



First Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

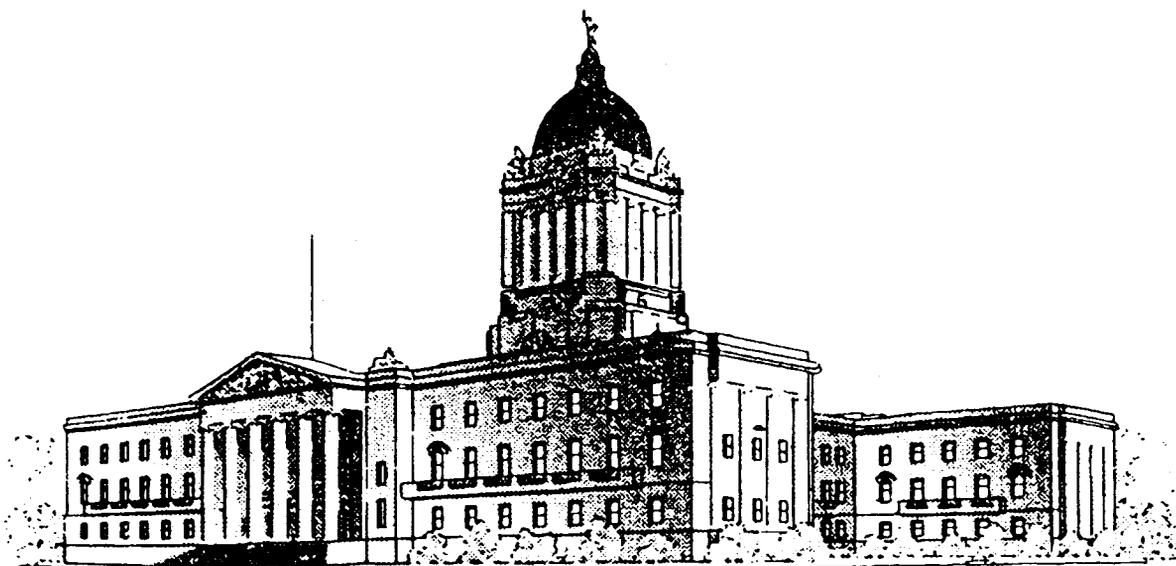
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 13, 2000

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please call debate on second reading, first of all, Bills 29 and 37, and we will call the rest of the bills after we deal with those two.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 29—The Health Sciences Centre Repeal and Consequential Amendments Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak), Bill 29, The Health Sciences Centre Repeal and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi abrogeant la Loi sur le Centre des sciences de la santé et modifications corrélatives), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

Is there leave to leave it standing?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 29, The Health Sciences Centre Repeal and Consequential Amendments Act. Several years ago, as part of a move to regionalization, our government put in place a process whereby the Health Sciences Centre would become an entity under the regional health authority, and that process was entered into several years ago. This is a culmination of that process.

Regionalization was intended to see the role of the hospital strengthened and facilitated by the integration of the hospital into the regional health authority under mutually acceptable

terms. Certainly the integration of other major publicly owned teaching and tertiary urban hospitals with regional authorities has been accomplished in other Canadian provinces with very positive outcomes, in terms of both effectiveness in the delivery of patient care and operational efficiency. The ability to reallocate resources from the administrative and support areas to patient care functions is significantly enhanced within integrated regional governance and management structures.

Certainly, we are looking forward to seeing the process of regionalization enhanced, and the movement of the Health Sciences Centre into the regionalization process will be a positive move in that direction. It is, in fact, continuing the process and brings in line the administrative process that has already taken place some time ago.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to support this bill and are agreeable to moving it forward.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 29, The Health Sciences Centre Repeal and Consequential Amendments Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 37—The Miscellaneous Health Statutes Repeal Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak), Bill 37, The Miscellaneous Health Statutes Repeal Act (Loi abrogeant diverses lois en

matière de santé), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

Is it the will of the House to leave the Bill standing?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 37, The Miscellaneous Health Statutes Repeal Act. We are certainly in favour of moving this bill forward into committee stage. The Bill itself is an administrative matter. It repeals acts that no longer apply, acts that incorporated five Manitoba hospitals, and now each is operated by a regional health authority and is governed under The Regional Health Authorities Act. It was a process that we put in place under our administration, and this is a culmination of that process.

So I am certainly pleased to move this forward into committee stage.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 37, The Miscellaneous Health Statutes Repeal Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bills 8 and 22.

**Bill 8—The Enforcement of Judgments
Conventions and Consequential
Amendments Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh),

Bill 8, The Enforcement of Judgments Conventions and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur les conventions relatives à l'exécution des jugements et modifications corrélatives), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, just to put a few comments on the record, more by the way of notice of questions. I have had a chance to review this particular piece of legislation. I see it as an enabling statute for the enforcement of judgments, conventions that the Government may from time to time enter into with other jurisdictions, and, of course, that is very, very important to ensure that people do not escape from their legal obligations by using jurisdictional boundaries.

We do have some questions of the Attorney General with respect to the operation of maintenance orders, and they are more questions just in terms of the process. I will be putting those to the Attorney General when we reach committee, but we see no reason why this particular bill cannot move onto that stage of the process today. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 8, The Enforcement of Judgments Conventions and Consequential Amendments Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 22—The Court of Queen's Bench
Surrogate Practice Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: To resume debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 22, The Court of Queen's Bench Surrogate Practice Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pratique relative

aux successions devant la Cour du Banc de la Reine), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

Is there leave to leave it standing?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, this particular bill is one that I have some concern with. I admit wholeheartedly that this is a rather small administrative office, but the Bill does provide now for the ending of the requirement of the courts to keep on file, or in storage for safekeeping, wills by citizens of the province who wish to deposit them there for safekeeping. I am sure the Minister of Justice will probably tell me in committee, when I ask this question, that this was a proposal that has been around since the previous administration, of which I was a part, and that there was probably some intention of the Department to advance this under the previous Attorney General. But even having said that, I must admit as a critic that I have some difficulty with ending this practice.

I do believe that the Court of Queen's Bench, or the Surrogate Court, pardon me, Mr. Speaker, is a place where Manitobans, some Manitobans, may feel very comfortable with depositing their wills, as opposed to leaving them in the trust of relatives or in the care of their solicitors. This is one sure place, one neutral place, that every citizen ultimately can have the right to store their will for safekeeping without fear of it being in the hands of others who may misuse it or with a solicitor, et cetera. So I do have some concern with this bill.

I can tell the Attorney General that we may not be supporting this piece of legislation, but I will be awaiting the Committee stage when I would hope that the Attorney General could give us some more detail as to the logic behind removing this particular right Manitobans now have to have their wills safely deposited with the Surrogate Court for safekeeping.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, just from my time in the law and with experience with constituents

that many people end up putting their wills in safety deposit boxes, which is probably one of the worst places you can put them because after someone has passed away, in order to have access to the safety deposit box, you have to have some proof that you have a legal right to do that. That legal proof is often in the will in the safety deposit box.

* (10:10)

There is also concern people have over the years about keeping their wills with their lawyers, just simply that lawyers go out of practice, they change practices. It could be lost over time. There may be some people just for their own right feel much more comfortable having them deposited with the court knowing that they are there, by a public body, properly protected, awaiting the day when they pass away, and their relatives can then access them to be able to carry out their requests.

I do recognize that there are administrative issues; there are space issues. The Attorney General may be able to convince me of the need for this bill, but at the current time, in principle, we have some difficulty with passing this bill. I would not say this is an earth-shattering issue, but it is one that we will look to the Attorney General in committee to give us his explanation as to the need for this bill and to see if he can make an argument that would win over our support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 22, The Court of Queen's Bench Surrogate Practice Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please call the

bills in the following order: Bills 30, 23, 26, 27, 34.

**Bill 30—The Social Services
Administration Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: To resume debate, second reading, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Sale), Bill 30, The Social Services Administration Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services sociaux), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Rose.

Mr. Glen Cummings (St. Rose): Having an opportunity to discuss the changes that are included in this bill, it would appear that the only place where there will be questions raised might be in committee. I would recommend it go to committee.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 30, The Social Services Administration Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 23—The Jury Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 23, The Jury Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

Is it the will of the House to leave it standing?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, Bill 23, The Jury Amendment Act, provides for a change, as I understand it, whereby the summons to perspective jurors that has traditionally been sent by registered mail now can be sent by ordinary mail. There is a presumption that five days after it is sent that, in fact, it is received.

This is what this statute does. Again, this is probably one of those bills that the Department has brought forward as an administrative clean-up or efficiency from their perspective. I am sure they have made the recommendation to the former attorney general to move forward on this. I certainly see where, if that is the case, the Attorney General is coming from.

However, we will have some questions about how this will work. In reviewing the Bill, I was impressed by the provision that allowed those who did not necessarily receive their jury summons by ordinary mail—perhaps they do not get their mail every day, perhaps they were away on holidays or business trips, et cetera—that that would give them an argument, a justification for not answering that summons.

I do have some concern whether or not this particular provision is broad enough for those cases in remote resort areas, et cetera, where people often do not get their mail every day, and just whether or not the fact that they may not get their mail once every two weeks or so would be a sufficient reason to justify not answering that summons. That tends to be the case in areas that I represent where post offices are few and far between and people do not always go for the mail on a daily or sometimes even weekly basis. So that would be one of the concerns that I have, and I look forward to discussing this with the Attorney General in committee.

With that, I conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 23, The Jury Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 26—The Court of Queen's Bench Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 26, The Court of Queen's Bench Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan).

Is there leave of the House to let it remain standing in the name of the Member for Carman?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting piece of legislation that generally I think members should be supportive of. It is one that I believe strengthens the opportunity to use mediation in settling court disputes.

From my own experience as an MLA, my personal experience, my experience as a lawyer, I think that the more things we can do in our justice system—and I think this is an area where the Attorney General and I share. There are a lot of areas the Attorney General and I share a great deal of common ground in our thinking on public policy in the justice area. This is certainly one of those areas where we share a great deal of common ground.

Anywhere that we could be advancing the use of mediation, conciliation processes where people are able to come together in a semi-judicial kind of a proceeding where they know

they are involved with the court system but with a greater informal nature in the proceedings, with the ability to be able to work through issues and problems without necessarily always using the legal profession, where they can come to a livable resolution of what, in essence, are their own affairs, we should be encouraging that. It makes it much more amicable; relations afterwards are better, and, of course, we save the costs that go with it.

Now, I do say that I have a few issues administratively that come out of my reading of the Act as to how this will particularly work. I notice that the Minister is including a definition of designated mediator in which he would be appointing. I have some questions around the criteria or the process by which he will be doing that, appointing those mediators. We have some questions around the operations of the proposed sections 48(1) and 48(2), but I am sure these can be dealt with appropriately in committee, and we are prepared to pass this piece of bill on to that stage of the process today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 26, The Court of Queen's Bench Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 27—The Correctional Services Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 27, The Correctional Services Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services correctionnels), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

Is there leave to leave it standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, this particular bill, I assume, arises out of a growing trend in our correctional services, one that started certainly or was enhanced during our days in government in the Filmon administration, whereby people who are incarcerated in provincial institutions are provided with the opportunity to do, I think, meaningful and gainful work.

Having one of those facilities in my constituency, the Milner Ridge correctional facility, we have seen on a regular basis now over the years that residents of that particular facility have been made available for community projects, private work enhancement. They have done a lot of work in ditch clearing, in playground construction, community hall construction, working with ARC Industries in laying a floor, for example, and doing a host of things.

From the rehabilitation side of incarceration, I think that is the way to go, and it has been very, very successful. I can tell members opposite that I have seen the respect for people in that institution grow, and respect from the community is a very important part of the rehabilitation process.

* (10:20)

This bill, as I understand it, moves to include those people when they are, in fact, in working situations under the Workers Compensation scheme. We do have some questions and concerns, not with the principle of doing that, because we recognize wholeheartedly that if somebody is in the process of working as part of their incarceration and they are legitimately injured in the course of working, given that people in those facilities are in two-year-less-a-day situations, that that injury could survive their incarceration. They could be returned to the community and not be in a position to have gainful employment because of a workplace in-

jury they encountered while in incarceration. So we recognize that there is a need to be met in providing that coverage.

We do have some concerns about how this, in fact, will be handled by the Workers Compensation Board. Who will be responsible for the premiums, first of all? Will it be the Crown if they are working on Crown projects? Will it be the sponsor of that particular project, if it is a community group? Will it be a private-sector employer if they are working in a private-sector situation? We want to ensure that the right payer is paying for the Workers Compensation premiums. We do not think that the general rate base should be covering these particular premiums because they are incarcerated by the Crown. That would be, in essence, a tax on other businesses. So we do not believe that is right or fair or appropriate, but if these people are working in public projects, certainly including them in the right base for people working in the public sector, in government, would be appropriate. If they were working for a private-sector employer, being included in that regular rate base for that category of employment would be appropriate. So we have questions in that particular area.

We also have some questions, Mr. Speaker, that we will be putting to the Attorney General when this bill comes to committee about ensuring that this is not misused in any particular way. Should I say we know that there will always be some folks who may try to use this particular system to benefit personally. We will want to ensure that this is being used to cover legitimate workplace accidents and not being used, or misused, should I say, by people who are in incarceration to enhance their income potential when they leave their place of incarceration. So those are some legitimate issues that are there that we want to ensure are addressed.

We also understand that this bill empowers the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to make regulations respecting the earnings of remission, should they be injured while they are still in incarceration and be entitled to some benefits during that period. We would like to know what those regulations are. We do not expect them to be all done by the time the Bill comes to committee, but we would like to know from the

Attorney General how he intends to operate this scheme.

So we understand why he is bringing it. We recognize that there is probably a need. I would suggest, just on that point, when the Attorney General comes to committee, it would be most helpful to us if he could provide us with the statistics on which he based the decision to move with this legislation. It would be interesting to know, and not because I think we want to get into some rancorous debate with him, but I would be interested in knowing today what the rate of injury is among persons in his care who are incarcerated while they are on work-type jobs.

That becomes very important and I am asking that not as a point of debate, because I believe we understand the principle and are generally supporting the principle that people who are working and are injured. It could affect their future income when they leave incarceration that coverage is appropriate, but we would like to know what that baseline is, because that would certainly provide a baseline to ensure that in the future this is not being abused in any way by people who are in his care. There is always that possibility and the ratepayers of a category may be responsible and should know what that baseline is. So these are the particular issues that we have and we look forward to discussing them with the Attorney-General when this bill is brought to committee.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I will close debate. Just from the remarks of the critic, I just wanted to bring to the attention of the Opposition that the Worker Compensation provisions here represent no change in policy actually. This situation remains the same as it has been for a number of years under the former government.

People under sentence have been subject to Workers Compensation, and what this does is it simply clarifies the law, clarifies the new legislation that was introduced by my predecessor to ensure that the community organizations who supervise not just inmates but anyone under sentence, in particular Fine Option, are assured that they are not subject to liability in the event

of an injury while anyone under sentence is injured doing community work.

This assurance is out of an abundance of caution, because there are some views in the Department that the current legislation does protect them. We wanted to ensure that we continued to receive the involvement of rural municipalities, in particular, as well as organizations, whether it is Macdonald Youth Services or a long number of organizations who are able to provide supervision of these individuals. So I just wanted to assure the Member opposite.

Mr. Praznik: Before the Attorney General relinquishes the floor, I just wanted to exercise a parliamentary right to see if he would accept one question from me.

Mr. Mackintosh: If there is leave, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave for one question?

Point of Order

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, just on a point of order. This occurs very rarely in our House, but under the rules of Parliament, when a Member does have the floor of the Assembly, if another member wishes to put a question to them, they have a right to rise and ask if the Member will accept a question.

If the Member chooses to accept the question, the other member may put it. It does not require leave of the House, so that is why I wanted to make the point that before the Attorney General relinquished his chair—*[interjection]* I do not believe it does. I ask through this ruling, I believe it is a right for members to be able to do that.

Mr. Mackintosh: On the same point of order, since I have already spoken and sat down and since the Honourable Member opposite has spoken and sat down, my understanding is that it would require leave, although it is a tradition in the House that leave be requested for the Minister to entertain questions. So I think, it is just a matter of semantics, perhaps.

Mr. Speaker: In regard to the point of order raised, the Honourable House Leader does have

a point of order. Once a Member has spoken and relinquishes the floor, leave is required if the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet wishes to ask a question.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Attorney General if he would undertake when he does come to committee to provide, from the experience that we have had to date with the program, the number of people through it and how many injury claims and their extent that we have had. I only ask that for general information, and I would ask if he would undertake to provide it at committee stage.

Mr. Mackintosh: I think it will make good value of this proposed amendment by sharing that kind of information. I will undertake to request of the Department that information. Hopefully, it is available now. If not, we will compile it and make it available. I will make that inquiry when I leave the Chamber this morning.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 27, The Correctional Services Amendment Act. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

* (10:30)

**Bill 34—The Statute Law
Amendment Act, 2000**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 34, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000 (Loi de 2000 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

Is there leave to leave it remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand.

* * *

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): 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)**

CONSERVATION

* (11:00)

Mr. Chairperson (Harry Schellenberg): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This morning this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Conservation.

When the Committee last sat, it had been considering items 12.3.(a)(3)(a) all the way up to 12.3.(a)(4)(a) on page 39 of the Estimates book. Line (4)(a) reads as follows: Surface Water Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$785,700. Shall the line pass?

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Surface Water Management. How and who is managing the surface waters under these appropriations?

Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Conservation): The question, I believe, is who manages surface water. The Water Resources branch.

Mr. Enns: I want to speak to the issue just coming up, the Groundwater Management, that

the Department is actively involved in and has been involved in over the years. But the Surface Water Management, is that dealing with our major rivers and streams? I was not aware of how the Department is actively engaged in managing the surface run-off of waters.

I am aware, for instance, that in the south in the last number of years, for irrigation purposes, surface waters used and drained off of some of the drains in the springtime to fill the large impoundments, reservoirs that potato farmers in south Manitoba have used. Is the Department involved in managing these waters? Is there a licensing process? I was not aware of it, from my understanding of the Department's work.

Mr. Lathlin: Yes, we are responsible for the management of the major rivers and streams. I understand that if there is a need on the part of anyone to access those major rivers and streams, that we, through the Water Resources branch, would have to license that kind of activity.

I believe the Member was also asking about spring run-off, I think he said. There, I guess, as he is probably aware, we rely on spring retention ponds for spring run-off, but at the same time, though, I think the Member also knows that there has been a movement for awhile now to try and get a handle on the water retention issue. There has been a study that has been started to address the water retention issue.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Well, I would like to ask the Minister on this surface water management. I mean, he has bills before the House at the present time in regard to drainage, in regard to some of the various levels of the flooding plains, that sort of thing. He is making changes to The Sustainable Development Act.

Can you give me some indication as to just how you think those programs should be looked at, Mr. Minister, in regard to our long-term view, I guess, of water management? I am only asking this because I think a lot of it is going to have to do with surface water management and ground water management for sustainable development of some of the industries that we really do have the climate to grow, peak-unit wise, but we may miss out on having enough water in a year-round

manner to sustain that particular crop. I am thinking of the irrigation area.

Can you give me some indication of what you think needs to be done in that whole area and how we really should look at a long-term program for the best use of this water in the future?

Mr. Lathlin: I think there are several initiatives that are underway now, Mr. Chair. As the Member knows, we have Bill 15 before the House which will go a long ways towards addressing the proper management of water, in particular the drainage. The Member is also aware that we also have another bill in the House that would prohibit the bulk removal of water from Manitoba.

The Member might also be aware of recent statements made by experts in this field that we are really going to have to try to come up with a long-term strategy as to how we can maintain and sustain a good water supply in Manitoba on the one hand. People are predicting that because of climate change and global warming, that perhaps our water supply may not be as plentiful as it is now in the future. People are making these precautionary statements, and quite rightly so. So that is why we, as one part of our water management strategy, introduced the Bill prohibiting the bulk removal of water from Manitoba.

* (11:10)

On the other hand, we are also faced from time to time with natural occurrences. Mother Nature will put out a lot of water on the ground. Like right now, we are having to concern ourselves with rainwater, not floodwater but rainwater.

So I think if we are going to come up with a comprehensive water management strategy, all those components will have to be taken into consideration. So we are looking at drainage; we are looking at retention; we are looking at the different uses of water for irrigation, industry, even including hydro. Unless we have that comprehensive strategy—it is not going work if we just go with this one little initiative when we have not addressed the bigger picture.

As I said earlier, I believe it was yesterday or the day before, perhaps if these types of strategies had been developed 20 years ago or 15 years ago, who knows, maybe we would not be in this situation that we are in now, but then one would have to consider the world condition. Global warming, climate change is not just happening in Manitoba, it is happening all over the world. That is why Canada, through the federal government, is a signatory to international agreements. Of course, when the federal government signs such international agreements, we are then obliged as provincial governments to help implement whatever would be ratified by the federal government. The provincial governments are then obliged to help in the implementation of those agreements.

So this water issue affects not only farmers. Often, as I said, it affects industry, it affects municipalities. I might add, it affects First Nations as well. If you pollute or damage the water, a lot of our people depend on the fishing industry either for a livelihood commercially or just for sustenance. So I think all of us are obliged to get together and see if we can come up with a strategy that will try to look at all areas. It would probably not solve everything but try to look at all areas so that in the end we have a long-term supply of water for everybody, not just the water we drink, but for other purposes as well.

Mr. Maguire: Well, the Minister has touched on a number of points, and I want to follow up on some of them. He did mention the issue of Aboriginal peoples being affected by this as well. I wonder if the Minister could give us his rendition of his thoughts on last night's election. Did he support Mr. Coon Come?

Mr. Lathlin: I appreciate the Member's question, but I think I will pass up on that opportunity to comment on the elections that happened yesterday. Maybe he and I will have coffee and discuss that later.

Mr. Maguire: I apologize for asking that question, Mr. Minister. It is a little off the topic, but I will take you up on that coffee.

You did mention the long-term use of water, and I agree we need to have a strategy in place

for it. You are looking at having meetings after, you know, later in the fall. Under Bill 15, we are putting a permit system in place that will force farmers to have to get a permit. Many farmers have talked to me, and they have grave concerns about the fact that in a situation like they are faced with in the Red River Valley right now, they would not be able to move their surface water off of their land with their tractors without going to town and getting a permit first or without having to come to the Government, in this case, to get a permit to run their tractor over their own land to the ditch to drain the water off in an emergency situation.

I wonder if you would agree that this bill does take away that individual right to do so once it is put in place.

Mr. Lathlin: Yes, that is a good question because, again, it gives me a chance to try to clarify the picture a little bit. As far as I know, temporary and emergency drainage is provided for already in the provincial process. We are licensing permanent works. I do not think there is any enforcement being contemplated for situations such as a record rainfall.

We are going to have to use common sense. Emergency measures, from time to time we have to act to address an emergency, an extreme emergency situation outside of our parameters. I mean, that is just common sense. If an emergency occurs, we are not going to look in the book, you know, where is it, to give us direction. I think we are going to have to use common sense from time to time. When an emergency situation arises we are not going to look for that rule book, we are just going to go ahead and try to address the situation right then and there.

Mr. Maguire: Thank you. It is not much solace, though, Mr. Minister, to the farmer at three o'clock in the morning when he finds his farm flooding. I know a case in the southwest last year where it was caused by rainfall that was virtually—if the farmer had not got up in the middle of the night and done some diversion, if you will, on his own land, this particular time it was not drainage, he was out there diverting water on his own field to make sure it did not

flood the local community or it would have gone right through the rink, it would have gone right through some of the other facilities in the community. He managed to direct it in another area, and it did go around the community, but at three o'clock in the morning, I agree, common sense has to prevail.

Emergency situations will come up, but when we take away the individual's right to do that, is he liable under those issues if he makes a decision at three o'clock in the morning and somebody does not like the decision he made the next day?

So, while we agree that common sense should prevail, these people are pretty upset that it may end up coming down to one person miles away making the decision or not even being able to get there to see the situation to make the decision soon enough to go ahead with. That is a big concern about the surface rights management and about Bill 15 that is coming forward.

* (11:20)

Mr. Lathlin: Yes. The Member is absolutely right. There are times in everyday life where we have to have some discretionary decision-making powers. Not everything is in the rule book. Just about everything is, I think, but not everything is in the rule book. For example, that farmer who was talking about three o'clock in the morning, yes, I do not think anybody is going to hold anything against him if he goes out at three o'clock in the morning to prevent further damage and catastrophe, but, then, on the other hand, the next day or a couple of days later, if it is then found that whatever temporary works might have been installed, if it is causing damage downstream, again, common sense will prevail. We would not allow such a temporary installation to stay if it is going to flood out the farmer downstream or municipalities.

I think what we are trying to do is balance the needs of drainage in almost every case. The farmer and the management of water for all those who may be living downstream, we are not going to try to unnecessarily restrict the farming community of any other use.

Let me give the Member an example. Where I live, our community, the Opaskawayak Cree Nation, we get our drinking water from a well. The town gets their water from the river. The town is always envious of OCN, because our water is better than theirs, because they get their water from the Saskatchewan River. It has to go through a whole complicated series of treatment before they can actually drink it.

Take for example the Saskatchewan River. Although we have agreements between provinces, B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, I forget what the agreement is called now, but there is such an agreement in place for the western provinces whereby I think it has to do with the amount of water that they are going to let go through their community. They will take some for their own use. Like, Alberta will get some water, Saskatchewan will get some water, then, finally, whatever comes down the pipe down river is what Manitoba gets. This is the water that the town of The Pas gets for their drinking water.

I remember having discussions with the former mayor of the town of The Pas, Bruce Unfried. The town is at the mercy of whatever garbage Alberta will put into the Saskatchewan River and whatever garbage Saskatchewan will put into the Saskatchewan River, all the factories, all the pulp mills, paper mills and so on, even though there are agreements. If we go back to Alberta and say, look, you guys, we have to drink this water, we would appreciate it if you not put that much garbage in there, because we have to drink it in the end.

That is what I mean by affecting people downstream. We have to have management systems in place so that people are responsible, whether you are a farmer or a municipality or whether you are a warehouse or whatever, a factory. You have to worry about that person that is going to have to live with the water downstream, whether it is for drinking, for another industry or for farming.

Mr. Maguire: Mr. Minister, you agree that this bill, temporarily at least, will take away the individual rights of the farmer to be able to drain his own land?

Mr. Lathlin: No, I do not. I do not agree with that at all, because, as I said, if the farmer finds himself in a situation where there is water in the yard, in an emergency situation who is going to stop him? I would not.

But the day after, if that temporary installation happens to be causing problems downstream, well then, hey, we have to talk.

Mr. Maguire: I guess the situation that we are faced with is, you are looking at having a series of meetings to try to come up with the big picture, with a larger plan for management of water in the future in Manitoba.

You have indicated that you are going to have a series of meetings this fall to deal with that. Can you give us an indication of when the series of meetings will start?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chair, I cannot give the Member an exact date, but my hope is that we get going probably around September, in the fall sometime. As soon as we get out of this House, I will go for a bit of a break and then I will come back to Winnipeg.

Mr. Maguire: I think that that is much needed in the province of Manitoba. So I would encourage you to hold that series of meetings as soon as you can, perhaps. I think, though, that it would have been very pertinent to have.

You know, as we have just talked, when you look the drainage coming off of farms, the drainage coming out of other areas into the water courses and provincial waterways that are there today, it is very clear under The Water Resources Administration Act that the Minister has within his power to declare virtually anything a provincial waterway if you were to carry the letter of the law to its extreme.

So, therefore, would it not have been more prudent to have established a means whereby you could have had a plan in place throughout the whole province prior to making the kind of change that is being done?

Mr. Lathlin: Again, let me answer this in two ways. Earlier in previous questions I tried to the best of my ability to respond to those questions, like the same question being presented in different forms maybe. But I will repeat, yes, there is a need to address the big picture in terms of water management strategy and implementation of that strategy once we complete it. However, we were faced with a situation that needed addressing right away. That is the reason why we introduced Bill 15, in order for us to address this emergency situation, while at the same time gearing up for sometime in the fall to begin addressing the big picture. I think that is as plainly as I can put it.

The second part to my answer. I am not trying to be negative. Mr. Chairman, to the Member, because I know that he has not been here for the last 10-11 years, but others have been here for the last 10 years and they have been on the government side. I have been on the opposition side for the past 10 years. I must confess, you know, that as an opposition critic I never really delved into the water issues, because my critic area involved other matters, but there were other critics in our office who concerned themselves with that issue.

This issue about water did not come up yesterday. It was there probably the day that I was first elected to this Legislature; I mean parts of it anyway. But there were many signals that probably could have motivated us to try to address the big picture much earlier. I am not being negative. I mean, that is the way it was. There is nothing we can do about it.

What I am saying to the Member is I ask him to work with us as we move forward. I do not want to dwell on the past. It does not do anybody any good. It does not do me any good. It does not do him any good. It does not do our constituents any good.

So my offer to the Member is, my plea to the Member is, we are going to need your help. We are going to need everybody's help to move forward to try to look at this big picture of good, proper water management that will attempt to meet the needs adequately of almost everybody. I am not saying that it is going to resolve every little problem there is, but hopefully it will ad-

dress the majority of the problems that people face.

Mr. Maguire: Just a couple of quick ones, Mr. Minister, before I turn it over to my colleague from Morris, who has I believe a couple of questions as well.

Do you agree that under the court proceedings that took place this spring, the decisions that were made there, that municipalities who do have water drainage by-laws in place could have proceeded with them under this process and that municipalities do have the right today to develop by-laws for drainage within their own jurisdictions?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chair, from what I understand of the case, yes, the municipalities have the by-laws. I think the court said that we did not have jurisdiction over what was happening. When the charge was laid by provincial authorities, the judge said that we did not have that jurisdiction. The municipalities had that power and authority.

But there are two things. Number one, the majority of the municipalities support this legislation. Why? Because they would rather have the provincial government have overall authority over this resource. I think there are very good reasons for that. If municipalities have the authority all unto themselves, then we would have a case of one municipality doing their own thing, and then the downstream municipality would be hurt, but, hey, you know, they can do it.

So that is why the municipal governments are coming to the provincial government saying there must be overall protection for all of Manitobans. That is why they see the need for the provincial government to have overall jurisdiction on this issue. Therefore, that is why we have introduced the legislation, to ensure that the provincial government has the proper jurisdiction to manage water for the benefit of all Manitobans, not just individual farmers, municipalities, but, overall, the message is that in this case the provincial government must take responsibility over water so that people are not hurt down the road, downstream, and that everybody gets to benefit.

Mr. Maguire: Does the Minister agree then that that overall plan as outlined by AMM the other day, does he agree with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities proposal that was put forward the other day for the development of watershed management areas in the province of Manitoba and that ultimately any permits that would be given out for the drainage of water from provincial waterways or construction, all of the other things prevail as well, but that the drainage of water in this case, permits for drainage would come under the water management areas?

* (11:40)

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chair, yes, we agree that there should be co-operation between municipal governments and the provincial government in trying to come up with a better water management system. We do not disagree with devolving responsibility to the local level. For example, yesterday or the day before mention was made of conservation districts. The devolution of responsibility to the local level is being done now under The Conservation Districts Act.

Most conservation districts, however, do not want to go into that area right now. As I think one of the presenters properly pointed out yesterday, there are 11 conservation districts; only 3 are watershed-based. Therefore, they are actively involved.

Also talking about conservation districts, the area of most extensive drainage, the Member will know, is in the Red River Valley, and that is not covered by conservation districts, so we have got a lot of work to do there. I agree with the Member, and I agree with AMM on their two conditions. We will work very hard towards that end so that the provincial government does not go it alone. We need to work with the municipal governments. After all, they will be the most affected in every case.

Mr. Maguire: I am going to turn it over to my colleague from Morris for a moment.

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Chairperson, I would just like to bridge a couple of issues with the Minister. Of course, as regards the discussion as it is going on now with regard to the new

legislation that his department has introduced, the majority of my constituency is situation in the Red River Valley.

Although I realize that the Department has introduced the legislation in response to a situation that has occurred with regard to permitting or licensing to drain water, producers in the Red River Valley basically moved into the Red River Valley in the pioneering days. It was a land reclamation that occurred. So drainage was very important with regard to being able to crop the land and produce a living.

Of course, one of the occurrences that occurred this year, and it occurs probably every second or third year, where you get a very heavy rainfall, producers will go out there with a tractor to just trench down to the hard pan to try to help the water get off the land into the municipal drains. So drainage is uppermost in every producer's mind through the Red River Valley. I think the Minister would appreciate the fact that, when you are cropping a quarter section of land, the last 10 acres of crop are the profit acres off that quarter section. If you lose that 10 acres as a result of drowned-out crop, you lose your profit. So, therefore, producers are out there very quickly after a three-inch rain or a four-inch rain trying to get the water off.

Now, when I take a look at the legislation, I appreciate where you are coming from on it, but I see it as a possible major problem in the Red River Valley. Ultimately, you get the heavy rains; you get producers trying to move the water off as quickly as possible. But the other thing that happens too is that ultimately every producer or 90 percent of the producers in the Red River Valley do drainage clean-out and/or drainage improvement in the fall.

If it requires a permitting system, how are you going to be able to handle the requests of some 2000 to maybe 3000 farmers within the valley floor coming forward to your department requesting permission to drain water or to improve drainage on their land into the drains? From a logistic standpoint are you going to be able to have a one-day turnaround in permitting to the producers, or are they going to have to

wait for long lengths of time before they get the approval to go ahead and do the drainage works?

As well, many producers have invested probably in the neighbourhood of \$30,000 to \$100,000 in equipment specialized in doing drainage works, i.e., laser equipment. So I was just wondering if the Minister could respond to how they would be administratively able to handle all the requests coming out of the Red River Valley for drainage improvement in the fall.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chairman, I thought I had. I cannot remember if you were here when I was talking about that. If the Member was here when I was responding to that.

I think the Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire) said what if there is a huge downpour and a farmer wakes up at three o'clock in the morning and finds that there is a deluge? What is he going to do, phone me at three o'clock in the morning to get a permit? Well, I think we are all smart people here. We are all intelligent people. We are all practical people, especially the farmers.

You know, they have been in the business for a long, long time. So I give people somehow do I say it?—confidence. I have confidence in people to have common sense, to use a little bit of discretion. If that farmer found himself in that kind of a situation at three o'clock in the morning, you know, hey, there are emergencies. Of course, he would be able to try to do remedial work, temporarily albeit. As I said earlier, the next day if we find that the temporary installation of remedial work project is going to adversely affect anybody downstream, then perhaps we would have to revisit that area and fix it.

Yesterday, I asked for some information to be given to me. If you look at the drainage licences issued for each year, if you look at it historically from '88 to '96, the line is quite flat in terms of number of drainage licences that were issued. That is not because there was absolutely no drainage work being done. Again, let us have some common sense here. Of course, there was a lot of drainage work being done during that time from '88 to '96. Why do you think we have a problem today?

So around '96-97, there were major awareness initiatives that were started. People became more aware of the need to have a licence. So what do you think happened from '96 to today? This year we are on track to issuing almost 300 licences. Let me also tell the Member that, yes, we realize that if we are going to be doing this, we are going to have to devote more resources to this type of activity because we do not have a choice. Whatever resources are there now, we will make the best of them. We will probably have to redeploy some resources to this activity, because we view it as a very crucial part of the strategy.

* (11:50)

Mr. Pitura: I would just like to apprise the Minister, Mr. Chairman, that probably in the Red River Valley when he talks about a flat request for permits for draining water, that is probably throughout the Red River Valley. Many municipalities probably do not even issue permits for drainage right now and it was always left up to the producers to drain water. This legislation is going to change all that because of this process. I would just like to ask the Minister, too, that if a producer is found to be contravening the legislation, has the Minister and staff given any thought to what kind of penalties would be invoked if the producer was to be draining water without a permit?

Mr. Lathlin: I apologize to the Member. I was momentarily distracted. Could I ask him to repeat the question?

Mr. Pitura: I was just going to share with the Minister that probably throughout the Red River Valley with regard to permits for draining water, most producers in the Red River Valley have never applied for a permit for draining water. They had just gone ahead and done it. That is the lifestyle of the Red River Valley for the last 80 years. So when you are talking about 300 permits for one year, I am suggesting that you are probably going to have a 10-, 12-, maybe even a 50-fold increase in the permit applications for draining water as a result of the legislation. I will leave that with you.

The question I wanted to ask the Minister is: Have there been any considerations given as to

what the penalty would be should a producer be contravening the legislation and draining water without a permit or a licence as it may be?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Chair, before I go into his question, up until, you know, like '99, I was not the Conservation Minister prior to October 5 of '99. Up until '99, there were already 166 applications for drainage licences, so, as I was trying to say earlier, this is not a new phenomenon. It has been happening for quite a while now, as more and more people become aware of the kinds of problems that uncontrolled drainage will produce. So people are becoming aware of some of the problems, some of them inadvertently maybe, but nevertheless causing a lot of discomfort and problems to downstream residents. So, as a result of that, people are trying to do the right thing, so they are coming to government to get a licence so that they go about doing their work the right way without harming anybody.

As far as the Member's question is concerned, if we find somebody out there who has done some drainage on his own, or her own, and if it is not affecting anybody negatively downstream, we ask: Where is your permit? If the work is not affecting anybody negatively downstream, we will tell them to get a permit. But, if it is affecting residents downstream in a negative way, then we are going to ask the person to fix the problem. Subsequently, we are going to have to resort to laying charges. That is why the law is being proposed. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Pitura: I wonder if I could just switch gears here for a minute. I just want to make a comment. I appreciate the Minister's comments with respect to the support for watershed management on a watershed basis. I really think that is the way we should be going in terms of watershed management. I concur with the Minister on his comments.

I would like to switch gears, and I would like to move to protection from too much water, and that is the community ring-diking system that is being put into place in the Red River Valley. I was just wondering if the Minister could give me an update on perhaps all of the community ring dikes that are being put in place. Are they at the stage of letting out a contract?

Has construction begun? Specifically, I would like to ask the question about the Riverside community, as to what is happening with the flood community ring-diking system that was to be put in place for that community. I have heard some vibes coming out of the community that it was supposed to go ahead, and now is at a standstill. I was just wondering if the Minister could clarify that for me.

Mr. Lathlin: I would like to suggest to the Member that I know I have paperwork that comes across my desk, and there has been a lot of progress made in terms of moving along in the protection aspect. I would like to ask the Member if I could go back to my books. I will get some of those reports, and, as a matter of fact, I will give him the most current reports as to the status of those protection measures as soon as I can.

Mr. Chairperson: The Member for Arthur-Virden.

Mr. Pitura: I thank the Minister for that and I believe that they have been done on a spread-sheet basis.

Mr. Chairperson: Pardon me, I will correct this. The Member for Morris, not Arthur-Virden.

Mr. Pitura: I did not pick that up. The Member for Arthur-Virden has a lot more hair.

I understand that most of their community ring dikes, Mr. Chairman, are done on a spread-sheet basis and I would appreciate getting the nearest update. Specifically, I am interested in Riverside. I do not know if you have that information here with you today or not, as to the status of that.

Mr. Lathlin: I understand what the Member is looking for. I will try, to the best of my ability, to have that information here for him by 2:30, three o'clock.

Mr. Pitura: I appreciate that from the Minister, and I will look forward to getting that information. And now I will pass it on to my colleague the Member for Emerson.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): First of all, it is good to see some of my former colleagues in the department of Natural Resources. It is good to see their faces again, and welcome them to the table. It was a great time that I was able to spend as minister of that department. I just want to commend the staff to the Minister, I think some good staff, good thinkers. I think they have the Department's best interest at heart and the best interest of the people of Manitoba at heart. I encourage them to continue the good work that they have done, and use the kind of integrity that I experienced in that department from the staff.

I say that in all sincerity. I think they truly tried their best to serve the people of Manitoba with the resources that were given to them by the then government and the now government. I am sure that they will try to continue that good work.

I have a few comments, Mr. Chairman, and also maybe a few questions. First of all, the licensing issue that has been raised by colleagues here today is not a new issue. The licensing of drainage and/or trying to create an atmosphere of giving some semblance of responsibility to draining and providing some measure of knowledge as to where waters will run and how they will run and how drains will be determined has been a matter of discussion within the department. I know that we had some discussion within the department at the time.

We did a land and water strategy, Mr. Chairman, fairly significant, across the province, and got some great direction, I thought, from the people of the province of Manitoba. I think the land and water strategy provided a blueprint for what could be done if the proper financial resources were put in place in the province of Manitoba.

I truly believe that we have not always been truly aware of how much we are affected by either rules or actions taken by individual municipalities or departments. The Department of now Conservation, formerly Natural Resources, I think has a great responsibility to ensure that our lakes are protected, our rivers and streams are protected within capacity where and when possible.

I think the Department, in its desire to ensure some semblance of regularity of flow in our rivers and streams has attempted to do that. I think there is a need at times to also ensure that inordinate type actions are not taken to cause damages to other people and individual property. I concur with that. Living and representing an area that is bordered virtually on both sides of the constituency by the escarpment of the Red River Valley, and secondly, further east, houses many of the swamps, storage areas—we call them natural storage areas. I think it is imperative that we continue discussing without causing inordinate disruption to the individual farmer and how they operate in this province. I think that there is an opportunity here to look at this legislation.

Mr. Chairperson: The time being 12 noon, I am interrupting proceedings. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting this afternoon following the conclusion of Routine Proceedings. Thank you.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

* (11:10)

Madam Chairperson (Bonnie Korzeniowski): Good afternoon.

Some Honourable Members: Good morning.

Madam Chairperson: Good morning. 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 Education and Training.

Did I do it again? Yes, I did too. This morning. Can we start again.

An Honourable Member: Sure. Let us just start over then.

Madam Chairperson: Let us start over. Good morning. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This morning, this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training.

Consideration of these Estimates left off on page 57 of the Estimates book, Resolution 16.1. Administration and Finance. The floor is now open for questions.

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education and Training): Good morning to everyone here. Yesterday I had made an undertaking to get some information for the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) on behalf of college enrolments over the last number of years. I think the Member asked from '87 to 2001.

I am pleased to be able to table that information right now. For the Member, I will also read into the record there has been an increase over that 13-year period. In '87-88, there were total college enrolments of 34 618, which increased in '88-89 to 39 065, and subsequently increased again in '89-90 to 40 453; '90-91, a small increase to 40 952.

We had three years of decrease after that. In 1991-92, 38 777; in '92-93, 39 918; in 1993-94, 39 050. In '94-95, it began an increasing trend again to 41 775; in '96-97, 42 345; in 1997-98, 45 643; in 1998-99, 45 111; in '99-2000, 46 435.

The Department estimates in 2000-2001 that enrolment will reach 49 435. The notes on this are that full-time enrolments include diploma programs, certificate programs, adult-based education programs and apprenticeship programs. Also, noting on this, I am sorry that the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) is not here to hear this, but since 1987-88 federal revenues have been decreased by \$13 million resulting in enrolment—I note the Member for Russell agrees, yes, and he is sorry as well the Member for River Heights is not here—leading to some enrolment reductions. Also correspondingly since 1995-96 provincial revenues have been increased by \$10 million. Those are notes, and I will pass that along to the Member. Which is good.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Madam Chair, do I get a copy of this?

Mr. Caldwell: Yes, I will table that.

Mr. Derkach: I do not know what the categories are, but those are good numbers to have. I think

they are useful, but I was interested in my question in the enrolments at the community college for the certificate and diploma programs. I was wondering whether the Minister has those broken down, because those are the areas I wanted to make some comparisons of.

Mr. Caldwell: Madam Chair, they are broken down, indeed, on this one, but I will have staff check to see if we cannot provide that, maybe even later on today.

The other undertaking I took was to provide the Member with some information on aboriginal nursing enrolments. In 1998-99 total enrolments were 26 aboriginal students; in '99-2000 47 aboriginal students; and the projections for 2000-2001 are 75-80 aboriginal students. I will also table that information for the Member. So there has been an increasing trend there. Lots of work needs to be done yet, but it is an increasing trend.

Mr. Derkach: I want to thank the Minister for that information. I look forward to receiving it. If I might, I may have some questions as a follow-up to the information, just for clarification more than anything I think.

With the Minister's indulgence, I would like to ask a couple of more questions on community colleges. I know when I spoke with him last I said I was pretty well done on the community college side. However, there are a couple of questions that I would like to return to if he is comfortable with that. I know that he may not have his staff here. But if he is comfortable with that, I would just like to pursue a couple of areas.

Mr. Caldwell: That is fine.

Mr. Derkach: Okay. Madam Chair, I guess the first question I have with regard to the community colleges is the coming back once again to the Red River campus and the downtown location for the Red River campus. I know the Minister and I agreed to disagree with regard to the specific location, but I failed to ask a question with regard to the Board. I know that some of the members of the Board have been replaced and others have been removed from their positions but are still members of the

Board, are still allowed to continue until their terms expire I would think.

Maybe he has provided this for my colleague, but I do not have it. I was wondering if he could give me the members of the Red River Community College Board who were removed and those who were left on and who the new appointments to the Board are.

Mr. Caldwell: Madam Chair, I did table a document a few days ago on the Department of Education's active boards and so forth. I do not know if the Member would just like to pick that up or would you like me to read it in again?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, all I am interested in is the Red River Board and not the rest of them.

Mr. Caldwell: Okay. Madam Chair, the Red River Board appointments: Bill Regehr has been appointed to the Board as of July 1, 2000. He replaces Mr. Lloyd McGinnis who resigned from that Board. Ann Robins is on that Board, appointed July 1, 2000. Martin Mayer is on the Board. Mr. Mayer was appointed April 1, 1997. Ian Scott is the student rep on the Red River Board. Beverly Bachalo is on the Board. She was appointed on April 1, 1996. Mr. Ed Martens is on the Board. Mr. Martens was appointed April 1, 1998. Danny Falcetta is a member of the Board appointed April 1, 1996. Betty Green is a member of the Red River Board. She was appointed April 1, 1996. Ron Bailey is a member of the Red River Board, appointed July 1, 2000. Beverley Watson is a member of the Red River Board, appointed April 1, 1999. Virginia Snyder is a member of the Red River Board, appointed April 1, 1998. Annemarie Wiebe is a member of the Board, appointed April 1, 1996.

The vast majority of the Board—there have only been three appointments, I guess, four with the student but that is the standard rollover for the students. But the new government has only appointed three new members to the Red River Board since the September 21 election.

I noted in the Free Press today where Mr. Martens was commenting that he was surprised that he was not removed from the Board on

September 22. I have endeavoured in the boards that are under my jurisdiction as Minister of Education and Training to not act in a way that is typical in terms of government-appointed boards, and that is typically as Mr. Martens expectation was, the day after an election with a new government just to clean out all the boards.

I have tried to take a philosophy in board appointments whereby those members who are serving on sitting boards, whether it is Red River or Brandon University or University of Manitoba or whatever boards they may be, that respect be given to sitting members regardless of whether their appointment was by the previous government or not, to allow an opportunity for sitting board members to continue to serve in the best interests of the institutions they represent and not politicize unduly the boards of community colleges or universities. There has been quite a bit of surprise in that regard.

* (11:20)

When I was at my first meeting with the Assiniboine Community College Board, it would have been sometime last November, as I recall, last October, November, it may have even been early December but it was last fall, last early winter, and my friend, Mr. Mazer who is the Chairman of the Board, we were sitting down chatting about the future of Assiniboine Community College. About 45 minutes into the discussion, Mr. Mazer said: Drew, I have got a question for you. I said what? And he said: What am I still doing here? Because his expectation was the same as Mr. Martens, that they would all be removed on September 22. I said to, I think it is Bob Mazer, well, you know, you are doing a good job, I assume, and he said, well, I think we are. I said well, that is the only criterion, frankly, for being on the Board. *[interjection]*

The Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) goes hear, hear. He also knows Mr. Mazer, and I know that the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) also knows Mr. Mazer, so the philosophy has been one of trying to maintain stability, in fact, encourage and enhance stability, having a good blend of longer-serving board members mentoring, if you will, newer appointments. That has been the philosophy I have taken to board appointments, and I think it has been a

philosophy that is quite unusual in terms of expectations of the individuals, not totally unprecedented, I admit that, but certainly the expectation of Mr. Mazer was that he would not be there on September 22 either. I am happy to note that both Mr. Martens, although he is no longer chair, and Mr. Mazer, who still is the chair at Assiniboine Community College, both continue to serve. So there have been three changes in the Red River Board. The majority of the Board remains as appointees of the previous administration.

I guess that concludes my remarks on that particular case.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, I am encouraged by those comments from the Minister, but I go back to the issue of the location of Red River community campus downtown. I guess the issue that gnaws away at me is the fact that we have a board—and some are more active politically than others on the Board, and I think that will always be the case, no matter what kind of board you have. The decision with regard to the campus location I do not believe was done for political purposes. I think it was done in a way which represented, I guess, the analysis of whether or not the location of the campus on Princess would serve the needs of the students but also would serve the downtown area. I would like to know what the Government's motivation is to locate or to do an analysis of a location on Spence Street as opposed to the Princess Street location.

Mr. Caldwell: The motivation of the Government in terms of having an analysis of not just the Spence Street hub or the Princess Street hub but all opportunities in terms of maximizing resources for infrastructure improvements at Red River College is to make the best use of public dollars in this regard, also to maximize those public dollars on students and educational opportunities for students. So the motivation, quite simply, is to maximize the educational outputs of that investment.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, has the Minister consulted with the business community who are associated with the community college and have over time invested in community college infrastructure with regard to their views and with regard to their input into the location and their

rationale as to the best location for the community college?

Mr. Caldwell: Yes, and consultation in that regard continues. We extended the time frame for making a decision on this particular project to allow for more dialogue to take place. I have met with the Exchange BIZ officials in this regard. There have been discussions both with myself personally and with the deputy; as well as the director of the College Expansion Initiative; with individuals from the business community; individuals from City Hall, including the Mayor and some of his councillors; obviously members of the Red River administrative staff as well as the University of Winnipeg in this regard.

I am assuming that the College Expansion Initiative director has, in all probability, met with others involved in school division properties as well. But the discussion with business officials has been ongoing in this matter for a number of months now. We still have dialogue continuing with business officials. That was a major motivation for extending the time line in terms of my taking this discussion to cabinet. I think it is appropriate to have the widest possible input on this decision-making of government. There are interests in the private sector for this project to proceed at Princess Street, as there are, in fact, at the Spence Street hub as well.

But there are significant discussions underway. I expect that they will continue right up to the point that I do take this to Cabinet. I truly desire to have a full knowledge of all the implications of whatever government's decision will be known before we make that decision. I certainly do have a lot of respect for the business community. In the BIZ district in particular, they have been very forceful in their representation to me.

I continue to receive representation from the business community in that particular area. They have had an impact, obviously, in locating the original proposal on that particular site, on Princess Street, and they continue to have an impact, on my thinking, in this regard. I truly do think it was a good decision to have due diligence take place in reviewing the Red River construction of a new campus in the downtown

area. I think that is a responsible and reasonable thing to do. I also think it is a good decision to allow for time for further dialogue to take place.

Mr. Derkach: I agree with the Minister, Madam Chair, that a decision of this nature needs to take some time and needs to be very carefully thought out before a decision is made. In the comments that I hear from the Minister, a specific location or building or whether or not a new construction will occur, existing facilities will be renovated, has not been made at this time. Indeed, the discussion is still open for people to have input into before that decision is made. I am encouraged to hear that. I do not have a vested interest in where the college is located. I do believe that it is a good thing to have a campus downtown as an addition to Red River. There is a significant population in that area. It also restores the downtown area and brings people into the downtown area. I think our government certainly tried to pursue those kinds of initiatives, and I am encouraged that the Minister is looking at that as well.

I guess I have a bias in terms of, or suspicion perhaps, because of comments that were made by the Minister's premier when he was in opposition with regard to his choice. As a matter of fact, even further back than that. I think the editorial in one of the papers spelled it out where today's premier was someone in favour of having the facility built on Princess sometime ago. I am wondering whether or not his views have changed or whether, in fact, he still supports his previous approach to a downtown campus and renovating the downtown region around Princess.

Mr. Caldwell: I really do not know. This is the first I have heard of the Premier's views on this particular matter. I have not had a discussion with him about what his views are. Basically, the Princess Street project, as of yet, I have not taken it to Cabinet yet. I expect that those will become clear to me when I take it forward. Certainly, I have not had discussion with him about his preferences vis-à-vis Princess promenade or University of Winnipeg or the old Eaton's building or using existing capacities or what have you.

Mr. Derkach: I do not have any further questions in this regard at this time. I would

simply say that I am encouraged by the Minister's comments in that he is open to hearing more dialogue on the issue before a final decision is made. Indeed, I am hopeful that he will allow the board to have that responsibility with regard to the operations of Red River community college, including the infrastructure that indeed their views will be considered fairly seriously, because we certainly do not want to start bringing back into government some of those decisions that should be made by a community college board.

I understand that the Minister does want to have some influence in this, because he does have to be accountable at the end of the day for education and for the infrastructure that is created for educational opportunities. I completely understand that. Suffice to say that I am encouraged that he is open to dialogue and discussion.

* (11:30)

Mr. Caldwell: I thank the Member for those comments, and I do appreciate them. I, indeed, do want to have a full dialogue take place before a decision is made and have due diligence occur before a decision is made on the expenditure of significant public dollars and, indeed, that is the way that we are proceeding.

I have to smile. I noted in the Free Press today that my remarks, I think it was yesterday, appeared on the front page of the Free Press, the front section of Free Press today. So I know that there is considerable public interest in the Red River expansion project, and I thank the Member for his comments today and I concur with him.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, I would like to move into the area of training and continuing education. This is an area that has now been combined with the federal programs. Although this is not a forum to bash the federal government, I think the Minister has recognized the fact that the federal government's contribution to the whole area of post-secondary education, as it is in Health, has been diminished over a number of years and that, indeed, the Province has tried to fill the gap as best it could. I am sure that challenge will also be facing this minister, because although some of the funding has been

restored, it is certainly not the level that we had. This does have an impact on students who attend our training and post-secondary programs.

I note from the Estimates that there is not a great deal of change with regard to the amount of money that is going to be allocated to the whole area of training and continuing education. I know how enormous the Department is with all the various areas of training and post-secondary education. With the Minister's thrust at doubling the enrolment at our community colleges in the diploma and certificate areas, I am wondering whether the Minister has considered the importance of training programs outside of the community college in the old labour market area and training and whether, in fact, he is going to be looking at this area in terms of expanding the training opportunities for people who are looking for further training for career opportunities.

Mr. Caldwell: The whole philosophy of lifelong learning and providing for lifelong learning opportunities, and that includes training, is something that is going to inform government policy in this regard throughout the course of the mandate. We have a view of education as being a foundation for economic growth in the province, a foundation for social development in the province, for community development in the province as a foundation for a healthy Manitoba and a prosperous Manitoba, and frankly for informed citizenry in Manitoba.

So the idea that training opportunities, educational opportunities should be available to Manitobans both inside the traditional institutional setting, whether that be the public school setting or the post-secondary setting or, indeed, the apprenticeship setting, the idea of having opportunities for Manitobans outside of those traditional settings is something that will begin to inform programming in the Department, I believe, as our mandate proceeds. So there is a philosophy that government has for lifelong learning that would indeed respond to the points that the Member makes.

Mr. Derkach: So is it fair to say, Madam Chair, to the Minister that that philosophy within the Department has not changed to date, that it is continuing, that, in fact, the Department will

continue to look for opportunities to either modernize programs that are already in existence or bring new programs on-stream that reflect the needs of the workplace, the needs of the business community, the needs of those who employ people in our province.

I want to draw attention, I guess, the first area that I would like to address is the area of Workforce 2000. This program has been around for a number of years. As a matter of fact, I believe in 1990 when I was the minister of Education, we introduced the program. It was to assist people who were in the workplace, furthering their training opportunities. Although the program received some criticism and some changes were made to it, I think, by and large, the intent and the goals of the program have not changed a great deal from the time that it was implemented.

I am wondering if the Minister could give me some comments with regard to the success of the program, specifically with the number of people that are being enrolled in that program today. What areas does he see as being ones which have the greatest need and the greatest opportunity for training upgrading?

Mr. Caldwell: The Workforce 2000 sector of the Estimates, as the Member has noted, is an important area for investment by the Department. There are a number of Industry-Wide Human Resource Planning Initiatives that Workforce 2000 undertakes. Priority areas of program development include defined provincial priority sectors of economic growth, the aerospace industry, health care industry, information technology industry, manufacturing, tourism, garment, steel, food processing, agri-business industry, call centre industry, which the Member knows has exploded in Manitoba over the last number of years, motion picture industry, trucking, agriculture, particularly as it relates to pork production, and so forth. In the past several years, and the Member will know this because his government was responsible for most of this, Workforce 2000 has contributed to a creation of close to 3300 new jobs in Manitoba.

The estimates are that the provincial contributions of \$38 million over the last number of years have resulted in more than \$98 million

being levered from the private sector or other government investments in training. *[interjection]* It is a heck of a program, the Member states, and I agree with him. It is a heck of a program. There are 263 sectorial partnerships that have taken place, providing training to some 40 000 new and existing employees. Workplace 2000 has had a very positive impact provincially, a very wide impact.

There have been, and I know the Member will likely get into this fairly shortly, so maybe I will head him off at the pass. There is a \$400,000 reduction in this—*[interjection]* He acknowledges, right, so I know where he was going—a \$400,000 reduction in the Estimates this year. The existing commitments that government has made with our partners in Workforce 2000 will be honoured. The Government will still work with sectorial groups to maximize resources, as has always been the practice.

The decrease in funding is primarily the result of a reduction in certain sector training partnerships arising out of the government commitment to review the subsidies that government provides to business. So there is a cut here, but not an elimination of the program, not by any stretch. This is a very, very important program, one that we plan on continuing into the future.

* (11:40)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, I guess we cut to the chase, because the Minister has alluded to it. My question to the Minister is with regard to the reduction in the whole program; \$400,000 trains a significant number of individuals. The Minister indicates that the reduction is primarily due to the sector training partnerships reduction. Although the Minister talks about subsidies to businesses, if we did not provide those dollars, and I think it has been acknowledged by the Minister that it has had a fairly significant impact on the economy of the province, we would have, I think, a decreased number of people being trained or retrained for the new technology, the new economy, if you like. So I would like to ask the Minister where this \$400,000 that he has reduced in this particular area has been allocated to.

Mr. Caldwell: There would not be a direct reallocation of the \$400,000. The \$400,000 would be reintegrated into the global budget of the Department. The reduction of \$400,000 to the current level of \$1.4 million for Workforce 2000 will result in—I think it is best to be up front in these things, in anticipation of the Member—fewer sectoral training partnerships, which would involve a number of about 600 to 1000 participants annually in the provincial economy. We are looking at up to 4 fewer province-wide courses involving up to 80 to 100 participants. So that is the impact of the reduced levels of funding assistance to existing initiatives.

As I mentioned earlier, the current existing commitments are being honoured and will be honoured. We will continue to work with sectoral groups to try and maximize the resources available. Indeed, I think it is fair to say that in the next budget year, as we review impacts, if it is deemed that this was an ill-advised course of action, as would be the practice of any prudent manager, we would adjust accordingly. At this point, however, we feel that that reduction can be made without any significant impact on Workforce 2000. We are looking at ways, more importantly, I believe, to have sectoral targeting take place to respond specifically to areas of importance to industry and the business community, frankly. Programs will link with new skills training initiatives arising from a provincial economic development strategy which is part and parcel of the premiers' economic summit that was held last fall or this spring.

So we do want to be responsive to industry's needs. We think the program is a very important program. We think it can be delivered perhaps more efficiently and in a more targeted fashion. That is our thrust in this decision.

Mr. Derkach: The Minister has acknowledged the fact that there will be fewer training opportunities for Manitobans as a result of this reduction. The Minister also tells us in the House when we ask questions that his commitment to education is total and that he wants to see as much training as possible. Yet this kind of flies in the face of that statement because, indeed, there is a reduction in the opportunities under Workforce 2000.

Now, if the Minister has a philosophical problem with Workforce 2000, that is one thing. But I believe, laying politics aside, this was not a program that was developed by a politician. This was a program that was developed in consultation with people who are in the field, with people who are in the business community, with people who are employees of businesses. The thrust was to lever more training dollars and have a positive impact on the economy of the province and indeed on the human side, if you like.

Can the Minister tell me whether or not the requests that have been coming in under this program have been diminished over the past year?

Mr. Caldwell: Staff advises that in their view there has not been a diminished capacity. I acknowledge the remarks that the Member makes. We are, as government, committed to education very profoundly in the province of Manitoba, and I think that is reflected in the increases to budget that have been made in the public school sector and the post-secondary sector in this last year's budget.

The Government, however, did make a commitment also to review the subsidies that government makes to business, and I note that the \$400,000 expenditure that was reduced, the \$400,000 reduction this year was out of the Grants and Transfer Payments expenditure line in the Estimates. As I stated in my earlier answer, as we review this decision going into next budget year, it indeed may be something that needs to be adjusted again. However, in terms of this budget year, we felt very confident and secure in the fact that existing commitments would be honoured, that sectoral groups will be partners with us in maximizing the resources, that that sort of commitment is maintained.

Workforce 2000 in the Department have attended to the major industries' needs with existing programming, particularly in terms of the information technology sector, the aerospace sector, health care sector and less so in the garment sector. But we are responsive to business and responsive to industry with regard to Workforce 2000 and will continue to be. I think, philosophically, both myself and the Member

would agree that Workforce 2000 is a very positive program, which indeed does focus on human resource planning and development with industry sectors with particular emphasis on priority sectors of economic development and that the program is very important in facilitating skills training and upgrading to both existing and new workers.

So we will continue to develop effective links with programs within the Department of Education and Training. We will continue to work with industry, as I said earlier, in maximizing the resources available to us to have the greatest impact in the business sector around the province of Manitoba. We, of course, as was the previous government, were confronted, as all governments are confronted, with the dilemma of finite resources.

It is a reality whether we are a New Democratic government or a Progressive Conservative government, and we have to, I think, in all good faith allocate resources in the most efficient manner possible to get the greatest benefit out of those resources. I know that the Member would agree with me when we talk about this matter in the House, that we have to be very sensitive to taxation in the province of Manitoba and how much we draw from the taxpayer in the province of Manitoba.

I know that is a favourite theme of the Member and his party, and it is certainly something that we are sensitive as well to on the government side of the House. We will review this program and our decision in the 2000-2001 budget year. We will review it with our partners in the business sector and the industrial sector, and it may be that adjustments need to be made. It may be that the decision this year was sound, but we will understand that more clearly as time goes on.

* (11:50)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, I look forward to being able to congratulate the Minister next year if, in fact, he restores or increases the funding to this particular appropriation. I do have to say that this does fly in the face of the comments that the Minister makes with regard to his government's approach to increasing the funding

to education, especially in a year when the Government has before it increasing revenues to the Province from taxation, from the economy of the province.

We have an expanding economy. The taxation revenues to the Province are increasing. I respect the fact that priorities do have to be made and priorities do have to be established by any government. To me it seems the wrong direction to take with regard to training opportunities for people who are going to contribute to the economy.

I would like to ask the Minister, it is noted in the Estimates book that, as regards the decreases in grants, and this is the program side of Workforce 2000, the decrease is primarily a result of the reduction in sector training partnerships. I would ask the Minister if he could share with me who the training partnerships were who are going to be affected by the decreases.

Mr. Caldwell: To a large extent, all sectors will share in a very small portioning of the \$400,000 decrease which lessens the impact generally across the system. I would note in terms of this particular sector that we have an increase in the total budget for the training sectors, so while one area, for example, Workforce 2000, declines, another area, Adult Literacy and Continuing Education, for example, increases.

It is a balancing act. There is no doubt about it. It always is a balancing act, but overall in global terms there is a modest increase in this particular sector of the Department's expenditures. So that may be the best way to respond to the Member's question.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, can the Minister advise whether any partnerships have been dropped completely or whether, in fact, this is a decrease shared by all of the training partnerships that are in existence today?

Mr. Caldwell: Existing commitments were and are being honoured. There are no sectors or partners that were dropped entirely, unless, of course, those sectoral projects naturally were having a decline in commitment and were being phased out in the normal course of the under-

taking, but there were none eliminated as a result of this budgetary decision.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, could the Minister tell me why Workforce 2000 was targeted vis-à-vis the other areas of training and continuing education? When I look at, for example, Stevenson Aviation, we see a modest increase there. We see an increase in the apprenticeship side, yet Workforce 2000 seems to have taken a hit for that family of programs.

Mr. Caldwell: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated in an earlier question, it is not always a balancing that takes place in terms of budgetary decisions, and the Member is right in noting that Stevenson Aviation had a modest increase, some \$150,000. Apprenticeship had a modest increase of a little over \$350,000. Workforce 2000 had declined in this particular budget year, some \$400,000. This sort of massaging of the dollar figures allotted to specific projects takes place in every budgetary exercise in every budgetary year whoever the government may be, and, in fact, even in the same administration from year to year. If we go back through previous years' Estimates, fluctuations pro and con occur on different projects as part of the regular budgetary process.

The Member indicated that he would congratulate me next year if this were indeed what occurred. As I indicated earlier, we will continue to monitor these decisions throughout the year with our partners in the sectors, and if there is any untoward impact that is perceived, adjustments will be made. However, as I have mentioned, we are honouring the commitments that Workforce 2000 had made. The existing commitments will be honoured and we will continue to work with sectoral groups to maximize the resources that we have available through this program. Indeed, Madam Chairperson, as I have noted, if there is something untoward that is ascertained to have occurred, there will be changes made.

Mr. Derkach: The \$400,000 decrease in this particular area is going to have an impact. I know that the philosophy of this government in the past when they were in opposition, and especially by the Leader of the Opposition then and now Premier, was that this program was

viewed as a program designed for subsidies to business and had very little impact on the actual training. I think, over time, it has been shown that, in fact, the program has had a positive impact. I would simply encourage this minister to take a very critical look at this program in terms of its positive impact and to look at restoring the funding for the training partnerships in the coming year.

But, Madam Chairperson, I want to ask the Minister whether or not he is looking at it. I know that he mentioned the garment industry, and I was wondering whether or not the Minister has any intentions of decreasing the involvement of the garment industry in Workforce 2000 training.

Mr. Caldwell: Madam Chairperson, I thank the Member for his remarks. The Fashion Institute is the primary area that is referred to in terms of the garment—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The time being 12 noon, I am interrupting the proceedings. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting this afternoon following the conclusion of Routine Proceedings.

HEALTH

* (10:40)

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Stan Struthers): Would the Committee of Supply come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health. Would the Minister's staff please enter the Chamber. We are on page 88 of the Estimates book.

Resolution 21.2 Program Support Services
(f) Health Labour Relations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,043,000. Shall the item pass?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairperson, just by way of background, the staff is on their way. They might be a few minutes, but they are coming over as quickly as possible. I suggest we can proceed and where we have to refer back, we can refer back. I would also like to table for the Member a copy of the

Wade-Bell report, December 93 date, for the Member at this time.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the Minister has any other information to table. I believe he has agreed to a number of different items, and I wonder if anything else is ready.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I will check my notes. At this point, I think all I have to table, I have tabled at this juncture. I will just check my notes, perhaps, we can proceed and I will just continue.

Mrs. Driedger: I appreciate that the staff are not here yet, so maybe some of this might be a little difficult to answer and I would be prepared to move on and ask them again when the staff are here. I guess we will give it a try and just see.

I understand that between April '98 and March '99, we recruited 103 doctors to fill rural vacancies. I wonder if the Minister could tell me how many rural vacancies there are currently for physicians in Manitoba.

Mr. Chomiak: I believe during the last course of our discussion with the Member, she asked us how many physicians were needed in rural Manitoba. So I take it that is the same question. We are still compiling that data.

Mrs. Driedger: I understand that currently Manitoba ranks, as of last year anyway, Manitoba ranked fifth in doctors and specialists per capita, which was one doctor less in Ontario. I wonder if the Minister is aware if this is still a current statistic.

Mr. Chomiak: The Member is asking our per capita ranking with regard to specialists vis-à-vis other jurisdictions and is indicating that as of last year we were fifth. I will confirm that figure for this year, if it is available.

Mrs. Driedger: I also understand, as of August of last year, the number of doctors in Manitoba has remained stable for the last few years at approximately 2020 to 2030, and I guess I would like to ask the Minister if that is still approximately the number that we have in Manitoba.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I believe that is the case, and I will also confirm that figure.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me whether there is still ongoing discussions with the University of Manitoba to increase the number of student spaces at the Faculty of Medicine.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes.

Mrs. Driedger: Would it be correct to say, and this is again going back to looking at some notes from last summer, that we are the first province in Canada to consider increasing medical school enrolment?

Mr. Chomiak: No, I do not think that is correct to say. I think it is breaking down, because from my observation, there is a general although not complete acknowledgment across the country that the Barer-Stoddart solution was not, in fact, working. I think, if other jurisdictions have not actually expanded their number of enrolments, and in fact which I think several have, they are in the process of doing so. So what was a national agreement to limit enrolments, I think, is no longer in effect.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me the progress that is being made with the University of Manitoba. Have they actually agreed to accept more students into the Faculty of Medicine? If so, how many and when would they be starting?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, the earlier question the Member asked whether or not there were still discussions ongoing with respect to expanding enrolments in the University of Manitoba, those discussions are still continuing. There will be an announcement in this regard soon.

Mrs. Driedger: Does the Minister have any information he would be able to share with me in terms of the International Medical Graduates and where that particular program is going?

Mr. Chomiak: That is a fairly broad question. There are numerous activities with regard to IMGs. If the Member is asking about our initiatives to increase the number of IMGs, and

she is nodding in the affirmative, if she is asking about our initiatives to increase the number of IMGs who have access to residency programs and ability to practise in Manitoba, I can advise the Member that in fact there is a process in place that will be part of a—when I indicated that there would be a package of announcements with respect to position recruitment and retention, that is in fact part of the package of announcements.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me if there is still a summer rural work experience offered to 10 first- or second-year med students in order to provide them with the opportunity to experience rural medicine practice prior to graduation.

Mr. Chomiak: Just subject to confirmation of staff, I believe there is.

Mrs. Driedger: I would like to ask the Minister whether there is still financial support to assist undergraduate med students and family medicine residents in their rural practice experience with accommodation and travel costs.

Mr. Chomiak: Also subject to the previous caveat, I believe, that is still the case. In fact, as I understand it, most of the previous programming that was in place is still in place.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister could tell me whether there is still provision of 15 loans of \$15,000 each to third- and fourth-year med students for which the student upon graduation returns service in an under-serviced area of the province.

Mr. Chomiak: I will confirm whether or not that is, in fact, still the case.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me whether there is financial support for continuing medical education for rural physicians still in effect.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I believe that is still in effect.

Mrs. Driedger: One other recruitment and retention initiative, which had been started previously, was financial support and protection

of training positions for rural practitioners to acquire needed skills, training for rural practice. Is this particular aspect still in effect?

Mr. Chomiak: As I indicated in my previous response, it is subject to the caveat I am just confirming with staff. I believe that all of those initiatives are still in place.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me, I believe that there was a rural physician retention committee established under our initiatives to address long-term rural recruitment and retention issues. I am wondering if that committee is still in place. I am also wondering if they are the ones that are addressing right now a further strategy to look at rural recruitment and retention issues.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister would be able to share any of their activities with me in terms of the problems they have identified and the successes they might be having.

Mr. Chomiak: As I indicated to the Member for Russell several days ago, the entire rural recruitment and retention strategy, which is a multifaceted effort, that it included a whole series of initiatives discussed and engaged with by the rural retention recruitment committee, as well as by RHAs, by various groups and by various bodies, including the University of Manitoba, et cetera, have put together a fairly comprehensive package that is forming part of what I said will be a significant amount with respect to a physician's recruitment and retention strategy that will be announced soon.

Mrs. Driedger: Would the Minister be prepared to provide me a copy of what they have put together?

Mr. Chomiak: The group has put together documentation for public consumption. That documentation that has been put together, I will provide for the Member.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me whether the negotiations with the MMA have all been finalized.

* (10:50)

Mr. Chomiak: No.

Mrs. Driedger: Could he provide me with a little more detail, if he is able to, on what areas they are still addressing?

Mr. Chomiak: In a variety of areas, Mr. Chairperson, the negotiations are ongoing and continue. For the most part, there has been a general closure on most of the issues that were arbitrated, and funding was provided for some considerable increases and considerable expansions within the budget this year. Suffice it to say, I will try to give the Member some general outline of issues that are being dealt with, subject to the fact that we are still involved, obviously, in a process and will try to outline some of the particular general issues that are contingent on that.

Generally, as the Member is probably aware, the negotiations considering fee-for-service physicians has been concluded, as well as details concerning specialist allocation. There is arbitration process that continues for a variety of other related funding issues that are still in a process of arbitration. The general award for fee-for-service positions, as well as specialist allocations, has been concluded, and negotiations are continuing on the areas in a process of arbitration.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister just indicate to me or for me, generally, are most of the negotiations completed then, like certainly a high percentage?

Mr. Chomiak: Both in terms of physician numbers and volume, as well as costs, in terms of the appropriation, if one looks in the Supplementary Estimates under the category that deals with physician remuneration, guessing, the vast majority of that, clearly, I would guesstimate somewhere in the area of 75 percent, 80 percent have been concluded.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Chairperson, in the Chair

The rest is part of the continuing arbitration process, which we are confident—well, as confident as one can be during negotiation

processes—is on the way to conclusion. There are obviously, in the midst of this, a series of smaller issues and smaller specific groups and smaller specific categories that are still being negotiated, but generally the process is moving along very favourably with the vast majority of the matters being completed.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me when he expects to see all of that finalized.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, that is difficult to say. We are trying to obviously proceed as expeditiously as possible, and I expect that most of the major issues will be wrapped up, just from my observations, in probably the next several months.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me if fee for service is a particular form of remuneration that he is very supportive of, or is he interested in looking at options.

Mr. Chomiak: Manitoba has one of the highest rates of other options to fee for service of any jurisdiction in the country. In a continued negotiating fashion, we are working with all parties to continue to find the best practice and the best means in order to do two things: maintain and retain the number of physicians that we need in this province and to provide adequate health care across the system.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister could be specific in terms of whether or not fee for service is a particular form of remuneration that he is supportive of, or does he prefer to look at something that might be more attractive?

Mr. Chomiak: The majority of remuneration for physicians in Manitoba and indeed across the country and indeed across the system is fee for service. Manitoba also has a variety of alternative payments, other than fee for service and other interesting variations on that which we continue to work with and continue to work with all parties in developing.

Mrs. Driedger: I guess the reason I am asking that question, Mr. Chairman, is rumour amongst physicians is that the NDP Government does not like fee for service, and I guess that is what I am

trying to find out is if that rumour is something he would like to comment on.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I can advise the Member that I heard the same rumour when I was opposition critic about the former government.

Mrs. Driedger: Would he like to comment on the rumour as it applies to the current government?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I do not think it does anyone any good to comment on rumours and speculation.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister could tell me if there is a shortage of general practitioners.

Mr. Chomiak: There are shortages generally across the breadth of this province in all areas across the province with respect to all forms of human resources in the health care field.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister could be more specific in terms of general practitioners. I know that this had been a concern over the last number of years, and funding was an issue there. I understand through negotiations funding was improved for general practitioners, and I have not heard very much any more in terms of whether we are looking at a shortage here. I would be very interested to know if we do have a shortage in this particular area.

Mr. Chomiak: We have already generally discussed the fact that across rural and northern Manitoba there is a significant shortage of physicians, which includes the significant shortage of general physicians, general practitioners. That does not even deal with the issue of the fact that outside of Winnipeg is also a serious issue of lack of specialists outside of Winnipeg. So there is variety. There is a lack of specialists in Winnipeg in various areas as well. So it is a continuing and ongoing problem across the field in terms of a province and in terms of how one maintains and attracts physicians to this jurisdiction in light of fairly competitive pressures both from other jurisdictions and indeed south of the border. So the job of Health is to try to maintain and attract as many

physicians as possible. Part of the initiative in that regard, as I have already indicated, will be a significant effort at rural recruitment and retention as well as dealing with the IMG issue and related activities that we have discussed previously.

Mrs. Driedger: Now that staff is here, I am wondering if the Minister might be able to tell me how many vacancies there are in rural Manitoba for physicians and if it might be able to be broken down in terms of the categories.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, as I indicated that question and the other nine issues that I have taken and dealt with, I will confirm and get back to the Member on all of those issues.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me whether we have a shortage of anesthetists? Having worked in the health care system and been around when we had severe shortages, I can remember the excitement that that caused. I am wondering if we have enough anesthetists in the system at this point in time.

* (11:00)

Mr. Chomiak: That is a shortage in any one specific area. I want to be very, very careful on this, particularly if one deals with the issue of anesthetists, because I have heard it said that generally we are okay at this point with respect to anesthetists. I have also heard it said that there is a problem in terms of allocation as to where those anesthetists are located and how they operate, et cetera. The Member, I think, is fully aware of the difficulties incumbent on this. I am loath to kind of pinpoint specific areas because of the ramifications and the difficulty of the Minister of Health saying one thing about one particular area and particular groups or individuals taking umbrage with particular comments. So suffice it to say that we monitor closely all the specialty areas. We have ongoing recruitment in most of the areas. Some areas we do better in. Some areas we are not doing as well in. We continue to proceed on that basis.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me what our numbers are, or, I guess, the question would be better asked: Do we have a shortage of cardiologists for adult patients?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, for a population the size of Winnipeg, yes, we do.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister would be prepared to provide a little bit more information in that particular area.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, in our announcement of the cardiac program, one of the underpinnings of that particular announcement was the fact that there was a need in Manitoba to maintain and attract, emphasis on maintain and retain of cardiac specialists, cardiologists, in Winnipeg. If my memory serves me correctly, we are—I am going by memory—something like 15 or 16, with some due for retirement shortly, and if memory serves me correctly, for a city this size, there was talk about us requiring anywhere from 19 to 20, 22, or 23.

Suffice to say we do not have sufficient cardiologists in Winnipeg or in the province. That was one of the significant reasons for trying to bring together the entire cardiac program, to provide some stability to the cardiac program, to show a future for the cardiac program, to show a process for the cardiac program and to provide the underpinnings and stability of an overall cardiac program so that those people that are in the system could be confident of what they are doing and where they are going, those that we could try to attract would be confident in terms of what we are doing and where we are going, as well as the opportunity—and this was significant—of people coming to Manitoba and perhaps doing a post-graduate fellowship set here around a cardiology program, and hopefully staying here to maintain that program because that has been a problem in the past. So, in fact, the retention and recruitment of cardiologists, and not just cardiologists, but other specialists in heart programs was one of the underpinnings of the need for the comprehensive program that we announced.

The program we announced, which was a relatively very significant program with respect to cardiology and the whole provision of services around the heart was a comprehensive attempt to, once and for all, in the near future and in the short term, mid-term and long term for Manitoba, put in place an effective program that would cover all the gamut of cardiac

services and would provide the locus and the critical mass that would permit us to maintain and retain the cardiologists that we need and the other specialists in this area, as well as the other, not just in terms of physicians, but to have a program that was recognized, that was up and running, that had a future, that had a future direction so that the cardiac program could provide the kind of service that we felt was necessary and needed for what is the No. 1 or No. 2 most significant illness affecting the population.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me whether we have a shortage of pediatric cardiologists?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I believe we do. I want to separate for a second the issue of the adult cardiac from the pediatric cardiologist. This is one area where several processes are in place: firstly, this is one area where obviously recommendations from the Sinclair report are going to be significant in terms of how some of the services rollout, as well as our ongoing negotiations with the other western provinces about the establishment of a western pediatric cardiology service that will offer services across all the western provinces for our children for pediatric cardiology.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me if there is a shortage of pediatric nephrologists or pediatric urologists.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I believe I provided that information during Question Period to the Member. There are a variety of areas where, some of these areas we are attempting to recruit. Then some of it goes down to a question as to whether or not there are some disputes and some disagreement in terms of whether we have actual numbers that are sufficient. I think it would be fair to say that it would be useful to have additional, certainly an additional nephrologist and a pediatric urologist.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me whether we are short of geriatricians?

Mr. Chomiak: I think there are probably very few areas that the Member could outline in terms

of specialties that we could not use additional services, and certainly that is one of them.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me whether we have a shortage of neurologists?

Mr. Chomiak: We have an ongoing process, and we certainly require, as I indicated in my previous responses, we could use specialties in virtually all of these areas.

Mrs. Driedger: I am wondering if the Minister would be prepared to table for me a list of the vacancies amongst the specialists and the list of vacancies in terms of the number of doctors needed in the area of general practice.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I am not sure if we can, the Member termed it vacancies, and to table a specific list I think might be difficult. It depends upon interpretation and it depends upon how one evaluates a situation.

* (11:10)

For example, there are some areas where the population base in Manitoba requires the services of, say, generally 1.5 of a particular specialty. Well, if we only have one specialist, then one could assume that there is a full vacancy. If we have two of those specialists, one would assume that we do not have a vacancy. That may not be actually a true reflection of the actual need and the actual requirement. Suffice to say that in almost every specialty area, we are seeking additional human resources in order to cover those areas. To give a definitive list, I have seen definitive lists come to me as Minister that have argued one way and have argued the other way.

Let me give you another example, a specialty area where a physician is the only specialist. We will just use that as an example. The requirements are beyond the capacity of that individual, but that individual is the only person doing it. That is a really difficult problem in a province like this, because it happens. There is not quite enough volume to justify another specialist, and if you bring in another specialist, you cannot bring in a specialist at the pay range that would be equivalent to keep that specialist here. Alternatively, to bring in that specialist at a

particular pay range would mean you are undermining the ability of the particular specialist who is here to stay here and who will then be attracted somewhere else.

It is not a simple process of simply numbers and vacancies. I have seen on some areas arguments both ways along the line, on both sides. They are both compelling arguments. Suffice to say that I think the people that are in place who make these decisions are doing the best they can in areas where we are clearly short, which is most areas, are attempting to recruit in areas where we are just on the baseline, are still attempting to recruit, but under circumstances that are sometimes more difficult than a lot of us can appreciate.

Mrs. Driedger: I certainly do appreciate the Minister's response. A colleague would now like to ask questions. As we agreed to at the beginning, when colleagues came in the Minister had been amenable to reverting to global questions, and I do believe my colleague has some questions specific to his area.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my colleague for allowing me to ask a few questions. The global questions, as the Minister indicated, these are global specific to the Pembina constituency. So whether that then is out of your jurisdiction and territory, I do welcome you out there. I know that you know where that is.

Specifically, I want to talk about, first of all, Boundary Trails, the regional hospital that is being built there. I want to thank the Minister and the Department for continuing and for allowing this project to continue. I do not know if you are aware, but it is on schedule. *[interjection]* The Minister says he visits us all the time, so that is good to hear. I am out there as well. So I want to thank him for continuing the project and allowing it to proceed as it is.

There are just a few issues on it. I know that the Minister of Health does not build roads, but the problem that has come out there is one of a short part of the paving which needs to take place. I had talked to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Ashton)—and I know they will be doing a project out there next year—but I think it would

be possibly appropriate if together the Minister of Highways and Minister of Health would just sort of agree that they could work that one together. It is not a big cost, and when they are ready we will be doing some paving there that they could throw that in on the project. So, again, I am just giving this out for information, just something that he could possibly think of in his discussions.

Again, with that, it is proceeding. I think also the Minister is aware that the beds that were offered and being built there are fewer than the combined beds of both Morden and the Bethel Hospital in Winkler, which leads me to the question of those people who need the personal care facility.

Could the Minister tell me where the Salem project is, that is the personal care home in Winkler? Twenty beds were looked at then and were promised there and also twenty beds in the Morden Tabor Home. I am just wondering if there could be an update as to where these projects are at, and are they proceeding in order to be able to meet the needs out there?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I thank the Member for the information, the previous information, and I appreciate the information he provided me.

As I have indicated and explained to other members, the capital process, several things occurred with respect to the capital process. Firstly, the fact that we came into the Government planning and bureaucratic process later than one would have liked because of the election, the transformation in the fall, meant that some things did not move as quickly as perhaps we and everyone would like, so that is the first point.

The second point is the capital plan is still being finalized. There will be an announcement of the capital plan. We are reviewing the entire capital plan, as a new government ought to. We are reviewing the whole process. Some of the ways that the capital plan functioned, I liked the way the old capital plan function used to be when I was critic in the mid to late '90s, with some variations, which I will not go down because then we will be into a political fight, but

I like the old way. I like the way the capital plan was ruled out in terms of analyzed and assessed, better than the experience in the last several years.

So one of the planning processes we came to bear was to look at the whole entire capital, the whole entire capital process and review not only the process but all of the commitments and all the promises and all of the allocations. It is extensive, and we are talking about considerable sums of money.

One of the concerns we had was the various projects that had been approved have increased dramatically in price. That was a concern when one has a limited capital budget and incredible demand, incredible expectations. As the Member knows, you cannot do all of the worthwhile and useful projects across the province, because there are so many. The Member's government had a limit to their capital and made decisions based under that limit. We are under the same circumstances. Having said that, I am not saying yes or no to any particular project at this point other than to advise that the process is underway and there will soon be an announcement with respect to the capital process and the capital allocations for this year.

Mr. Dyck: I thank the Minister for those comments. I guess just to possibly try and capsulize this a little, first of all the area that I represent rurally is the fastest growing area within the province of Manitoba. With this, the problem we are running into is, also part of that growth is retirement community. Now, coming back specifically to Salem and Tabor, which are the two personal care homes, I believe that a year ago they were put on, there were going to be 20 beds added to each facility. I appreciate what the Minister said, where he said that the upcoming capital plan has not been approved. My understanding was that that capital plan for these two projects had been approved.

That leads me to the next point I want to make. That is that right now within our hospitals we have about 40 people who are awaiting placement. Because we have the room within the hospitals, we have a place to leave them. What the community and what I am really concerned about as the MLA is, where will we leave these

people? That is a year from now when we will be in the new facility. I do not think that the present government, nor would our government ever have wanted to put anyone out on the streets. I am not in any way implying that this is what you are wanting to do. I am just raising this as a concern and stating that somewhere we will have to leave these people. Because of the approved capital 20 beds, both Tabor and Salem, I am asking: Where are those projects at?

Mr. Chomiak: Those announcements are forthcoming.

Mr. Dyck: So the Minister is saying that he cannot commit himself as to whether they are continuing, as they had proposed to be, or are they withdrawn, just that we will wait to see. Is that the answer? If that is the answer, when will we find out?

* (11:20)

Mr. Chomiak: To be both intellectually consistent as well as program-wise consistent, we are reviewing the entire capital process and all of the capital projects in their entirety. As part of that process, it is difficult for me to give indications one way or the other on any particular or any specific project, because we are literally talking about not just dozens but maybe hundreds of projects. So there will be an announcement, capital, as soon as possible, as soon as we can. I think that announcement will be soon. We are aware of the Member's concerns and we are aware of the needs and the ramifications required for that particular area. Those presentations have been made. The process is continuing. We will soon be announcing the make-up of the capital project for this year.

Mr. Dyck: Well, okay, I will not pursue it any further, though, but I do want to re-emphasize the fact that we, the RHA, the community is going to have to have a place to leave those people who need a personal care home. I think in our long-range planning that when we indicated we were going to adding the 20 beds at Salem and at Tabor that that was going to be one way to partially alleviate the problem. I appreciate the fact that today he possibly cannot make that comment. However, I do want to re-emphasize

the fact of the importance of this. We do need to know where these people will stay.

I will move on to just another one, and you probably have discussed this, but it is also an issue within our area of going to community clinics. I am wondering what the Minister's response is. Is it positive, is it negative, does he see it as something that is working out? In our area we have a group who is looking at establishing a community clinic but does need support. I do not believe it is that much financially as far as capital is concerned, but does need support in the funding later on when the doctors are within this facility.

Mr. Chomiak: I think generally across the spectrum of the plans, the needs plans that were put together by all the RHAs as well as the direction that was provided by the Department of Health that the move towards a greater emphasis on primary health care is one that was encouraged by the Department as being pursued in various forms and in various combinations by various health care authorities, in principle, clearly there is a general agreement by all parties in the health care field that a move towards primary health care is a wave of the future and indeed ought to be encouraged. There are variations on the particular way that it is approached and how it is approached, and those discussions continue.

Mr. Dyck: Then I want to move to another one. I know you had discussed this with the critic. In fact, just a few minutes ago you were talking about doctor recruitment. I would just like to add a little take on this. This is, of course, a concern that I have. First of all, in our area, we have had doctors, and about a year ago we had the full complement of what we needed. We have had several move away, and I am told that recruitment is taking place. It is, I guess, not as quickly as we would like to see it done, but I can also appreciate the problem there.

The other one of drawing doctors into the rural area, it is a concern that just came to light again within the last several weeks. I have a daughter who is wanting to get into medicine. She is at university at the present time. She has got several friends who reach and really have the qualifications. These are rural people who want

to get into medicine, but they are not just accepted. Now, they can go out of province, and they will be accepted there. My concern is, and I know that the Minister is aware of this, but I think we need to re-emphasize this, that somehow there is a strategy in place within the province that is somehow selecting those who are allowed to get into medicine and is not taking into consideration the fact that these are rural people who would then go back into the rural area. These are young students. These are young students who are from our local area. In fact, I could name you three, but I will not do that here, young gals who have all the qualifications but appear not to be accepted. Their marks are the right ones and everything else. I just feel that somehow we need to continue to pressure if it is the MMA, whatever, that these people be allowed because, within this same student body, there are urban students that are accepted for medicine, but the rural ones are not. I know that our government emphasized this continuously, and I know that you are doing the same. We need to get some of our rural people into medicine so in fact they will fill the gap within the rural area.

My question is simply: What is the Minister's response to this, and is there something that he is doing in order to try and resolve this so that we can in fact in some way assist these so that they do not leave the province for studies and then practise somewhere else?

Mr. Chomiak: On the general issue, I think there has been almost a general consensus, I would almost say unanimity, across the province with respect to the future growth of physicians, all professions, but physicians I will emphasize because of the discussion has to be one of retention. The most likely people to stay within your own jurisdiction are people that have roots in the community in a variety of ways. That is in almost every presentation, every group across the way, and I should tell the Member that the MMA has also been cognizant of that, is also supportive of that, so it is almost a unanimous agreement. So there is a real emphasis now on retention. As I have said on many, many occasions, it is even further than that. We know, for example, that Saskatchewan, for some very good reasons, retained 70 percent of their home-grown physicians, and Manitoba is 30 to 40

percent. That is a whole other area which is a little bit different but somewhat related to what the Member is talking about.

I can indicate to the Member specifically there will be specific programs and initiatives dealing with the issue the Member has raised, when we announce our package of rural recruitment and retention. There is going to be an overall package that is going to address that issue.

Mr. Dyck: I thank the Minister for that response, and, again, I do not want to belabour at this point either, but I just think that we have—and this is not only an isolated incident; this is something that has happened over the years. I agree that we need to keep our home-grown people at home, but the message that I am getting from these young people right now is that they can go outside of province and they will be accepted. Then they will stay there and practise in a different province. We want to keep them here. It is much better if we can do that.

Another area I would just like to look at, and this comes back again to the Boundary Trails, but with, first of all, the moving into one regional health care unit, we will have two, hopefully, empty facilities. I am just wondering if the Minister has given any thought to what they will be doing with the facilities that will be vacated.

Mr. Chomiak: I will endeavour to get back to the Member specifically on the status of that.

Mr. Dyck: The reason I am asking is that the community is wanting to do some long-range planning, and if they could have an idea of what ultimately would take place, they would be able to plan with that in mind. That would be very helpful.

One more question, and I know that ambulance emergencies rurally is a big issue. I am told that the funding on that—this is for rural areas—and I guess with that, I can also give an example, which, I am sure, you have heard, but it is interesting that how when people come from Winnipeg and go out to Morden for dialysis, they are given the cost of transportation. However, when it is vice versa, they come from

Morden and/or Winkler or from Manitou to Winnipeg that they pay for their costs themselves. I know that he can go into a political debate on that, and I am not interested in that. I am wondering if the Minister is looking at some way in resolving this. Does he have a plan in mind to be able to do that?

* (11:30)

Mr. Chomiak: I am not going to get into a big political discussion on that. I have said three or four times during the course of these Estimates when I have dealt with this issue that nothing has really changed, but there are larger policy issues that arise from that. The larger policy issues are that medicare never really covered transportation except in certain limited circumstances. That did not grow up as part of the universal medical scheme. It is interesting, as we evolve into a more community-based one, a system of more transportation and longer distances, the commensurate funding and the commensurate support have not gone to those services.

That is a really difficult issue that we are all locked into in terms of the larger issue, and it is not just this jurisdiction. It is right across the country. I have been at conferences where, for example, B.C. funds ambulance services. They are able to do that. Alberta does not. Manitoba does not. Saskatchewan does not. Most of the jurisdictions do not. Clearly, it is one of those issues that is on the table, that if you are moving towards a different approach to universal health care system, maybe the time has come to look at the issue of transportation. It is now an integral part of the health care system, whereas before, it was never considered. It has been considered your responsibility to get you from home to the door of the hospital. I mean, that was the traditional. Then it expanded to include the personal care home. Then it expanded to include prescription drugs, and then it expanded to include a variety of areas. Then you have the crazy anomalies that do not make any sense that we are all aware of. You get your drugs in the hospital; you go in the home where we are supposed to encourage you to go; and you get a limited access of drugs under a Pharmacare program. Does that make sense if you want to encourage people to go from acute care sector into the community? No, it does not. It is one of

the crazy anomalies—it is not crazy, but it is one of the anomalies—of the entire system. Can we change that overnight? No.

I can indicate to the Member that it is part of the overall discussions that we are having with the federal government and with the other provinces. We are negotiating for new funding. Is there any way that new funding can be appropriated towards these kinds of new services? That is part of the discussion.

It is a difficult issue, and it is not easily addressed. For example, when the federal Health Minister raised up the trial balloon of the federal government funding just community-based services, a lot of the provinces went bonkers and said: Well, we do not even fund adequately our acute care services. We cannot even maintain our acute care services, never mind expand in the community. That is all part of the discussions.

I have always said, both in opposition and as minister, that in an evolving medicare system you would think it would make sense to evolve the funding and to evolve the measures you put in place to the appropriate means of offering the service. As we ask people to go further distances, and as we ask people to move from place to place, should we not recognize that? Unfortunately, the constraints on the Treasury are such that we do not have that flexibility. It was the same issue for members opposite. It is the same issue for us. In terms of a larger argument, it obviously makes a lot of sense. Do I have an answer for the Member? No. Are we aware of the difficulty? Yes. Has anything changed? No. Will anything change in the future? One would hope.

I do not want to be overly optimistic, and I do not want to be naive on this. It is part of the discussions that are going on with the federal government and all of the provinces with respect to where we should go, and what we should do in terms of the future of how we fund and how we care for people. I am going to stop here, because I will go on for a long time. It really is a fundamental question. I am not trying to offset the Member's question, but it is pretty fundamental. It is one of the difficult issues to grapple with on the entire spectrum of health

care issues we are approaching. But I will leave it at that.

Mr. Dyck: Just another question here. I am wondering if the Department has a strategy in place when you have regionalization taking place or when you have hospitals closing down and moving to one regional centre. Obviously, there is some added training that needs to take place in order to put this together so that it will operate smoothly. I am just wondering if the Department has funds available for that in order to be able to make that transition and to make it fairly smoothly. The way that I understand it is that, when you are closing down two centres, moving into one, this does not happen overnight. So there are some costs that are associated with that which would be fairly difficult to take out of the existing budget, that they are allocated. So I am just wondering if the Department has any dollars or any way of assisting that kind of transition to take place.

Mr. Chomiak: I am advised that generally it has been and continues to be a departmental policy when a consolidation does take place. There is a recognition of that need and factor. On the specific question regarding Boundary Trails and that particular consolidation, I will endeavour to find out. I should tell the Member there are significant funds we put in in a whole series of areas in terms of training as a result of our other strategies for staff. There are specific issues with respect to training that we are doing. With respect to the specific issue of Boundary Trails, I will take that as notice and get back to the Member. But I am advised that there is a general departmental policy that they do try to incorporate the needs for additional training in situations of that kind.

Mr. Dyck: I want to thank the Minister for the comments and the answers that he has given. I will turn it back to my colleague.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could tell me if we have a shortage of physiotherapists in Manitoba.

Mr. Chomiak: In all areas, frankly, there is need for physiotherapists.

Mrs. Driedger: From the Minister's answers, then, I can probably take from that that we are likely seeing a shortage in the area of occupational therapists, speech pathologists, respiratory technologists and the like. I understand that the regulatory bodies for a diagnostic service provider, such as lab X ray, radiation therapists, have proposed a baccalaureate as the entry to practise with multiple exit points. At the time, the first intake of students was to be this fall. Is that still happening?

Mr. Chomiak: I believe that what the Member is referring to was proposed by that association. I do not believe that the previous government had acted upon it. I can indicate that we are pursuing that particular issue.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me if the pursuit of this issue is currently happening. Will we see anything happening in terms of a program being available this fall, or is it still in the developmental stages and we may have to look at another year before it is available?

Mr. Chomiak: I can indicate that when we came to office there was not a process in place that would have permitted it to be put up this fall, as I understand it. There will be an announcement in this regard shortly.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me in terms of looking at other professionals, such as physios, occupational therapy, speech, respiratory: Is there any type of recruitment and retention plan in those areas? It certainly impacts, I know, on nurses at the bedside, because when you are short of physiotherapists it is a nurse that ends up having to do the job. The same with the other areas. It is particularly impacting when we look at nurses outside of the city, and we go up north to The Pas or Thompson or Flin Flon. The nurses are more impacted in these areas when they do have a shortage in any of these other professional bodies.

* (11:40)

I am wondering if the Minister could tell me, because I think it is easy to always look at

nurses and physicians: Is there any emphasis being placed on recruitment and retention of these other professions?

Mr. Chomiak: I think I have made it clear during the course of Estimates, and during the course of specific questions in the House, that there is a dearth, a shortage, in virtually every human resource of health care across this province. I have said very clearly that we are going to actively pursue and recruit in a variety of areas. We are going to announce programming and changes in a variety of areas.

Now I do not want to start getting political, but part of the problem was a lack of activity in the last 10 years. One of the proposals the Member referred to earlier had come to government about 3 years ago. Now the Member is asking if we are acting this fall, when it had not been acted upon. We will be acting on these issues. We are putting together a comprehensive human resource strategy across the spectrum. You have heard the nurses' plan announced. You will hear about the physician plan announced. You will hear much more about a variety of other professional groups from this government.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me what principles he is following in establishing bargaining strategies.

Mr. Chomiak: In general, of course, in bargaining with the physicians, we are following the Teskey award with respect to the other professions. Because we are in bargaining with a variety of other organizations and groups, we take into consideration most of the usual factors.

Mrs. Driedger: I have never had any involvement at any level in bargaining. I would think that as we enter into looking at bargaining with various groups that there might be certain principles one follows or guidelines that are set so that there is fairness and consistency in all bargaining. For instance, would the Minister look at, well, if he is going to settle with one group at 2, 2, and 2, is that something that would then for fairness and consistency be what he looks at when he is bargaining in other areas, or does he not follow that particular line of thinking?

Mr. Chomiak: I think that the Member ought to know that we are involved in a series of negotiations literally as we speak. There are obviously negotiating strategies and negotiating guidelines that are followed. I do not think it furthers the process just by the nature of it and makes it very difficult if we were to outline publicly our negotiating and our bargaining strategy. Suffice to say that we are cognizant of the competitive demands and pressures on Manitoba in a variety of areas.

As I indicated to the Member in our previous discussion with respect to some issues of bargaining that the Member had raised with respect to related issues of bonuses and things like that, there are certain principles we try to adhere to. We are also very cognizant of the competitive needs and demands for all of these organizations we are bargaining with as well as the pressures from other jurisdictions. I do not think for me to outline specific bargaining strategies and approaches would further the process.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could tell me what the salary scale for midwives was set at.

Mr. Chomiak: The process for determination of the salary for midwives was a process that resulted from discussions and negotiations with all of the organizations and all of the groups involved and roughly reflects that of a senior nurse or a senior health care professional.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could provide me with their salary scale.

Mr. Chomiak: We will provide that to the Member.

Mrs. Driedger: I do not know if we covered it or not, and maybe if we have, the Minister's memory will be better than mine. In Health Labour Relations, under External Agencies, the annualization and expansion of grants has risen somewhat dramatically. I wonder if the Minister could give me an explanation of that and perhaps what grants were actually expanded.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, we covered that. That was the College of Physicians and

Surgeons, the Quality Assurance Program, the Drug Transfusion Program and the Clinical Practice Guidelines. It was those three big issues, but I understand. I know what that is like.

Mrs. Driedger: I remember that now. I knew we talked about it somewhere and that has reminded me. I am ready to pass this line.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 21.2.(f)(1) Salary and Employee Benefits \$1,043,000–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$405,300–pass; (3) External Agencies \$692,300–pass.

Item 2.(g) Grants for Evaluation and Research (1) Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation \$1,850,000. Shall the item pass?

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister would be prepared to table the grants and awards made by the Manitoba Health Research Council.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, certainly.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder if the Minister could provide me with the names of the members. Now, I guess, I should first ask, is there a board that is responsible for the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation?

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, there is, Mr. Chairperson, and we will provide the Member with a list of the Board members.

Mrs. Driedger: I wonder when the Minister is doing that, or maybe he can even tell me now, have there been any board changes made?

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, there have been several changes to the Board in the past. We will provide a list of the changes, and I think the only addition is Mr. Dedi. Mr. Hikel is the Acting Deputy Minister who has been put on the Board as well. We will provide the specific list to the Member.

Mrs. Driedger: Could the Minister tell me whether there have been any staff changes made?

Mr. Chomiak: Yes. There have probably been some staff changes but not at the senior level that we are aware of.

Mrs. Driedger: I am prepared to pass this line.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 21.2.(g)(1) Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation \$1,853,000–pass; (2) Manitoba Health Research Council \$1,752,600–pass.

* (11:50)

Resolution 21.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$28,782,100 for Health, Program Support Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2001.

Resolution agreed to.

The next item is 21.3. External Programs and Operations (a) Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$310,900–pass; (2) Other expenditures \$194,100–pass.

Item 3.(b) Regional Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,943,400. Shall the item pass?

Mrs. Driedger: One question in this area, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering if the Minister could tell me: There was an increase of \$33.4 thousand under Professional/Technical despite the same number of staff, and I wonder if he could give me an indication of the reason behind that increase.

Mr. Chomiak: It is indicated to me there is about \$15,000 roughly for staff increments and the like and \$14,000 for Desktop.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 21.3. External Programs and Operations (b) Regional Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,943,400–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$659,300–pass.

Item 3.(c) Chief Provincial Psychiatrist (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$178,500–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$47,800–pass.

Item 3.(d) Selkirk Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$18,554,000. Shall the item pass?

Mrs. Driedger: I have just one question for the Minister in this area. I know that my colleague

from Gimli had expressed some concerns in Question Period a while back in terms of the staffing issues at the Centre. I wonder if the Minister could address whether or not some of that has been resolved.

Mr. Chomiak: The issues expressed by the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) were concerning the Selkirk crisis stabilization unit. Those are part of an ongoing, continuing collective bargaining issue that is under negotiation. As I understand it, the Centre is still functioning and open.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 21.3.(d) Selkirk Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$18,554,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$3,391,800—pass.

Item 3.(e) Emergency Health and Ambulance Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$998,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$4,152,900—pass; (3) External Agencies \$51,900—pass.

3.(f) Public Health (1) Public Health and Epidemiology (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,023,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$9,054,300—pass; (c) External Agencies \$195,700—pass.

3.(f)(1)(2) Cadham Provincial Laboratory Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,084,100—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$3,315,800—pass.

3.(g) Medical Officers of Health (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,539,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$88,800—pass.

3.(h) Health Programs (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,467,200. Shall the item pass?

Mrs. Driedger: Under Health Programs, Primary Health Care in the Activity Identification section, it indicates: "Design and implement targeted education and communication strategies, to enhance client and stakeholder understanding of primary care and primary health care."

I wonder if the Minister could give me an idea of the kind of activities being undertaken in that particular area.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, there is a Primary Health Care unit within the Department of Health. It is developed and meets with and regularly converses with all of the various regions in terms of trying to acquaint them and move them towards the development of a primary health care model. It is a working group that has been very active in the Department. It has been active for some time and is one of the areas I think that has done some fairly good work in terms of development and models and activities.

Mr. Chairperson: The hour being 12 noon, I am interrupting proceedings and leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will resume sitting at 1:30 p.m. for Routine Proceedings and that the House will also be resuming consideration of the Estimates process after Routine Proceedings.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 13, 2000

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