorically wrong. We do not have 64 and 65 people in the hallways on a regular basis day after day after day. We do have some periods, and I said it was not perfection, where there are peaks and flows, but we are in a situation where we can actually monitor them on a daily basis. The last couple of days, there was no one in the hallways. There are days when they are higher; there are days when they are lower. Over the nine-month period, I am happy to compare it totally with the nine months last year.

I can assure the Member opposite, not only did we announce hallway initiatives in November when we came into office, but we have continued those initiatives into the new year. We will be refining them and redefining

them to ensure that Manitobans get the care that they deserve and expect.

First Nations Casinos Gaming Agreement Compliance

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): The doubling of gaming in this province and what is apparently becoming the privatization of gaming in this province takes a new twist and a new turn on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans were astounded yesterday when the Minister of gaming admitted that several of the casino proponents are not in compliance with the First Nations Native Gaming Agreement. The Minister told the media that it was no big deal. Can the Acting Premier reconcile the Minister's statements that non-compliance is no big deal, with page 9 of the RFP outlining the selection criteria which states, and I quote: the proponent and any participants must be in compliance with all gaming laws and regulations, including the Criminal Code of Canada, The Gaming Control Act, and The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act in order to be considered for selection under the RFP?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): As I pointed out yesterday, there are individual partners within a proponent consortium partnership that were not in compliance certainly as of March 31. As the selection committee's report states, the recommendations on page 25: Final approval for operations should be subject to all proponents, participants, financial partnerships and participants' agreements receiving MGCC clearance once participation in the project is confirmed—once it is confirmed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Derkach: Why, and Manitobans want to know, were these proponents even considered when they were not in compliance? It is very evident by the Minister's own admission that they were not in compliance. He says it is no big deal. But my question: Why would this independent panel have considered them in the successful candidates for casinos in Manitoba?

Mr. Lemieux: There are some compliance issues certainly surrounding a few of the

partnerships in the consortiums. The selection committee was not going to disqualify, it appears, a whole consortium proponent because of compliance issues around one or two partners.

There are no compliance issues related to sole casino proponents, and no casino proposal will be approved or allowed to proceed until all compliance issues are dealt with to the satisfaction of the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, here is the RFP. In the RFP it states, and I quote once again: The proponent or any participant must be in compliance—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if you could ask the Member to put a question. It is a supplementary question. There should be no preamble.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Russell, on the same point of order?

Mr. Derkach: On the same point of order. With the greatest of respect, I was simply quoting from the RFP for the Minister's clarification because he seems to ignore it. Mr. Speaker, I was simply quoting.

* (13:45)

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary should not—[interjection]

Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the Honourable Member to please put his question.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. Can the Minister confirm whether a proponent's compliance track record was a factor in the selection committee's final casino project recommendations when the RFP says, and I quote: The proponent and any participants must be in compliance with all gaming laws and regulations, including the Criminal Code of Canada, The Gaming Control Act and the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation in order to be considered for the selection under the RFP?

Mr. Lemieux: First of all, the selection committee did not give approval to any casino proposal to commence operation. They made recommendations to the Government on five proposals, and they considered economic viability as a criteria. Those five proposals had conditions attached. These conditions must be dealt with before any proposal receives the go-ahead.

As stated by the selection committee, the selection committee report and recommendations: The selection committee recommended five proposals for the following reasons: Each of the selected proposals contains a sound business plan for a destination gaming facility that, properly developed and operated, should meet the project's objectives. Each of these proposals is reflected in market realities and demonstrates appropriate and reasonable - business planning.

Each presents a sound, complete business plan. These First Nations proponents have been given an opportunity to go ahead, an opportunity to speak to the communities they are part of, and certainly they have to go to the implementation committee and show that they are certainly in accordance with all the laws.

First Nations Casinos Gaming Agreement Compliance

Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale): In follow-up in regard to the selection committee the Minister is referring to, on page 10 of the selection committee's final report and recommendation, it states, and I quote: Early in March, the Manitoba

Gaming Control Commission issued its investigation requirements for personal and business investigations related to the regulatory aspects of the casino project. The information was requested to be submitted by proponents directly to the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission, which is a board that is appointed by this minister, by submission for the deadline.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister: Can the Minister of privatization of gaming advise if this information contained the fact that several of the proponents were not in compliance with the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission's reporting requirements?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): I just want to thank the Member for the question.

Once again, all the laws of the land, including all the gaming regulations and so on, will certainly have to be adhered to before the provincial government issues any licences or any go-ahead to this.

Also, with regard to the proposals, I listed yesterday within the report submitted by the selection committee that they had Norm Asselstine, John Borody, Jan Collins, and so on, and many others, looked through every proposal very carefully to ensure that these are absolutely good business plans and that these five have a great opportunity to be a success. Five out of the twelve have a great opportunity to be successful, but they certainly have to meet the criteria or conditions of success. If they do not meet those, Mr. Speaker, there is no casino.

* (13:50)

Mr. Reimer: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the same minister. Can this minister advise if the information revealing that a major criteria to be used by the selection committee was provided by the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission to this committee? In fact, the information that was funnelled through the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission to the selection committee, did it have these shortfalls in their submission to the selection committee?

Mr. Lemieux: Once again, I just want to repeat for the Member opposite. I want to state that the selection committee took a very thorough look at all the proponents and all the proposals, and certainly looked at a variety of criteria and conditions that had to be met. In their best judgment, they took a look at the five best out of the twelve that were proposed, and they determined that those had the greatest opportunity to be a success.

I came forward yesterday and mentioned to the House that there are one or two of a consortium that may not be in total compliance as yet, and this is certainly something that the implementation committee will be looking at as one of the conditions that they—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Reimer: My question is simple. The information was requested to go through the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission before it went to the selection committee. My question is: The information that was filtered through the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission, a board that is appointed by this minister, did they flow through the information to the selection committee that the criteria was not being met on a few of the proposals, that some of them were not in compliance? It is a simple question. Was it transmitted in its entirety to the selection committee, or was the selection committee compromised because they did not have that information?

Mr. Lemieux: If I might just repeat the question. I think I understood the question—it is hard to hear sometimes—asking whether or not information had been passed on to the selection committee from the Gaming Control Commission. My understanding is that the Gaming Control Commission was certainly part of this report, as stated at the back on page 30. It states Mr. Rick Josephson and senior management were part, and consulted with by Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Freedman, prior to making their report.

First Nations Casinos Gaming Agreement Compliance

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): On page 13 of the final Report and Recommendations, it lists

the nine evaluation criteria, including: "The commitment of proponent First Nations governments and participants to comply with the provisions of the Criminal Code respecting gaming."

As well, it states: "All proposals were evaluated completely and on a consistent basis."

Mr. Speaker, if this is the case, how can an applicant be approved if it is not in compliance with this major requirement?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): If the Member opposite for Springfield would like to quote from this particular document, I wish he would include the whole statement and all of the particular criteria as they are listed, not necessarily in order of importance, but he was very selective in the one he chose.

Let me be selective: Relevant corporate development experience and expertise; Relevant executive development experience and expertise; Strategic and operational business plans; Financial strength and capacity; Knowledge of relevant markets; Market assessment and potential negative impact, and so on; the degree to which the proposal satisfies the economic benefit objectives of the casino proposal; the degree to which a proposal satisfies economic benefits in total to First Nations people.

That is what this proposal is about: giving First Nations people an opportunity to stand up and be a Manitoban, like the rest of us.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of gaming, who doubled gambling in Manitoba, explain how, of the five casinos recommended, the first, the second and the fourth which were listed in order of precedence, achieved their ranking if all proposals were evaluated on a consistent basis?

Mr. Lemieux: Once again, the Member for Springfield is very selective in his choice of information. Let me put this on the record and make it absolutely clear with regard to doubling gambling. We took a look at Regent and McPhillips, no public hearings, no consultation whatever, just slap them up. In every gin joint in

Manitoba, there is a VLT due to the members opposite. They will have to live with that.

Mr. Speaker, if I might just indulge the House for a moment, the Member opposite stated we doubled gambling. If all casinos—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lemieux: —in Manitoba are successful, the five recommended, there will be approximately 1200 VLT machines within those particular establishments. There are 7624 in total in Manitoba now. That is not doubling. It is one seventh. I just want to clarify that. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

* (13:55)

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister consider a history of non-compliance a factor in his government's final decision on who gets a casino and who does not, or has he forgotten that he told this House that the same laws of the land will apply to First Nations casinos? Answer the question.

Mr. Lemieux: It is quite clear that the rules and the regulations with regard to the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission will be upheld. Casinos will not go forward unless those laws are abided by. That is the commitment we make on this side of the House, and it is a commitment we make to all Manitobans to assure them that the process is fair, and not only that, that all legal entities are certainly met and certainly the regulations are met.

An Honourable Member: You have broken them already.

Mr. Lemieux: I see the jokers are wild again today, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to say—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Speaker is standing. All members in this House are honourable members. I would like to remind the Honourable Minister to refer to all members as honourable

members. Could you please conclude your comments, Honourable Minister.

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, on unparliamentary language, the words should be chosen very carefully in this House, and I noticed you have already asked the Member to remove his comments. I will await his apology.

Mr. Speaker: I will ask the Honourable Minister to please retract those comments.

Mr. Lemieux: Mr. Speaker, with the highest regard certainly to this Chamber and to members opposite, I certainly apologize. I withdraw the remark. I was just trying to get my answer on the record, and there was heckling and so on across. I am sorry I lost my patience with members opposite. I do apologize.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Honourable Minister.

First Nations Casinos Selection Committee—Consultants

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): On page 11 of the final report on recommendations it states: the selection committee directed to the establishment of an assessment team to provide assistance, expertise and analysis in diverse areas relevant to the submissions made in response to the RFP. We have asked the Minister of Tourism (Ms. McGifford) if she has done any studies, and the answer has been no. We have asked the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Sale) if there has been any social or economic benefit studies done; the answer has been no.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister: Who did the selection committee direct their request to for those 16 individuals?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): I am not sure who the question was directed at. I am not sure if the Member opposite addressed it. I am sorry; I only caught part of the question. I would ask that the Member—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When questions are raised, they are raised to the Government, and it is up to the Government which minister they choose to answer the question. An honourable member would like to answer that question?

Mr. Lemieux: I would ask the Member to repeat the question, please.

Mr. Tweed: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, this will count as my first question again.

I want to ask the Minister: When the selection committee made the request for the team of individuals from the Government, who did they make this request directly to?

Mr. Lemieux: I would like to say that this selection committee was an independent selection committee, depoliticized, and they had at their disposal a number of different experts that they were to call upon, if need be. They certainly did not, even though they are very talented in their own right, have all the expertise, and they called upon other individuals, who they deemed necessary.

* (14:00)

Mr. Tweed: Just for clarification, what we are trying to find out is who did make the request and who approved the people that went on this committee? Did the Minister and his government, given that the majority of these individuals were seconded from provincial government departments, provide the names, or were they asked for specifically?

Mr. Lemieux: Thank you for the question. The selection committee, Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Freedman, certainly had at their disposal, as I mentioned, a number of different areas and experts that they could call upon. To the best of my knowledge, I have been advised that they contacted the different departments and so on, and different individuals were called upon to help them.

Mr. Tweed: Then my final question to the Minister is: Did Eugene Kostyra, Shauna McKinnon or Angela Matheson [*phonetic*] have any contact with the selection committee?

Mr. Lemieux: Again, this was an independent selection committee, depoliticized, and certainly I was not aware of what they did, and so on, and how they conducted their research. I was only informed when others were, when this report came out, of who they had called upon to put together this report and to put together five possible casino recommendations.

First Nations Casinos Gaming Agreement Compliance

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable that a minister of the Crown could tell the House today he was not aware what civil servants were being seconded to do work for a committee, independent or otherwise. One has to question the competence of that kind of minister.

Mr. Speaker, I want to come back and I want to ask the Minister again the questions that were asked by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach). Since we know that Mr. Nadeau and we know that the other commissioner both indicated some of the proposals were not quite there—some were clearly there; others were not—would he confirm that the reason the commissioner said that in fact was that a number of those proponents were not in compliance with the law as the RFPs required, and that they were in fact pushed into including them in the selection?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): As I mentioned, this was a depoliticized and independent selection committee. They had at their disposal many, many different people that they could call upon to do this. The Member opposite mentioned in his question that somehow, as a minister of the Crown, I should be delving into an independent selection committee and so on. I guess that is how he operated when frozen food came about. I am not sure if he delved into the operation.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, given that he takes so lightly his responsibility to ensure that the criteria is met, that proponents are in compliance with the law, when he views that being in compliance with the law is no big deal, I would ask him again: How could the selection com-

mittee approve or recommend to the Government proponents who in fact were not in compliance with the basic RFP that said that they had to meet the law? How could he allow that to happen?

Mr. Lemieux: Thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, this was an independent selection committee, and they certainly looked through a number of different criteria to make recommendations to government, and they have given First Nations an opportunity to pursue their goals in trying to put together a casino project. Certainly they are going to go forward with that. Certainly, as I mentioned, a number, one or two of the participants in a consortium, there is some question with regard to their compliance issues, and certainly these consortiums are not going to be able to proceed past the implementation committee nor are they going to be able to proceed past this government and this Cabinet if they are not abiding by the laws of the Province with regard to gaming.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, on a new question?

Alternate Sites

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Yes, Mr. Speaker. We have a situation here where we have proponents who are not in compliance with the law making it through the selection process when the selection process said they had to be in compliance with the law. We have a Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) who is not prepared to provide assistance to the other minister in respect to how to properly ensure that people are within the law. We have a government who does not want public accountability. I want to ask the Minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It is my understanding from *Beauchesne's*, it is everyone's understanding I believe, that, on a supplementary question no preamble is allowed. It is an extensive preamble on a supplementary

question. Would you please ask him to put his question.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Points of order are very serious matters. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

The Honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order?

Hon. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I noticed today in the House we received some new earpieces. I recommend the Honourable House Leader use his. The Honourable Member did state it was a new question.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the Government House Leader, when the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet stood up, he clearly identified that it was a new question, so I would ask the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet to please put his question.

* * *

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, given that he has said this is an independent process, given that the Government tells us—although I do not think many believe them—that they want to stick to the rules, I would like to ask the Minister: Is he prepared to stand by his words in this House last Tuesday where he said no other work is being done with respect to an alternative proposal should one of these five not be accepted by the Cabinet?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to mention that we made a promise during the election that we would be using Bostrom and the Saskatchewan model to license up to five First Nations casinos based on the Bostrom report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, should one or two not be successful, I do not want to prejudice the process because they have an opportunity now to go forward and make the best case possible to their

municipalities and members of those communities. Should they not be successful, within this mandate we are not prepared as a government to be bringing in new proponents, and so on. The independent process has taken place, and if one of the five or whatever that number may be, if they are not successful, we are not going to be adding on new people. These five have an opportunity to go forward. We wish them good luck. But the ball is in their court, and if they are not successful we are not going to be adding on anyone to the list.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister.

Dakota Tipi First Nation Premier's Meeting

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): I would like to ask the Minister, and if he cannot answer it, the Deputy Premier, if they would confirm that within the last few weeks the Premier (Mr. Doer), who is responsible for gaming in this province, had a meeting with representatives of the Dakota Tipi First Nation. Would they confirm that, please?

Hon. Jean Friesen (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for that question. Clearly, the Premier is a Premier of all Manitobans, and he meets with many people over the weeks. I do not have his schedule in front of me, and will certainly take that question under advisement.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, while the Deputy Premier is taking that as notice, I would ask her again: Will she not confirm—as I have been told by people who were present in that meeting—that the First Minister of this province encouraged that group to carry on their work, that their proposal was not dead, that, in fact, if the Headingley proposal failed, they would be considered? Would she confirm that the Premier has, in fact, done exactly the opposite of what the Minister has said to this House?

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member is aware, I cannot confirm anything of a meeting that I was not at, and in fact which he was not at either. So I think we will leave that for the Premier.

**Letter to the Prime Minister
Tabling Request**

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Highways and Government Services): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier undertook to table the letter he wrote to the Prime Minister in regard to the southwest, so I am tabling that today on his behalf.

* (14:10)

**First Nations Casinos
Alternate Sites**

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Well, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), has just asked a very serious question with regard to the flip-flop regarding the additional casinos that might be established in this province.

The Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, his department told the Chief of Waywayseecappo that with regard to their casino they should hang on to their proposal, because in fact they may be still considered for a casino in this province. The Minister, who is responsible for gaming in this province, just said in the House again today that no other proposals would be considered.

I would like to ask either the Minister who is responsible for gaming, the Minister who is responsible for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs or the Deputy Premier (Ms. Friesen) to clarify this government's position with regard to additional casinos in this province.

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the position of the Government is quite straight, as articulated by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Lemieux).

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, then I ask the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs in this province, because his department gave false hope to the Chief of Waywayseecappo and his council: Would he now write to the Chief and explain his position, and explain the Government's position, so that they in fact are not left with false hope regarding their proposal with regard to the casinos in Manitoba?

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, clear the air. At no time did I give anybody false hope about us opening up the process again. I believe simply what we said was we have not had an opportunity to talk about this, nor about how we are going to go about the implementation committee, nor how to assist these First Nations communities in meeting some of the conditions for success. That is simply what was pointed out. But we are definitely open to meeting with Chief Clearsky, Chief Hayden and other chiefs in this province that were unsuccessful in this go-round. I think that we should stand up in this House and all members should stand shoulder to shoulder with First Nations people in this very, very viable initiative, as we did 10 years ago when my predecessor Mr. Elijah Harper stood up and said no to Meech Lake.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I agree that we need to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Aboriginal people of this province, but not when a government contradicts itself, even in this House, with regard to the expansion and the privatization of gaming in this province. Once again, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has put on the record that, in fact, he is talking about—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Maybe you could use my last point of order here. I believe that there was a supplementary question posed and it was, I think, two or three sentences as a preamble. Would you please ask the Member to put his question.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the Honourable Member to please put his question.

Mr. Derkach: On a new question, then.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member, on a new question.

Mr. Derkach: Every single member in this House wants to support the Aboriginal peoples of our province.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Derkach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I might add that, on a personal note, I have worked with Aboriginal peoples in this province for a number of years, and certainly I respect and appreciate their contributions to this province.

I want to ask this government to clarify its position, once and for all, so that Aboriginal peoples who were not successful in their bid for a casino can once and for all have an understanding of where this government is going, so they are not left with false hope. The Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has once again said that he has given them some indication that there might be another round for casino proposals in the future. Is this in fact true, or is it, in fact, the truth, what the Minister of gaming says, that there will be no other considerations?

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, some of my best friends are Aboriginal people too, and we want to ensure that these five that were selected by the selection committee succeed and, if there is an opportunity down the road, perhaps we will have more opportunities for Aboriginal people. This is only a start—the casino initiative. There are other opportunities.

First Nations Casinos Alternate Sites

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, given that we have a change in position by two ministers who are sitting next to each other in the same Cabinet, I want to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs if he concurs with his colleague and what his colleague just told the House, that there may be more opportunity now for other proponents, as the Premier (Mr. Doer)

has negotiated with Dakota Tipi and his colleague is negotiating with Waywayseecappo. Would he tell us, is he changing his position now or is he going to resign from Cabinet?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act): Mr. Speaker, our position has always been clear. Yes, I do concur with the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. Some of my friends are also Aboriginal people too. I would just like to say what the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is saying, that this is just one small step for First Nations people with regard to economic development and job creation. They know that gaming and gambling is not the be-all and end-all, that this is just a step for them to become Manitobans, have the opportunity to create jobs for their young people just like anyone in this Chamber would want for their children and their relatives and so on.

So I concur with the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs that yes, indeed, we want First Nations people to succeed and we want them to have opportunities just like the rest of us would like to have.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, this is about honesty to this House, to Manitobans and to First Nations people. And I want to ask the Minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lac du Bonnet knows the rules of the House well and knows that with supplementary questions there is no preamble. Would you please ask him to put his supplementary question with no preamble?

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have to rule on the point of order first. The Honourable Government House Leader does have a point of order.

Beauchesne's Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, on a new question?

* (14:20)

Mr. Praznik: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Government is so afraid of being honest with people, with First Nations people, with members of the Legislature, with the people of Manitoba, this week in the House we asked the Minister responsible for gaming whether or not these five were it or were others being considered should one of them not meet the criteria of Cabinet.

He said before this House, no, no, no, we are not considering others. The Premier, we understand, has been negotiating with Dakota Tipi. The Minister of native affairs has been talking to Waywayseecappo. The Minister now has said something else.

I ask the Minister: Has his policy changed or is the Minister of native affairs wrong in that this government will not entertain an additional proposal should one of the five be rejected by Cabinet? Is the Minister out of step with this minister or is the Minister of Consumer Affairs out of step with his colleagues and should he resign?

Mr. Lemieux: We have been very consistent all the way along. The Bostrom report said up to five First Nations casinos. The selection committee selected five proponents. We want to give them an opportunity; we want to give them a chance. We are saying absolutely clear and in a forthright way that the process is that these five First Nations casinos now have an opportunity. We wish them a great deal of success. The ball is in their court now to show all the advantages related to their proposals. Now they have to also show an implementation committee that they have also met all those criteria and concerns that are related to their proposals.

Now, if someone within the Ministry of Northern and Aboriginal Affairs, and I certainly

would not speak for him, but someone within the Department I believe was mentioned by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), stated that there might be an opportunity or something. Well, I cannot speak for those people within the Minister's department.

But what I can say absolutely clearly, though, independent process, depoliticized process, five First Nations have an opportunity. If one of them or any of them are not successful, we are not going to open up the process again during this mandate. We are absolutely clear about that and consistent about that, and we will continue to be.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Financial Reporting

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to draw attention to an article in last week's *Winnipeg Free Press* entitled "NDP's planned accounting changes make provincial auditor happy." The article lists a number of—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is very difficult to hear the Honourable Member. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

An Honourable Member: Start again.

Mr. Schellenberg: Start again?

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to draw attention to an article in last week's *Winnipeg Free Press* entitled "NDP's planned accounting changes make provincial auditor happy." The article lists a number of financial reporting changes we intend to implement, including the addition of a summary budget prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles next spring. Additionally, Crown corporations will now be directed to follow more acceptable financial recording in an effort to make these entities more accountable.

In opposition, we criticized the former government for its reliance on the Fiscal Stabilization Fund to balance the books. We have agreed to stop using transfers for this purpose. The article goes on to state: Singleton took another poke at the Tories in his audit of public accounts ... saying the NDP have already done more to improve their performance than their Conservative predecessors did."

We are pleased to be able to meet the Provincial Auditor's recommendation in our first year of government. After taking office in 1988, the former government earned nothing but criticism for its questionable accounting practices.

A number of provinces have already abandoned accounting practices used in Manitoba in favour of more generally accepted accounting principles. We believe it is time Manitoba did the same. Manitobans deserve government accountability and transparency. Our financial reporting changes will go a long way towards providing citizens with a more accurate view of provincial finances.

Mrs. Bernadette Haggerty

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Today I would like to congratulate an outstanding constituent of mine, Mrs. Bernadette Haggerty, of Morden. She is a real credit to that town and to the constituency of Pembina. Last night I had the distinct pleasure of bringing greetings at an awards ceremony that was honouring her with a Kin Club Citizen of the Year Award. I can think of no one more deserving. In the 10 short years she has lived in Morden, she has given more time to the community than some people have in a lifetime.

In preparation for the evening, I had the opportunity to review her letter of nomination for the award, and I was simply amazed by her efforts: the Morden Hospital and hospital auxiliary, the Canadian Blood Services, the Canadian Cancer Society, the widows support group, the friendship centre and her church are but a few organizations she has donated her time to. What an extraordinary lady.

I know each of the members of this Assembly do their fair share of community service, but I think we could all take a lesson from Bernie. Many thanks to her for her many contributions, and a big thank you to the organizers of last night's award ceremony.

Philippine Heritage Week

Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples): On Monday, the Honourable Minister responsible for Multiculturalism (Ms. Barrett) spoke, and, with the Premier (Mr. Doer), signed and proclaimed June 11 to 17 as Philippine Heritage Week.

Philippine Heritage Week is about highlighting some of the successes and challenges of this community and sharing our heritage and traditions. This includes the commemoration of the historic declaration of Philippine independence, culminating with a huge picnic in the park. Incidentally, you are all invited. That is in Assiniboine Park on Saturday, ten o'clock.

It is also a celebration of the socioeconomic contribution of the Philippine-Canadian community in Manitoba. You will find them engaged in all levels of economic activities from entrepreneurs to aircraft parts manufacturing workers, in the hospitality and service sectors, health care workers, teachers, in high-tech industries, corporate offices and academics in higher institutions of learning.

In 1959 the first Filipino immigrants were welcomed in Manitoba and settled in Winnipeg. These early immigrants included health care workers such as nurses and medical practitioners who filled shortages of workers in Winnipeg hospitals. In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, the garment industry was on the verge of collapse. The garment industry and the government of the day looked towards the Philippines to recruit skilled workers, thus saving the industry from collapsing. Today approximately 50 percent of the garment industry's workforce are Filipino-Canadians.

The Philippine community has now grown to about 40 000. The 1998 census showed Filipinos as the largest ethno-cultural group in Manitoba. Filipino immigrants brought with them a rich-

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the Honourable Member have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Aglugub: Filipino immigrants brought with them a rich cultural heritage. As a member of the Filipino community, I am proud to say that we continue to be a vibrant community, adding to Manitoba's rich cultural diversity and contributing fully to the provincial economy. Thank you.

St. Michael Church

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): On July 16, 15 families at St. Michael's Parish in Dugald will host 11 children from Chernobyl orphanages for one month. The operation, dubbed the St. Michael's Church Project 2000, will not only offer a chance for Chernobyl orphans to travel to a clean environment and feel the kindness of others but also the chance to benefit from medical attention.

This project is the first of its kind in Manitoba. The project has assembled a team of doctors and dentists to provide basic checkups for the orphans, who are aged 6 to 10. The cost of bringing these children to Manitoba, around \$1,300 for each child, will be covered by funds raised in the Dugald community by the St. Michael's Parish.

* (14:30)

I commend Father Sebastien Gatsky *[phonetic]* and Lauren Andrushko *[phonetic]* for organizing the St. Michael's Church Project 2000. They will be providing these children with much-needed attention and hope for the future. I congratulate the men and women of my constituency, who will be caring for these children, for undertaking this admirable project, and I encourage all members to wish the St. Michael's Parish in Dugald the best of luck with this endeavour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Family Initiatives

Ms. Linda Asper (Riel): I am proud to rise in this House to applaud the direction this government has taken to support families. Our government's budget comes as welcome news to

the many working families in my own constituency.

My colleague the Minister of Housing and Family Services (Mr. Sale) announced an additional \$9.1 million for Manitoba's Child Day Care Program. An 18% increase in this area will add 364 more funded spaces to the existing 20 000. Additionally, subsidies will now be available for 500 more children.

Improvements to Manitoba's child care system are only one component of our \$13-million Healthy Child Initiative. We are further expanding support to families and children using prenatal and postnatal nutrition programs and parent-child centres. Increased support for adolescent pregnancy prevention and fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects prevention and support programs will also be available. A prenatal benefit modelled on the National Child Benefit will ensure children receive necessary support as soon as possible. This budget solidifies our belief in the importance of early child intervention.

Our government acknowledges that today's families will also require healthy neighbourhoods in order to thrive. Our Neighbourhoods Alive! commitment provides community organizations with the necessary tools to help revitalize local housing, develop economic initiatives and implement safe initiatives.

We have made a strong commitment to families with stable funding for education, increased recreational opportunities for our youth and a property tax credit for all renters and homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), 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.

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
(Concurrent Sections)**

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

* (14:40)

Mr. Chairperson (Harry Schellenberg): Please come to order. This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in room 254, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism.

At previous sittings of this Committee, the following agreements were made. It was agreed to not pass line 2.(b) and 2.(c)(1). It was further agreed that, once completion of consideration of line 2.(k)(2) was complete, the Committee would skip ahead and consider resolution 14.6. Capital Grants and then pass all lines in that resolution. Is that still the will of the Committee?
[Agreed]

We will now proceed to line 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs (e) Arts Branch (2) Other Expenditures \$139,600. Shall the item pass?

Point of Order

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Mr. Chair, on a point of order. I believe I had the floor when the House adjourned yesterday. Does that mean that I can continue with my response, or does the adjournment of the session mean that we change that order?

Mr. Chairperson: It is not applicable to Supply, unless we speak to motion. It is up to the Committee. Is it the will of the Committee?
[Agreed]

* * *

Ms. McGifford: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Committee for allowing leave so that I could put some information on the record. Members opposite might remember that yesterday afternoon I made a commitment on behalf of my department that we would review our materials, the materials that related to the

particular issue of the art, and we have conducted that review. We did find some information.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Can I ask the Minister to table that document that she is referring to, so that we could all take a look at it?

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Chair, I do not think that is a point of order. I wonder if I misrepresented what the Department has done. I said a "review," by which I meant people in the Department read through some of our written materials on this issue. I do not know whether members opposite understood me to mean that.

Mr. Derkach: Same point of order, Mr. Chair. My point of order was with regard to the list or document that the Member was referring to and reading from. I ask whether or not she would table that document that she was reading from or the list that she was reading from.

* (14:50)

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Chair, on that same point of order. I do not have a list of documents. I was not reading from a list of documents. The only list that I read from was yesterday, when I read the list of four pieces of art that were still missing. The Department has not prepared a list of documents, if that is the point of order that the Member for Russell is bringing up. We do not have a prepared list of documents. I am assuming that the Member would be looking at a list that said on this day this was done and on this day this was done. We do not have a list of that nature.

Mr. Chairperson: On the point of order raised, if a document quoted is a private letter, Rule 37 states: "Where in a debate a Member quotes from a private letter, any other Member may require the Member who quoted from the letter to table the letter from which the Member quoted but this rule does not alter any rule or practice of the House relating to the tabling of documents other than private records." Therefore, there is no point of order.

* * *

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Chair, I am pleased that there is no point of order, but I do want to make it clear to the Member opposite that I was not reading from anything, I was speaking. I do not have a document before me that I was reading from. So I am trying to be co-operative with the Member, but I do not understand what he is requesting. I do not know whether the Member wishes to respond to my remarks.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I was only referring to the list and, whatever she wants to call it, whether it is a memo or a list, a document, that she was referencing in her comments. I think *Hansard* would clearly show that she was referencing a document that she was holding in her hand.

Ms. McGifford: Well, Mr. Chair, I was holding a document in my hand called "Bureaucrats baffled by vanishing art," which is an article from the *Free Press*. That is the document that I was holding in my hand. I was not reading from it, but I would be delighted to read from it if the Member would like to refresh his memory on the contents of that particular document. No, I am not reading from a document. I do not have a document in my hand. Honest. I have to conduct the meeting like this?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chair, I would like to go back to the series of questions and the topic that we were discussing when this committee rose last. Specifically, we were talking about and discussing the missing pieces of artwork. After we broke for the day, I could not help but, in my mind, go back through the series of events that occurred as a result of this fiasco. The Minister has, on numerous occasions, acknowledged and then contradicted herself with regard to the pieces of artwork that were missing, what was said, what was not said, memos that were referred to that could exist, might exist, do not exist, and on and so forth.

Mr. Chair, the Minister has acknowledged that the Department did an inventory in August of last year. Then she said that, when she became the Minister in October and November, just a few short months after the inventory was taken, she was made aware that 400 pieces of artwork had gone missing in just those few short months. Then she changed that to 104 pieces of

artwork that went missing. In this committee, she has acknowledged that only one piece of artwork is now missing. So, through all of this, it appears that what was a mountain has now become simply a molehill.

The problem with all of this issue is that the finger seems to have been pointed by the Minister and by the Government at the former administration. That is the impression that has been left on the minds of people in this province. That is a very, very serious issue.

So I want to ask the Minister today what her motive was, because she has acknowledged that she ordered the audit. We pressed her on what basis she requested that audit. Was it on a memo from the Department? Was it on a briefing from her department? Was it on the request of her Premier (Mr. Doer)? Was it on the request of another minister? Then I want to know what the motive for her calling this audit a few short months after the last inventory was taken was, because it appears, and it certainly appears to many Manitobans, that the motive was to discredit and to blemish the name of the former administration and the names of ministers who had left their offices after the election.

That is why I say this is a very serious matter, because Manitobans are still left with the impression that there are large numbers of artwork that are missing. As a matter of fact, one of my colleagues at a social function just a few short days ago with some seniors was asked whether or not we had taken artwork from the offices, because he was offended by that, and so he should have been. But we are more offended by that. The Minister has received correspondence from the leader of our party with regard to that, two pieces of correspondence, one that was responded to.

But what is even more complicating in all of this is the Minister has contradicted herself in the responses that she has given. In addition to that, she has been very evasive in the information that she has put on the record. When she was asked about the "government memo," and this was in two articles in the *Free Press*, one on the 11th of January, one on the 12th of January, that made specific reference to a government memo.

Now there is no question on anyone's mind what a government memo means. Anybody who works in government, whether you are a minister, or whether you are a civil servant, or whether you are a member of the Opposition, or any staffperson, knows what a government memo means. When the Minister was questioned about this government memo that is referenced twice in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, she went on to say: Well, a memo could mean different things. I do not think Manitobans misunderstood what the term "government memo" means. If you read in the newspaper that someone has taken a quote directly from a government memo, that means indeed that statement was made in an official capacity from the Government, because it is a government document.

We also questioned the Minister on another issue, and that was a news release. In one instance, she said, yes, there was a news release, but she did not know what kind of a news release. Then, later, she said there was no news release.

Mr. Chairman, this is the individual who is responsible for this entire issue. During all of this, she must have had communications with her department, with the Premier's Office, with the communicators in the Premier's Office, with her own communicator. I am even surprised that this minister could not remember who the communications person was that she spoke with and whether it was one or two, and then she said, well, they change.

* (15:00)

Well, Mr. Chairman, this breach of memory certainly leaves us with many, many questions. It certainly puts a cloud over what the intention of this minister was with regard to this witch hunt, and I term it a witch hunt, that she embarked on.

Mr. Chairman, I am offended because this has cast a cloud on all of us as MLAs in this Legislature. People who have read these articles in the newspapers certainly become more cynical about what their representatives in the Legislature could be up to.

Now, if this were the truth, if in fact today we were still missing 400 pieces of artwork, as was originally alleged, or if we were missing 100 pieces of artwork or if we were missing 50 or 75 pieces of artwork, I could say there is some credence to what this minister said and what she is doing, but in fact virtually every piece of artwork has been located.

Yes, perhaps in different offices, not maybe in an outer office, maybe in an inner office, but all of it has been accounted for, with exception, the Minister I think yesterday said, one piece has not been located at this point in time. So what are Manitobans to believe, given this new information with regard to the artwork of this province? What are the people of Manitoba to believe about the credibility and the motive of this minister with regard to this issue?

In my humble opinion, I believe that this minister owes a huge apology to the members of this Legislature, not just the members on our side of the House but indeed she has blemished the reputation and the character of all members of the Legislature. For that reason, I believe she needs to apologize to the people of Manitoba, to the people within this Legislature, and also, I would say, that included in that would be the people who work for the Province of Manitoba, because I am sure that they must have felt there was some suspicion with regard to whether or not they may have taken some artwork as well.

So, Mr. Chairman, although some people would like to sweep this under the table, I have to tell you that this cannot be swept under the table. This is not an issue that can go away without some closure to it. The only satisfying closure that can occur with regard to this issue is a complete and total apology by this minister to the people of Manitoba, to the workers of the Province of Manitoba and to the people who represent, the MLAs, especially on our side of the House, who were pointed at in terms of this fiasco.

Mr. Chairman, my first question to the Minister today is with regard to the motive that she had in calling for the audit.

Ms. McGifford: The Member opposite has been around this mulberry bush several times already,

and I suppose that I will indulge him and answer the questions once more, as opposed to referring him to yesterday's *Hansard*.

When we began proceedings today, I did say that my department looked through some of our documents and found a document that contained some phrasing that was similar to something that occurred in the Doug Nairne article. Actually I want to read that Doug Nairne article into the record this afternoon, and I would table copies for members.

This is the Doug Nairne article that is dated January 11, 2000. The headline, as headlines frequently are maybe more sensational than the article itself: "Bureaucrats baffled by vanishing art." It says:

"Provincial bureaucrats have lost track of more than 100 works of art hung in offices at the legislature, according to a government memo obtained by the *Free Press*.

"A large amount of publicly owned art was shuffled around the legislature last fall—and sources say some has vanished—even though it is strictly forbidden to move the paintings, sculptures and other objects without permission.

"There are an unprecedented number of works of art from the Government of Manitoba art collection being relocated within the Legislative Building without due process,' the memo says.

"A government source said a detailed audit of the collection is about half completed, and there are already more than 100 pieces of art unaccounted for.

"We are still in midstream, so there may be even more items missing,' the source said.

"While no one is alleging the largest art heist in the history of the province has taken place, there are few answers as to where the small fortune of artwork has gone.

"At least some of the blame is falling on the Tories, who held office for 11 years before being defeated late in 1999.

"According to the memo, one defeated Tory minister was caught taking a painting to his new office. The memo says government services staff appealed to the Clerk of the Executive Council, Jim Eldridge, and were allowed to retrieve the work.

"In another case, the memo says a departing minister has claimed the art in his office as part of his personal collection and removed it from the building. The province is still trying to determine the owner of the art.

"The memo does not identify the politicians.

"The Tories reject allegations they are responsible for any missing artwork. But they allow there was a lot of confusion after the election and it is possible that some artwork and some furnishings got moved without approval.

"Opposition Leader Gary Filmon said he is unaware of any specific complaints against members of his party, or the allegations in the memo. He said if the government knows of anyone who has artwork belonging to the province, they should ask for it back.

"It is news to me,' he said, 'We certainly wouldn't have taken anything without discussions with government services people.'

"Filmon said he personally handed some of the art in his office over to incoming Premier Gary Doer, and took other items along with him to his new office.

"Government officials or politicians who borrow art from the 3,000-piece provincial collection must sign an agreement that says the material will not be moved from its assigned office.

"In addition, a memo from the executive council was sent the day after the Sept. 21 election, warning people moving offices that,—and this is important—"warning people moving offices that, 'As with furnishings, art will remain in existing locations.'

"A complete inspection of art in the Legislative Building was done in the summer of 1999. The current inventory review was called to

address concerns that so many works have gone missing.

"Terry Welsh, director of the provincial arts branch, said closets and storage rooms at the legislature are being scoured to see if any of the missing works can be found.

* (15:10)

"Earlier this week, the *Free Press* reported the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation mistakenly auctioned off a \$1,000 painting from the provincial collection for \$5 at a junk sale. The painting, which was originally signed out to another government department in another building, had been sitting in a lotteries storage room for 14 years. Red-faced corporation officials are now attempting to buy it back."

Now, I wanted to put this information on the record for several reasons, but let me start by pointing out that at no point in this article am I, as Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, cited. Mr. Nairne, as I think I said time and time again, simply did not speak to me. I want to make the point that I have already made time and time again that I did not leak any documentation to the media. I want to also make the point that I have been advised by staff and by political staff that neither my staff nor my executive nor my political people leaked any information to the media. I also want to point out that the article which I read includes the observation: "The Tories reject allegations they are responsible for missing artwork. But they allow there was a lot of confusion after the election and it is possible that some artwork and furnishings got moved without approval."

Let me make the point that what is quite clear is that it was not only possible that artwork was moved without approval, it certainly did happen. I regret, and I am sure members opposite regret, the flouting of the policy, which was clearly established by their government, and it was an action which led to this problem.

I never accused opposition members of stealing artwork. My department never accused opposition members of stealing artwork. It was the unauthorized movement of artwork that created the impossible problem for staff who were charged with managing these very

important resources. Valuable art was no longer in its assigned location when an audit was carried out. Serious concern obviously existed about the whereabouts of significant numbers of pieces of art. Had everybody followed policy, a policy that members opposite and my side of the House were reminded of by the previous clerk of the Cabinet, there would have been no story for reporters to seize on, because all the art would have been in the location where it was supposed to be.

You know, I think I have made this point many times, and I am going to make the point again. The art does not go with the individual who requested the art from the art bank. The art belongs in the office. It is assigned to an office, and that when an individual moves from the office, the art stays in the office unless the individual makes a specific and concrete arrangement with the art bank people. I certainly regret the complete state of disarray that happened over this collection. I regret that it may have been reflected badly on members opposite or any members of the Legislature, although I believe, having recently reread this article, that there was much more balance in the article than members opposite realized. As well, I told members time and time again that I did not write the article. The article was written by Mr. Nairne. Mr. Nairne drew whatever conclusions Mr. Nairne chose to draw. I did not dictate them to him. I did not even speak to Mr. Nairne. I find the accusations from the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), and the insinuation that I somehow was the instigator of a plot to be really not worthy of a member of this Legislature.

I also want to point out that immediately following the article in the *Free Press* on the 11th of January, the manager of the Arts Branch, Terry Welsh, was interviewed, and Mr. Welsh explained that what was proceeding in the Legislature was a review in progress, that there were no aspersions being cast as to what conclusion it would reach. In fact, members from the Arts Branch and myself always referred to mislocated pieces of art. Neither my staff nor I ever referred to members opposite as having helped themselves to works of art.

Now there were several other questions implicit in what the Member put on the record. I

know that he referred to a letter from his former Leader of the Official Opposition, and on February 18, 2000, I wrote back to the former leader, thanking him for writing to me, thanking him for his co-operation, and also I took the opportunity to assure the former leader that, like him, I was deeply committed to ensuring the professional management of valuable works of art, and again, thanking the Member of the Official Opposition for his kindness in agreeing to co-operate in the whole matter.

Now I believe that the Member from Russell (Mr. Derkach) also brought up the question of news releases. There was no news release under my signature with regard to this matter. There is no memo that I can find or that my staff could find with regard to this particular matter. I made reference to some remarks that coincided in a particular document. I simply do not know what else I am supposed to say to the Member. Well, no, I do know what else I can say to the Member, and in fact, I would like to read from a second article from the *Free Press*, and I tabled documents for members opposite. This was an article that appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press* on April 27, 2000. It has a headline that should help members of the Opposition to feel somewhat cheered, "Government sleuths find \$100,000 in missing art."

"The case of the missing art has been solved.

"Almost all the 112 items that vanished from the provincial collection have been located, with sculptures retrieved from dusty drawers and paintings hauled out from behind bookshelves.

"Culture Minister Diane McGifford said only four pieces of art are now missing.

"'We have tracked down almost everything,' she said. 'Most of it was located at various places in the legislature.'" Let me add parenthetically, as I always said, would happen, as my staff always said, would happen.

"When the first audit of the 3,000-piece collection was done last fall, 400 items could not be located. It took two rounds of searching to narrow the losses down to four items. At one time, the missing art was valued at \$100,000.

"The items still missing include two photographs, a ceramic piece and a mixed-media aboriginal work."

Now, in fact, this is not accurate. Well, let me finish reading this article. Then I will inform members opposite as to exactly what is still missing.

"McGifford said the biggest culprits in the disappearing act are politicians and bureaucrats"—note, not opposition bureaucrats, not—

* (15:20)

An Honourable Member: There are no opposition bureaucrats.

Ms. McGifford: Oh, pardon me, not opposition politicians, not government politicians. The words are unadorned, unadjectived "politicians and bureaucrats."

"McGifford said the biggest culprits in the disappearing act are politicians and bureaucrats, who moved artwork without telling anyone." McGifford said they moved artwork without telling anyone. There is no accusations of pinching, stealing, thievery, thuggery or anything else—moving from one office to another without telling anyone.

"The change in governments last year saw dozens of people changing offices.

"The art collection is recorded and tracked by the office the pieces are located in. The province demands that anyone moving artwork get approval, but that has not always happened.

"A memo obtained by the *Free Press* said staff had to retrieve artwork from the offices of politicians who had moved it without permission.

"To avoid confusion in the future, the two government agencies that deal with artwork—Culture and Government Services—have been told to work together.

"McGifford said Manitoba Lotteries Corp. auctioned off a \$1,000 painting from the provincial collection for \$5 at a rummage sale

last year. The painting, which was signed out to another government department in another building, had been in a storage room for 14 years."

Now, I did say that there is some misinformation in this article as to exactly which pieces of art were mislocated. So I am going to refresh the minds of members opposite once more and say that as of April 27, 2000, and I believe even earlier, the staff in Government Services and staff in the Arts Branch had narrowed down the missing pieces, the mislocated pieces, to four: one ceramic sculpture by Jordan Van Sewell entitled *Western Hour Continues*, last located in room 166 in the Legislative Building, office of the former Minister of Education; one ceramic piece by Jordan Van Sewell entitled *Still Life with Plums*, last inventoried in room 170, legislative office of the former Minister of Urban Affairs.

Now, on Tuesday when we were discussing this matter, the former Minister of Urban Affairs was in attendance, and he immediately recognized it as a piece that he now has in his office. So he informed staff and the list has gone down to three. I do not know where the piece of art was when staff did the audit and could not find it, but we might surmise, guess, opine that since the Member was in transition going from one office to another, perhaps he had transported it in a box and had not unpacked yet. We could perhaps get him to give us a detailed explanation if members think that is important.

But of course, the thing is that the former Minister of Urban Affairs, who I think is a very decent person, I have great respect for his integrity, really should have phoned Government Services and said: I am going to move *Still Life with Plums*. Well, he did not. But fortunately, the good news is that *Still Life with Plums* has made its reappearance, and we do have it, and it is apparently hanging on the wall.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. A recorded vote has been requested by another section of Supply. The Committee will now recess and proceed to the Chamber for a formal vote. The Committee is recessed.

The Committee recessed at 3:25 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 4:26 p.m.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Will this section of the Committee of Supply please come to order. Before the recess the Honourable Minister was speaking and had 10 minutes remaining.

Ms. McGifford: I was speaking, as you suggested, before the recess, and I was talking about the list of works of art and mentioning those that we still had not located. I had mentioned that one of the pieces that we have not located is a ceramic sculpture by Jordan Van Sewell, *Western Hour Continues*, which was last located in room 166 in the Legislative Building, office of the former Minister of Education.

Then I mentioned the very good news that the Minister of Urban Affairs has discovered that he had another Jordan Van Sewell wall hanging, *Still Life with Plums*, and this was one of the pieces that was not inventoried. I speculated that perhaps it was because it had been moved by the former minister perhaps in a box and he had not unpacked it. But it would have made the problem easier if he had followed the protocol which was issued on September 22 by Mr. Don Leitch, who was the former Clerk of Executive Council.

Two of the other pieces are, of course, the wall carving by Keith Morriseau, *Shield of Peace*, which was previously located again with the Minister of Urban Affairs, and we hope that piece will turn up; then there was a Kathy Koop beige vase, which was over 15 years old. It could have been broken. Art bank people are speculating that this is a possibility. Fortunately, we do have a duplicate of this particular piece, and it had last been inventoried in room 226.

So at this date, just to make it perfectly clear to the current Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), we are now down to three pieces, and we are speculating that at least two of them could possibly have been broken. So that would mean, if that were the case, and we are continuing the search, it could be the one piece.

You know, the Member opposite has continually suggested that there was a plot emanating from my office to make him and his colleagues appear foolish, in fact to appear more than foolish, and I want to make the point again that this is quite fictitious. It is of the Member's own invention or creativity. In fact, he might want to put pen to paper and participate in the literary arts, because his invention appears to be quite lively. Anyway, he may win one of the new Manitoba book awards. One never knows.

I do want to make it clear and on the record that on January 12 in another article in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, again written by Doug Nairne, it was reported—and members can check this article out. I do not have the article before me, or I could read it in its entirety and put it on the record, but it was reported in the January 12 article by Mr. Doug Nairne that the Minister, quote, does not think there is a larger problem with accountability.

* (16:30)

So let me reiterate that I at no time, at absolutely no time did I personally nor did my staff ever suggest that members opposite had stolen pieces of art or were up to dirty tricks. My concern, my department's concern, was always, and still is, in maintaining the integrity of the art bank.

The Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) appeared to be shocked that a minister would ask for an inventory of art works, and I can understand why he might be, since apparently in 11 years in government very little accountability was expected for members with art.

An Honourable Member: You are casting aspersions on your own department.

Ms. McGifford: Now the Member is interrupting me and saying that I am casting aspersions on my department. My department takes their direction from a minister. If a minister asks to do an inventory, they do an inventory, and that is what I asked to do.

Now I did ask for this inventory for a number of reasons, Mr. Chair. First of all, I want to make the point, and I have made this point

before, but let me make this point again, that for five years I was the critic for Culture, Heritage, and as it was then known as Citizenship. Citizenship, of course, is no longer a part of this department, and the Department is now Culture, Heritage and Tourism, as we all know. But, anyway, for five years I was the critic. I was very concerned about the Government art bank because people in the community suggested to me that the Government art bank required more care than was being given. People in the community were nervous about the Government purchasing art and not taking proper care of it.

As well, the two departments, that is, the Department of Government Services and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, were concerned that, with the election, art may be—because people were changing offices, and people in both these departments are quite familiar with the frailties of humanity—relocated without proper authorization, and so they were supportive of an audit. So there were at least two very good reasons for calling an audit. But another one is, as the new Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, I thought it a good idea to have an analysis and a record of the status of the Government art bank when I came into office. So that is what I requested.

Also, if I might talk a little bit about the chronology of these events, which of course I have talked about several times, and government members seem to want to go over this particular issue over and over and over again as though matters like Tourism, Public Library Services, all the fine work that this department does, were of no import at all. But, if they wish to drag it on, I suppose we will. We will endeavour to be gracious.

So, Mr. Chair, the chronology is basically this. In the summer of '99 I understand that summer students were hired to undertake an inventory of art in the Legislative Building, and that was done. Then, secondly, on September 21 there was a change in government. Good news for Manitobans that there was a change in government, and my colleagues were very pleased to be returned to the Legislature with a majority government and to assume the reins of power.

So September 22 there is a memo from Don Leitch, former Clerk of the Executive Council. This memo from Mr. Leitch went to offices in the Legislative Building. It advised all members of procedures following the election. It advised members, that is, residents of the Legislative Building, who were instructed that all art was to remain in the current location. Now I know it is not up to me to ask questions because I am a member of Government, but really I am desperately curious to know why people did not simply follow the instructions of the Clerk of the Executive Council, who is our chief civil servant, and do as he asked, leave the work in the offices in the current locations. If that had happened, this whole fiasco, this whole fiasco, let that suffice, would have been avoided.

I mean, members opposite who seem to be so concerned about their eyes being blackened in public and nationally, internationally, intergalactically, as I said yesterday, members opposite who are so concerned could have avoided this entire problem, Mr. Chair, if they had done one simple thing and that is followed the advice of the Clerk of the Executive Council. But, well, as I said, human beings are frail. As Christianity tells us, we are all subject to original sin, maybe original sin leapt in, I do not know, but anyway people chose to disregard this advice.

The press found out about it, but let me continue with my chronology because I had only hit on September 22, 1999, and mentioned the memo from the Clerk of the Executive Council.

Mr. Chairperson: The time has expired for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism.

Mr. Derkach: I think the Minister has put some interesting comments on record, and certainly she continues to see herself as being completely innocent and blameless in this entire fiasco, and yet she is the Minister responsible for the Department and for getting herself into this muck to begin with.

An Honourable Member: And showed myself responsible by asking for an inventory.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Let us not interrupt the speaker, the person who has the floor.

Mr. Derkach: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It is interesting that the Minister continues to lecture us about what should have been done by members who were leaving the ministers' offices, yet she does not apply that same principle to the members who left the Opposition offices. Indeed, when I entered the Opposition office that I occupy now, all of the furniture had been removed, and it had been removed by the staff of the incoming government.

Now it would seem to me, if you apply a rule with regard to artwork, that rule should also apply to other government property. The other thing is the fact she said that nothing should have been moved without going to the authorities, and I would tend to agree, but I would have to say that that should apply to all offices and all ministers including the Premier. But the Premier-elect had his eye catch a piece of furniture in the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism's office, and he said, well, my gosh, that is a nice piece of leather furniture. I should have it in my office, and it was moved to his office. Mr. Chair, I could tell you that during that period of time I could see furniture and all kinds of movements of materials going back and forth, not by the government people who were hired to do that, but indeed it was being done by political staff. So, Mr. Chair, if one rule was broken, there were many rules that were broken during that period of time, and indeed there was a lot of confusion as I guess there is during a time when there is a transition in government.

* (16:40)

Mr. Chair, it is a sad day when the Minister does not accept responsibility for her actions. As a matter of fact, she was quoted in the paper as pointing to politicians and to bureaucrats as being the major culprits in this allegation of having the artwork disappear.

Ms. McGifford: They were the only ones in the building then.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Order. Let us not interrupt the Member speaking, and let us keep the conversation down so that we can proceed with the discussions here. I caution all members to keep their voices down.

Order, please. I cannot hear the speaker.

Mr. Derkach: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, once again. The Minister has contradicted herself on a number of occasions during our questioning on this issue, and yes, we have posed questions, similar kinds of questions in different ways, but once again the Minister continues to contradict herself. She said, at first, there were four pieces of artwork missing, then there were 112, now we are down to one. She continues to confuse the issue, but never once has she said that she was sorry that in fact she did cast that kind of an aspersion on elected members in the Legislature and also on staff.

I want to draw your attention to *Hansard*, to page 2644, where the Minister says, and that I think was yesterday, June 14: " Today three pieces have been located, as we in this department always expected to be the case." Which means that only one piece of artwork was missing. Now, this is just an example, Mr. Chair, of the kind of confusion that this minister seems to be under. I do not think she understands where she is at with regard to this artwork as well.

It is obvious to us that the only reason that she ordered the audit was for political purposes because, if she had looked at the inventory list that had been done in August—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. If you wish to carry on a conversation, it would be appreciated if you would move away from the table to the chairs on the side here because we cannot carry on our Estimates.

Mr. Derkach: So, Mr. Chair, I think that this minister has embarrassed herself, and in doing that, she has also dragged in with her the embarrassment of a lot of members of this Legislature because of the fact that she has accused them of something that was fiction. She brought into that the bureaucrats, whom, I think, she owes an apology to as well. So it is sad that in her recent tenure as minister responsible for this department—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Please do not interrupt the Member speaking. You will get your opportunity to speak later, if you wish.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chair, I am deeply concerned about how this minister is deploying her responsibility as steward of a department that has some very, I think, significant importance to the Province of Manitoba. It is the wrong way for a minister to start her tenure as a steward of that department.

So, because of the fact that this minister has not come clean with this committee, she has not apologized to the people of Manitoba, she has not apologized to the members on this side of the House, she simply continues to stall, I move, seconded by the Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), that

WHEREAS the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Ms. McGifford) has failed to accept her responsibility as minister and issue a public apology on behalf of her department to all of those individuals who are accused of stealing art from the province when that was not the case; and

WHEREAS her comments to this committee show an absolute abrogation of her responsibility as minister; and

WHEREAS this lack of responsibility and accountability put in question her ability to manage the provincial art collection, this committee censure the Minister for her lack of appropriate, meaningful and public apology to all who were implicated by her politically motivated comments; and

THAT this committee transfer the Minister's Salary to the management of the provincial art collection.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. In accordance with *Beauchesne's* 951, you cannot transfer funds from one item to another. Therefore, the motion is out of order.

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Mr. Chairman, with greatest respect, I challenge the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Chairperson: Does the Member have the support of another person?

Mr. Derkach: Yea.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chair, could you clarify the Yea and Nay, please. Would you repeat the motion.

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mrs. Dacquay: Mr. Chair, I request a recorded vote, please.

Mr. Chairperson: Are there two members requesting this?

Mr. Derkach: Absolutely.

Mr. Chairperson: The Committee will recess to the Chamber for a recorded vote.

The Committee recessed at 4:49 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 5:53 p.m.

Mr. Chairperson: Will the meeting come to order. We will now proceed to line 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs (e) Arts Branch (2) Other Expenditures \$139,600. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Derkach: When we called for the vote, Mr. Chair, and we introduced this motion, it was sincere and serious, because, at some point in time, whether it is in committee or whether it is in the House, I do believe that this minister owes many people in this province a sincere and complete apology for her actions with regard to the alleged missing artwork, which was not really missing at all.

As I said in the beginning of my comments when I started questioning the Minister, this is very much like the alleged audit that was done, which was later revealed to be a review, which proved nothing because, in fact, the Government was once again trying to create a scenario in our province which did not exist. You know, it is the first time, I believe, that I have ever witnessed in the years that I have been here in the Legislature, an issue of this nature where a minister comes into an office and deliberately attempts to discredit the former administration by venturing into an audit which has no basis—an audit which has no foundation. Mr. Chair—

An Honourable Member: What about the Lotteries audit?

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Please do not interrupt the speaker, the Member that is speaking.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chair, I cannot understand why this minister simply will not acknowledge her involvement in this entire issue. She continues to tell us she does not know about a news release; she does not know about government documents. Yet she acknowledges that she is the one who, I guess, ordered the audit—the art audit. She also has acknowledged that she is the one who pointed at politicians and bureaucrats in this building as being the main culprits for the missing artwork. Yet she says on record in this committee that really she was not on any kind of a witch hunt at all, and she was not pointing the finger at anybody, except that in the newspaper article it is very clear that she did point the finger. She did point the finger at politicians and bureaucrats. For that reason, I think she owes Manitobans an apology. If there had been one or two or twenty pieces of artwork missing, then I could say, she could be, in a very small way, minutely, justified in what actions

she took, but, in fact, in essence, every piece of artwork has now been collected.

Point of Order

Ms. McGifford: You know, for three days now, I think, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) has been talking about a news release. He insists that there is a news release under my name. He reiterates it. I have assured him, Mr. Chair, that there is not a news release, that there was no news release under my name.

So, Mr. Chair, I think it may be a very good idea—since the Member for Russell is convinced that he has a news release and it is under my name, I would like to ask that member if he could table this mysterious news release, because I have assured this table several times that there was no news release under my name.

Now, I know the Member is going to dig out something from Tuesday, when I said I did not know if there was a news release, and I did not. But I have assured the Member, after doing research, that there is no news release, and if there was a news release, it would, of course, be available. But there is no news release. *[interjection]* There is no news release, Mr. Chair. I ask the Member to get his mind around this once and for all—no news release, no news release, no news release.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for your patience. I mean, you must be as tired as I am of hearing this news release, this elusive news release being referred to, even though I have said time and time again, no news release. I have assured members that there is no news release. I have checked with everybody I can think of, and they have assured me there is no news release. Yet this Member sits in his seat day after day, brings up the news release and, in fact, brings up this news release several times in each day.

So, Mr. Chair—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Excuse me, there is no point of order. It is a dispute of the facts.

* * *

Mr. Derkach: It is the Member herself—

Mr. Chairperson: Order. The hour is six o'clock. The Committee shall rise.

LABOUR

* (14:40)

Madam Chairperson (Bonnie Korzeniowski): 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 for the Department of Labour.

Consideration of these Estimates left off on page 129 of the Estimates book. Resolution 11.1 Labour Executive (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$500,100.

The floor is now open for questions.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Request for an Apology from the MLA for Brandon West

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): Madam Chair, I am moving a matter of privilege. Yesterday, in the latter part of the afternoon, the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) began to make personal references about my son, who is a well-respected and dedicated policeman in Brandon and who is a constituent of his in Brandon West. There were numerous catcalls during this time.

The Member for Brandon West said: I know who your son is. He is in labour. He is a good NDP—no, he is not a good NDP. You and your son do not get along very well. Did you know that? Then they went on talking about the exchange of Christmas cards, that is all we do in a year. Then the Member from Brandon West turned to the Member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and said: They do not get along, you know. Well, maybe they send each other cards at Christmas, et cetera, et cetera.

I bit my tongue because I did not want to reply at that time, and at the end of the day, I did say to the Member for Brandon West, as he kept on, that I would be informing my son. Last night, I did inform my son. Now, he is the vice-president of the Manitoba association of police.

He has occasion to meet with the Minister of Labour (Ms. Barrett). He was very distressed to hear about the catcalls that were of such a personal nature in this committee.

I am well aware, Madam Chair, that there are times when we hiss at each other about issues, and I dare say that yesterday there were catcalls about my bestselling book and a few other things to try to throw everything off track from members opposite.

I thought, quite honestly, that yesterday I would say that the questioning went extremely well during the afternoon, and I had thanked the Minister several times for her answers.

These catcalls kept going on and on. My matter of privilege is because it got personal about a member of my family. It also is a person who has a very high stature in the police force, Madam Chair. My son, who is, as I said before, the vice-president of the police association, says that he is apolitical in his role as a negotiator with the police force and that his name should not be coming up at this committee for any reason, or reference to my son in Brandon. By the way, he is my only son in Brandon. Also, the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) stated he knew my son. He should because they are neighbours. Indeed, the Member for Brandon West is my son's MLA.

So I am taking this forward because I think that what happened here yesterday was entirely unprofessional, inappropriate, and I would call on the Minister of Labour (Ms. Barrett) to support the fact that members opposite should not be making personal comments on the family members of the MLAs.

I think that we have to be very careful here in this committee. We may have our opinions about the issues. We may continue on calling each other on several points. Madam Chair, when it comes to my son who does work on a daily basis and who is a very dedicated, caring policeman and who is also high profile in the police force and who also has had occasion to visit with the Minister of Labour, I think that, therefore, should you find a prima facie case of privilege, I would be prepared to move, seconded by the Member for Springfield (Mr.

Schuler), that the comments made by the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) yesterday in the Labour sitting of Committee of Supply with regard to my son was not becoming a member of this House and ask that the Member be directed to withdraw his comments and apologize.

Madam Chairperson: The Member has raised a matter of privilege to the effect: That the Member for Brandon West yesterday in the Labour sitting of the Committee of Supply made comments with regard to my son not becoming a member of this House and asks that the Member be directed to withdraw his comments and apologize.

I must inform the Committee that, in accordance with *Beauchesne's* Citation 107, it has no power to deal with a matter of privilege. Such matters can only be dealt with by the House itself on receiving a report from the Committee. Therefore, I am prepared to entertain a motion to report the alleged matter of privilege to the House.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): Madam Chairperson, I would so move that this matter be reported to the House. We are not speaking to it yet.

Madam Chairperson: May I have a copy of the motion, please? It has been moved by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert that this matter be reported to the House. I find the motion to be in order. Debate may proceed, and I would remind the Committee the debate is on this motion, not on the matter of privilege.

Mr. Laurendeau: Madam Chairperson, I do not believe there is much else we can say on this matter other than it is a personal reference to a family member of an elected official. I do believe this matter is important enough that it should be dealt with in the House, and that is why we are asking for this committee to report this matter to the House. Thank you.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Madam Chair, I have been sitting at this committee for several weeks now, and to say that, for instance, the Minister of Labour and I have always agreed on issues would hardly be the case. The Minister

and I have disagreed on a lot of issues. I have asked a lot of tough questions, I am sure questions that she has not liked. I do not feel particularly that she has answered them, but she has given some kind of an answer. But I have to say to the Minister that at no point in time was there a personal attack. At no point in time did the Minister ever attack my family, and that is the way proceedings are supposed to proceed at this kind of a committee meeting.

Madam Chair, I do not believe that there is any honour in attacking families, and I will say right up front, and it is not something one does often. I commend the Minister. When the microphones are off and sometimes even when they are on, she has been very gracious towards my family and has taken an interest in my family, and that is the way it is meant to be, but to sit here and start getting personal about families is unacceptable. The session has barely started. The term of this government has barely started, and already junior members of the Government, people who are green to the process, have gotten carried away and made this personal.

* (14:50)

Madam Chair, this is not personal; this is politics. We are here to do the politics of the province, and we would appreciate very much if the Member for Brandon West would withdraw those comments. He should apologize for those comments because, you know what, we can very easily discuss all kinds of issues. We can get upset with each other, and we can challenge each other. We are all politicians. We are all elected, and it is fair game. But as soon as you go after someone's family, that is completely unacceptable, Madam Chair, completely out of order, and I believe that this member has a point.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. I just remind you that we are speaking to the motion.

Mr. Schuler: And I am speaking to the motion, Madam Chair, and that is calling the Member to order to apologize for those comments.

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin-Roblin): On a point of order, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: It is on a new point of order? On a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Struthers: I realize that a point of privilege is something that is very important that needs to be dealt with seriously by this committee; however, I do not think the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) needs to be lecturing the Chair, again as he has in the past during these Estimates. I believe there is a point of order on this already. What the Member has essentially done again is challenge the Chair and try to tell you, Madam Chairperson, what your role is here. Your role is set out pretty clearly, and you do not need to be lectured by the Member for Springfield on how the conduct of this committee is supposed to be held. If the Member for Springfield disagrees with the ruling that you are making, then the Member for Springfield should bring forth a challenge of the ruling.

All I want to do is make sure that the Member for Springfield follows the rules in such an important matter as what has been brought to the table today. Just to reiterate, Madam Chair, the Member for Springfield has essentially challenged your ruling. He has done it in an off-handed way. He should at least have the courage to bring forth a formal challenge of your Chair as the rules of the House provide, instead of doing it in this backhanded way.

Madam Chairperson: I thank the Member for Dauphin-Roblin for his comments; however, this is not a point of order.

* * *

Madam Chairperson: I would ask that we vote on this motion. Is it the will of the Committee to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Just on this point of order, is the question before the House the motion subsequent to matter of privilege being moved because if it is, if I could have some guidance from the Chair as to whether that is the appropriate procedure. It is my understanding

that a matter of privilege must be determined outside of here on the basis of whether it is a prima facie case, whether it was raised at the earliest opportunity and those considerations.

Mr. Laurendeau: On a point of order, Madam Chairperson, if I just add some clarification for the Honourable Minister, for the House Leader's information. We had moved the matter of privilege, but the Chair has ruled it has to be dealt with in the House as you are aware. What I moved subsequently was a motion to bring this to the House in report stage so that we would deal with it in the House and not in committee. That is what we are dealing with now is the motion to refer it to the House.

Madam Chairperson: On the same point of order, the Government House Leader.

Mr. Mackintosh: I thank the Opposition House Leader for that clarification and wonder if perhaps we could get some guidance again. Is a motion necessary to do that? Is it not simply referred to the House by way of the report from Supply, or do we need an actual motion?

Madam Chairperson: The Government House Leader, there is no point of order.

* * *

Madam Chairperson: The Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Smith) raised a point of privilege. The Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) made a motion that that point of privilege be reported to the House, and we are now voting on that motion.

Is it the will of the Committee to adopt the motion to move this point of privilege to the House? *[Agreed]*

I will interrupt the proceedings of the Committee of Supply, so that the matter can be reported to the House.

Order, please. The question before the Committee is the motion from the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) that this matter be reported to the House. Is the Committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Voice Vote

Madam Chairperson: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Laurendeau: Yeas and Nays, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: A formal vote has been requested by two members. This section of the Committee will now proceed to the Chamber for a formal vote.

The Committee recessed at 2:57 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 4:19 p.m.

Madam Chairperson: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. The floor is now open for questions.

Mrs. Smith: My line of questioning in terms of the Labour that we are involved in being deputy Labour critic, I had looked to this minister as being able to answer some of the questions and concerns that I had. I want to put it on record that each one of the NDP Government did vote down my motion today when I asked for an apology from the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith).

I have to say on record that this would have been good for all of us to know that our family was off limits. In the Labour portfolio, Madam Chair, when I have a son who is the vice-president of the Manitoba association of police and he is being catcalled in this committee, I think that this compromises the Minister's position. I think it compromises our position. I

think that we have to take serious consideration as to what is going on here.

Unfortunately, when we talk about Labour and when we talk about the Labour concerns, for years I had a lot to do with labour. I negotiated on my own teachers' board and my family, my son being one of them, as the Member for Brandon West put out, negotiates for the police as well. My request today was a motion for all of us. I find it very regrettable that this minister and this government chose to take a stand to say that this did not matter, my concerns did not matter and vote this motion down. This motion would have been good for all of us. It would have been good for the portfolio in Labour.

I would ask this minister, when there is a concern about labour negotiations and my concern is this: when there is a compromise in the Act, the Act says that any employee, anybody can be part of a labour consideration. What went on here the other day when my son was brought up as an example and different comments made about him and when he walks into your office, Madam Minister, with the police association, with Boyd Campbell, the President, and my son is the Vice-President, there are some concerns that he would have as to the Minister's fair analysis of any judgment that might be made on behalf of the Manitoba police association.

This is why I brought that motion forward. I did not think that, here in this committee, there were any appropriate comments that ever should be made. I asked for an apology from the Member for Brandon West simply because I thought quite categorically that our children and more succinctly my child should be kept totally out of anything that is going on here in the committee.

I talked with him extensively last night, and the comment that the Member for Brandon West made about our not having a good relationship, I can assure that is none of the committee's business. The other part of it is we have an excellent relationship. What I am more concerned about is his position and dealing with you as Minister of Labour, taking so lightly, Madam Minister, this deal, this concern that I have.

This concern is not only for my own children but for your children as well, but I do not think at committee level our children should ever be mentioned or brought up. When I brought it up this afternoon, there was complete denial. The Minister said she did not hear. I do not know whether she did or not. Mr. Rondeau said he did not hear. I find that quite strange since both myself and the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) both heard.

This is something today I will put on record that was very difficult for me. Yesterday I asked you legitimate questions. I wanted to find out things. I treated you with the utmost respect, Madam Minister.

Madam Chair, I think that a precedent has been set here in Manitoba that is very unsavoury. This is not a quarrel between political parties. What this is is a precedent that is set. Our children, at committee level, Madam Chair, should be off limits. All our children should be off limits. We can ask things like: Do you have children? or How are your children? But to bring your child up, particularly because he has a position of great responsibility in the police force, is totally out of line. So I have to express my disappointment. This is a labour issue.

My question to the Minister is, Madam Chair: I would like to know if the Minister is very happy with what happened today.

Madam Chairperson: Could I just comment? I must apologize for the sake of *Hansard*. My mike was off. Could I recognize the Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Smith) at this point, having spoken? I had not recognized you for *Hansard*.

Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour): The issue that was before the House for the vote was: Was the issue raised by the Member for Fort Garry a matter of privilege? The determination by the vote was that it was not a matter of privilege. It does not mean that it was not a matter of concern. The suggestion that I made to the Member for Fort Garry was that this should be discussed with the Member for Brandon West when that is possible to do. The vote was simply on: Was this a matter of privilege? The matter of privilege, in a parliamentary system, is a very, very serious one. It is not to be taken

lightly. It is not to say that the issues raised by the Member are not of concern. I think they needed to be dealt with in a manner that is different from a matter of privilege before the whole House. That would be my response.

Mrs. Smith: Madam Chair, we as elected officials have a responsibility. I take my responsibility very seriously. I understand, I guess, your reluctance to take a stand in terms of what was happening this morning. I want it on record. Yesterday I told the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) that I would be letting my son know. I did not say anything yesterday because I did not want to jeopardize my son. He is, first of all, my son; he is, secondly, the vice-president of the police association. As Labour Minister, there is grave concern when the vice-president of the police association is talked about in a derogatory manner at this committee, when the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) says that he is a neighbour and he knows him.

I do not want to do any political skating. What I want us to do, as members of this committee, is to protect the rights of private citizens and of our own children. The fact of the matter is, I will take under advisement—I have already informed my son that the Minister of Labour does believe that he should take this up with the Member for Brandon West. He will be requesting a letter of apology from the Member for Brandon West through the police association. He will also need assurance from the Minister of Labour that when he walks into your chamber to talk about negotiation things that you understand that he is apolitical and that it really is nobody's business what political party he belongs to or does not belong to. When he walks into the Minister's chamber, he is a member of the Manitoba police association who is taking care of police business.

The police need the support that you know very well. I believe it is 82.2 they are dealing with the Minister on now, in terms of some alterations to that particular amendment. I understand from the Minister that she has a grave responsibility in lots of different areas, but this is very unsavoury. It is very unfortunate that this lack of respect was brought to this committee. I really do not know what the far-reaching ramifications can be. Indeed, I will take

under advisement from the Minister the fact that my son will be dealing directly with the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith).

Just on the record, this committee, after the caustic remarks, as I will put it, about our relationship, it is excellent. We are a very close family. Over and above that, as MLA here in Manitoba, I think that everyone should know in this House, when we are discussing things, that our children, too, have jobs. Our children, too, are big parts of the community. As MLAs, we should respect our children's rights to their privacy and to their way of earning a living.

* (16:30)

Because my son happens to be dealing with the Minister of Labour (Ms. Barrett), I do not want any more derogatory—excuse me, Madam Chair, could the Minister please listen to me when I am speaking? This is very important. Could that happen?

I know you are glaring at me, Madam Minister, but I need to make this point. This is so important for you and for me and for our children, and it is so important also for my son, who is apolitical when he walks in to the Minister's chamber. He wants to work with the Minister of Labour. He wants to accomplish things. His one objective is to accomplish things for the Manitoba association of police. Could I ask the Minister, Madam Chair, does she understand this?

Ms. Barrett: As I have stated on numerous occasions in these Estimates when discussing various meetings that I have had with groups and individuals, I respect and listen to every individual and every group that comes into my office.

There are people who come into my office that I have never seen before, whose political affiliations I have no knowledge of. There are people who come into my office that I have met many times before whose political affiliation I know very well. I pride myself on the fact that, when I meet with those people and those individuals and those groups in my office, as Minister of Labour, that that is what I am, and that it is my responsibility as Minister of Labour

to talk with and dialogue with and work with every single group or individual that comes into my office.

Political affiliation, whether known or unknown, has absolutely no bearing on anything I talk with an individual or a group about. You are not a good minister, you cannot do the job of being a minister in a department, unless you are able to put that aside.

As I stated to the Member, I may have met with her son. I know I have met with the association, but I cannot remember, because there are so many people that come in. I had no idea if her son was there. I would have had no idea at the time that he was her son. If I did know that he was her son, it would have made absolutely no difference to me, as far as paying attention to what he had to say or his representation of the group that he is vice-president of. That goes for the past, it goes for the present, it goes for the future in all of my dealings with any individual or any group that comes to see me in my role as Minister of Labour. I take that responsibility very seriously.

Mrs. Smith: I thank the Minister for her comments. I would also be mindful of the fact, then make a suggestion that the Minister of Labour, when colleagues are sitting around the table, that they be encouraged not to make comments, in particularly here, my son, because he is involved in labour or particular comments about members of the Legislature's families.

I understand the Minister does take her job very seriously, and if indeed that is the case, then I am sure that the Minister will take this issue very seriously. It has been hard for me to bring up as an MLA and as a mother and especially to talk to my son, who is so involved in Labour and in negotiations through this minister's office. I appreciate the Minister's comments. I think the Minister can appreciate the fact that when a member opposite is sitting across and saying, I know your son, and all of the rest of the things that he said in a derogatory manner, with her sitting at the end of the table, I am assuming she heard. She reassured me, Madam Chair, she did not hear, but at that time, I was sure she did. I appreciate her comments. I think that we on both sides of the House have to be very mindful of

this. I personally am very proud of my son. He is a very dedicated policeman, very involved in the police force, and, as I say, when he deals with police business he is apolitical, and this is what he is there for.

I was not going to bring this up originally, Madam Chair, and this is why I did not say anything yesterday, because I wanted to talk to my son first. He definitely was very angry. He will be dealing with the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith), talking to him, and he will be asking for a written apology through the police association. I think this is something that we all have to be sensitive to. In this case, just because my particular son goes into the Minister's office and she says she does not know really who he is, well, that could be, because I understand the Minister does see a lot of people. This is an issue that we have to be very mindful of.

Regrettably, Madam Chair, I do regret that the NDP Government voted down this motion, because I do believe that if they had spoken to the motion and said, yes, we believe that our member got out of line and he should apologize, which is, I think, at the very least what the Member should be doing, but it is a matter of privilege and the NDP Government in this House chose to vote it down. I have a grave concern my son's business, any private citizen's business should not be at this committee level.

I am happy that the Minister takes her job seriously. Actions will speak louder than words. We will be watching to see what will be happening in the future. I would suggest, as I am suggesting and talking to my caucus, and my caucus agrees, members of MLAs' families should never be brought into committee. It is unfortunate that my particular son is the vice-president of the police association. It is something which he takes very seriously.

I thank you, Madam Chair, for this opportunity to say this. I want to ask the Minister, in the future if this should happen again, would the Minister be willing to just stop the conversation and request of the Chair that things be brought to order and MLA's family not be brought into any conversations at this table?

Ms. Barrett: Every committee member has the right at any time to ask for order to be brought

into the committee hearing. I as a matter of fact think that on occasion during these Estimates have asked I think once or twice for order to be restored. Other committee members on both sides of the Committee have done that and, of course, it is the right and the responsibility of members to do so. As I stated earlier, and the Member may choose to believe me or not, I did not hear the interchange to which the Member was referring and so therefore would have been unable to call for order, because I did not hear the exchange that she is referring to.

Mr. Schuler: I would like to refer the Minister to the Manitoba Labour Board, where we are currently asking questions, as my binder gets fuller and fuller. Part 3 of the Labour Board Act deals with successor rights. I would like to ask the Minister: How is the Board involved at this point?

Ms. Barrett: The Act comes into effect when either party, either management or the employees, make application to the Labour Board to implement the successor rights section. The Labour Board does not do that on its own. It is an initiation by either party in a labour contract.

* (16:40)

Mr. Schuler: Can the Minister explain section 56.1 to this committee, dealing with the sale of a business in regard to existing unions?

Ms. Barrett: In the normal course of events when a business is sold whose employees are covered by a collective agreement, the new employer, who is the employer by virtue of having bought the business, inherits the collective agreement currently then in effect and the employees of that new employer retain the collective bargaining rights that are under the provisions of the collective agreement. Those remain in effect, both rights and responsibilities remain in effect as long as the collective agreement is in effect.

Mr. Schuler: Madam Chair, through you to the Minister, does section 58 work in a similar fashion when a business merges or is amalgamated into a larger company?

Ms. Barrett: Yes.

Mr. Schuler: What happens if a company declares bankruptcy and is then bought up?

Ms. Barrett: If the new company carries on the same or similar business as the former company did, then it would probably be considered to be a successor company. If the company was bought and the assets were sold, then it would not be. It would depend on the Labour Board would make a determination as to how similar the current operations of the company were to the former operation of the company as to whether the successor rights would carry out.

Mr. Schuler: Does the Labour Board get involved at this point?

Ms. Barrett: The whole issue of successor rights is only triggered by the application of either the employer group or the employee group. The Labour Board would not initiate any involvement.

Mr. Schuler: If Bill 18, dealing with successor rights, passes and receives royal assent, what impact will this have on the Labour Board?

Ms. Barrett: Minimal because very few businesses fall under this category, that is of moving either from federal to provincial jurisdiction, or from provincial to federal jurisdiction. The Bill is designed to deal with a very unusual situation, two examples. One is Deer Lodge Hospital, that went from federal jurisdiction, from Veterans Affairs to provincial jurisdiction. That would have been a case covered under this amendment and also Manitoba Telephone System, when it went from provincial jurisdiction to being under federal jurisdiction. Bill 18 would cover both of those circumstances. Should an issue have arisen over successor rights, again, if there was no issue that arose for either of these cases, but there might be, so that is why we put the piece of legislation in to ensure that there is no ambiguity.

Mr. Schuler: Again, if Bill 18, dealing with successor rights, passes and receives royal assent, are any additional regulations required?

Ms. Barrett: No.

Mr. Schuler: If Bill 18 dealing with successor rights passes and receives royal assent, is there

anything else that has to happen after that, or is it that is it, it is the bill?

Ms. Barrett: No, that would complete the process. There would be nothing more to be added. It would go into the statutes of the Province of Manitoba and into then the procedures and processes of the Labour Board. I am sure there would be internal changes to documentation and training and information for the Labour Board, because it is an additional section for them. But it would require no other further action.

Mr. Schuler: To the Minister: What types of companies would be affected should Bill 18 pass and receive royal assent?

Ms. Barrett: Generally speaking, the type of operation that would be affected would be any operation that formerly would have had, for example, an operation across the country, which then now is only operating in Manitoba. One of those examples where it might happen is the short-line railroads that used to be part of an intercontinental rail system and are now being bitten off and thrown off, if you will, by the CP and CN, and then some of them are becoming or in the process or have a possibility of becoming short line within the province of Manitoba. They would have formerly been under federal jurisdiction. They would then be under Manitoba jurisdiction. So this change would affect the operations of those entities, for example.

Mr. Schuler: Could the Minister tell this committee approximately how many short-line operations there are currently in the province?

Ms. Barrett: There are currently two short-line rail—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. A recorded vote has been requested in another section of the Committee of Supply. I am therefore recessing this section of the Committee of Supply in order for members to proceed to the Chamber for a formal vote.

Is it the will of the Committee to call it six o'clock? *[Agreed]* As the hour is now 6 p.m., Committee rise.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

* (14:40)

Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture and Food. Will the Minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

We are on page 27 of the Estimates book, Resolution 3.4, Agricultural Development and Marketing (b) Animal Industry (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,763,100.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Mr. Chairman, we are into a new section of the Estimates, and we have new staff with us. I would like to introduce Allan Preston, Acting Director of the Veterinary Services Branch; on my left here, Terry Smyrl, Manager of Food Quality and Product Development in the Animal Industry Branch.

Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie): Yesterday the Minister took under advisement a question on Veterinary Services that she said she would respond to if she had the personnel that were able to advise her in that capacity. Does she want me to repose the question, or is she ready to respond?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, Manitoba sponsors 12 spots at the university in Saskatoon, and the applicants for that program are screened first on their academic ability because, of course, that is the most important criteria. But after that screening on the academic area, they have an interview where they go into their background, their knowledge of animals, their experience of working with animals, their volunteer services, perhaps if they have volunteered in veterinarian clinics and what kind of experience they have in that area. Certainly their people skills are also assessed, because that is a very important part of any job. You know, they have to deal with livestock and small animals, but you also have to deal with people in some very difficult situations. So people skills are a huge part of it.

Of those 12 seats last year, 6 of them went to applicants from rural Manitoba. So when you

consider the population that we have in rural Manitoba versus what we have in urban centres, or in Winnipeg, the largest centre, I think that is a pretty good balance to get that many. There is a lot of the work in rural Manitoba, but there is also a lot of work in the urban centres as well. That is the criteria that the decisions are based on, and the last round of applicants was 6 from rural and 6 from urban centres.

Mr. Faurshou: Mr. Chairman, I would like to be a little more specific in the question that the Minister has just responded to insofar as that orientation or past residency really does not give a true indication, although it does indicate the individual has rural experience. But what we are asking is in fact: Is there an assessment of the aptitude or attitude or intention of the individuals when they are being screened for continued education in veterinary services, whether they have intent to return to practise in the rural of Manitoba on livestock?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the most important thing that is considered when an individual applies to attend vet colleges is their academic standards, and then all of the other issues are looked at. Their interest in rural Manitoba certainly comes into consideration. There is one person on the panel who is a rural veterinarian who would look at that. What a person says or intends to do when they go into the program may vary greatly from what they end up doing at the end of their training. They may have full intentions of going into rural Manitoba, but as they get into their courses, they may find out that where their specialty is or the area that they have an interest in may be something different, maybe it is in small animals or something like that, so that may change.

But the other program, Mr. Chairman, that we use to try to encourage people to come to rural Manitoba is the scholarship program, and in order to take advantage of that scholarship program and have it written down, or have the amount you have to pay back written down, you have to go into a practice in rural Manitoba. The scholarship program is one of the ways that there is an incentive, areas where there is an incentive to get people to stay in rural Manitoba. Once you have spent a few years in rural Manitoba in order to get that scholarship paid off, many times you

have put down roots to the point where then you have established a home maybe or made some connections that you want to stay.

But I want to also let the Member know that Doctor Preston, who is here with us at the table today, is Manitoba Agriculture and Food's representative on the advisory council to the university in Saskatoon. The issues of rural vet services is one of the topics that is discussed. Certainly steps can be taken; to encourage people to come back to Manitoba is also one that is discussed.

I want to also let the Member know that this year, of the graduates, nine are coming back to rural Manitoba. Last year, there were twelve graduates, I believe, and twelve of them came back to rural Manitoba.

* (14:50)

Mr. Faurshou: Twelve of twelve returned to rural practice from last year's graduating class?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, yes, last year 12 graduates came back to practices in rural Manitoba. Now that does not necessarily mean that they all originated from rural Manitoba, but 12 of them have come back to practise in rural Manitoba, and certainly that is a good sign. I would suspect that our scholarship program may have something to do with attracting them to come back to practices, but also there is a growing interest in livestock production. There are many opportunities for veterinarians. Now all of these veterinarians may not be going to vet clinics, but as we have growth in businesses, in livestock, in the hog industry, there are other opportunities for veterinarians. I am not sure where the 12 have gone to.

Mr. Faurshou: Mr. Chairman, in regard to the actual internship for doctor status in veterinarian medicine, is there rural large animal requirements in that particular internship?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the students who take the vet program are trained as a general practice and are trained with large animals, with small animals, with poultry, with all the livestock industry, and once they graduate they are qualified. There is no intern program. They

are doctors, veterinarians, and they can practice in the area that they choose or where they can find employment.

Mr. Faurchou: Now I would like to perhaps move on from qualifications to actual entry into practice. There was concern raised by two individuals that must have been of the twelve that came back to Manitoba with their newly achieved status as doctors in veterinarian medicine. As we all can recognize upon graduation from our schooling, not a great deal of resources are available to the individuals and these two particular individuals wanted to set up practice but had no resources in which to accomplish that. I would like to ask the Minister whether there is any intent to provide for that situation. I speak more specifically of perhaps a program through MACC which would finance a mobile vet clinic or vet services van or truck, but this is in no way, shape or form, Mr. Chairman, suggesting that the government sustain and actually provide for facilities that other veterinarian services throughout the province are in competition for and must derive their resources from those sectors. But what I am suggesting is that in cases where there is little or no equity to offer as collateral that consideration in this regard may be given through MACC.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I recently had the opportunity to attend the annual meeting of vet districts. The representatives from the various vet districts and the commissioner, Mr. Lewis, raised this particular issue. The purpose was, Mr. Lewis raised the issue about looking at MACC to provide some kind of funding for the establishment of practices. It is an issue that has been raised, and it will be raised with MACC to see whether the Board sees this as an area where they could move into.

I want to also let the Member know that we have \$300,000 that is in this budget to help vet clinics upgrade their equipment. With this kind of upgrading of equipment, we think this is a good way to help young and new veterinarians come into a clinic, because sometimes the equipment that is in the clinic has been there for a long time. These veterinarians have trained with very modern equipment. By bringing this new equipment in, it is hoped that young veterinarians will find that this is the kind of

equipment that they need to work with and will be enticed to stay. Certainly vet service districts also encourage people to come into the districts and they will help them with loans. They will help them with their moving expenses. Many a time they will provide housing for them and even cash grants to help them out, in order to encourage them to make the move into, to come to rural Manitoba.

The issue that the Member raises with respect to MACC is one that has been raised by the Commissioner, and one that they will be discussing with the Corporation and the Board and one that we will be, I am sure, hearing more about. There is a system of districts. Our goal is to ensure that there are services provided through the vet services districts and the establishments that are out in rural Manitoba.

* (15:00)

Mr. Faurchou: I appreciate the Minister's response. I would like to caution the Minister that at any time when public monies are expended in the form of grants or assistance that inequities eventually are revealed between one practice versus another practice. This is something that remains a bone of contention between different veterinarian services in different parts of the province and the levels of support given to the various areas. I would like to caution on the aspect of grants where I believe loans would be much more applicable to upgrade and to essentially invest in the future and also in that way provide the incentive to continue on the practice in that area. I believe the Minister has a response to that comment.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated to the Member, there is \$300,000 that is in the Budget that is granted to the various vet services districts. It is not made across the board, it is based on need, and it is not meant to create inequities between the districts. The funds are there to help raise the level of the equipment that is in place in the particular districts. The various districts make their applications to the Commission, and then the Commission makes a decision as to which one should be getting the grant to upgrade their services.

If the Member has a particular issue that he is driving at here where granting out of these

funds may have created an inequity within the Vet Services districts because of funds that have come from the Province, I would certainly invite him to put that information on the record or provide it for me, and we would raise it with the Commission because it is not the intent. The intent of these funds is not to create inequities. It is intended to improve the services in rural Manitoba and also encourage young people who are graduating from vet college to come into rural Manitoba to provide services.

Mr. Faurchou: I thank the Minister for her response, Mr. Chairman, and I will encourage them to do just that because the situation still exists.

I would like to ask the Minister: The Veterinary Services Act that the Legislature passed last year, has it been proclaimed?

Ms. Wowchuk: I am really, really pleased to see that so many people are recognizing the importance of the Agriculture Department and are joining us in this Estimates process here, because quite often agriculture tends to be neglected a little. So I certainly welcome all the people here to the Chamber to help us with this, to listen to this important discussion.

The Member asked about an act that was passed last year, amendments to The Veterinary Medical Act, and, yes, that was proclaimed.

But again I want to refer back to the Member's previous comment where he said that he had a particular issue where granting was being done that was causing a discrepancy. I would ask him to provide a few more details so that staff can address that issue for him.

Mr. Faurchou: All I stated last time was that I would encourage the individuals that I had spoken to, to contact yourself directly rather than go through a third party. So I appreciate the Minister's response. The Act being proclaimed, I want to ask specifically of the regulations right now: Have they been put in place with that particular act? I will speak specifically of concerns that producers had in regard to the provisions for artificial insemination, semen and embryo egg collection, and sexing. Those regulations were very specific. They had to be

under veterinarian supervision or, pardon me, actually provided by Veterinary Services and conducted by qualified doctors of veterinary medicine. The concern that was raised last year was that the practices in those particular areas are conducted by experienced livestock personnel, and that continued artificial insemination, semen collection would not be hindered or impeded by the legislation.

I would like to have the Minister's remarks in that regard.

* (15:10)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the particular act that the Member was raising does not have regulations. The powers go to the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association, and they make the by-laws, rather than having regulations.

The Member is right, partly. There is a list of activities under this act that are allowed to be done by the farmer, and there is a list of the activities that are not allowed. One of them in particular is embryo collection—must be done by a veterinarian. Semen collection must also be done by a veterinarian. However, it can be done for in-herd use by an individual. But most individuals use a veterinarian because this is a very important part of their breeding program, and they use the veterinarian services. AI does not require a veterinarian to do it, nor does the implantation of embryos; that can be done by the farmer. But, again, most times farmers will call on the veterinarian to do these services for them.

With respect to the collection of semen and, in particular, embryos, there are very strict regulations that have to be followed under the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and also the veterinary act. Basically, these regulations are there for a very good reason: to ensure that high standards are met and that we meet national standards and have the ability to then meet the requirements for export, because these have been, and continue to be, very, very important markets for us too. I know that in the dairy industry there is a tremendous market to export embryos as well as semen. But embryos are a growing market, and you must meet those CFIA standards or risk not being able to export.

Mr. Faurshou: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister enlightening me that the Act does not require regulation to, as it is very specific. I do understand the response. It still concerns me, and I will cite an example and the reason that it does concern me.

An individual was, in fact, in the employ of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. This particular individual was responsible for sexing the embryos for Holstein cattle, and she was, without any dispute, probably the leading expert in this field. She was the last quality control individual prior to export of that particular product. She was charged with that enormous responsibility and was, rightly so, recognized as an expert at what she did.

She chose to retire from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and she returned to her family farm. She wanted to carry on the particular practice in which she had been employed under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I am a singer myself, but not at this time.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I know that there is a lot of interest in the agriculture industry, and I welcome all members to the Chamber to join us, but the Member from Portage is trying to ask a question, and both the staff and myself are having great difficulty hearing. So if you would ask the other members if they would kindly listen to the question and if they would enable us to put the answer as well.

Mr. Faurshou: I appreciate the Minister wants to hear the question, because I believe it is a very serious situation insofar as this individual is qualified on the national front by the Government of Canada and charged with that particular responsibility.

When she returned to the farm to carry on the family business, she wanted to diversify and use her expertise and provide a service which involved her past employs and practices within those employs by sexing the embryos of her Holstein herd. She was prevented from doing that by the veterinarian services act.

This is a situation where, I believe, there is an infringement of power over an individual without any recognition whatsoever of that person's capability, qualifications, expertise, experience, simply because she did not have "doctor of veterinarian medicine" in her portfolio. This bothers me immensely, so I would like the Minister's response to this particular case and whether, in fact, this would be the same here in Manitoba. This particular situation occurred in Québec.

Report

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (Chairperson of the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255): Mr. Chairperson, in the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 considering the Estimates of the Department of Labour, the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) moved a motion to report a matter of privilege raised by the Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Smith) to the House.

The motion reads, seconded by the Member for Fort Garry: that this matter be reported to the House.

Mr. Chairperson, this motion was defeated on a voice vote. Subsequently, two members requested that a formal vote on this matter be taken.

Formal Vote

Mr. Chairperson: A formal vote has been requested. Call in the members.

All sections in Chamber for formal vote

Mr. Chairperson: In the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in room 255 considering the Estimates of the Department of Labour, a motion was moved by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

The motion reads: that this matter be reported to the House.

This motion was dealt with and was defeated on a voice vote, and subsequently two members requested that a formal vote on this matter be taken. The question before the

Committee now is the motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 20, Nays 26.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is accordingly defeated.

The section of the Committee of Supply will now continue with the consideration of the departmental Estimates.

Mr. Chairperson: The Honourable Minister is about to answer a question from the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Fauschou).

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, if you could call the staff in, please.

Mr. Chairperson: The staff of the Department of Agriculture and Food, please come into the Chamber.

* (16:20)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I believe the Member is referring to a case out of province, not a Manitoba case. I believe that, on previous occasions, he has had the opportunity to have a very thorough discussion on this matter with representatives from the Animal Industry Branch, Doctor Neufeld, to thoroughly discuss this matter. If you look at the Act that the Member is referring to, there are included practices, and the practice of transferring embryos for animals is restricted to veterinarians. Then, if you look a little farther under the Act, there are exemptions to the Act, depending on the specific case. Given the comments that the Member made, I would assume that, under these exemptions, an individual under the circumstances that he spoke about might fall under those exemptions, depending on the circumstances, and then have the ability to work under a veterinarian.

There are various exemptions. For example, a veterinarian student or an animal health technician can be given the ability to work, or the owner of an animal or an employee of the owner can, for example, administer a drug, veterinary, biological medicine, or treatment of any kind, to an animal, if the person is. So there

are exceptions that could be made, depending on the circumstances. The Member is referring to a situation that I believe has taken place in Québec. As I am aware of, there has not been a situation like this, and should a situation arise, the individual would have to review the act and work through, possibly work under a veterinarian that is registered in Manitoba.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Chairman, the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, at its annual meeting, for a number of years, has discussed the possibility of a national checkoff. I know that the Canadian cattle producers have discussed that same possibility. There seems to be a bit of an impediment in the process. I am not quite sure what that is. Speaking to the cattle producers in Manitoba, not too long ago, they wondered if I might ask the Minister if she would be amenable to putting in place a checkoff at this time, to allow them to utilize the checkoff for research, that once the Canadian checkoff came into being, the national checkoff came into being, that this was to be rolled into that. I wonder whether the Minister might be amenable to a provincial checkoff during the interim period before the national checkoff becomes a reality.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I have had the opportunity to meet with the members of the Manitoba Cattle Producers. We have discussed the issue, and I have indicated to them that if this is the wish of the producers of Manitoba, to have a checkoff, certainly we would want to be assured that all of the producers that there was a full consultation, but there is the ability for them to implement a checkoff without new legislation. They can be doing that. I believe the Member is referring suggesting a non-refundable checkoff, but my understanding is that they are looking for a \$1 checkoff that would be deducted off each animal marketed through auction marts and slaughterhouses in all provinces. The objective is to secure funding for beef research and development. We have had discussion on it. I do not think there are impediments for them to go forward.

* (16:30)

Mr. Jack Penner: Those of us involved in the agricultural industry always find it interesting

when governments decide to withdraw funding from research. We note that in this project, the Department is withdrawing virtually one and a half million dollars from research. I think that is one of the concerns that the beef industry has.

Virtually all the industries that I have had discussions with lately have voiced a real concern about this government's withdrawal of a significant amount of money from research. A resolution passed at the last year's annual meeting of the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association references the importance of research in ensuring that our customers are ensured the delivery of, first of all, greater convenience of the products that they receive at the store and greater food safety and the concerns that are expressed by the consumer.

They have indicated that via resolution they would ask the Minister for a compulsory national checkoff, and this is the federal minister, but that is slow in coming. That of course could be applied to all cattle coming into the country, whether they come out of the United States or other markets, out of foreign countries. But in the interim they are wondering whether the Minister might consider passing a regulation under The Natural Products Marketing Act to delegate powers to the Canadian cattle promotion and research agency to impose and collect a checkoff in Manitoba.

I think that is something that would be beneficial and would help offset some of the research money that is being lost in this budget. I wonder whether the Minister might want to give us an indication whether she is willing to entertain a regulation and pass a regulation and ask her Cabinet to pass a regulation under The Natural Products Marketing Act to delegate these powers to the Canadian cattle promotion and research agency.

Mr. Cris Aglugub, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Ms. Wowchuk: As I indicated previously, I have had discussions with the Manitoba Cattle Producers. They have talked about the national checkoff that they are looking to have implemented, but they were looking for a national one. I do not recall having any request

from the cattle producers to have us pass a regulation that would be independent of the national process.

Now, if that is something that the Member has heard, it has not been raised with me. There was discussion, and certainly there is the ability of implementing a national checkoff without changing any legislation here in Manitoba. They can do that through the existing Natural Products Marketing Act in Manitoba, but, if I recall correctly, we have not had a request for us to move forward before the national checkoff is implemented.

Mr. Jack Penner: I will table, then, for the Minister a resolution that was passed by the Cattle Producers Association, and it surprises me that they would not have raised this with her, because this resolution was passed a year ago. One of the board members just talked to me yesterday and asked whether I would raise this with the Minister in Estimates, so I have raised it, and I will give this to her for her information so that she can peruse the request via the resolution from their annual meeting. So she might want to respond to the Cattle Producers directly then if she has not got an answer today.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I will certainly look into this matter. As I look at this, this resolution was passed in 1988. It was under the previous administration, and, as I indicated, they came to us with their resolutions that were passed this year, but I do not recall them raising this particular issue.

But I will check back on the notes from that particular meeting and certainly have discussion with the representatives from the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association.

Mr. Jack Penner: I wonder if the Minister could give us an indication as to what the impact will be to the cattle industry or the livestock industry, in general, from the reduction of one and a half million dollars to research funding. There was a significant amount of dollars, I think, that was allocated towards livestock research, the research that is required to do the environmental impacts and all those kinds of things on the expansion of the livestock industry.

Quite frankly, we are a bit confused as to why the Minister would have chosen to reduce the research budget at this point in time when we have such a dramatic expansion of the value-added industries and a dramatic expansion in the livestock industry, both on the cattle side and the hog side and the other livestock areas. Indeed, the poultry industry, I understand, has expanded by some 20 percent over the last couple of years in this province. It would almost appear that the Minister would want to have increased the research budget instead of decreasing it.

I wonder whether she could give us an indication as to what she assumes the impact will be or what her department assumes the impact will be to the livestock industry.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, as we look at this resolution, what the Manitoba Cattle Producers is asking is that we join the national plan, but they are not asking us to collect funds outside the national plan. We have had discussion on joining the national plan, to work with them to join the national plan, but that is a national regulation that has to be passed.

The Member raises the issue of funding. I have put the information on the record several times now. The Member asked why we chose to reduce the funding for agriculture research. There is \$9 million in the fund. That will fund many, many projects. We have made a decision to reduce the amount of money that we are putting in this year because we are in a transition year with negotiations with the federal government on safety net funding. It is a decision we made, but I can assure the Member that \$9 million, with the additional money that we have put in, that there is a lot of money.

* (16:40)

The ARDI is going to be meeting very soon to review applications again. I believe if the Manitoba Cattle Producers should have projects in, they will be given fair consideration, as will all others. The Manitoba Cattle Producers has talked about the need for more research, for more marketing for their industry, but if you look at this resolution, they were planning to collect funds from the producers in 1998, when the previous government was in place. The fact

that there is less money going into ARDI this year has nothing to do with the fact that the beef producers want to do more research and development.

So I know the Member wants to try to twist the fact that there is no money for research. As I indicated, there is \$9 million there, there has been money put in this year, Mr. Chairman. The Cattle Producers are looking to have a national checkoff for research and promotion. They did have money before, and that fund is being reduced. They are looking for a way to replenish that fund. We support them in their efforts to have a national program put in place.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, I will ask the Minister whether she would read the bottom part of the BE IT RESOLVED issue. The resolution asks whether the Minister would consider putting forward a regulation that would allow the national organization, research organization, to do a checkoff in the province of Manitoba in the interim period before the national checkoff is applied and whether she would pass a regulation under the Marketing Council's jurisdiction.

It is a very simple request. It could be done very easily by regulations, giving the jurisdiction of a checkoff that they are requesting for the interim period. Once the national checkoff came into being, then automatically this regulation could be terminated and the checkoff need not be done under the provincial marketing council. That is the request that they are putting forward. So I am just asking on their behalf whether the Minister would consider something like this. I know she will blame the previous government, and she can do that, that is her prerogative. This has really very little to do with the previous government. This request was passed in November of 1999, and I do not know whether they had a meeting with the Minister during that period of time to make that request. They are making that request now, and asking whether the Minister would consider it. She is the Minister.

Ms. Wowchuk: If this is the issue that the cattle producers are bringing forward now, I would invite them to call my office, meet with me, and we could have a discussion about what it is that they want to do, because that is not, Mr. Chairman, what my understanding of this

resolution is. They have asked for a creation of a regulation, but a regulation under The Natural Products Marketing Act, to delegate the powers of the Canadian cattle promotion and research agency to impose and collect a checkoff in Manitoba. My understanding is that they are not asking for this before the national regulation is put in; but, if that is not view of the Manitoba Cattle Producers, I would invite them to meet with us and we will work through it with them.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, this is simply an interim measure that would allow the checkoff to happen in the Province prior to the national consent being given the Cattle Producers Association in Manitoba. It would simply be an interim measure to give them bridge funding to do the kind of things that the cattle producers need to do. I think they have talked about an identification program that they want to do to ensure that cattle could be identified from birth right through to marketplace. That is part of the program that the checkoff would be used for. They just want to get on with doing the kind of things that they need to do to ensure the safety, especially now when we are allowing importation of cattle from areas, cattle from the United States, that we have not allowed to come into Canada before.

The Manitoba producers think it is extremely important that they are able to identify properly a head of livestock from birth right through to marketplace, and then are able to trace back, a head of livestock, and this would be part of that checkoff program. It is an identification program, which would allow them to do the research, add some research funding to it. I am simply asking whether she would recognize what the resolution really asks for. It is an interim regulation under the natural products marketing board to allow the funding checkoff by the national research development fund to be done in Manitoba till such a time that there is a national checkoff.

Ms. Wowchuk: As I read this resolution, I have to tell the Member that nowhere in this resolution do I see the word "interim," but I say to him as well that, if this is what the Manitoba Cattle Producers are looking for, if they want to

come to my office and have a discussion about this, I certainly welcome that. If it is an important issue, I would want to have a discussion with them about other provinces, about checkoff happening in Manitoba while it is not happening in other provinces for a national program. I think we should be cautious about that. I welcome the discussion, the Manitoba Cattle Producers to call my office, and we can make arrangements to discuss this in more detail. The Member talks about the national identification program, and certainly this program was initiated by the—

Report

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Chairperson of the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254): Mr. Chairperson, in the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 to consider the Estimates of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, the following occurred. The Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) moved the following motion which was ruled out of order requesting a transfer of the Minister's Salary to the provincial art collection. The motion was out of order because you cannot transfer funds from one line item to another.

Mr. Chairperson, the ruling of the Chair was sustained on a voice vote, and, subsequently, two members requested that a formal vote on the matter be taken. Let me read the motion: It is moved by the Member for Russell and seconded by the Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) that

WHEREAS the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism has failed to accept her responsibilities as Minister and issue a public apology on behalf of her department to all those individuals who were accused of stealing art from the Province when that was not the case; and

WHEREAS her comments to this committee show an absolute abrogation of her responsibility as minister; and

WHEREAS this lack of responsibility and accountability put in question her ability to manage the provincial art collection.

THAT the Committee censure the Minister for her lack of appropriate, meaningful and public apology to all who were implicated by her politically motivated comments, and this committee transfer the Minister's Salary to the management of the provincial art collection.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Formal Vote

Mr. Chairperson: Call in the members.

All sections in Chamber for formal vote.

* (17:40)

Mr. Chairperson: In the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in room 254 to consider the Estimates of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, the following occurred. The Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) moved the following motion which was ruled out of order, as it was requesting a transfer of funds from the Minister's salary to the provincial art collection. The motion was ruled out of order, because no one can transfer funds from one line item to another.

The ruling of the Chair was sustained on a voice vote, and subsequently two members requested that a formal vote on the matter be taken. Therefore, the question before this committee is: Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 25, Nays 14.

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

This section of the Committee of Supply will now continue with consideration of the departmental Estimates.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Is it the will of the Committee to rise?

Mr. Chairperson: What is the pleasure of the Committee?

An Honourable Member: No.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

(Continued)

* (17:50)

Mr. Chairperson: Committee, please come to order. The item under consideration is 3.4.(b) Animal Industry (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,763,100. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I am wondering whether the Minister's staff is coming in, because I do have some technical questions that I would like to ask. Maybe the Minister can answer them.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I will take the questions, and if there are some that I am not able to answer, I will take them as notice and come back to the Committee. I would invite the Member to raise his questions.

Mr. Jack Penner: You know, Mr. Chairman, it is becoming more and more evident that the arrogance of this government is clearly being demonstrated. I think for the Minister not to bring her staff in when we are in Estimates is an indication of the disregard she has for the importance of the whole Estimates process.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that the whole Estimates process—

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The staff are here. The Honourable Minister.

Ms. Wowchuk: I think the Member might want to withdraw his comments that he just put on the record. I had indicated to him that I was prepared to take the questions and the staff was not here. I do not think that he should consider that arrogance at all, Mr. Chairman. There have been a lot of interruptions during the course of the day. The staff left the Chamber. We have a very short time. We only have about five minutes left. I thought that the Member had some important questions that he would like to put on the record and we could follow up on. I told him that if I did not have the information I

would provide him with the information. I do not think that that is being arrogant at all.

I think that that is just indicating to the Member that I want to give him every opportunity to put questions on the record. Maybe some of the questions that he would put forward would require more research than we would be able to get to in the short time that we have in this Chamber, but I was offering him the opportunity to put these questions on the record because, Mr. Chairman, we are in a section of the Department dealing with the vet services districts and the animal industry, both of those. The animal industry is a very important industry to Manitoba, as are the services provided by the vet services commission. We certainly had very good discussions this afternoon with the Member for Portage la Prairie. If the staff is in the Chamber, I would invite him to put his questions.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, are we discussing the point of order?

Mr. Chairperson: There is no point of order.

Mr. Jack Penner: Well, I was speaking before and she interrupted and you recognized her. Was that a point of order?

Mr. Chairperson: I said "order." I did not say "point of order." I am trying to maintain order in the Committee in the discussion. The Member for Emerson now has the floor.

Mr. Jack Penner: I just want to repeat what I said before. I think the actions of the Minister when I asked whether her staff was coming in, she said no, demonstrate a measure of arrogance that I have not often experienced in this Chamber. That kind of attitude, that kind of arrogance in my view has been demonstrated on a number of occasions in committee by ministers of this government. I think that it sort of will put the stamp and identify to the general public how this government wants to present itself. Because the Minister does have—

An Honourable Member: Do you want to talk about arrogance, Jack, after you were in government for 11 years? Do you want to go down that road, Jack?

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The Member for Emerson has the floor.

Mr. Jack Penner: I think if the Member for Dauphin-Roblin (Mr. Struthers) wants to speak, I would welcome him to speak and put his remarks on the record, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairperson: Does the Honourable Member for Dauphin-Roblin wish to speak? Does the Minister wish to speak?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the Member has taken offence to the fact that I said that I would proceed with questioning without the staff being here. I would like the Member to recall what we did a few days ago. A few days ago we had five and ten minutes left in the time. We both sat down in our chairs and we began a discussion without staff in the room at that time, and the Member made no objection to not having staff in the room then. We have a very short time frame. I was not sure whether the staff could get up from the office in those few minutes. So I was inviting the Member to put his question forward. He said he had technical questions. I said that I would follow up on them. The staff is here now, and I would invite him to put his question.

Mr. Jack Penner: Mr. Chairman, there was a study done a little while back, I think back in October, by a group calling itself the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. I am wondering whether the Minister has had an opportunity to read the report that was issued. It was called Large-Scale Hog Production and Processing: Concerns for Manitobans. The commissioner's report on the citizens hearing on hog production and environment was done out of Brandon in October 1999. In the report, there is a significant section that deals with the hog production and livestock production in general, but the introduction talks about the citizens' hearing on hog production and the environment.

Some of the recommendations in that report are: the first one, for instance, being any memorandum of understanding between the proponent of a major development and the Government of Manitoba or any other public body should be a public document and should require that government commitment to any action or subsidy be conditional on full com-

pliance with all pertinent laws and regulations including the evaluation of its sustainability, and there should be public participation in the process.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., the Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 15, 2000

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