



Third Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
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DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
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GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
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LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
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STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 18, 2002

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to advise the House that Hansard was delayed in coming back from the printer today and that it should be arriving shortly.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Transcona-Springfield School Division

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to present this on behalf of the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

I have reviewed the petition, and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The Clerk please read.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT on November 8, 2001, the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) announced a split in the Transcona-Springfield School Division but despite repeated requests has been unable to identify any benefits of this decision to the students and taxpayers of said school division; and

THAT this decision was not preceded by adequate public consultation as outlined in section 7 of The Public Schools Act; and

THAT this decision would result in significant hardships for the students in both Transcona and Springfield that would affect the quality of their education; and

THAT the proposal by the Minister of Education on February 12, 2002, neither alleviates nor remedies these hardships; and

THAT this decision results in an increased financial burden on the taxpayers of both the Transcona-Springfield School Division and the province of Manitoba; and

THAT on March 13, 2002, the number of resident electors required by The Public Schools Act requested the Minister of Education to convene a Board of Reference to decide the matter.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of Education to reverse the decision to split the Transcona-Springfield School Division and allow it to remain as a whole or to consider immediately convening the Board of Reference to decide the matter.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present the Annual Report, 2001-2002, of the Surface Rights Board.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister does not require leave for that.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report for 2001 for the Municipal Board.

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Estimates of Industry, Trade and Mines for 2002-2003.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 54—The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Conflict of Interest Amendment (Conflict of Interest Commissioner) Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by

the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), that leave be given to introduce Bill 54, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Conflict of Interest Amendment (Conflict of Interest Commissioner) Act, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Administrator, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table the Administrator's message.

Motion presented.

* (13:35)

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for the appointment of an independent conflict of interest commissioner to give advice to members of the Legislative Assembly about their obligations under The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Conflict of Interest Act.

Motion agreed to.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Gaming

Government Reliance on Revenues

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the Doer government has milked the gambling cow for all it is worth, tripling the advertising budget for gambling, expanding VLT hours and announcing five new casinos. The latest StatsCan numbers showing Manitobans spend more per capita on gambling is proof of how successful their hypocrisy has been.

My question is to the Minister of Lotteries: How much more money must Manitobans spend on gambling until this Government's addiction to gambling revenue is satisfied?

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin—I do not think my mike is on.

An Honourable Member: It is on.

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by pointing out that the study to which the

member has referred is a study that covers the years 1992 to 2001. In other words, it covers a period which involves seven years of Tory government and two years of New Democrat government. During those years gambling has expanded in the province of Manitoba, revenues have increased and expenditures per individual have increased as the member has put on the record. That is quite accurate. But I do make that point.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that, during the regime of the New Democratic government, several initiatives have been taken that were certainly not part of the former government's time in office, for example, responsible use practices, the first responsible use policy in the country; training workers in VLT site holders to recognize problem gambling, and I will finish.

Mr. Tweed: Mr. Speaker, what the minister fails to acknowledge is that it is her Government's policy of increased gambling advertising, the number of increases in casinos in the province of Manitoba, and I would like to ask—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

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

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you kindly remind the honourable member that a supplementary question should need no preamble, citation 409.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, on the same point of order.

Mr. Tweed: Same point of order, Mr. Speaker. If the Government is afraid to accept the facts that they have increased the number of gambling advertisements by triple in this province and the number of casinos by five, he may do so at his own peril.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, he has a point of order. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable members

that a supplementary question should require no preamble.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the honourable member to please put his question.

Mr. Tweed: Can the minister responsible for gambling or the Minister responsible for Lotteries explain or tell Manitobans: Is she now saying that Manitoba is going to become the Las Vegas of Canada?

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is the premise in the member's question shows his question to be the *reductio ad absurdum* that it is because the logical conclusion, if his premises were to hold, would be that we had the greatest number of addicted gamblers in the country. But several studies have been done involving Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, and in those four provinces, we have the lowest problem with gambling: 5.1 in Alberta, 5.9 in Saskatchewan, 3.4 in Manitoba and 3.8 in Ontario, so the question is mere nonsense.

Advertising Policy

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): I suggest the nonsense, Mr. Speaker, is coming from the Minister of Lotteries. I would ask her to confirm today that Manitobans spend more per capita now than any other province in Canada. I ask her to confirm that Manitoba's total gambling revenue has increased by three times. I ask her to confirm that she has increased gambling advertising by triple.

* (13:40)

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, since there was no carefully drawn question, I will simply say that Manitoba has the lowest incidence of problem gambling. I will repeat that, and I will point out that the AFM advises me that there is no link that they know of, that there is no link between monies spent and numbers of addicted individuals.

Again, I point out that gambling grew under members opposite, seven years in government, as opposed to two years here.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, on a point of order.

Mr. Tweed: Yes, Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne* 417, provoke debate. The minister talks about no known connections. She must have felt that when she said in December 3 of 2001: I do not know of a government that advertises gambling because this Government does not advertise gambling at all.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Advanced Education, on the same point of order.

Ms. McGifford: Well, yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. I would like to say there is no point of order. It is a mere abuse of rules, a habit to which we have grown accustomed.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Before making a ruling, I would like to point out two things: first of all, that a point of order should not be used for a rebuttal; and the other thing is I would like to remind all honourable members when they rise on a point of order, it is to convince the Speaker either it is a point of order or it is not a point of order. The Speaker will decide if it is a point of order, but it is to convince the Speaker one way or the other. I would just like to remind all honourable members of that.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed), he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Cardiac Surgery Accessibility

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, in *The Winnipeg Sun* today we heard of another patient, Walter Kowaliuk, who has been bumped twice for heart surgery. He has been waiting for one year for heart surgery, and he is

absolutely terrified of being bumped again on Tuesday.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health if he is aware that Mr. Kowaliuk was told by numerous staff at St. Boniface Hospital that bumping is now the norm under the NDP government?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): I understand there was a story in that particular journal as quoted by the member, and I understand that he has surgery scheduled, I believe, for next week or the following week. What I can confirm is that when we came to office, the wait list for heart surgery was longer than it is today.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health tell us why he has limited the number of surgeries to 1173 a year, as stated by Dr. Brock Wright in a radio interview, the lowest number of surgeries since the mid-nineties? Knowing that this limitation leads to bumping of surgeries, why has he limited the number of surgeries?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, for the past three years we have been following the national standard of cardiac care of Ontario, in terms of the clinical approach to heart care. In fact, we are doing front-end innovative procedures to lessen the amount of surgeries, I was advised as early as this morning. I can indicate to the member opposite that this May we did more surgeries than any time in the last year.

Mrs. Driedger: Can the Minister of Health tell us why he has closed 18 ICU beds, as stated in a June *Free Press* article, which again limits the number of surgeries that can be done and creates this bumping situation? Why has he closed 18 ICU beds?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, firstly, I can indicate that every year there are ICU beds that are closed as a result of—[interjection] if the member wants to ask another question she will have her chance.

ICU beds are closed because of the usual summer closures. I can also indicate, as I indicated a year and a half ago in an article in the

Free Press, that we were pressed with respect to ICU nurses, which is one of the reasons why we doubled the number of nurses in training, as opposed to members opposite who not only cut the nurses training program but, when we tried to bring back the diploma program, opposed that. In addition, Mr. Speaker, this Government did not do what members opposite did, and that is close 1400 acute care beds in the province of Manitoba, the greatest in the history of the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Charleswood, on a new question.

* (13:45)

Mortality Rates

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): On a new question, Mr. Speaker. It has been reported that the mortality rates in cardiac surgery have increased significantly under the Doer government. Has the Minister of Health had any discussion with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority as to whether the increased mortality rates following cardiac surgery are related to the length of time patients are forced to wait for surgery or by the stress caused by bumping? Has he had those discussions?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): I can indicate to the member opposite a number of points. Firstly, if at the end of this year the member is to look at the number of cardiac surgeries, I think she will find that we will have increased the cardiac surgeries. Secondly, I can indicate to the member that we are taking all of our numbers and comparing them to national standards and international standards with respect to mortality. I was informed as recently as this morning that at this point we are waiting for final numbers in the fall. Those numbers in fact compare quite favourably with international standards.

As I said to the media scrum when this issue came up—[interjection] Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, when Linda West and the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) had a press conference on this issue on Monday some of the numbers that were put forward by the Member for River Heights were in fact down. Notwithstanding that we are going to take those numbers and compare them nationally and internationally

in the fall. At that time if the member wants to debate the numbers I will be happy to debate the numbers any time.

Physician Resources

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Can the Minister of Health tell us how Manitoba can carry on a safe cardiac surgery program when four cardiac surgeons have left in this past year alone and the remaining five surgeons are forced to work between St. Boniface Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre? As a nurse, this alarms me.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): I see the member opposite is trying to revisit the issue by the Filmon government to consolidate all heart surgeries at Health Sciences Centre.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, we reversed that decision and said there would be one program. We would operate it at Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital. People in the cardiac community are quite supportive of that.

I might add, with respect to the surgeon leaving, there is a report that is being done. *[interjection]* If I were the member opposite and members opposite, I would be very cautious, because there is a report reviewing a particular instance of a particular surgeon, and I think we ought to let Judge Krindle do her report before members opposite jump to the many conclusions they seem to be jumping to, not just in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, but on a continuing basis. I think it would be prudent to wait until that report is out.

Program Review

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Has the Minister of Health demanded a full and thorough review of the cardiac surgery program to get to the bottom of why mortality rates have risen under his watch, why four cardiac surgeons have left in the past year, why critical care nurses are angry and morale is low and why the program

appears to be in crisis? Has he done anything about this?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): What I can indicate to the member opposite is, in December 1999, there were 173 people waiting; now there are only 147. What I can indicate is we have committed \$20 million to rebuild a cardiac program, \$20 million, Mr. Speaker, a program that was allowed to deteriorate during the dark years of the Tory government as said by the member, the president of the Manitoba Medical Association called it the dark Tory years. We have gone through that. We have gone through cardiac reviews.

We have gone through situations, Mr. Speaker, we have learned some lessons and one of the lessons we did is a year and a half ago we announced an expanded cardiac program, a program that had \$20 million invested, new angioplast and angiograph suites, new facilities, new surgeons, improved—*[interjection]* That is why we have an overall cardiac program, that is why we are rebuilding it—*[interjection]*

I believe that members opposite ought to wait until the mortality rates come out in the fall before they make some of those claims they are making today, and I suggest they wait until Judge Krindle makes her report before she makes the outrageous comments that she has been making.

* (13:50)

Golden Boy Merchandising Program

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Government announced that it is going to merchandise the Golden Boy. The Government press release stated, and I quote: "Proceeds from the sale of items will be used to cover the costs of the merchandising program." Today the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported that profits will go into a heritage fund for future restorations of Manitoba buildings and symbols, and *The Winnipeg Sun* reported that profits will go toward restoring the Golden Boy. I would like to table all three documents I have referenced.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Government Services is: Could the Minister of Government Services please clarify whether Golden Boy merchandise will be sold strictly on a break-even basis or if in fact there will be a profit?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how pleased I am to get a question on the Golden Boy. I think the project has captured the imagination of Manitobans. I particularly am pleased to answer questions in response to an initiative that was taken by the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau), who, in responding to his constituents' concerns, found, as I have found, that Manitobans were asking, including at the time when the museum display took place, for an opportunity to have exactly this type of merchandise available.

Our No. 1 priority is to provide it as a public service. I want to indicate that our No. 1 priority is to provide this public service, but if there are any proceeds, we will do a very novel thing, Mr. Speaker. We are going to put it back into improving our historic buildings for other projects similar to the Golden Boy. I think that makes sense.

Mrs. Dacquay: My supplementary question to the Minister of Government Services is: Can he explain how a new heritage fund based on profits from the sale of Golden Boy merchandise would be administered?

Mr. Ashton: I think it is important to note that historically when this building was first constructed, and I will not get into the scandal involving the Conservative government of the day, but it was actually financed both through tax revenues and what was called subscription in which Manitobans actually donated money for the building of the building and the Golden Boy itself.

We are now I think trying to be innovative. I am surprised members opposite would have a problem with the word "profit" because what we are saying here, if there are proceeds, we are going to put it back into that kind of project in the future. I think most Manitobans will agree with that.

Mrs. Dacquay: Can the Minister of Government Services, given this Government's abysmal track record trying to manage Crown corporations, assure Manitoba taxpayers they will not end up on the hook for the sale of Golden Boy action figures and tattoos?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is the difference between the Conservatives and the NDP. They sold off the phone company; we are selling Golden Boy souvenirs.

Golden Boy Proprietary Rights

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): This does deserve a follow-up question.

Mr. Speaker, the Golden Boy is one of Manitoba's most important icons, and one that is held in high regard by Manitobans and visitors alike, but it is important that it be treated with the utmost respect. So my question for the Minister of Government Services is whether he can tell this House and all Manitobans as to whether the provincial government holds the proprietary rights to the Golden Boy and any use of his images or copies.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): Well, Mr. Speaker, once again I am really pleased to see the interest in this project. I can indicate essentially the Golden Boy is public domain. I believe he belongs to all of us here in this province.

I will tell you how much enthusiasm there is for the Golden Boy. We actually had a senior, I believe in the constituency of the Member for Portage (Mr. Faurichou), who actually volunteered to donate money for the repair of the Golden Boy. Well, we said thank you, but what we are trying to do is be innovative here, be entrepreneurial, and we are trying to take the proceeds and put it back into this kind of restoration in the future.

* (13:55)

Merchandising Program

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if the Minister of Government

Services could tell this House how the Golden Boy product line was tendered and whether Manitoba companies are making the Golden Boy merchandise.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I really welcome this question because one of the things the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau) who pioneered this has been doing is exactly that, making sure we have the opportunity for Manitobans to be part of this and Manitoba companies.

Like the project itself, I want to put on the record that we have had tremendous participation from Manitoba companies, including Bristol Aerospace, by the way, which has donated its facilities and its work for part of the project of the Golden Boy. We are doing this here in Manitoba.

Mr. Pitura: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary. The minister did not answer the question. Was the product line tendered or not?

Mr. Ashton: I really do not think history is going to repeat itself here. I do not think we are going to end up in a commission of inquiry like we did back in the construction of the building, but I welcome questions on this because we have worked with Manitoba companies.

I want to say, by the way, when we go into Estimates I welcome the input from members opposite, because I view this, we view this as a Government as a project we should all be proud of. I invite members opposite to give their ideas because we welcome them.

Fetal Alcohol Program Current Statistics

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): My question is to the Minister of Family Services. Each year in Manitoba we have many children born with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects. The minister has talked much about this issue and there does appear to be progress, for which I compliment the minister.

My question to the minister is this: In order to know the extent to which progress is being

made, I ask the minister if he can provide the numbers of children born with FAS and FAE for the years 1999, 2000 and 2001.

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Family Services and Housing): I welcome the member's question. I believe we are making progress in regard to particularly reducing the number of very high-risk women who would likely give birth to a child with fetal alcohol syndrome through the STOP FAS program expansions which have recently been announced.

As the member will know, the definition and diagnosis of FAS in infants is extremely problematic. It is relatively easy to diagnose when it is full blown and obvious with the facial deformation that comes with severe FAS. It is much more difficult as the level of disability diminishes slightly and the obvious physical symptoms are not there, and they do not show up until the child is in a developmental stage at 18 to 24 months. Some of it may not show up until language acquisition begins and the notions of numeracy begin. Then you begin to see both the behaviour difficulties and the difficulty at acquiring and using knowledge.

The clinic at the Health Sciences Centre is an extremely fine clinic, as you know. It is one of the leading clinics in Canada in this regard. The estimates are—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

* (14:00)

Mr. Gerrard: I look forward to the rest of the minister's answer. I would say that it is quite important.

I ask the minister: When it can make such a big difference to these children entering school and early on, can the minister provide us or tell us what he is doing in terms of estimates of numbers and whether it is at birth or at age two or at age five?

Mr. Sale: As I was saying, the issue of numbers is a very, very difficult issue. The estimates in Canada are between one and two per thousand, but there are communities, for example, in the Yukon where the percentage of children born

affected with fetal alcohol syndrome range as high as 50 percent. So there is essentially a whole generation being decimated in some parts of Canada. High rates are experienced in some northern communities, very low rates in other northern communities.

I will be happy in Estimates to attempt to provide specific numbers of the children newly diagnosed each year at the clinic for the member for the last number of years. Those numbers are available. I do not have them with me today but I would certainly be glad to answer those questions in Estimates today.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I would repeat the question, which is: Can the minister provide numbers for the last three years to see if there are some trends to improve? Indeed, can the minister even give us an estimate of the proportion of children with FAS who would actually be diagnosed at the clinic compared with the numbers of children who remain in the community who have FAS but are not diagnosed because they are not referred down to the clinic?

Mr. Sale: Mr. Speaker, I think I gave the member the best answer I can and that is, if he will ask that question in Estimates, I will have the information. If he wants it before Estimates, I will try and get him information, but to speculate in terms of the numbers of undiagnosed cases is not a job for a Minister of Family Services. It may be a job for an epidemiologist, but it is certainly not one that I would undertake.

Film Industry Government Initiatives

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, Winnipeg is earning the reputation as Winni-wood or Hollywood of the North, as we have just won out over Houston to play the city of Houston in the movie *Crooked E: The Inside Story of Enron*.

I want to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines to tell the House about this success story in the developing film industry and other cultural industries in Manitoba.

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines): Well, this is truly good

news for Winnipeg and Manitoba, and there have been a number of initiatives that have originated in the eighties and have developed through the nineties. We are proud to say that this year we will have productions between \$80 million to \$100 million of film industry here in Winnipeg.

That substantial increase is due to a number of reasons, and I am very pleased that our Premier (Mr. Doer) did raise this, was one of the main purposes of a trade mission to L.A., that it is identified as one of our key strategic clusters. We have also last year removed the \$50-million asset cap which allows more international co-productions. We have created and established crews that can handle international film productions, a strong and talented acting base, diverse and interesting locations for shoots, the tax credit and flexible and responsive teams.

Garden Valley School Division Adult Education Programs

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education likes to talk about increasing access for educational opportunities. However, in the case of the adult education students of Garden Valley, the minister is putting up barriers with the withdrawal of adult education funding.

Mr. Speaker, why is this minister turning his back on the large adult immigrant population at Garden Valley School Division by refusing them access to educational opportunities?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, when I assumed the office as Minister of Education in October 1999, there was \$6 million budgeted for adult learning centres in the province. Today there is \$12 million budgeted for adult learning centres.

Mr. Dyck: Mr. Speaker, the lowest support at 59 percent has been indicated by MTS.

Mr. Speaker, my next question. My constituency is among the fastest growing in Manitoba. Why would this minister not encourage furthering one's education among our adult immigrant population?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, this Government believes in supporting and encouraging

Manitobans throughout their lives to enhance their educational opportunities.

Mr. Dyck: It is a sorry state in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister support the superintendent, who referred to this decision as arbitrary and personally commit to reviewing the division's business case and reinstate the funding for this program?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, every year proposals are made from across the province for funding support from the Government for adult learning centres. As I indicated in my first answer, when this Government came into office, adult learning centres were budgeted at \$6 million. Today we are investing over \$12 million in adult learning centres. We will continue to support adult learners in the province of Manitoba.

Seniors Home Security Loan Program Status

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Justice put his best spin on the latest Juristat numbers that showed a 6% increase in crime in Manitoba. The minister even attempted to discredit StatsCanada calling the information outdated.

Mr. Speaker, one of the commitments made by the Doer government in the last election was a home security loan program for seniors. It has now been over 1000 days since this so-called commitment. Just how much higher does our crime rate have to be before this minister makes good on his election promise?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I wish the honourable member would read the Statistics Canada report as well as she reads the calendar, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that, of course, despite a national trend of an increase in violent crime, Manitoba did buck that trend and there was a reduction in violent crime, recognizing that the threat of and the ongoing epidemic of auto theft in 2001 continued in no small way to drive the overall rate. So there is hard work underway to deal with auto theft and the rate is now coming down by, I understand, 10.8 percent in the first six months of the year.

In terms of the seniors home security loan program, we are looking at a broad range of issues in terms of how we can better work with seniors and indeed ensure that seniors have access to programs that meet their needs in terms of enhancing their safety. That is a commitment made by this Government and will be delivered by this Government.

Crime Rate Reduction Strategy

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, according to criminologist Doug Skoog, crime in Manitoba will likely continue to increase in the years to come. Stats Canada reports that Manitoba had the single largest increase in their crime rate for 2001.

When is this minister going to take concrete action to address this growing problem which is creeping, by the way, into my own constituency as evidenced by the two recent fire bombings?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to recall, I do not think that Manitobans need lessons from Conservatives on crime rates. We, unfortunately, suffered the distinction of being the violent crime capital of Canada for many, many years, 1993 to 1998, and we saw increased rates of violent crime in this province for many of those years.

Hopefully, the indication from 2001 of a decrease in violent crime will continue. It holds out some promise. We can only be cautiously optimistic. In the meantime, we must remain vigilant, strengthen those relationships with our partners in the police sector, in the citizen patrol area, the community generally, with schools, with the federal government and municipalities. This Government is working each and every day to bring in innovations to the criminal justice system.

Mrs. Smith: Mr. Speaker, Stats Canada reports that Manitoba has indeed a violent crime problem. It is second in the crime rate in all of Canada at this point in time in this area.

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I should have said on a new question. My apologies. This is a new question.

The minister campaigned on the catchy slogan of we will make our community safer. My question to the minister is: Since he campaigned on the slogan of we will make our community safer, what is he doing, what is this Government doing to produce some results and make crimes eradicated in this city?

* (14:10)

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, I will just reiterate, when it comes to personal safety, violent crime was down in 2001, bucking the national trend of an increase in violent crime across Canada. We recognize that the challenge of auto theft has continued since 1993. We appear to be able to ratchet this down, working with all Manitobans, MPI, police and citizen patrols, for example, but more has to be done. We know that. That is why this week, in concert with the City of Winnipeg, we announced 21 new officers.

River East School Division Class Size and Composition Costs

Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa): River East School Division estimates that it will cost them \$8 million to implement the class size and composition initiative if the minister allows that to go forward. Would the minister commit to picking up the costs the River East School Division will incur?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, for the first time in Manitoba's history, Budget 2002 allocated over \$1 billion in support of the public school system in this province. This Government made a commitment unique in Canada to support the public education system at, at least, the rate of economic growth. We have had three successive years of historic increases in the support of operating funds to the public school system, in contrast to 10 years of cuts perpetrated on the system by members opposite when they were in office. This Government is committed to investing in our public education system and supporting educational excellence.

Mr. Gilleshammer: On a new question.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Minnedosa, on a new question.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like the minister to focus his mind on the issue of class size and composition. River East School Division has indicated it is going to cost them eight million additional dollars. That is \$8 million they are not spending this year; that is \$8 million they do not have.

If the minister foists this initiative on River East School Division, will he pick up the costs?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I heard a number of if's in the question the member asked me to focus on. If a comet hits the planet next week, that will put a different context into our daily lives as well.

I will say, not as an if but as a fact, that this Government has invested in education at rates unprecedented in the province's history and has supported educators throughout the province in providing educational excellence in the classroom in its mandate.

School Divisions Operating Costs

Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa): On a new question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Minnedosa, on a new question.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Would the minister acknowledge, as his correspondence does, that he is responsible for only 59.2 percent of the operating costs of school divisions, and this is in fact an historic low?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, I will acknowledge that Manitoba taxpayers contributed 76 cents out of every dollar spent in the public education system. Manitoba taxpayers cover 100 percent of the capital costs of our public education system, 100 percent of the employers' share of pension costs available to retired educators.

We are, as a province and as individuals throughout this province, committed to providing educational excellence to the students who go to class day in and day out for 200 school days in the classrooms of the province of Manitoba.

Kenaston and Wilkes Underpass Funding

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the Member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), in opposition, spoke up loudly and strongly against any public funding of a new downtown arena and, in particular, any public funding going to subsidize an NHL franchise.

Now the tune has changed. Not only has she negotiated \$38.5 million for a new arena, she has sat by quietly as her Premier (Mr. Doer) has negotiated a deal which will see \$4 million to \$6 million going to subsidizing an AHL franchise.

I would ask this minister, who has also apparently changed her mind on amalgamation—in '95 she was against, now she is for—if she will change her mind one more time for the benefit of those citizens in west and southern Winnipeg who would ask her to go back to the negotiating table and renegotiate the infrastructure program to get rid of that footbridge from The Forks to Provencher and provide proper funding for an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I do recognize the member's frustration with the difficulty he faced with his arena agreement and indeed the absence of an agreement that was able to be reached by the previous government. So I recognize there is a great deal of disappointment there, and I understand the frustration behind the member's question in that this Government has indeed been able to negotiate support for an arena downtown for our plans for downtown revitalization which are well under way.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Bishop Nykyta Budka Monument

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin-Roblin): On the August long weekend, August 2 to 4, the Selo

site in Dauphin will be hosting Canada's Ukrainian National Festival. Part of the celebrations of that weekend include a get-together at the Trembowla Cross of Freedom which is located north and west of Dauphin. At this Cross of Freedom event, there will be a monument that will be unveiled by the people who will be attending. This monument is a monument to Bishop Nykyta Budka who was the first Ukrainian Catholic bishop in Canada.

This site, this day and this unveiling is a big part of the Ukrainian Catholic culture in Manitoba and in western Canada. It is also a unique opportunity for a very worthy site in our part of the world. It is a big day for tourism in the Parkland area.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate Kay and John Slobodzian—John Slobodzian is the president of the Cross of Freedom—Stella Sapach, who is the treasurer, and all the many volunteers who operate the Trembowla Cross of Freedom all through the year and organize this day as part of the Ukrainian festival.

I want to invite all members in this House and all Manitobans to come up to the Trembowla Cross of Freedom on that Ukrainian festival weekend, join in the festivities and also pay tribute to those people who are working to preserve this culture.

Mayor Clare Braun (Niverville)

Mr. Jim Penner (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today in recognition of Mayor Clare Braun of the Town of Niverville for his service to the residents of the community and to all Manitobans. Recently Mayor Braun announced he will not be seeking a third mandate in the October municipal elections. While his departure will certainly create a tremendous hole to be filled on Niverville council, he also leaves a strong legacy of which to be proud.

As many of the members of this Chamber know, the town of Niverville has seen tremendous growth as a result of the leadership of Mayor Clare Braun. In fact, Niverville is now one of the fastest growing communities in our province, and business continues to grow and develop. In addition, as mayor, Mr. Braun

worked to better the community through the promotion of volunteer and community activities. As a result, Niverville has seen an increased number of volunteers and has seen the rebirth of its major festival, the Niverville Old Time Country Days.

* (14:20)

Mayor Braun has always seen the importance of individual responsibility, as well as the importance of teamwork. Through this recognition, he has helped the town of Niverville establish good relationships with neighbouring municipalities and achieved a number of important initiatives. Key among these is the securing of flood protection for Niverville following the flood of '97. This has given many residents confidence in their community and its future.

Mr. Speaker, members of this Chamber know full well the sacrifices that are made when involved in public life. Mr. Braun has made those sacrifices but has left behind a stronger community and a better future for the residents of Niverville.

On behalf of all members of this House, I would like to extend our thanks to Mayor Clare Braun for his service and best wishes in his future.

Climate Change

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, with the debate about signing the Kyoto agreement on climate change, I want to share with the House some information from David Suzuki's new book, *Good News for a Change*. It is relevant to our region as we are faced with another weekend of the heat wave and we are looking at compensating flooded farmers and others.

Very powerful interests like the insurance industry are feeling the effects of climate change, and I want to read from page 289: Payments for climate-change-related catastrophes such as hurricanes, tornadoes, fires and droughts have been so high in recent years that they are threatening to bankrupt many insurance companies. In 1998, weather-related damage claims on insurance policies exceeded \$89 billion U.S. and, in that single year, were greater than all

weather-related damage claims in the entire decade of the 1980s. Not only are hurricanes, ice storms, heat waves and floods occurring with greater fury, but they are happening in places that have never seen this before. In November 2000, Britain's largest property insurer estimated that, if left unchecked, climate change will bankrupt the global economy by 2065.

Mr. Speaker, it is not our imagination or not just more media coverage, but there are more natural disasters and extreme weather events occurring, a predicted state of climate change, global warming and destruction of the ozone layer.

I would encourage all members of the House to have a good summer read. Read this. Read Mr. Suzuki's latest book and take seriously what is happening in our environment.

Carl McGregor

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honour the extraordinary contributions of one extraordinary man, the late Carl McGregor of Rossendale.

Mr. McGregor was born in 1923. During his lifetime, McGregor worked at various farm-related jobs. However, more significantly, he made many remarkable and unparalleled contributions to charity. He donated money to the Rossendale United Church, the Community Foundation of Portage and District Inc., the Red Cross, the University of Manitoba Faculty of Agriculture and the Portage District General Hospital Foundation. As if this were not enough, McGregor also established a private foundation that would provide \$800 bursaries to students from four high schools.

Eventually, this private foundation dissolved and was incorporated into the Portage foundation, where it became the H. Carl McGregor Bursary Fund. Further donations included over \$100,000 to the Portage foundation, \$65,000 to the bursary fund and another \$31,000 with no designated use.

After donating thousands of dollars to charities throughout the 78 years of his life, Mr. McGregor passed away last October. In his will,

he continued his legacy of giving by willing \$180,000 to the North Norfolk-MacGregor Foundation. This money will more than double the foundation's assets and further its success.

Clearly, as an individual, McGregor was well aware of the value and importance of giving of himself in order to make the world a better place. He cared about the people around him and put them before himself. He may be seen as a role model who possessed all the morals and qualities of an outstanding individual.

Mr. Speaker, the people who knew him remember him as a very giving man and a very generous person. Manitoba regional co-ordinator for Community Foundation of Canada, Jim Rennie, knew McGregor and comments now that it is a pleasure just to think about him. Through his contributions to the community, McGregor earned the sincere respect of the people around him, and it is this respect that will make the memory live on forever. On behalf of all members of this Chamber, I would like to pay tribute to this truly wonderful and exceptional human being.

Incubat

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): I am very pleased to rise today to note an extremely significant development that was announced yesterday by my colleagues, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines (Ms. Mihychuk) and the Minister of Advanced Education (Ms. McGifford).

SmartPark, the University of Manitoba's research park will be undergoing a major growth spurt in the coming months. This is a development that bodes extremely well for Manitoba's research, education and business communities. Construction on a new multi-tenant facility will begin immediately and will serve as a catalyst for new partnerships between industry, academia and the private sector. The \$3-million privately-funded project will house TR Labs, an information and communications technology research consortium, and ProfitMaster Canada, a local manufacturer of computer finance solutions.

The most exciting development was the establishment of Incubat, a private-sector-driven

technology business incubator that benefited from support from the Manitoba government and will create new start-up companies arising from research conducted at the University. All three tenants will contribute an enhanced economic development in Manitoba and will contribute to enhanced educational opportunities for U of M students.

The announcement yesterday speaks to the importance of university infrastructure as a tool for economic development. We all know of the Filmon government's extreme troubles in providing even the most basic infrastructure for our universities; the leaky roof at the University of Manitoba engineering building being the most embarrassing example. Similarly, while they provided early-stage support for SmartPark, they allowed the empty fields on Chancellor, Matheson Road to sit and sit and sit empty throughout the 1990s until our administration could finally begin to realize this project's potential. The establishment of the SmartPark multi-tenant facility and the Centre for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals announced last year are a very clear indication that the Doer government is well aware of the importance of research parks and business incubators as the critical infrastructure for our universities and students.

* (14:30)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 22-The Public Schools Amendment Act (Francophone School Division Governance Structure)

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on second reading of Bill 22, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Francophone School Division Governance Structure), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Carman.

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, having had the opportunity to peruse this bill with my caucus, we have decided that this bill probably better serves the people of Manitoba having the opportunity to let it go to committee

and give ratepayers in the province of Manitoba an opportunity to make presentations.

I recall the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), at first reading, informing the House that this bill was to have been part of The Public Schools Act that relates to the governance structure of la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, and that it removes the regional committee structure, enables trustees to be elected directly to the Francophone school board; that it would enable the Francophone school board to establish an advisory group for each region in the province of Manitoba; and that it would eliminate outdated provisions specific to the initial establishment of the Francophone school division in our province.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my caucus colleagues, we are prepared now to allow this bill to move forward on to the committee stage.

Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleague from Carman in speaking to this bill. Certainly this minister's record on governance of school divisions is not a sterling one. We have had a Minister of Education who has taken upon himself to fire a school board, and we have a division which will be out of governance officials in terms of duly elected school board members for upwards of a year. This is shameful, and this is a terrible way to have elected officials in the Morris-Macdonald School Division treated.

So, Mr. Speaker, this minister's record on governance is not good. We also have questioned his ability on the governance issue with Bill 14, which has to do with the governance of school divisions across this province, where the minister is taking more and more authority into his own hands. We have had trustees from one end of this province to the other speak out on this issue and condemn the minister for his treatment of them under the guise of implementing new forced boundary amalgamation, but at the same time he is taking upon himself the ability to micromanage school divisions.

So we have grave concerns about how this minister has treated school divisions; the firing

of Morris-Macdonald school officials, particularly trustees, the ramming through this House of a bill on forced amalgamation which does much more than that and treats trustees in a very disdainful way and one that this minister and this Government will pay a price for.

But, with this bill on Francophone governance, it appears that it is time for it to go to committee. We would like to hear from the public on this particular bill. It was our government some years ago that brought in the Francophone governance for the special school division related to schools across this province, and we would very much like to hear from the public on this bill at this time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to put a few comments on the record with respect to Bill 22 and fully concur with my colleagues from Carman and from Minnedosa, on the comments that they have made thus far.

Representing an area that has the Francophone school division within it in three major communities, I would just like to indicate that, first, within the confines of Bill 22, it removes the regional committee structure and enables trustees to be elected directly to the Francophone school board. It also enables the Francophone school board to establish advisory groups for each region, and particularly those two aspects of the bill in my contacts with the constituents within the Francophone school division areas that I represent, they were very much in favour of seeing this bill move forward and through and in terms of the positive impact that it will have on their community. So, along with my colleagues, I would like to see this go through to committee and receive public input.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Monsieur le président, je vais parler quelques moments sur la Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques, qui concerne la structure de gestion de la division scolaire de langue française.

Ce projet de loi est nécessaire et je suis d'accord de façon générale sur le projet. J'ai une

préoccupation particulière, c'est-à-dire le programme exact pour la représentation des petites communautés comme Saint-Laurent et Saint-Lazare. C'est important que ces petites communautés aient une bonne représentation, ainsi que les plus grandes communautés. Pour cette raison j'attends les présentations en comité qui viendront des citoyens du Manitoba.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, I will speak a few moments on The Public Schools Amendment Act concerning the Francophone school division governance structure.

This bill is necessary and I am generally in agreement over it. I have one specific concern, which is the exact plan for representation of small communities such as St. Laurent and St. Lazare. It is important that these small communities have good representation, as well as the larger communities. For that reason I await the presentations in committee by Manitoba citizens.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading Bill 22, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Francophone School Division Governance Structure).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Bill 32—The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on second reading Bill 32, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Fort Garry.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to come and make some remarks on The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act. It is a bill that is necessary here in the province of Manitoba. This bill amends The Fatality Inquiries Act to require the presiding judge to

complete an inquest report within six months after the inquest ends. If, in fact, the judge needs more time to complete the report, request for an extension can be made to the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court.

Mr. Speaker, this bill clarifies some very important points to help things run smoother during the time that an autopsy is required. This bill clearly defines when an autopsy report must be submitted to the Chief Medical Examiner. It changes the circumstances in which the Chief Medical Examiner must review services provided by a Child and Services agency, and it increases the maximum penalty for breaching the act. It also, in addition, makes an amendment to The Provincial Court Act to require information about inquests to be included in the annual report of the court.

It is with pleasure that I am pleased to pass this bill off to committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 32, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

* (14:40)

Bill 33—The Private Vocational Institutions Act

Mr. Speaker: Resumed debate on second reading of Bill 33, The Private Vocational Institutions Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Tuxedo.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, this bill essentially protects students' tuition fees in the event that a private vocational school should go out of business. This is a very important issue for I think all members of this House, to make sure that we do protect our students and the tuition fees that they pay for these institutions.

We on this side of the House are proponents of private vocational schools and want to ensure these institutions continue to prosper in our province. These institutions provide continuing education for those individuals seeking jobs in our province. They are very important toward the job prosperity as well in our province.

There likely will be a few presenters on this bill. They will bring forward some of their concerns on this issue. So I think it is important at this point in time to pass this bill on to committee. That is what we are prepared to do now.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise just to put a few words on the record on this bill. It is, I think, maybe a testament to the type of government we have with the NDP that they are planning for when private vocational schools will go out of business. One wonders if there is not a subtle effort by the NDP to put private schools out of business.

One wonders also if some of the sort of results of the Minister of Education's (Mr. Caldwell) decisions, in a variety of ways, including those in Morris-Macdonald School Division, have not had adverse impacts on educational training in the private sector as well as in the public sector.

Certainly, I look forward to presentations at the committee stage. I think that it is indeed important to protect students, but I also think it is important that we have a framework in which the quality of education, whether it be provided by private schools or public schools, is foremost and that we have a government which is working with all to make sure that the quality of education provided, whatever the institution, is of the highest quality possible.

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

An Honourable Member: Question

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 33, The Private Vocational Institutions Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Bill 43—The Polar Bear Protection Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 43, The Polar Bear Protection Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Lakeside.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I want to put on record the fine contribution made to this bill by my colleague the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Jim Penner) when first introduced to the Chamber.

We have looked at the bill. We are in support of the bill and are pleased to see its speedy passage to committee. My only comments would be that reason prevails. What this bill in principle sets out to do is to prevent the totally unnecessary and unacceptable practice of moving the polar bear, which is unique to our northern climes, into those areas under those conditions that obviously are not in the welfare of its treatment. It does not preclude—nothing in this bill indicates that that is the case. The appropriate home for some of these bears in our well-maintained and well-managed zoos certainly in Canada and in other parts, I would say temperate parts, temperature-wise of the world, and I would like to assure myself that that in fact is the case at committee.

So, with these few comments I want to indicate that we will supporting this bill and look forward to hearing from the minister or any other representations on this bill at committee.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): With regard to The Polar Bear Protection Act, I certainly support the intention of this bill in trying to provide an environment in this province and indeed elsewhere around the world where polar bears from Manitoba will be in circumstances, if they are not in the wild, where they are very well supported. I am actually quite interested to have more details at committee stage of the better understanding of precisely how the minister intends to provide for the extra territoriality of this bill. He clearly is going to intend to have this apply and enforceable on a global basis, and this is unusual for bills. I will listen to the minister and be ready with some questions and looking forward to presenters who have comments on this interesting aspect of the polar bear bill.

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

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question for the House is Bill 43, The Polar Bear Protection Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 44—The Provincial Police Amendment
(Aboriginal Policing) Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 44, The Provincial Police Amendment (Aboriginal Policing) Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for St. Norbert?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): The Provincial Police Amendment (Aboriginal Policing) Act provides a legislative framework that allows First Nations police forces to be created to provide police services to First Nations communities. In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, there are, at this time, First Nations police forces in different forms that are in place at different locations in the province of Manitoba. However, it is good to see that this legislative framework is here which makes it a framework that allows for this to happen in an easier way. I would recommend that this bill be passed on to committee.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Government's attempt to put in place a framework for Aboriginal policing in Manitoba. I look forward to presentations from various parties at committee stage. I am a little bit concerned about the relative skimpiness of this bill which provides for establishing a naming, but it does not appear to provide adequate details of what the legal framework of the relationship among the various police forces operating in this province will be. I see this as important to make sure that we provide adequate

assistance to people in the Aboriginal community and make sure that the establishment and operation of Aboriginal police forces in this province proceeds in a way that will be able to support the security of people in this province, to be effective in decreasing the incidence of crime and provide a co-operative partnership environment in which all in the province can work together in making Manitoba a safer, fairer and more just place to be.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 44, The Provincial Police Amendment (Aboriginal Policing) Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): I move—oh, yes, we are in Supply already. It is just a matter of resuming Supply, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: We have finished with the second reading of bills. We will now move back into Supply. Would the Deputy Speaker please take the Chair.

As agreed, the House will be finishing at five o'clock, right? As agreed? *[Agreed]*

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
(Concurrent Sections)**

ABORIGINAL AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

* (14:50)

Mr. Chairperson (Harry Schellenberg): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order? This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs.

We are on line 4. Amortization and Other Costs Related to Capital Assets (a) Desktop Services (1) Amortization Expense - Hardware

and Transition \$60,900 on page 25 of the main Estimates book—pass; (2) Amortization Expense - Enterprise Software \$10,900—pass; (3) Enterprise Software Licenses \$25,800—pass;

4. (b) Amortization Expense \$23,200—pass.

Resolution 19.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$120,800 for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Amortization and Other Costs Related to Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is item 19.1. Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Executive (a) Minister's Salary \$28,400.

At this point, we request that the minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): I would like to take a few moments to discuss the report that came out in June of this year. The provincial Auditor General released a report into the investigation of the missing artifacts of the Anthropology Museum of the University of Winnipeg. The report found that 89 artifacts and, possibly, dozens more had been released from the museum without proper documentation, outlining to whom and where they were going, and without consulting the affected Aboriginal groups. Mr. Chairperson, 58 of the missing artifacts were from the Northern Ojibway collection, 8 from the other North American Aboriginal collection, and 23 from the Asia, Africa South Pacific, Central America, American Southwest and India collection.

The report also found that the record keeping at the museum was very poor, and that discovering exactly how many artifacts are missing may be impossible. Among the allegations raised during the course of the investigation were: at least four of the missing artifacts were identified as having been de-assessed to the Three Fire Society in Wisconsin, U.S.A., in May of 1998. The artifacts were described as two water drums

collected from the Pauingassi First Nation and two birchbark scrolls collected from the Jack-head First Nation.

It has been reported that six artifacts were repatriated to the Pauingassi First Nations on June 22 of this year, a process reportedly facilitated by Court of Queen's Bench Justice Murray Sinclair. The artifacts had been turned over to the Three Fire Society in Wisconsin for safe-keeping.

Other allegations included that a fifth artifact, a raven's headdress collected from the Little Grand Rapids area, was allegedly to have been deaccessioned from the ethnological collection, but its whereabouts are unknown; that the deaccession of these artifacts has been completely, unilaterally, by certain employees of the university without consultation with the families or communities from which the artifacts had been obtained and without the knowledge or consent from others at the university; that the museum's policy manual was not reviewed by higher levels of university administration nor by the university senate or board of regents; that the policy in place for repatriation was minimal compared to the policy guidelines at other museums; and that the museum did not keep appropriate records of deaccessioned artifacts.

Mr. Chairperson, the removal of the artifacts to Wisconsin may have been undertaken in a manner that could constitute an offence under the Cultural Property Export and Import Act. Obviously, there are some serious concerns about the matter in which important artifacts were handled by the University of Winnipeg.

* (15:00)

I am sure the minister has had the opportunity to review the Auditor's report. I am wondering if the minister would like to put a few words on the record about the findings of the report and the effects it could have on the First Nations artifacts being held in universities and museums throughout the province.

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Mr. Chairperson, I am somewhat familiar with the issue, although not to the degree that I have read the report page by

page. I am going to have to raise this matter with the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Lemieux) and, of course, Advanced Education (Ms. McGifford). Truly, our department would be very concerned about this, given the fact that we are responsible for Aboriginal matters in the province of Manitoba.

I will report back to the member by way of letter. It is something that we take very seriously as well. Allow me to do that, and, hopefully, in the next short period of time, I will be able to respond to the member by letter.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Has the minister's staff had any discussion with the officials from the University of Winnipeg regarding the First Nations artifacts that the university currently holds in the facilities, such as the Anthropology Museum?

Mr. Robinson: No. The staff of this department have not had a discussion with the university nor with Advanced Education.

However, the member does present a challenge that I will take up immediately with our staff, and that is to immediately commence discussions with the university, Advanced Education and the other government department, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, to review the queries that have been raised by the member.

Mr. Laurendeau: If the minister does not mind, there are just a number of other questions I would like to get on the record.

Is the minister confident that the steps that are being taken by the University of Winnipeg to ensure that the First Nations artifacts in their collection have been properly inventoried?

Mr. Robinson: I will examine that issue to the fullest degree, and I will report to the member in that same correspondence that I will provide to him.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that answer.

Is the minister confident that steps are being taken by the University of Winnipeg to ensure that the future deaccession of the First Nation

artifacts will be conducted under strict supervision and that all parties associated with these particular artifacts will be involved in the process?

Mr. Robinson: I believe that, with the scrutiny and the public attention paid to the matter, the facilities and organizations or institutions such as the member is describing will have no alternative but to take stricter measures on protecting artifacts and ensuring they are safe and well kept.

The matter that he raised is that we must ensure that these artifacts are kept in a safe and proper way and, where applicable, should be returned to their proper owners and their place of origination.

Mr. Laurendeau: Is the minister confident that the University of Winnipeg has the resources and the staff in place to ensure that all the artifacts in the Anthropology Museum are being properly maintained and cared for?

Mr. Robinson: Again, I do not have first-hand knowledge about the question being raised with me this afternoon. It will be part of the investigation that I will be conducting, and I will be providing a response to the member as soon as possible.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that answer.

Mr. Minister, has your staff investigated whether or not the removal of the First Nations artifacts to Wisconsin constituted an offence under the Cultural Property Export and Import Act?

Mr. Robinson: Again, I will have to take that question under notice and provide it in the overall response that I will provide to the member.

Mr. Laurendeau: Alberta has legislation, the First Nations Sacred Ceremonial Objects Repatriation Act, dealing with ceremonial objects of value to First Nations that are held in Alberta museums and the process of repatriating them. Has the minister examined this legislation and whether it might have an application here in Manitoba?

Mr. Robinson: In an earlier question with the critic, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik), we did talk about similar issues, not directly relating to the one we are talking about at the current time. That is something that I will instruct our staff from our department to examine, and consultation will occur between myself and the Official Opposition that perhaps this is something we could all agree on.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Minister, should there be provincial regulations or legislation dealing with the removal, sale and export of such artifacts?

Mr. Robinson: Again, that will be part of discussions that I will have with the Official Opposition. I believe that we could come up with a piece of legislation that could be agreed to by all members of this House.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Minister, would you or your staff be aware of any other instances where First Nations artifacts are being held in collections at any other Manitoba educational institution or museum that have not been properly catalogued?

Mr. Robinson: To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Chairperson, I am not aware of any artifacts being held in any institution in the province of Manitoba. I do have first-hand knowledge, however, about human remains in Britain. That does concern me a great deal. I will further investigate the matter of artifacts in other institutions in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Laurendeau: Is the minister's staff or the minister aware of any other instances where the First Nations artifacts being held in collections at other Manitoba educational institutions or museums have not been properly deaccessioned to the First Nations people?

Mr. Robinson: I am not aware of such occurrences in the province of Manitoba. However, as I indicated in my previous responses, I will embark upon an investigation by our staff be undertaken of these institutions to determine whether or not there are artifacts that are there illegally, if I could put it in those terms.

Mr. Laurendeau: Is the minister aware of whether or not there is a black market that exists

regarding the sale of First Nation artifacts in Manitoba?

Mr. Robinson: I am not aware of such activity.

Mr. Laurendeau: My final question. In the wake of the Auditor General's report, is the minister now confident that the First Nations artifacts in educational or museum collections in Manitoba will be properly looked after? If not, I appreciate that he has made the commitment to look into a number of other issues, but I am hoping that we can work together to make sure that we repatriate all these artifacts that have been lost or stolen to the rightful owners.

Mr. Robinson: I thank the member for his commitment to work with us on this matter. It does deeply concern me. It has never been brought to our attention prior. I will embark upon, pursue the initiatives that I said I would. I look forward to working with the member and the other members of the Opposition on this matter.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. This concludes my line of questioning.

Mr. Chairperson: We will do the last line here. 1. Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Executive (a) Minister's Salary \$28,400--pass.

I will read the last resolution.

Resolution 19.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$909,600 for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Executive, for the fiscal year ending 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: This completes the Estimates of the Department of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs.

The next set of Estimates that will be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply is the Estimates of the Department of Health.

Shall we briefly recess to allow the minister and the critics the opportunity to prepare for the

commencement of the next set of Estimates?
[Agreed]

HEALTH

Mr. Chairperson (Harry Schellenberg): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Health.

Does the honourable Minister of Health have an opening statement?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Yes, Mr. Chairperson.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I had discussion with the critic for the Official Opposition, wherein we discussed how we would allocate time in the best interests of the department, and I appreciate her acknowledging the fact that we would allow the department officials who are present today to attend to their duties, while the official critic and I discuss matters in general. I appreciate her allowing us to do that.

I want to commence by expressing a few viewpoints that I often do not get an occasion to express as we commence these Estimates. I was reflecting on this over the past few days during all of the activity undertaken by officials at the Department of Health and in the regions across the province in Conservation and, indeed, the public; the efforts that people were putting in as a result of the positive identification of a crow respecting West Nile virus. It was the fact that I thought I should acknowledge the work done by people both in the community, in the department and around the various organizations. They labour long and hard as caregivers throughout the system, and often do not get recognition for their efforts.

I was very pleased last night during the course of the committee debates when we were reviewing bills, that the individuals who came forward thanked the departmental officials for their work and effort. That is one of the factors that suggested to me that I would spend some time today talking about some of the efforts that are undertaken.

We know health care providers and caregivers throughout the system, certainly at the

front end: the nurses, the physicians, the home care aids, the support staff, the laboratory staff and the myriad of individuals; we know on the front lines what efforts they make in a system that has been undergoing significant change and, in fact, has been under public scrutiny, under a public microscope, for a long period of time. The efforts that they extend; you do not hear generally in the public anyone say: Gee, I did not like the care provided by X, Y or Z provider. Indeed, 99.9 percent of the time it is the opposite. The care provided by the individuals was outstanding and very often beyond the call of normal work duties.

I just want to extend that, though, to individuals that do not always get recognition; the public health officials in the department. The public health component, for example, of Health and their components and counterparts in the regions. Over the last year, the work on the water safety, the work on meningitis immunization and the meningitis effort, the present work on West Nile, the security bill provisions, the September 11.

*(15:20)

Mr. Chairperson, on September 11, when it occurred, and this is not a recognition of the brilliance of the minister. In fact, it has no reflection on the minister at all. The department and the health regions swung into action that day, and were ahead of it, and had put in place measures and resources and systems across departments that were ready for any kind of eventuality.

Indeed, a month or two later when matters were being sorted out between the federal government and the various provinces, Manitoba was cited as not only an example, but, in fact, took the lead with determining protocols for establishing health initiatives and preparation. That was done through an all-party task force—led an all-party task force at the political leadership, but it was actually done by officials and individuals who often do not get acknowledged or recognized for the work they do. I was reminded of it last night when presenters referenced departmental officials, and we see it every single day throughout the health care system. I see it on my tours around the province; I see it in

the comments given by individuals on a daily basis.

Further, Mr. Chairperson, it is not always acknowledged, the work of the departmental staff here in the Legislature and at 300 Carlton, particularly, from the Department of Health. Only one who has experienced it can understand the volume and the kind of stress that people are under, and the fact that they deliver on a day-to-day basis, I think, ought to be acknowledged and thanked for their efforts. That is throughout the system, and it is not something that we often recognize. When we get caught up, and I have been in that same boat myself, when we get caught up in political machinations of events, we often forget that there are people out there delivering, in fact, beyond the call of duty on many occasions. I want to acknowledge that, and thank them all for their efforts to try to provide health care to over one million Manitobans. They do a very, very good job of it.

While often it is events under the microscope that get all of the attention, it is the 99.9 percent of events that are not acknowledged that deserve some recognition and some thanks. In essence, I am saying, on behalf of all Manitobans, to the extent that I can, thank you to all of those individuals in the department, in the regions, in the institutions, in the community, in people's homes, for the care that they provide and the attention that they pay to looking after each other, which, in fact, is one of the reasons that we have such a wonderful health care system. It is based on a spirit of co-operation and caring for each other, and that is reflected on a daily basis throughout the system and throughout the country and throughout the province. If it is not done by people who are on salary or paid, it is done by volunteers, or it is done by people just to extend their time and energy to do that.

While we, and I, take credit often for advances and for programs, it is really a result of incredible work by a lot of people who are not delivering in a political way, but are doing it to help their fellow citizens to lead better and better quality lives. That happens on a daily basis, and happens minute by minute and hour by hour, and I just want to acknowledge all of those people and all of their efforts on our behalf, without getting too maudlin here, Mr. Chairperson.

We have the occasion of reviewing the Estimates for '02-03, which is our third budgetary year as a government. It would be trite to say that there has been a lot of developments. Indeed, it is hard not to acknowledge that everyday in the health care field there are some new and developing matters that merit our attention and our efforts. Over the past few months, we have had occasion to undertake a series of consultations with the public. We have had occasion to dialogue and to receive advice from the public. We have acknowledged some of that information, and we have used some of that information in a determination of the evolving health care field in Manitoba.

As I have said on many occasions, Mr. Chairperson, when we assumed office, we reviewed the entire system and we acknowledged that one of our primary goals and needs was to provide for the human element that provides services across the health care system. Consequently, it is well known that we have expanded training of virtually every health care profession or field, with one or two exceptions.

There are additional people in training in every single area. That was done in order to augment the needs in the system and in recognition of some of the demographics, not just the demographics of the population, but the demographics of the workforce that was providing the care. That move has been reflected in both reports nationally and provincially across the country where all jurisdictions now are following that course of action. I think that we are quite pleased that we were able to launch it relatively early so that the benefits and the effects and the impact can be felt sooner rather than later.

We are awaiting with a great deal of anticipation the final report of Roy Romanow, as are most jurisdictions in the country. Notwithstanding that we are awaiting with a good deal of anticipation the recommendations, we have taken significant action in Manitoba, over the past year in particular, to deal with various components of our health care system as it evolves.

As indicated, Mr. Chairperson, when we came to office we recognized the needs of the labour force. We also recognized the fact that we needed to rebuild significantly some of the

infrastructure as it related to health care. That is why, across this province, we have seen the expansion and construction of not just facilities but new programs, new infrastructure. In essence, what we have done is we have begun to rebuild the human infrastructure and the physical infrastructure as well. Physical, not just in the sense of new hospitals in places like Boundary Trails or announcements of new hospitals in Gimli or Swan River or the various expansions, be it at Victoria or Seven Oaks Hospital or St. Boniface or Health Sciences Centre, but the expansion of the infrastructure that supports those institutions; in terms of equipment, significant investments in equipment, and associated with that, new programs that reflect an innovation and a reflection of the changing needs of the health care system.

Let me reflect on that for a few moments, Mr. Chairperson. It is very clear that we are moving towards a system of more care provided in the community, and more care provided up front prior to the actual diagnosis of major diseases or major health care initiatives. Let me cite some examples.

A recent report from Stats Canada that talked about demographic changes was something that we recognized several years ago. That is one of the reasons why we have expanded the orthopedic programs, and we have restructured some of the surgery programs around the city of Winnipeg and around the province of Manitoba. For example, the moving of orthopedics from St. Boniface Hospital to Concordia and to other hospitals. For example, the repatriation and the provision of additional surgeries in rural Manitoba at Steinbach and in Thompson. All efforts to provide care at home.

* (15:30)

The expansion of day surgery through the Pan Am Clinic. A recognition of every single report that I have ever seen in health care over the past—probably—five years, has said there need to be more day surgeries in a move to less invasive and more surgeries done, and more procedures done on an out-patient basis. Therein was the reason and the rationale, one of the reasons and rationale for the expansion of surgeries to the Pan Am Clinic. An innovative approach. An approach that has been recognized

nationally for both its innovative approach and for its efficiencies. For example, I cite one example, the fact that we were able to take a pre-existing contract for surgery, transfer surgeries from that pre-existing contract to the Pan Am Centre, and save significant money—significant dollars—on each procedure which then allowed us to invest in additional procedures.

The movement of dental surgery from Winnipeg frees up not only Winnipeg space for other surgeries, but allows for surgeries closer to home in Thompson. Four hundred surgeries in Thompson, Manitoba. Four hundred children and families not having to come the long way to Winnipeg. On the preventative front, the first time in Manitoba history, Mr. Chairperson, a cervical screening program for all Manitoba women. I am advised, if memory serves me correctly, it could save several lives per year; several women will have their lives saved as a result of a screening program for cervical cancer. Those stats were provided to me by the director of the program.

Less well-known is our asthma education program, a program put in place, Mr. Chairperson, that reduced visits to ERs for asthma dramatically. A program that provides education to parents and children on controlling the symptoms of their asthma to the extent that visits to the acute care facility were reduced dramatically.

Most recently, there have been announcements of developments on the primary care front. Now, I am not going to go into an elaborate analysis of the various definitions of primary care. It is one of my pet discussion models.

An Honourable Member: It is? I have never heard you say that.

Mr. Chomiak: The Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) is interested. I am pleased that she is interested in primary care because we certainly are, and, to that end, Mr. Chairperson, that is why I was in Ethelbert, Manitoba, formally opening a nurse clinic; or why I announced the expansion of the Nor'West Co-op, River East, Transcona—all primary care developments.

An Honourable Member: That was our plan. That was our plan, too.

Mr. Chomiak: The Member for Charleswood says it is our plan, and I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairperson, that it does not matter to me whose plan it is. What matters to me is what is put in place, and I think that is the issue that the public is concerned about.

You know, I do not think it is recognized as much, Mr. Chairperson, that providing care through EMS is a significant approach. Members opposite and members in this House, in Chamber and in committee will know that we doubled the funding to rural health authorities for EMS, more significantly, 80 new ambulances, of which 70 go outside of Winnipeg—70. For the city of Winnipeg, when we came to office, there were 9 ambulances funded full-time. Now, at a peak period, 16 and, shortly, there will be 18. A significant change.

I put that under the rubric of primary care because it is part of a developing primary care model. I think there has to be recognition through one of the components of primary care. Primary health is the provision of services at that level.

Telehealth at 23 sites in the province of Manitoba, I am told, if memory serves me correctly, more than anywhere else per capita in the country. As I recall, I do not believe there was a Telehealth process a mere three years ago. Now, we have 23 sites. Think of the impact for Manitobans in rural and northern Manitoba, access to specialist care, access to diagnosis, right across the province.

There are doctor and nurse practitioners; there are numerous projects, both operational, and we will get into it because I know the member has now indicated that she is quite interested in primary care, so I anticipate and hope we can have a significant discussion in that area during the course of these Estimates, and I can deal with it more specifically and outline to the member many of the initiatives that we have undertaken.

One of the areas that I am very pleased that we are participating in, Mr. Chairperson, is the development of a significant neurosurgery program in Manitoba. I was very pleased that all of the premiers collectively agreed with the

initiative put forward by our Premier (Mr. Doer) of developing centres of excellence across the country. It was not that long ago when hospitals competed with each other. Now, under our regional health system, we have been able to work together through clinical programs. I know there are those that still want to go back to the old days, but we have been able to co-operate and collaborate through clinical programs and, in some cases, one clinical program can be provided in more than one site.

I know the member has raised questions about the cardiac program, and I look forward to questions and discussion in that regard. I very much look forward to questions in that regard and welcome them and anticipate that it could be a learning experience, because every issue is a learning experience. But I digress.

Centres of excellence. Why not have Manitoba have centres of excellence? I do not know why members opposite are concerned. Manitobans can do things just as well as any other province. That is why under the Premier's leadership, the premiers across the country have agreed to develop centres of excellence. What are the first two centres of excellence that they are working on? First, children's pediatric heart surgery; second, neurosurgery, more specifically, a gamma knife to be located here.

What makes more sense, Mr. Chairperson? Why does every province have to compete for expensive and, perhaps, low-volume services when we can co-operate? Why can we not take the initiatives that we have demonstrated in Manitoba by working together as regions and do it together as provinces? I am very pleased that our Premier has led the way in this regard and that we have been acknowledged by premiers across the country of any political stripe. It is not a political issue.

An Honourable Member: You did not lead the way.

Mr. Chomiak: I gather from the comments of the member from Charleswood that she will also have significant questions in this area, and I welcome them. So I will not have to get into many more details except to indicate that premiers across the country have agreed with the

concept and the idea. It does not matter if they are a Liberal premier, a Conservative premier, or an NDP premier. They all acknowledge and are working on it.

* (15:40)

I recently hosted a meeting of the western Health ministers where we endorsed the concept. I have had meetings individually with numerous Health ministers and will continue to have meetings to work on the details of these programs. But, if one wants to talk about innovation, there is another example of significant innovation in terms of a different approach.

Mr. Chairperson, I have to comment about one of the more significant events that has affected all Manitobans over the past year, and that is the Sinclair-Thomas reports. I said at the time of the release of the Sinclair report, and the subsequent release of the Thomas report, that things would never be the same in health care. I said that those reports were watershed developments in health care. I also said that the lessons learned ought not to be repeated again.

I want all Manitobans to know that we take the report extremely seriously. It is helpful on the framework of some of the innovations and the developments and the goals and the models of the future of health care in Manitoba. I said it in public pronouncements that so many of our actions and so many of our programs are guided by the knowledge and the information provided by the Sinclair and Thomas commission reports, and that is as it should be. I know that some critics have wanted us to spend millions of dollars on royal commissions. I know that some critics have wanted us to hire high-priced accountants and high-priced consultants to elaborate on plans. But I suggest, Mr. Chairperson, that using the Sinclair-Thomas reports as one of the basis for development in the health care system is not only prudent and efficient, but totally understandable given the breadth and scope of the ramifications of the recommendations in that report.

What am I speaking of, Mr. Chairperson? Something as both simple and complex as a reorganization of the department itself, a structural reorganization to reflect recommendations in that commission. Simple on paper, because

there have been many reorganizations of the Department of Health, but complex to the extent that it better facilitates the follow-up and the following through of recommendations of Sinclair and Thomas. We have seen significant change.

I was very pleased to table in the Legislature the first-year update on the recommendations of the Sinclair and Thomas reports, and I was very pleased with the developments. Nothing is fast enough, but I was very pleased to see significant change and significant impact, something as basic as consent forms which formed a fundamental basis of the Sinclair and Thomas reports have been revised; something as commonplace as a manual of health care and the information provided. Until the Sinclair-Thomas reports, Mr. Chairperson, information to the public about out-of-province benefits was not provided. Sinclair and Thomas said provide public information. We have information, not just on the Web site, but pamphlets and information for individuals that outlines the most generous out-of-province policy in the country.

The experience of Sinclair and Thomas has shown itself recently when an occurrence, an incident occurred at the Health Sciences Centre. There was a dramatic reaction and follow-up. The outside individuals who were called in, I think, suggested it might even have been an over-response, but the lesson was learned and the mechanism worked, and, notwithstanding some public comments, it indicated that the system has responded.

I recently had the occasion to open a conference on medical error. The issue of medical error is gaining tremendous inertia across the country. Clearly, it was one of the fundamental issues surrounding Sinclair and Thomas. It is now on the agenda of the federal-provincial Health ministers. But more important or more significant or just as significant, Mr. Chairperson, is the fact that in Manitoba the regions, together with the department have already undertaken measures to deal with the issue, the first time in the history of the province. Three hundred individuals got together to discuss definitions, and I look forward to questions on that, on medical errors.

Our own former deputy minister of Health, now on the board of the WRHA, Dr. John Wade,

is one of the leading figures from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in following up on medical error.

Out of Sinclair and Thomas has come groundbreaking legislation amending The College of Physicians and Surgeons Act to deal with physician profiles. That issue alone could occupy a department and an agency for years on end, Mr. Chairperson. It is not an insignificant change in the way health care is provided, and now Manitoba is leading the way with legislation. I have heard individuals say, well, you are not fast enough or you have not gone far enough. Perhaps. But we are further ahead than we were a year ago, and we are further ahead than we were before Thomas and Sinclair. Is that not the point of the Thomas and Sinclair commissions, to learn, to develop, to improve?

I also look forward to discussions and developments and questions in regard to that fundamental report and that fundamental issue. There are those, Mr. Chairperson, who would have us say: create a central plan and publish a central plan like perhaps other ministers or other places have done, and dictate from on high that suggests how the health care system will function. That will not work anymore. That will not function in our health care system. I prefer the fact that we have developed a system from the ground up, from the grassroots up, from listening and learning, particularly the Sinclair-Thomas reports. This year's budget builds on the evolution and the development of the health care system.

I have highlighted several of the achievements, several of the initiatives. I would like to touch on a couple. One of them is mental health.

I have appreciated the assistance of the Member for Charleswood in this area. I have always felt that this was one area that cooperation was of the essence. I am very pleased that we have made some significant progress in this area. I am tempted to redeliver my speech that I delivered at the Eden Health Care Centre several weeks ago, as reprinted in the Winkler paper, but I will spare all of the individuals of this committee the time in having to review our goals and objectives and where we are going in terms of mental health. But it is reprinted in the *Winkler Times*.

* (15:50)

An Honourable Member: Sum it up.

Mr. Chomiak: The Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) asks me to sum it up, and I am quite pleased to do that. The department outlined, through a series of meetings and discussions with health care providers, a series of objectives and goals, achievable goals, and a plan in terms of mental care development. I will table for the member—I will table copies of those documents that have been widely circulated. But I will highlight some of the initiatives for the member.

One of the considerations is to work with self-help organizations. That has always been actually one of the objectives and goals of health through all the years that I am familiar with health, and we re-emphasize it. Another innovation is the development and the utilization and inclusion of families in all of our mental health initiatives. That has been formally structured and formalized within our mental health objectives and goals. Quite clearly, in summing up, the goal is to provide the continuum of care that will restore an individual to the best functioning within their community.

That is accomplished through a variety of objectives and goals which will be illustrated in a document that I will table for the members of this committee. But some of the elements of that program include some initiatives that we have put into place that were never in place before.

The first is the PACT program, of which I have spoken on many occasions, a Program of Assertive Community Treatment. The second, Mr. Chair, is a \$750,000 initiative, three-quarters-of-a-million-dollar-initiative recently announced; an initiative that looked at comorbid co-occurring diagnosis. That is so often previously in the health care system and to a certain extent today, if you are addicted to a substance, you cannot get mental health treatment; if you have mental health treatment, you cannot get addictive treatment but a co-occurring program, where we are reaching out to all regions of the province to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of co-occurring, not illnesses, but co-occurring problems.

We have also, with the assistance of Canadian Mental Health Association, developed a program of training individuals at Red River community college to assist other individuals in meeting their housing needs. Not an insignificant matter when one looks at the fact that, usually, when one canvasses the mental health field, housing is the primary requirement and need. An education centre which is accessible province-wide that provides information, all types of forms of mental illness and treatment, programs that allow for education in the classroom about diagnosis, early diagnosis and recognition of mental health problems. All of this is new. All of this is recent, and all of this fits in with our mental health program.

It involves community, it involves self-help organizations, it involves institutions, it involves the range of care providers. In that regard, we are not done yet. There will be more developments and more programming as we move along slowly and deliberately, maybe not slowly but certainly deliberately towards an acknowledgement that mental health is one of the most significant factors facing the population and may soon eclipse, if it has not already, many of the traditional matters of health that were all too familiar.

So I am very pleased, Mr. Chairperson, to discuss and deal with the initiatives undertaken in regard to mental health. In this area I, too, acknowledge the work done not by political people but by people in the mental health field or community or the mental wellness community, who have given their time, effort and energy to develop these policies and principles and these goals and objectives, and are working with us to achieve them in a timely fashion.

I have commented, Mr. Chairperson, generally, on some of the initiatives undertaken. I am not sure if the Member for Charleswood wishes me to take the next half hour to delineate the dozens and dozens and dozens of programs we have instituted or revised or expanded upon. I look to her for guidance. I certainly can, and I would be very happy to do that, or I can turn the floor over to the member to outline her opening comments. I look to the Member for Charleswood for her advice.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the Minister of Health for those comments. Does the official opposition critic, the honourable Member for Charleswood, have any opening comments?

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. But, in response to the minister's question, I am certainly amenable to whichever course of action the minister wishes to take.

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable Minister of Health, continuing his remarks.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I thank the member for her advice in this regard as well. I thought what I would do would be to discuss in more detail and outline in a broader fashion some of the initiatives undertaken in this budget and over the past period of time with respect to some of the initiatives we have undertaken.

Why do I not commence with a significant issue? That is the rural and Manitoba physician plan. As members of this committee will know, we announced last year a comprehensive plan, long in the making, for a rural and northern physician recruitment and retention plan. To remind all members of this Chamber, it dealt with virtually all components and aspects of medical training.

* (16:00)

Firstly, we expanded for the first time in over a decade the number of positions offered at the medical college. We reversed the previous trend that had occurred as a result of the Barr Stoddart [*phonetic*] report in the nineties to limit the number of admissions, to reduce the number of admissions in the Faculty of Medicine.

In addition, we expanded residency positions, if memory serves me correctly, by 15, including nine family residencies, to acknowledge the need for family physicians in this province. We put in place a bursary program for graduates, and, if I could put it in these terms, subsequent graduates to allow them to obtain financial assistance. In return, they would provide service to Manitobans and, in some cases, in rural and northern areas. Very significant, something people in rural and northern Manitoba

have told us for years we ought to do. As all of my comments are from memory, if memory serves me correctly, over 150 individuals have taken advantage of this particular program, which is not an insignificant number.

More recently, I was very pleased to see that one of the members of the opposition party stood up and congratulated the Government on its appointment of a director of Rural and Northern Health, Doctor Klassen. We have appointed a director of Rural and Northern Health, who has, as one of his major goals, to encourage, help and assist students entering and staying in medicine, particularly from rural and northern Manitoba.

Further, we announced an Office of Rural and Northern Health, an office to be located in Dauphin. Why Dauphin? Several reasons. Firstly because the family residency program is located in Dauphin. Secondly, because geographically it made sense. There is more to come in this area as well.

So, if you think about it, a program aimed at keeping, at attracting, keeping and maintaining doctors in Manitoba, talked about for a long time, is now in place. I suggest the last two years we have seen a net increase of doctors in the province of Manitoba, a net increase after years of out-migration. So this is but one example of new and innovative approaches, something I think that has been acknowledged across all political boundaries and all jurisdictions as a long time in coming and needed and that program is in place. It costs millions of dollars, but we feel it is an investment. One of the difficulties I have often is not understanding individuals who criticize investments that we make in the health care system, not recognizing that investment today is a benefit not only today but down the road and certainly our investment in medical care, in medical students is one of those investments.

Mr. Chairperson, the single largest expenditure in health care is what we pay the men and women who, on a daily basis, provide health care in the system, somewhere in the neighbourhood of 70 percent. I am trying to square the circle in my comments. I started out talking about human resources and I am trying to end on that. It just does not mean training professionals and training individuals as we have done. It just

does not mean expanding the College of Medicine. It does not mean just doubling the number of nursing people in education. It does not mean just expanding the occupational and physiotherapy classes. It does not mean just expanding the sonographer classes. It does not mean just expanding medical lab technologists. It does not just mean expanding radiation therapists. It does not just mean expanding health care aide programs.

It also means providing those individuals with acknowledgement in the form of remuneration to keep them here in Manitoba. To that end, we have just concluded significant negotiations with two of the largest groups of individuals that provide care in the health care system. That is the doctors and the nurses. I am very pleased that we were able to reach an agreement with the nurses, an agreement that by all counts will assist us in our efforts to keep nurses here in Manitoba and recognize the need for retention and recruitment of nurses.

As I said on many occasions, we cannot even in a year or two reverse a decade of different direction in terms of nursing, but we have been able in a collective agreement and in some of the other issues that recognize the role and responsibility of nurses to reverse some of those trends. By that, I am talking about our Work Life Task Force. I am talking about reversing the trend and putting something novel to Manitoba that should not be: putting nurses on boards across the province in a variety of areas, acknowledging the front-line providers in our decision-making process, providing education funding for not just nurses in the primary setting but nurses in rural and northern communities to provide upgraded training and assistance across the board. And it is not just money. It goes to the issue of respect and acknowledgement.

With respect to the other settled agreement, that is, physicians, we were able to settle with the physicians in an agreement that we felt was fair to physicians, fair to the taxpayers and, most importantly, fair to Manitobans.

Mr. Cris Aglugub, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Our agreement with the doctors allowed for a significant savings on private medical labs, for

example, significant savings in the first six months of the collective agreement, an arbitration process that was acknowledged and asked for and negotiated with the physicians.

Both of these agreements, that is, the agreement with the nurses and the agreement with the physicians, was finalized in a milieu of mutual respect, acknowledgement that our goal was to work and improve the quality of health for all Manitobans. That was the goal of our negotiations with the doctors, and that was the goal of our negotiations with the nurses. I am very pleased that we were able to conclude those two significant collective agreements as we rebuild the infrastructure of those professions. That is through the increased training, through the increased number of spots and through the myriad of programs and initiatives that I have already enunciated, most notably the physician recruitment and retention program, the expansion to the Faculty of Medicine and all of the initiatives undertaken with respect to nurses.

* (16:10)

Now we hear often the issue of full-time, part-time. We have decided to go to the roots of that issue by working with the nurses on solving that difficulty, by setting up a joint committee to work with the nurses. Imagine that: working with the nurses to deal with the issue of full-time, part-time, not imposing from on high, not failing to acknowledge but working with them to solve some of the issues. That is what we undertook, and that is what we are working with the nurses on with respect to our collective agreement we have entered into with them and a joint memorandum of understanding that allows us to work with the nurses.

While I am on that point, let me also indicate that the new MMA agreement also includes a significant component of retention of doctors and a fund to deal with retention of doctors. So it all becomes clear. We entered office acknowledging that we had to deal with the human resource component, upgrade, train, expand and develop, and now in year three we are seeing some of the fruits of those initiatives in terms of increased retention, increased enrollments, increased graduations and now increased emphasis on retaining those people we have trained.

But I daresay, Mr. Chairperson, there are a variety of areas where we have to continue this process. We have to do it with the other health care providers, and that is why we have undertaken initiatives in that regard as well. It is not a static process, and it is not a process that one can resolve overnight. But I think it is fairly well acknowledged that through that process we have been able to change some of the attitudes and some of the approaches to health care in Manitoba.

Those that demand a plan from on high, a structured plan from the centre, I do not think recognize the fact that we are working with health care providers on a daily basis to not outline on paper a plan but, in fact, to implement the plan—the plan of re-investment in human resources, re-investment in infrastructure that is physical and otherwise, and innovation across the health care field, be it in the 23 telehealth sites never before seen in this province, or be it in the developing of primary care centres, the expansion of EMS, or the approach to Pan Am, which has been acknowledged by even the chair of the Romanow Commission as being innovative. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, the editorial board of *The Toronto Star* have suggested that perhaps other jurisdictions should follow Manitoba's lead and its approach to providing innovation with its developments at Pan Am.

More recently, Mr. Chairperson, the expansion of services, not just in the urban centre as some would have us do, but, in fact, throughout the province.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

The first time, since I recall, repatriation of surgery outside of Winnipeg. Something that was studied in the nineties but has been done by this Government—studied in the nineties, recommended in the nineties, but undertaken by the Government of Manitoba in the year 2002.

Mr. Chairperson, I see my time fast fleeting away. I thank the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for her assistance in working on the timing, and I have two more minutes but notwithstanding that, I will cede the floor to the Member for Charleswood.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) for those comments. Does the official opposition critic, the Member for Charleswood, have any opening comments?

Mrs. Driedger: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do.

Mr. Chairperson: The floor is yours.

Mrs. Driedger: I thank the minister for his opening statement. I always enjoy listening to hear his overview of where he sees the achievements of his Government, and I certainly look forward to getting into these Estimates again.

Generally, I always find this to be quite an interesting experience, but I have to say right off the bat, I almost fell off my chair when the minister offered to table a document without me even having to ask for one because, as I recall in the last two Estimates, it was like pulling teeth sometimes to be able to get some documents. So, to have that out there right off the beginning, I really do appreciate that the minister made that offer.

Certainly, I hope that, as we go through Estimates, there is an ability to get more answers out of the minister in Estimates than we do in Question Period. I certainly find that in Question Period it is quite difficult in asking questions, that one appreciates to get some form of an answer, and that it is quite difficult to do that with this particular Minister of Health.

What I am certainly finding is I am getting an escalating number of calls from the general public asking why this Minister of Health does not answer my questions in Question Period, and I personally have to wonder if he is buying into the Minister of Education's (Mr. Caldwell) philosophy that it is question period, not answer period. I think the public is feeling somewhat frustrated, to say the least, with the phone calls that I am getting. It certainly is the indication.

But I do understand the stresses and strains of the minister's job. It cannot be an easy challenge at all to be in that particular portfolio. I believe it is probably one of, if not, the toughest portfolios in government, and the challenges within that portfolio, I am sure, increase on a daily basis because the challenges in health care will likely not, in anybody's lifetime, disappear. I

do appreciate the challenge that the minister faces. I know that he tries to do what is right. It is obvious that he cares in his efforts. He may not believe it, because this always tends to be a very adversarial business, but I do wish him well in facing the challenges that are before him.

I was waiting for an opportunity, I know, for a ministerial statement on Mental Health Week because I did want to, and I was actually going to stand in the House and acknowledge what I think were some good initiatives put forward by the minister in the area of mental health. I think some of those initiatives that were announced Mental Health Week are good initiatives and will help to strengthen the system. As the minister said, it is an area that does need some attention, because over many, many years, I think that has been one area that has probably been neglected. It probably does not have the strength and advocacy that other areas do, not from the people that are trying, but just from the fact that it does not take on the same momentum, I think, as people waiting for cardiac surgeries, or hips and knees, or a number of other issues. I think it is important that it does have some emphasis at a government level. I do acknowledge the efforts that this Minister of Health is putting in that area.

I do take some issue with a few comments made with the minister's opening remarks, but I will question him on those as we go throughout Estimates. I will not take time during my opening statement to get into any of them, but I think some questions will certainly arise in that area as we move through Estimates.

* (16:20)

As the minister acknowledged, too, there are many challenges faced by people within the system on a day-to-day basis, whether it is people in Manitoba Health who, I truly believe, are trying their very best to deal with a very, very complicated health care system, by those involved in the RHAs at all levels, by people in the hospitals, in the personal care homes, in the community. I think everybody is giving their very, very best. It is a particularly challenging time, I think.

As the minister said, there are a lot of front-line workers that give their all on a daily basis.

Those truly are the people that need to be acknowledged for their work. Having been a front-line worker myself, I do recall living through a lot of similar challenges in my time as a nurse. I actually have to say, I do recall the dark days of the Pawley government when I was a nurse and I was walking the floors. Nurses were in tears because of the health care system at that time. It seems like the stresses and strains in health care do not necessarily go away. They may just change face over time, change their color and hue, but there are always challenges in health care. I do not think any government has a magical answer as to how to fix it.

I think we have seen a challenging year for a lot of front-line workers in the public health area, whether it has been, as the minister had indicated, meningitis, West Nile, looking at water safety, the issue of September 11, and how quickly people were able to rally in this province right after the September 11 issue. I think it is because we have such quality people in the health care system that that can happen.

I recall being a nursing supervisor a few years back where we had a call at St. Boniface Hospital that there was a pending plane crash, and I knew how quickly we had to address that issue, and how a disaster plan has to come into place very, very fast. It is amazing how things actually can fall into place. I can recall another time we had a bomb threat and you certainly watch the talented people around you, and you end up being part of a team that works hard to address those challenges that get thrown at you, and sometimes you do not expect them.

So, certainly, to all of the front-line people in health care, not even just front line, I think to everybody that is involved right now in our health care system, it is a time for all of us to say, thank you for your time, your talent, your commitment and the many, many sacrifices that you do make.

But I, also, truly, in my heart, do not feel that things are going to improve in health care just by wishing that they are going to happen. I think governments, certainly, have a responsibility to play a large part in that, and they are the ones that set the direction from which decisions come, and create the environment in which

things happen. I certainly hope that for the sake of the system, decisions could be made because they are made in the best interests of patient care, and that decisions are not made for political or ideological reasons. I really believe, in my heart, that we owe that to the patients, and it has to be something that is right for the patients, and it has to be something that does not jeopardize patient care, quality of care, patient safety, or anything like that.

While I appreciate that this is easier to say than do, I believe it is a course that we must set for ourselves, and a goal and a direction, so that whether it is a minister making decisions in government about what to do, or whether it is me determining the questions that I put forward, those really need to be the driving forces in how we approach this issue, so that there needs to be that accountability on all sides.

I guess I am like the minister. I do not believe that things are going to change unless you do have a plan. I think people need to know what a government stands for, what direction they are going, what their priorities are, and while there is nothing wrong with involving the grassroots and front line in some of that decision making, I think it is absolutely imperative that a strategic plan be put forward by a government so people have a sense of where the Government is going and what they stand for. I think without it, you will end up with a government continuing to drift on a day-to-day basis, and I think without a grand scheme, as the minister has said he does not have, I think you are just going to end up going from crisis to crisis and pumping money into a system where you do not see the positive effect on patient outcomes.

I think that is going to continue until there is a commitment for a plan. So, although the minister is saying he does not need a plan from on high, that it will not work, I think that is unfair to the people all the way across the system, that, then, how do people know what a government stands for. Yes, you can certainly do your best in trying to address the challenges that come on a day-to-day basis, but, I think, efforts towards improving patient care would happen more effectively and efficiently if there was a strategic plan in place. I think because there is not, that is why I believe Manitobans are

dissatisfied with the job the Doer government is doing right now. In asking some Manitobans what they were feeling about the health care, I would like to share with the minister some of the quotes that have come our way about our health care system.

The first quote is: As long as you run the system with bureaucrats, politicians and labour unions, you will have an inefficient, unresponsive mess. Consumers need to be the ones voting with their feet and money to force this system to respond. No one cares about the consumer/patient in the system we now have. It is all about power, money and vote. If McDonald's were run this way, a Big Mac would be \$40 and you would go on a waiting list to get one.

Another quote is: Our health care system is going down the drain. As Canadians, we should do something or else no one will benefit eventually.

Another quote: There is a great deal of money tied up in health care services. I would really like to know why it is so poorly managed and badly functioning.

Another one: Use more nurse-run clinics and nurses as first line. Give nurses more credit for what they know, and put them in greater positions, i.e., more clinics like Youville, et cetera.

And another quote: Stop the abuse of our health care system.

Another quote: In 2000 my late husband waited his turn for radiation therapy. Mr. Chairperson, by the time it was administered, the tumour had tripled in size, requiring more treatment. He never recovered his health from this and passed away in August 2000.

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I am sorry to interrupt the member's comments, but, by agreement, this particular committee was going to cease at 4:30 for today.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to rise? [*Agreed*] Agreed and so ordered. Committee rise.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

* (15:00)

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Jim Rondeau): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order? This section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will now resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture and Food. We are currently considering item 3.4 on page 33, Agricultural Development and Marketing. The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): What item are we on?

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Jim Rondeau): We are on item 3.4 on page 33, sir. That is the Agricultural Development and Marketing.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, ever since the change in the transportation policies, commonly referred to as the Crow, I think one of the chief mandates of the Department of Agriculture has been to, if anything, accelerate the diversification of our agriculture. It has many forms. I appreciate that livestock has maybe preempted the stage to some extent. But certainly in the crops development, there are as many, and significant, successes in diversification, and always more challenges to come.

I am pleased to note that the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) is joining us. Among the enthusiastic efforts of some six or seven years ago, in terms of diversification, was the introduction of commercial hemp into the cropping opportunities of Manitoba. I do not have to relate the history. Like many new ideas, certainly hemp has had its detractors and still does, I suppose. It has had, to say the least, a difficult growth. I am aware, as the minister will be aware, of the hopes and aspirations that they were in the province for the beginnings of a process operation to be set up somewhere in Manitoba, which was very essential to the success of the crop.

I think what was demonstrated in the last few years is that certainly Manitobans can grow the crop. Certainly, our climate and other conditions are there so that the crop can be grown. We have just not quite figured out what to do with the crop after we grow it, nor have we been able to, even though there have been some very interesting developments of people that could have and, I think, do have the capital resources to kick-start an entirely new industry in the province of Manitoba. There are virtually unlimited possibilities for the use of hemp, everything from oil extraction to clothing to, well, the list is endless, soap.

We are aware, of course, of the regrettably failed venture that started, I believe, in Dauphin, where it looked like we had something started. I would like to think that the department has not given up on the crop, and I would appreciate if the minister would take a bit of time and bring this minister, or this former minister, up to date with what is happening in the field of hemp. A number of acreages that are currently still being cropped, and what, if anything, the department is doing in the way of assisting those who are still courageous enough to work with this crop.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Mr. Chairperson, I am pleased the member raised the issue of the hemp industry and the opportunities there. There certainly was a lot of work done, and there continues to be a lot of work done in the area. There is a very committed group of people in the Dauphin area who are looking at ways to add value to the product. That is the key. You can grow the crop, but if you are not going to do something with it, then that is a problem. It can pile up.

What they are looking at now are opportunities to use the fibre in a variety of ways. We are in discussion with the federal government and how the federal government might support the project, and how it can be moved forward.

The member asked about the acreage. There are only about 1000 acres of crop being produced right now. That is being grown for those specialty markets where they use only a small amount of product to meet the demands of the market there.

The Soils and Crops Branch and the Parklands group are working very closely with the people in Dauphin who are spearheading this. As well, there is a significant number of trials on different varieties. Those trials are at the Parklands Crop Diversification centre in Roblin.

As well, the department continues to support the hemp industry by providing money through a variety of MAVI grants to develop products. The Hemp Seed Oil Market Development received money: \$3,000. The Manitoba Industrial Hemp initiative got \$10,000. West Coast Marketing of hemp got \$5,000; East Coast marketing: \$5,000; Hemp Grown for Fibre: \$5,000; Industrial Hemp Oil Processing and Marketing: \$5,000; Market Development in Europe: \$3,000; and market development of agriculture diversification got \$5,000.

So there is still a lot of interest in the industry as far as developing markets and developing value-added products, but I think what it is going to take is redefining that special market and pulling things together so that we can add value. As I said, the area, right now, that the Dauphin group is looking at is how can we add value to the fibre. There is certainly quite a supply of fibre stored up in the area right now, but not very much crop. As I drive through, I have seen a couple of fields in the Dauphin area, but not that many.

I would like to take this opportunity, as well, to introduce Ms. Dori Gingera-Beauchemin, who is the director of Marketing and Farm Business Management Branch, and Lynn Manaire, who is manager of the Soils and Crops Branch.

* (15:10)

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to hear that the department is continuing its support for the crop. I am aware that it is going to take the efforts on the part of a lot of people to try to make that into a viable crop for the province. I do not think the initial conditions have changed. The simple fact of the matter is that it continues to be problematical as to how successfully we can market the traditional cereal crops in the exports of the world, not that we do not have the quality, not that we do not have the product, but the simple economic facts of costs in this post-

Crow era dictate that the department faces an ongoing challenge of diverting substantial acres of good land into other crops, other crops that we have heretofore not produced in this province.

I am not one to push or promote governments into any greater expenditures than necessary, although in my political description, despite my reputation—I am actually a red Tory, I want the minister to know. There is time for government intervention. I use a very, very good analogy. When a previous administration banned stubble burning in the province of Manitoba, which, I might remind the minister, was not particularly, it was not a difficult thing to do. You just ban it and start sending the RCMP after people that light fires when they are not supposed to, but, politically, it was not an easy thing to do, particularly for a political group that had considerable support in agricultural rural Manitoba.

Along with that, the department, at the same time, increased its efforts into looking around at how we could find other ways of utilizing the surplus straw that sometimes piles up on our fields. I was pleased that the government that I was a part of, although it had a bit of a shaky start, we found a way. I am referring to the straw plant at Elie, which, while off to a shaky start, I am told by our reports, is meeting expectations, is running at close to full capacity, and they are talking about expansion. That is taking, in essence, a product that could be considered waste—farmers were burning it causing environmental problems—into value-added agricultural production from that straw base.

It took, I recall, not so much this minister, but some of her colleagues who are more bent to be mean-spirited and political and who like to blame all the faults of the world on the last government, were somehow taking some pleasure out of the fact that the strawboard plant at Elie was in financial difficulty, and that the previous administration had invested a sizable amount of money, I believe some \$15-millions of dollars, into the loan of that plant. The fact of the matter is, though, that that plant found the right owner, Dow Chemical, and from all I hear, and, certainly, from the 200 to 300 farmers who are part of the straw co-op who are providing the straw for that plant, they are heaving a collective

sigh of relief. They see added opportunities of some additional income off their land through the sale of straw, certainly for the 100, 150, perhaps up to 200 people that are working in the plant currently. It is a tremendous boost to the rural economy of rural Manitoba and Elie in particular. The investment, show of faith, if you like, by the people of Manitoba to a government agency, in my opinion, was well rewarded.

It is in a similar sense that, I believe, and I would like to encourage the minister in the Department of Agriculture, if circumstances over the next year or two come together where there is an opportunity, and I know that due diligence has to be done, but if there is an opportunity for a hemp processor, people in Dauphin can put their act together to the point where it is, maybe, just about there but needs that extra shot in the arm by a government agency to provide by way of a loan guarantee or something similar to what happened in Elie, then I would encourage the minister. Mr. Chairperson, I would encourage the department to understandably appreciate her responsibilities to agriculture.

This is trying to promote an agricultural development, an agricultural crop. She should be in the forefront in supporting it and knocking on her colleague's, the Minister of Finance's, door, the Treasury Board's door, when and if that occasion arises. I know that she will do that.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to hear the member's comments on the hemp industry and the other diversification opportunities that there are in Manitoba.

The member talked about the challenges of the substantial amount of land that we have in this province and on the Prairies. We talk about diversification, but we are never going to take all of that land out of grain production. We do not want to. It is a part of the rotation that we need. But we also need the grain industry for feed for the livestock industry. There are opportunities for diversification and adding value in different ways. Certainly, the hemp industry is one and, as I said, our departments are working very closely with the people in Dauphin, looking for an opportunity. Should that opportunity come along

for processing, I can assure the member that we will be there.

Through MACC, we have expanded the loan guarantee program. This might be an area where there could be funds available for such an industry, or it might be in other areas. But, certainly, we are working on that one.

I want to also tell the member that, with regard to the hemp industry, we are working very closely with Guelph University where there is research. I am trying to bring that research to Manitoba, because I think that, if you want an industry in the province, you should have your research done and have crops tested right in this province so that they adapt to the climate.

We also changed crop insurance over the last two years to make it available for people who are growing hemp, as well. So there are changes that we have made but where we are trying to encourage the industry. As well, with the strawboard plant, I understand that that has turned around, and I have heard that there is additional production. They have found market for the product, and that is a good step.

We are also looking at other ways of diversification. We made an announcement on the ethanol industry, where we want to add value to crops through the ethanol industry in a variety of ways. We are doing a study on that because, again, that may be another use for straw. Grains can also be used from the ethanol industry. Then you have got a by-product that can be used as feed for the cattle industry and opportunities for a lot of other products as well—value-added products that can come from the ethanol industry.

Canola growers have come and talked to us about bio-diesel and are interested in looking at the opportunities there. So I can give the member full assurance that this department is very committed to diversification and to adding value to agriculture products here in the province, because that is a good base to build many industries on.

* (15:20)

Mr. Enns: I recall, you know, it was a significant effort on the part of those promoters for the

introduction of hemp on the Canadian scene to, first of all, convince Canadian authorities, the federal authorities, that they were able to produce a crop that, genetically, had the low amount of the good stuff in it. What is it called?

An Honourable Member: THC.

Mr. Enns: THC, you know, down to a low level. Has the minister given any thought of relaxing that a little bit and jumping up that count a bit?

Ms. Wowchuk: If that is what the member is looking for, he is out of luck, because I think the THCs have been reduced to the level that you would have to consume a whole acre and you may not even end up with a good headache. So it has been reduced. But the member is right. A tremendous amount of work has been done. I know that there was seed that was imported, and there was a lot of difficulty getting seed in from Ukraine. I am not sure what other countries there were. As far as relaxing that, I think we are past that. That quality is gone out of the agriculture seed in this province.

I want to tell the member, also, that the department is participating with other departments in hosting an agri-fibre workshop this fall. This is modelled on the previous, the member will well remember, a Straw to Gold conference, and this is, again, building on that. We are hosting a workshop here to look at ways to further add value to the fiber that we have.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I asked the question only because her Government is making it so much more difficult to use the legal stuff, you know, that you have to explore all avenues.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would remind the member that tobacco seeds are available, and, if the member would like to plant a few tobacco seeds, he could grow some pretty potent tobacco and you could even smoke it. I am sure we could find some equipment to help you chop it.

Mr. Enns: On another subject. You have soils people here. I know the minister of the department is concerned that, you know, the kind of news that was emanating out of Alberta with respect to accepting Manitoba barley unless we

were clean or fusarium-free. I must tell the minister that, in my travels through the province, I am somewhat disturbed at the few barley fields that I see. I see a great resurgence of the oat crop in different parts of the country, including my own South-Interlake country. Could the minister, maybe, confirm that? Is our barley acreage down considerably, and is part of the reason the ongoing difficulty of managing fusarium as reasons for that decline in acreage?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, I would have to tell the member we do not have the numbers for this year's seeding yet, but, if we look at the numbers over the past three years, the numbers are holding pretty consistent. There is not much of a decrease. It is pretty steady.

I would have to say that, yes, I am sure producers are concerned with the statements made by Alberta and what looks to be like a trade barrier to have our grains come into their province because we know that there is fusarium in Alberta. They are not fusarium-free, but when they are doing a study and talking about restricting movements of grain, that would cause some concern. But the department is advising that numbers have remained pretty consistent over the last few years and there has not been a dramatic drop. We will have to see what is happening this year.

Mr. Enns: Barley always has been an important crop to Manitoba, but a growing one, particularly in view of our growing livestock industry. If we do not produce ample quantities of that grain, it will be very quickly replaced by American corn, as it already is to some extent.

I ask the minister—a concern that I always had: Is she satisfied, or is the department satisfied, that the amount of research—I am of the opinion, I could be wrong, I would like to be proven wrong, but it certainly was the case some years ago where research dollars dedicated to barley were primarily involving malt barley? Now that may be because the malt industry, large brewers, were there to help fund it, but I have felt increasingly in the last, particularly in the last few years, as appreciative as I am of malt barley, and a barley sandwich occasionally, that, for Manitoba, feed barley for our growing

livestock industry is, quite frankly, of greater importance.

The last time I looked, about 70-75 percent of the barley research dollars were going into malt barley and relatively lesser amounts were going into feed barley which could, among other things, help us develop strains that are more resistant to fusarium than others, just as we have research dollars always available for anti-rust properties and wheat and other crops.

What is the status on the research money, and how is it being spent? Is there anything the minister or the department can do to inject some influence on that?

Ms. Wowchuk: The member raises an important issue, because it is important that we do have a feed barley supply for our livestock, that we do not replace it all with U.S. corn.

The federal government is maintaining its same level of support on both sides, on the malting side and on the feed side. So, research is continuing and, as a province, we are continuing to do that work. We are putting some extra money into research on fusarium-resistant barley. There is also work being done on hull-less barley for the feed industry, and also there are some trials being done and research on barley that can be used for forage and silage.

So, if anything, I would say that there is not a decrease in the funding, but there is a slight increase in the amount of work that is being done on barley, recognizing the importance of that particular product in the feed industry, and recognizing that the fusarium issue is very important for us. So there is that kind of work being done in Manitoba.

* (15:30)

Mr. Enns: Well, Mr. Chairman, let me take this opportunity to be an MLA, a parochial one, and looking after my immediate interests. The Stonewall agricultural society went out of existence in a classic clash of urban and rural affairs; in fact, the urbanites of Stonewall kicked the agricultural society off their land that they had always had for their agricultural fair for many

years. Stonewall agricultural society is one of the older ones, I believe the seventh society that was formed many years ago. It was to be regretted. The expanding town of Stonewall required the land, and they exercised their political muscle to expropriate the land, or next to expropriate the land. However, the society did not lie down; they restructured themselves after a two- or three-year absence, and on a new 80-acre piece of fine alfalfa ground three miles south of Stonewall they, this year, commenced activities as one of Manitoba's longest agricultural societies.

I would simply ask the department that they, and I know the amount of support that is currently being given is nominal, is not that much, but that they would show some generosity to the Stonewall agricultural fair inasmuch as they have not operated for three years and I think forgave those nominal thousand-dollar grants that you do give to each fair. The likes of that is what I am saying. I am now just being a good MLA working on behalf of his constituents and looking upon the department to deal with some generosity and fairness in lieu of the difficulties that this old agricultural society has had.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the whole issue of the Stonewall ag society and the movement from one location to the other was, I believe, a very difficult situation for the people involved in the ag society. I would imagine it was just as difficult for some people in the community because the fair has been a long-standing event in the community. I am pleased that they were able to work things out.

I do not know whether all the details are worked out as to how much the town is going to compensate them or what kind of monies the town is going to put into the new facility, but, certainly, they are moving forward. They have had their sod turning. I hope that the town will treat them fairly for giving up the land and will help them with their new facility, but that society has been a bona fide ag society through the whole period. They have received their support. Each year, they receive the supports, whether it is for judging or for whatever their grants are.

There are building grants that are available, and, as they proceed, they will be treated the same as any other fair. I hope that the town, as well, will treat them fairly, but there has been no request from the Stonewall ag society for additional support. I think that there are other places, as they proceed, that they may be able to. There are always other granting places that they may also make application for funds and may qualify for further support.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Jim Rondeau): Is it the will of the committee to pass this section?

An Honourable Member: Pass.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Jim Rondeau): Section 3.4. Agricultural Development and Marketing (a) Marketing and Farm Business Management (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,869,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,268,100—pass; (3) Agricultural Societies Grant Assistance \$368,400—pass; (4) Other Grant Assistance \$42,800—pass.

(b) Animal Industry (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,886,600.

Mr. Enns: Let us talk about the animal industry for a moment. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that there has always, in the last few years, particularly, been a lot of focus on the study expansion of the hog industry, but, as a modest cattle producer, I have always been equally interested in expanding our opportunities in the beef industry. I am led to believe, I do not know whether I am right or wrong, that there has in fact been, over the past several years, a modest but sustained growth in our beef cow numbers and overall beef industry.

Alongside with that, I am also pleased to see that there has been some return strength in our feedlot industry in the formation of several feeding facilities in the province. Maybe the minister could just give us a little overview of the condition of our beef industry, the number of, in percentage terms or in real numbers, whatever way she chooses.

* (15:40)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the member is right. The beef industry is an important industry in this province, along with other industries. We are the third highest producers of beef in the country. We do not see huge jumps, but it is a steady growth that we see. Unlike in other provinces, where there has been some decline in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and those are due to weather conditions, there has been some increase in our number of beef cattle producers. We have a few more producers, going up from 10 240 to 10 300. So there is a slight increase in the number of producers.

Our beef cattle have gone up from 554 000 to 560 000. So that is an increase of 1.1 percent. Replacement heifers have gone up from 82 000 to 84 000, which is an increase of 2.4 percent. So, as you look at it, there is a steady increase of animals. There is an increase also in interest in finishing.

When I talk about the numbers reducing in Alberta, I know that there are Alberta producers that are looking at Manitoba. Some of them are buying up some land. Some of them are moving their herds to Manitoba. It is my hope that, as those numbers increase and people come to know Manitoba, they will recognize that this is a good place to raise cattle, that we do not have the swings in climate, our hay supply is pretty consistent, and that those people who have brought their livestock here will continue to see Manitoba as a good place to keep these animals. Our total number would be somewhere about a million and a half right now in Manitoba.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, when the domestic elk program was introduced into Manitoba or made available to Manitoba producers, there was every effort made that that be fully considered an agricultural program, with the Department of Agriculture having its hands on the reins, so to speak, on that whole program. My question through you, Mr. Chairman, to the minister is: Has she been able to keep those bandits from the Department of Conservation out of the game so far? Is the domestic elk program in Manitoba still being run by the Department of Agriculture?

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, maybe that was somewhat facetious. What is the status of the elk program in Manitoba? We appreciate that we are no longer in the cops-and-robbers game of capturing elk, although we should be doing it right now, Madam Minister, elk at Riding Mountain. I might suggest that you could give your senior staff the rest of the summer off, and put them on some good allowance and let them round up all elks around Riding Mountain Park and you will solve yourself a couple of problems. On top of it you will make yourself some extra cash for the department. We always sold them for a reasonable amount of profit, which helped defray some of the costs of industry.

What is the department doing with respect to managing the elk program today? How many farmers do we have? How many elk are in captivity, are behind the fence? Again, I know, just like bison it has had its ups and downs in terms of speculative breeding prices, but I think the program is still sound for those who are engaged in it.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, there are 89 farmers who raise elk in the province. There are just under 3000 elk on these farms. Of those, about 280 are the ones that the Government is still holding because we have not had clearance from CFIA to release those animals.

You know, there is interest in the industry, but the biggest problem is the drop. There has been about a 90% drop in the price of animals and in the price of the antlers. Those people who have made investments are having a difficult time, because when your income drops by 90 percent that is pretty difficult.

But I want the member to know that last year our Government gave the Manitoba Elk Growers Association a grant of \$10,000 to help them with market development, because that is one of the areas where work has to be done if this industry is going to grow and thrive. As it is with the hemp and is with other products, you can grow them, but if you cannot get them to market and get a fair return for them, well, it is a pretty difficult business to be going out to feed those animals every day and know that you are not going to have a market for them or get a very good return for them.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, through you to the minister, can the minister indicate, have there been any health problems crop up in these 3000 animals that are being farmed? I will ask the same thing about the bison herds that we have that are being domestically farmed. I am not talking about a touch of foot rot or something like that, I am talking about a serious health problem that would have implications for the industry.

Ms. Wowchuk: I think the big problem that is facing the elk industry is the chronic wasting disease that is in Saskatchewan. There has not been chronic wasting disease in Manitoba but there has been in Saskatchewan. Many animals have been put down. There has also been an animal detected in Alberta. Of course, that drives the price down of the whole market, but we do not have chronic wasting disease in Manitoba.

The other issue is the TB suspect that is preventing us from dispersing the animals that I had mentioned earlier, some 280 animals that we did not have clearance from the federal government. Of course, the animals that are on these farms are tested regularly, and the farmed animals have a clean bill of health. The only issue is those that have not been given the clearance by the federal government.

* (15:50)

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chair, I am pleased to hear that we have not had an incident of the Creutz problem in Manitoba. The TB situation with the captured elk, two questions: Where are they being held? Are they being held at the facility that was provided for them in the Grunthal area?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the animals that were held at Grunthal have all been dispersed. The only animals being held are being held at Inglis.

Mr. Enns: The last question on this matter: Is there any way the department can know whether or not these animals that, to date, have not cleared the TB tests, originated from the Riding Mountain area?

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes. All of the animals that are being held originated from the Riding Mountain.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to berate the minister any more than is necessary, but I do not have to tell her, though, in this instance as strong a lobby as the Wildlife people are, that agriculture is really facing an intolerable situation in and around the Riding Mountain region.

I expect her and her department to exercise all the influence they can on behalf of the cattle producers, the ranchers in that area. It is just not acceptable, to take a hands-off policy with respect to Riding Mountain Park, because it is a national park, and jeopardize not just our industry but jeopardize the Canadian livestock industry. Americans are in a touchy mood. They do not need a great deal of reasons to touch off their nervousness about border closings.

I will tell you why I say this to her, because I am somewhat disturbed that reasonably reliable reports have come to me and come to my attention just in the last little while, coming from a senior member in the Department of Conservation, the director of Wildlife, that he certainly is not going to listen to a bunch of whining farmers on this issue. Well, it is not just a matter of whining farmers. It is a great deal more than that. I am concerned that the tree huggers of this world are quite happy to let the Manitoba livestock industry go to pot in defence of a few elk before they will touch them.

I expect the Department of Agriculture, and I expect you, Madam Minister, and I expect your people to be very forthright in standing up for what has to be done under these circumstances. I leave it at that. I know that she faces these pressures from people that are more directly involved than myself, like the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association and others—reeves, councillors from around the area.

But it is a serious issue. It is one issue that I expect her not to take any back seat to around the Cabinet table or around decisions that have to be made, recognizing that so much of it is federal. But in this instance, again, we have to come to terms with it.

Ms. Wowchuk: I have to tell the member that we are, indeed, taking this matter very, very seriously and are making investments in it. The

member is well aware that, in 1997, there was a detection of TB in the Riding Mountain area, and no real steps were taken to address it at that time. Since we have taken office, we have put the elk strategy into place. It involves the CFIA, Manitoba Agriculture and Food, Conservation, Parks Canada, and now involves the Manitoba Cattle Producers.

We are putting in \$200,000 a year over a five-year period, putting together a strategy that will monitor the movement of elk, where they are going. There is additional money for fencing of bales to try to control the elk from getting into the hay. There has been—the member talks about the Department of Conservation not being supportive of this. Well, I can tell the member, he is wrong, because the Department of Conservation has made a huge increase in the number of tags that are going to be available this year to allow to bring those numbers down.

So there is a lot of work that is being done to reduce the number of elk and test those elk when they are reduced. As a department, we did a lot of work in conjunction with CFIA, holding meetings with the producers, information meetings, letting them know what was going on, working with them and addressing all of the issues, because we have to address it.

We have a livestock industry that we just finished talking about that is very important to producers. It is one of the areas that we see opportunities for further diversification. It is important to the producers of the area. But, certainly, we are having challenges with TB. We are working with the producers and we are taking steps to reduce the number of elk. There will be a substantial increase in the number of licences that are provided this year.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to hear that, because, as of a very short while ago, that was a specific request within the area that additional tags be issued to do just what the minister says. But we are not receiving any indication that that, in fact, would take place. The minister is telling me otherwise. I thank her and I will cease and desist from any further questions.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Jim Rondeau): Is it the will of the committee, then, to pass the section on—*[interjection]* Does the Member for River Heights have questions in this area on the animal industry?

Hon Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I have a couple of questions here. On the animal industry, one of the important aspects, in terms of being able to produce and market the hogs, has been the Livestock Stewardship Initiative that the minister has undertaken. I know that, when I asked a question on this some weeks ago in Question Period, the minister indicated that she was going to make an announcement in the near future. I would like an update on what the status of that is.

* (16:00)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the Livestock Stewardship Initiative was an initiative that we took on when we formed government, recognizing that there is a growth in the livestock industry and an interest in further growth in the industry. We wanted to ensure that this growth was happening in a sustainable way and that people had the opportunity to have input. We did that. There were some 40 recommendations that came forward from the committee.

It was interesting when we got the report from the committee, some of the things they were recommending we were already doing. So we have worked on some of them. We have implemented some of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations we have said we will not implement, and some we continue to work on. We are working with the municipalities, municipal level of government—we are working with people in the industry. Of course, there have been a lot of issues also raised on the environmental side of it, and we are looking very closely at those.

Mr. Gregory Dewar, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

So I see the Livestock Stewardship Initiative as a work-in-progress where some of the recommendations are implemented, some will take

longer to implement because there has to be time for farmers and producers to adjust to the recommendations. We will continue in that direction and work at them, and make further announcements as we are ready. I see this as a very, very important issue and I want to, and our Government wants to take the time that we need to ensure that we are doing it right and in proper consultation; and not putting too much burden on some people, but always working to ensure that this industry has long-term sustainability. So that is where we are at on it, and we continue to work and, as I say, many of the recommendations that are in there have already been implemented.

Mr. Gerrard: When I meet with people involved in the industry, I get repeatedly concerned about the uncertainties which result from lack of clear decision making on a number of issues, and these would seem to me that it would be important to resolve these issues—yes or no, what is going to be done—as soon as possible, so that there is clarity, even if not everybody agrees, that at least everybody knows what the situation is going to be.

So I had interpreted the earlier answer to my question that there was going to be an announcement coming up shortly that would provide that sort of clarity, in terms of which recommendations were accepted, which were not, which were changed, and you know, even if some of the implementation dates were not immediate, that at least that information would be provided as soon as possible.

Mr. Gerard Jennissen, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Ms. Wowchuk: And that is right. We have said that we will be making an announcement shortly, and we are working closely with the industry to talk about what the changes are, and what the time frame will be for implementation and things like that. But, yes, there will be an announcement shortly.

Mr. Gerrard: Also on the marketing, this time of cattle, the issues which surround tuberculosis status, I would just like a clear update. There

have been rumours that this could be isolated locally, that it might affect all cattle in Manitoba, that the status or the changes and who will this affect and what will be the results.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairperson, the issue that the member has raised is one that has certainly been on the minds of cattle producers since there was in '97 one animal detected with TB, and then there has been another one since then. That affects the status of marketing in this province.

Certainly, Manitoba Agriculture and Food and CFIA have been working very closely with the cattle producers, with the milk producers and everybody involved trying to, and suggestions have been put forward, as to how Manitoba status should be affected. Should it be all of Manitoba? Can we have a zone in the area where the suspect comes from, and various lines have been drawn about what the zone should look like, should it be a municipal boundary, should it be around the area?

Those kinds of discussions have taken place, and we have to think about where our market is. Our market is the U.S., and CFIA has been meeting with the USDA to try to work through this, through Manitoba's accreditation and look at what kind of an accreditation they will accept. So we are waiting. The work has been done between the CFIA and the USDA. We are waiting for an announcement from the USDA. Once we have that announcement of what will be acceptable, what their ruling will be, then our staff and CFIA will have to work closely with them to interpret what it is they are proposing, and then work through it from there to ensure that we still have access to that market.

Mr. Gerrard: I want to move on to the Veterinary Services, which are next. Do we pass that line, or are you passing it a group at a time here?

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Gerard Jennissen): Are there any other questions on item 3.4?

Mr. Gerrard: It is 3.4. (c), which is Veterinary Services. The question would be—

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Gerard Jennissen): The item 3.4.(b) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,886,600—pass; under Other Expenditures \$531,000—pass; under Veterinary Services—

Mr. Gerrard: My question relates to the impact of whatever that USDA ruling or agreement may be on the need for veterinary services, particularly if we have a province-wide situation. Can the minister give us an update on what the situation is? Are there adequate veterinary services, and what arrangements have been put in place?

* (16:10)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, again, as I indicated to the member, we are not sure what the USDA rule will be. We have to negotiate on that, but there are a variety of ways that it could go, but we are prepared for it. We have put out a call to all private vets to make them aware of what the situation might be. We think that, with the private vets and the provincial vets, we will be able to handle the situation, but, again, that is hypothetical because we do not know what the situation will be. So we have to wait for the decision.

Mr. Gerrard: I am ready to pass the Veterinary Services.

Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie): I just want to ask the minister, currently, are we still wanting in regard to veterinarian services here in the province? What is our status as to those spots available for individuals wanting to pursue a doctorate of veterinarian?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the issue of veterinarians in rural practices is always a challenge for us. There are always people coming and there are people going. There is quite a bit of movement and many times quite a bit of vacancy. At the present time, there are 15 rural practices that are attempting to recruit veterinarians. Ten of these are vet services districts, but you know that each year we sponsor veterinarians to go to school in Saskatoon and make every effort to recruit. We, in fact, expanded the number of veterinarians that we would sponsor to go to Saskatoon, but, right now, the college

does not have the physical capacity or the resources to train additional vets.

So we recognize the issue. We are looking at ways to train more vets. It is an ongoing issue to try to get the number of veterinarians that we need. It is a challenge. Working in rural areas is handling large animals, in most cases. It is hard work and sometimes it is working in isolation. There is not always another veterinarian to work with, but we recognize it as an issue and continue to work at it.

Mr. Faurchou: I would like to ask the minister: Are we looking elsewhere, other than Saskatoon? Guelph, I believe, is another program. Are we looking, because the need is significant? I know in Portage la Prairie, our veterinarian just had a medical condition, is out of practice at the present time. It is a real concern in the rural of Manitoba for veterinarian services.

Ms. Wowchuk: Our tie is to the University of Saskatoon where we sponsor students, because that is the western veterinarian college, but when people are looking for veterinarians they can look to any other place. They can attract them from anywhere and students can choose. I do not know what the vacancy rate, what the room is at Guelph college but we do not have any arrangements made with Guelph. There are veterinarians who also come to Manitoba who have not necessarily trained at Saskatoon. They can come from anywhere to work here, but they are in great demand and they can make the choice of where they want to take employment. People have to work very aggressively to try to attract them to their communities.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Gerard Jennissen): Item 3.4.(c) Veterinary Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,007,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$876,200—pass; (3) Grant Assistance – Operating \$471,000—pass; (4) Grant Assistance – Capital \$300,000—pass.

Under (d) Soils and Crops (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Mr. Gerrard: When we were part of the delegation from Manitoba which went to Saskatoon dealing with the impact of the U.S. farm

bill, one of the items which was raised was the situation with special crops and the fact that the United States was starting to subsidize in a significant way peas and lentils. I would ask the minister: No. 1, is there any provincial effort to follow through with the increased need for marketing and research in this area as was brought up at that meeting; and No. 2, has there been any indication of whether the planting this year was altered because of the changing subsidy south of the border?

* (16:20)

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, with respect to the provincial efforts with marketing and research, the marketing of pulses is a very important part of our trade and marketing efforts. In Europe and in Mexico, those are our largest markets, and that would be in the beans area. Our largest pulses, the most pulses we grow, is beans. In fact, we are the No. 1 producer in Canada, and we are really proud of what producers have done, where they have changed over from, worked it into their rotation and found new crops to diversify into. They have been very successful, and the department has worked very hard with the producers to find markets and develop markets for those products.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to research, there is a strong program with the pulse growers. There is also research at the Morden research centre in the breeding of pulses. Pulse growers of Canada are located here in Manitoba. Their head office is here, and they do a lot of research. Their research is some in Manitoba, but they do a variety of research.

With respect to the U.S. farm bill, the U.S. farm bill does not cover beans. They do not cover the beans, which is our biggest crop, but they do cover peas and lentils, which are smaller crops in Manitoba. The majority of the lentils are grown in Saskatchewan. That is where the big hit on this will be. I do not think there was any impact this year by the U.S. farm bill because seeding plans were already made by the time the announcement came out. I think any changes we would see in the amounts is due to crop rotation, and that is the kind of change you would see. I do not believe that there is a huge decrease in pulses, peas and lentils because they are very

small crops in this province, and the beans are not affected. They would not be affected.

Just on the edible beans, the projected acreage for 2002 is about 255 000 acres up from 220 000 acres. So the bean production is increasing, and the others, our climatic conditions just do not allow for those other crops to be grown. As the research continues, perhaps there will be more of those crops. Certainly, another crop that Manitobans are becoming quite interested in is in the soybeans as well. Those are growing.

Mr. Gerrard: One of the significant developments in agriculture on the Great Plains, and I say U.S. and Canada, has been the development of new generation co-ops, part of a vertically integrated effort, part of a marketing effort as well as a production effort, and these have seemed to move along faster in, for instance, the Dakotas than here. There have been many who have been interested in changes to the legislation, which would in fact improve the situation for new generation co-ops in Manitoba, and I wonder if the minister could comment on whether any progress is being made in this area.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, the issue of new-generation co-ops is one that there is legislation in place for. It is an area where our staff do a lot of work with producers in establishing co-ops when they are interested. Producers are continually looking at a new-generation co-op as a way to add value to their products. We do not keep numbers, so I cannot give the member numbers, because it is not our department. It is under Industry, Trade and Mines that the co-op legislation is. But the legislation is there. If there are issues with the legislation it will be reviewed.

When you look at the new-generation co-ops south of the border, there have been some very successful ones where producers have worked together to then add value to their products. I have seen a couple of them. I think there are opportunities for more of them here in this province. It is something that I think it takes a little bit of time to get off the ground. But there is an interest. Our staff works closely with producers when they have an interest in developing a co-op.

Mr. Gerrard: Just to confirm, basically, I thank the minister for the information. My sense is that changes to the new-generation co-op legislation is not a priority at this point for the Government.

Ms. Wowchuk: No, I did not say it was not a priority for us. What I said is we work with producers and various groups. If there are areas that are identified that there is a need to change legislation, then we will change that legislation. But there have not been a lot of concerns. It is the legislation that is the difficulty in getting new-generation co-ops started. It is a slow process and one that we continue to work with.

But should there be need for changes to legislation, by all means, I think co-ops are very important. If you look at the Prairies and how the Prairies were developed and the number of businesses that provide service in rural communities across the Prairies, if you look at many, many co-ops that were started by producers joining together, it is a very important concept. But you have to have the people that are interested in participating.

Mr. Gerrard: Just clarification then, either something is a priority or it is not a priority. So you are saying it is a priority to change the legislation? I mean, I asked you if it is not a priority, and you said, no, no, I did not say that. So my interpretation then is that it is a priority. Is that what you are saying?

Ms. Wowchuk: What I said is the legislation is not under this department. The legislation is in another department. Co-ops are very important for us. I believe the legislation is in place. I do not know of any requests to change the legislation to make it work. The legislation is working. We have very similar legislation to legislation in North and South Dakota, where the new-generation co-ops are quite active. What it takes is producers to be interested, people to be interested, and our department works with them.

So I think that if the member is looking for changes, if the member has some suggestions that he has heard about for changes to legislation for new-generation co-ops, I would ask him to share those, because that is not what we have been hearing from producers.

Mr. Faurschou: I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Estimates process. I do want to say at the outset I want to congratulate Mr. Barry Todd and the department for recognizing his talents and dedication to the department, and his appointment to assistant deputy minister.

* (16:30)

In regard to crops and the necessity to broaden the varieties of crop production here in the province, I know of enterprising individuals Dr. Rick Durand and Dr. Tam McEwen who have done extensive development with woody herbaceous plants and development of the discovery elm and then now working with hybrid poplars. They had approached the department for some guidance, and it was a disappointment to them that the department is very stretched in this area of new crops. We find ourselves with quite a number of different varieties and different crops.

Seeing that once again the department overall budget has been cut by almost a million dollars this year from last and the requirement for us as producers to stay in business is to look at diversified crops, this development in the hybrid poplar and in fact the more recent cultivars are ones that could very well, if seen through to maturity, be considered a hardwood and of very, very good quality for a number of end uses. I brought this to the attention of the Conservation Minister as well, but I do want to take this opportunity to bring the Department of Agriculture on board, if I might be so bold as to suggest that this is a very, very good opportunity for some producers in lands that are looking to produce other than our traditional grains and oilseeds, a product that will generate a very positive cash flow in a number of years.

So, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the minister: Is she familiar with the hybrid poplar program of Doctor Durand and Doctor McEwen? If not, I would ask that she make herself known of their program.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Chairman, we are very aware of the work that these gentlemen are doing. Staff from Portage la Prairie have worked with them. I believe they received funding under CMASS a few years ago, but we are not aware

of any application that they have made. So I am not aware of what the member is referring to in the disappointment that he has that we have rejected an application from them because there has been no application that we are aware of.

The member talks about the level of funding for the Department of Agriculture, and I would tell him to look back historically as to what the level of funding was in the past and the amount of funding now because if the member will look back, he will realize that there was certainly an increase to funding in time to Agriculture. In the last couple of years, we have put in additional funds through the CMAP1 and CMAP2 programs, substantial money that was not put in by the previous administration. The level of funding that is in this department has been maintained at a fairly significant level to where it was at other times.

Mr. Faurichou: I appreciate the minister's comment. The expressed disappointment was just in regard to a new crop. It certainly has been supported in the past by dollars to research and develop. It is a matter of the department recognizing the potential of a new crop and looking to assist in letting the word out, if I might say, to producers throughout the province of a potential diversified crop. That is why I am requesting the department keep an open mind and be able to recognize where the marketplace is and the potential for additional diversified revenues to producers here in the province.

Ms. Wowchuk: Of course, I would tell the member that the department always keeps an open mind to new crops and new varieties and new opportunities for producers. There are programs like the Agro Woodlot Program that is out there, but again I would say to the member if there are these people looking for some way to promote their crop I would encourage them to make application. It is not that the department is not interested. If you look at what work has been done in a variety of crops we have been very supportive of research and development of crops.

The member may not know, but there is work that we do with crops in other parts of the province. I believe that there is a trial project on some hybrid poplar in the Parklands area, trees

that were planted some time ago. There are pasture programs on natural poplar to see how it can work with grazing to ensure that there is adequate regrowth.

Some of these issues fall under the Department of Conservation, but certainly our department also works very closely and are always interested in new crops. I would encourage the member, if he has some information, those people have talked to the Ag district staff in Portage la Prairie. I know they are very familiar with the projects and the research.

Mr. Faurichou: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the minister's response. In no way, shape or form should my wording be construed as a slight on department staff as not being open to new ideas. I went in the direction that there is potentially not enough staff in order to address the diversification needed.

In regard to the minister's response to the level of dollars allocated to the Department of Agriculture and Food, I would dare say that we have to also always be considerate of the purchasing power of the dollar with inflation calculated. If one were to sit and review the proportion of agricultural funding as it pertains to the global budget of this province, it has been in significant decline, less than 2 percent of the overall budget now. That is the direction of my commentary.

I want to suggest the minister continue her fight. I know she is highly vocal at times in support of agriculture, but to recognize the absolute vitality of our agricultural sector as it pertains to not only the need to sustain ourselves but the bottom line effectively being sovereignty.

* (16:40)

If one gives up the food production potential of any given jurisdiction, you then leave yourself open to be dependent on other jurisdictions. Ultimately, when you are dependent, you are no longer sovereign. That is the bottom line when we are discussing it. Without diversification, we in this province are going to be significantly impacted by the U.S. farm bill.

I now want to turn specifically to the crops which we grow here. The minister reflected that

beans are not under the U.S. program. However, I daresay that the bean production in this province will be impacted due to the agricultural commodities, all agricultural commodities, being affected by the country-of-origin clause in the U.S. farm bill that requires every agricultural product to be identified as to its origin.

So, if the minister wants to take a minute to comment on some of what I have said, we will get into a few more questions.

Ms. Wowchuk: I cannot pass up the opportunity. I cannot pass up the opportunity to talk about buying power, because I do not think our buying power has changed very much since 1996-97.

In 1996-97, the Agriculture budget was \$96.4 million. In 1997-98, it was \$97.7 million. In 1998-99, it was \$99 million. In 1999-2000, it was \$112.9 million.

Under the new government, in 2000-01, it went to \$114 million; in 2001-02, \$122.08 million, a substantial increase. In this Budget, it is \$121.1 million. Yes, there is a slight reduction in the Budget, but it is substantially higher than it was under the previous administration.

So when the member says our Government is not committed to agriculture, I would just ask him to look carefully at those numbers when he says we have dramatically decreased the budget for the Department of Agriculture.

This is a very important industry to this province. It generates a lot of revenue for the province, and I am proud to be able to support the industry. I am very proud of the work that departmental staff does in extension services, in research, working with the industry, helping with diversification, new crop development. All of those things are very, very important, and I am proud of the work that the department does with the resources that we have.

Yes, there is a reduction, but there are other priorities. I think about other areas where the Opposition has asked us to make increases, where they want an increase here and they want more money for this. Well, where is the member suggesting that we cut in order to make those increases that have been demanded?

With respect to beans, Mr. Chairman, and with respect to country of origin, the issue of country of origin is a very serious issue because we do not know what the impacts are going to be. I can tell the member that next week on the 25th, I will be going to Chicago to meet with commissioners and secretaries of agriculture along with ministers from Manitoba and ministers from across Canada to look at the country-of-origin labelling, what the impact is going to be, and look at how we can work together to ensure that there is not a negative impact on Manitoba, because trade is very important to us. It is important to us in the livestock industry, it is important in the bean industry. I can also tell the member that I took this issue to the Tri-National Accord.

It was through efforts of Manitoba to get this issue raised that we are now having this meeting in Chicago. Manitoba looks at this as a very serious issue. Through our initiative, letters have been sent to the President and the heads of Senate and Congress. A committee was set up between Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montana and North Dakota to look at the country of origin and see how we can just make sure that free trade is working the way free trade is supposed to work and not have barriers put in place because of rules that the U.S. is bringing in.

I can also tell the member that I had a meeting with the industry yesterday to talk about country-of-origin labelling. The pork and the beef industries are very concerned about what it will mean to them, because products move back and forth, and they are our biggest market for those products. We take the issue very seriously and are working diligently to try to make the U.S. aware of what impacts this could have. People are looking at how this fits in under NAFTA, how this fits in under the WTO. We will continue to work on this matter.

Mr. Faurichou: Mr. Chairman, I am glad I was sitting down when the minister expressed her desire and extreme support for free trade. I do not believe that was always the position of the New Democratic Party in the past. But I will state that best to be prepared in all fashions to explain to her American counterparts the amount of U.S. crop that comes to Canada in support of our livestock industry. When I was involved

with CSP Foods, later Canamera, there was a lot of resistance to Canola oils going south of the border, but when we present them with the big picture of vegetable oils, period, they were astonished to learn the amount of soybean oil and corn oil coming to Canada. The minuscule market that we had for Canola oil in the States was not even impacting at all. Ultimately, when those figures were presented, we ended up with GRAF status in the States. Since then we have never looked back for marketing of our Canola oil.

I want to emphasize to the minister that currently more than two million head of the hog weanlings go south of the border. Our family farm is in Iowa. Currently, they are laying in Manitoba-born weanlings at \$29 U.S. a head into Iowa. The best at-cost efficient run operation for weanlings in the States is \$33. So there is a \$4 saving to the U.S. producer. That is why Manitoba-born hogs are headed south in the weanling market. I do know that a lot of those producers of weanlings in the States are hanging on for effectively a decision of country of origin to see the end to Canadian weanlings headed south, which there is no doubt in the producers that I have talked to down there that they will be forced to go back to American weanlings and no longer take Manitoba. So this discussion that you are having is extremely important.

* (16:50)

The notation has to be made that that same Iowa farmer that is marketing corn and soybeans, how much corn and soybeans are shipped to Manitoba that effectively are what the sows that are birthing the piglets are consuming. If they are faced with those figures and information, I suggest that they will look at the situation far differently. So I encourage the minister to do so.

I do know that in light of what has transpired last year in support of the functional food and pharmaceuticalization of crops here in the province of Manitoba, I would like to ask the minister now: In her want to see this particular enterprise flourish, has she considered the impact of the Canadian Wheat Board on functional foods and pharmaceuticalization as it pertains to crops in the Wheat Board Act and whether or not she would consider sending a letter of support to the federal Ag committee's recommendation that

there be an opportunity for producers to market their products directly?

If the minister can see where I am going on this, it is absolutely paramount that producers are able to contract directly with the researchers and those responsible for the pharmaceuticalization and functional food development of these crops. I am certain the minister has a comment or two.

Ms. Wowchuk: I want to go back to the member's first comments when he talked about free trade and tried to put words in my mouth. What I did say to the member is we have free trade, but we have to look at how this fits under free trade. Now that we have a free trade agreement there has to be trade. You cannot put artificial barriers up when it suits you and on one hand have trade and on the other hand not have trade.

With respect to the pharmaceutical and functional foods, I am very supportive of that and I am very supportive of food development. I am surprised that the member has not put a comment on the record about the Food Development Centre that we are investing in in Portage la Prairie so that we can create value-added. I am surprised he has not raised that issue.

With respect to functional foods and pharmaceuticals, our department works closely. We have made investments. There has been an ARDI grant. Funds from this department have gone towards that.

With respect to the Wheat Board, I am again surprised that the member would ask that we step into an area that is controlled by producers. Producers are elected members on the board, and producers will make the decision as to the role of the Wheat Board. If you look at the people that are elected to the board, they are very supportive of continuing the role of the Wheat Board. I think we always have discussions with the Canadian Wheat Board and I think the Canadian Wheat Board is flexible and people are able to work with them to make various arrangements. I have not been asked, and I will not interfere in the work of the elected directors of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Chair, I wonder if you might check with the committee if we could call it five o'clock. We

have some House business we have to take care of in the House.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Gerard Jennissen): Is it the will of the committee that we call it five o'clock. [*Agreed*]

The hour being five o'clock, committee rise.

JUSTICE

* (15:00)

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

We are on page 117 of the Estimates Book, resolution 4.1.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry): I, too, want to welcome back the staff. The staff has been absolutely wonderful in all their support during the Estimates time. I know, in the busyness of the day, we often do not get a chance to say thank you. As Justice critic for the province of Manitoba, I would like to thank you very much. You have been very patient and very knowledgeable in your areas.

I wanted to ask the Justice Minister. Last night we had a bill that we had debate on in the committee. That bill had to do with compensation for people who have experienced the wrongful death of someone in their family. Members on this side of the House fully support that bill. I have to compliment the Justice Minister for bringing that bill forward, because it is something that has been long overdue and much needed in this province of Manitoba.

We had a very sad thing happen. A 20-year-old died of head injuries suffered in a fight outside the Pembina Hotel in my constituency of Fort Garry. Another party pleaded guilty to manslaughter, and was sentenced to two years less a day in jail last June, and then released on early parole in time for Christmas last year.

The McLaughlin family did not have the benefit of having their son join them at Christ-

mas-time. Anthony was not there. As a result, Jack McLaughlin began People for Justice. Many people who had experienced this type of tragedy in their family began to join the organization People for Justice. Mr. McLaughlin has been quoted as saying that if the courts do not begin to set out a deterrence, families will begin to take it upon themselves to pursue justice. He went on to say this is not a money issue. I do not want the money. But he wanted accountability last night.

In it we presented an amendment which this Attorney General had some problems with, and gave some ideas and arguments as to why he had problems with it.

Could we spend some time this afternoon? I would like to get some ideas from the Justice Minister on what he could do to take a look at the amendment I brought forth, or members on our side of the House brought forth last night; some fair and equitable things that could be done for people who are now, in July 2002, in the courts because they have pursued some type of closure, or type of understanding, or type of accountability that they so need in the justice system.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I do not think I can add anything new, over and above what I offered last night, except this: I have asked Legislative Counsel and Civil Legal Services to look carefully at the amendment, and re-look as well at the issues that were raised around this point; look at the options, and advise me if there is a fairer way than what is in the bill.

I just remind the member, though, that this was extensively canvassed and specifically canvassed in response to questions I raised with Legislative Counsel about the application date of the legislation. The point we are at so far, in terms of the amendment, is a recognition of matters before the court. But I do not know how we can make it fairer if matters that have just been settled will lead to a serious sense of injustice on the part of claimants, and perhaps even liability issues—professional liability issues.

It is just very difficult, so I look forward to hearing from the Counsel to see if there is a

fairer way than what is presented in the bill. As I say, there is not much different from last night, and they know this is a matter that should be looked at expeditiously.

Mrs. Smith: There are some all-encompassing kinds of questions that I have at this point in time. That is why I asked originally to go in a global forum so we could get to the point, rather than going line by line. If you will bear with me, I need some answers to some issues that are pending now and to understand what is happening in the Justice Department in these areas.

On September 6, 2001, the Justice Minister raised an issue at the ministers' conference concerning how to better protect victims of domestic violence. His suggestion was by taking steps to ensure that protection orders issued in one jurisdiction are recognized and enforceable in other jurisdictions.

I am wondering if there was anything that came out of that particular initiative.

Mr. Mackintosh: We got support for that initiative from our counterparts, which was the first step.

The second step, then, and it is still unfolding, is the work by the Family Law working group of officials to design legislation, which hopefully will be acceptable across the country. What would be called uniform legislation that could be passed by the jurisdictions in Canada to mutually recognize out-of-province orders for protection. We hope that, before the conclusion or the end of the next session of Manitoba's Legislature, there will be a legislation available, but I guess that really will depend on any obstacles that have been discovered. Although I am relatively confident that the legal principle is sound, it is just a matter, I think, more of finding acceptable wording and ensuring that the legislation will be strong. So that is where it is at, and that is our hope and expectation.

* (15:10)

As we did with the reciprocal enforcement of maintenance orders legislation, it is our hope that we will provide a lead in getting the legislation introduced to the Manitoba House. I know, with the other enforcement of mainten-

ance orders legislation, we were the first in order to back up our calls for breaking down the barriers to collection of maintenance enforcement across the country. The other provinces were following suit, but we will do what we can, and we will see how the timetables work. It is not a matter that is solely within our control. We initiated the process, and hopefully now it unfolds in a timely way.

Mrs. Smith: Does the Justice Minister now have any intention of reviewing the zero tolerance policy for domestic violence in terms of?

As we know, the zero tolerance policy came in under our Government, and the intent was to absolutely not tolerate any domestic violence. However, as we look at what has happened, sometimes that particular initiative, well intended, has also been abused in the system from time to time.

For instance, I had a lady not too long ago come in and see me, and she was explaining how she and her partner had taken turns calling the police and claiming one had hit the other. To make a long story short, the domestic violence calls often result in tying up police resources. Because the police have little or no discretion in terms of making that call, there have been many things that have happened in the province like the unfortunate 911 event that happened.

However, how does the Attorney General or the Justice Minister want to deal with the problem now of the abuse surrounding this particular policy?

Mr. Mackintosh: We recognize that there are some concerns and challenges regarding the effectiveness of the so-called policy as it is currently operating. We have been, of course, eagerly awaiting the recommendations from the 911 inquest, which I know will deal with part of those challenges. In fact, we do not know the scope, of course, of those recommendations, but in the meantime we have had ongoing discussions. I do not mean in a loose way either. There have been some formal discussions, dialogue, in fact several of which I have participated in myself directly, with stakeholders, with organizations outside of the Justice Department, notably including police.

We have also been looking at the experiences elsewhere. The experiences elsewhere, I think, offer some opportunity for improved effectiveness, I think, in certain ways. We also have to recognize that the current process has some obvious shortcomings in several ways. We know that, for example, the counter-accusation challenge really, I think, has to be revisited. As well, there are many other necessary changes.

I can say to the member that we are putting together what we think are some options for change. We will continue our dialogue with the stakeholders, and, hopefully, we can have a phase two, if you will, of this policy unfold over the next little while. The work that has been done so far I think positions us well to respond on a timely basis—of course, depending on the nature of the recommendations from the 911 inquest—with a view to some improved efficiencies and effectiveness.

We also recognize that zero tolerance, as it is called, is in no small way an issue that the police have a lot at stake in. The policy as it is perceived is being looked at carefully by the police, and indeed our Family Violence Unit and, in particular, the senior prosecutor in that unit has been working on an ongoing basis with the Winnipeg Police Service, for one, to look at how improvements can be made, to look at educational programming and, in fact, deliver hands-on educational programming with police officers.

I think the views of the police, their insights are absolutely invaluable in how we move ahead. I have had ongoing discussions myself at different levels and with different stakeholders. So that is where it is at right now. I think that the inquest report will be instrumental in how we move ahead.

Mrs. Smith: Could I ask the Attorney General when there will be something out? Well, first of all, I would request that the recommendations of the 911, the document with the recommendations from 911, if the minister could forward them to me as well, when it is prudent to do so, when he receives them, so I can have an early look at them, if there is some liaison we could have there, because I think the zero tolerance, although well-intentioned, there are problems

there that have to be dealt with. Is that possible to happen?

* (15:20)

Mr. Mackintosh: The advice I have is it is very rare for government to receive inquest reports much in advance of public release but we can consider that. I do not know what the logistics might be there and I do not know when we are anticipating receipt of the report. So we will certainly consider that.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Just following in this line of questioning that my colleague, the Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Smith), has been asking on the zero tolerance with respect to domestic violence, we have been talking about we are reviewing the situation and so on. I am wondering if the minister could let us know when in fact we could see some written documentation of this review that is taking place.

Mr. Mackintosh: I can say we are looking at some initiatives in the next little while, without regard to the inquest report, on matters we do not think will be dealt with in that report. We are looking at some enhancements. We may be in a position to advance those even by early fall or even by late summer, but in the meantime I think a lot depends on the inquest report.

I think it would not be wise to make significant policy shifts or decisions in areas that are likely or even possibly to be covered by the inquest report, just because then there might be a recommendation that says we should not do what we just announced. That is why we will await that report.

My understanding is that the judge was keen on getting the report out on a timely basis, but we do not have a time line on that one. So that is a real factor. I mean, without that inquest report there, right now things might be quite different, because we had been involved in developing different options. We just have to be careful that if public policy is to change, that it be done consistently with recommendations that are accepted by the Government. That is the state of play right now. We are not going to wait with everything until then.

Aside from the work that is being done on the enforcement of restraining orders issue as

was dealt with in the earlier line of questioning, we are looking at other administrative changes and some programming enhancements.

We have been doing consultations with affected parties on the effectiveness of the domestic violence act, the domestic violence and stalking act of Manitoba, to get some feedback on how well that has been working. I think it is about two or three years old. Yes, September of '99, it came into force. I think it has been on the books and in force long enough now so that we can learn from the experiences there. I know there have been consultations, for example, with representatives from the shelters who have dealt first-hand with the survivors who have made applications on that legislation. So I am certainly interested in seeing if that legislation can be enhanced, if at all. There also has been experience under similar legislation. I think there are about five jurisdictions now that have similar legislation.

In the fall, at the next federal-provincial-territorial meeting of ministers responsible for Justice, there is hoped to be time set aside to deal with domestic violence. I know that the civil order legislation will be one of the subjects that will be of interest, not only to me, but I know to some of the Maritime ministers as well.

In fact, at the last federal-provincial-territorial meeting, over supper, I was talking with my counterpart from Prince Edward Island. We were comparing experiences, as we knew it, from civil legislation, and one of the other Maritime ministers was surprised to hear about the nature of the law. Even though the provinces were neighbours, they did not even know that there was a civil law available in several provinces to deal with protection of victims of domestic violence. So that really spurred an interest in having a time set aside to deal with this issue.

Police training, as well, I know has been enhanced, and we have partnered in that. I think a lot of the ideas for improvement are coming from the dialogue between the family violence unit and the Winnipeg Police Service. We also have made two very significant enhancements in the area of protection and prevention, and that is, under the Aboriginal Justice Implementation

Commission, there is a recommendation to enhance culturally appropriate supports for Aboriginal women in crisis.

We were proud to commit, as I recall, about \$1.5 million to what is called Ikwe. It is the shelter housing initiative that has been servicing Aboriginal communities in Winnipeg, which will enable them to essentially, virtually, get a new facility, a much larger facility and service. As well, we provided additional funding of \$1.1 million to each and every shelter and, I think, other organizations, as well, in Manitoba, to enhance their services. The Ikwe commitment is relatively recent. So those initiatives are unfolding now, and it is my expectation that we will deal with more of the challenges when we get the recommendations.

I had said earlier that the counteraccusation policy has not been working as originally designed. Under the former administration, there was an issuance of a counteraccusation charging directive, but there appears to be a continuing pattern of charging of both. That is only one concern, though. We also, I think, have to look at how the domestic violence policy, as it is called, is actually being applied and how the courts are responding. Is there too much emphasis on the number of charges versus outcomes, for example? So those are some of the issues that have to be dealt with. I think we are likely and I hope getting close to the time when that inquest report will come out.

Mrs. Stefanson: I believe, just in listening to the minister's answer to my question at the beginning part of his answer, he started to get in, and I apologize if I perhaps maybe tuned out for a split second there when I believe he mentioned he is going to be waiting on the inquest to take action in this area. I am wondering if he could just specify more briefly as to when we can expect the inquest to be completed, upon which he will then be taking action in this area.

* (15:30)

Mr. Mackintosh: I am advised the inquest has been completed. All the evidence is in. As I said earlier, it is my understanding that the former Chief Judge was very keen on having a timely release of the report.

I want to emphasize again any fundamental shifts I think should await consideration of recommendations from the inquest. In the meantime, there are many other changes that have been unfolding.

I might add as well that bail applications regarding domestic violence are now heard together as one docket, which is one of the last recommendations from the Lavoie report to be implemented. As well, the civil protection orders are now being registered on what is called CPIC. That makes it easier for police to access information for enforcement purposes. Previously, they were only listed on what was called PINS, so they were not accessible beyond the province and were difficult for the police to access in their vehicles. That was a big improvement for law enforcement.

In Winnipeg, we have also changed the hours of the magistrates who are available to deal with applications. It has been changed from 8:30 to 4:30, to 10 to 6, which was recommended to us and has made an improvement.

There are other matters that are being explored, many that are being explored and some of which, as I say, will be announced and unveiled over the next several months, those kinds of initiatives we think will be outside of the ambit of the inquest report.

Mrs. Smith: On another matter, I was wondering if the Minister of Justice could get me a copy of the code of conduct for Crowns for the province of Manitoba, just for my information.

Mr. Mackintosh: We will undertake to forward that code of conduct. As well, we can forward the recently adopted international standards. We now adhere to an international set of standards that have been designed by Commonwealth international. Ninety countries are members of the international organization of prosecutors—the International Association of Prosecutors is what I am talking about.

I am also pleased to advise that the prosecution team from the Warrior trial has been recognized for an award of special recognition for the outstanding work they did with that very difficult challenge in Prosecutions. So it is our

hope that perhaps Mr. Morrison or one of the representatives from Manitoba will be able to attend to receive that award. That team is the only one in the world to get that award this year.

Mrs. Smith: I think that is wonderful to hear that. To have an award such as this for such exemplary work is very gratifying to see here in Manitoba.

I want to thank the Justice Minister for the very timely receipt I had of The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act. I asked for it this morning, and it arrived very shortly in my office.

Mr. Mackintosh: That file was brought in for me to sign today, and I said to my assistant, I clearly remember signing these letters about two weeks ago. We looked through the file and, sure enough, in there was an approval of the wording of the letter. That was my mix-up. The world is unfolding as it should.

Mrs. Smith: I thank you very much for it. It was very helpful today, and it helps things progress in a timely manner. I want to switch the line of questioning now to Sophonow.

I was wondering if the Justice Minister could inform this House of how much it cost the Province from the time Sophonow launched his recent court case against the Province. How much did it cost? I need to know in terms of staff time and in terms of costs related to the court system here in Manitoba. How much has it cost to date?

Mr. Mackintosh: The most recent claim by Mr. Sophonow was handled internally. I am advised that the only apparent and likely disbursement was the filing of the statement of defence which is nominal. It used to be \$30. I do not know what it is now. *[interjection]* It is around \$100 now. Oh, is that because of us? I have not practised for a while. There may have been some other incidental costs, but it was handled internally.

Mrs. Smith: I am not clear yet on how much it actually cost the Province in terms of staffing and in terms of the recent—did you say a hundred thousand, or was I mistaken? I could not hear what you were saying.

Mr. Mackintosh: The cost of dealing with the most recent claim is only nominal. The only disbursement was a cost of around a hundred dollars for filing the statement of defence. We did not retain outside counsel to deal with that matter. We used staff.

Mrs. Smith: What was the cost according to staffing hours and things like that? That would be part of what staff does but it related to Sophonow, in addition to the monies already put out by the Province.

Mr. Mackintosh: I am advised that there is not a record of staff work on this. The deputy, for example, I think, has been involved as much as anyone in the senior administration on this. That would just go to his daily workload. You will see his light burning at night. Civil legal would keep track of its time presumably, but we do not know what that is. Yes, they do keep a log of their time, but we do not know what that is. I think we are talking nominal amounts of time for that. It was really the statement of defence, I guess.

Mrs. Smith: Is the issue of the Sophonow case now resolved? Has he withdrawn his court case?

Mr. Mackintosh: I have been advised that yesterday there were conversations with Mr. Sophonow's counsel, Mr. Harris, in Vancouver, and that the instructions to the department from the Government were to forward all outstanding monies to Mr. Sophonow's counsel by the close of business tomorrow. I understand, just within the last three or four hours, there is no reason to believe there is any difficulty in achieving that. So we do expect that his counsel, Mr. Harris, will be in receipt by delivery of the monies as calculated, including interest calculations.

I might also tell the member that we have received a quarter-million dollars from the City of Winnipeg, to date, in respect of the City's contribution.

* (15:40)

Mrs. Smith: So I just have to put on the record right now, with all due respect, it was a good idea to pay the bill and then negotiate with the City, was it not?

Mr. Mackintosh: The answer to that unfolded as discussions with the City unfolded. We have been working with the City, including at the senior level, including discussions between my office and the mayor over the last while to help facilitate payment. So what we are seeing now is the outcome of those discussions.

I think what is important, too, is that we look to see how we can put in place a protocol, so that we can guard against the challenges that have been discovered when there are multiple jurisdictions that have to make payment. There are insurers and I have concerns about how insurance policies are ordered, quite frankly, so I think in terms of how these things are dealt with, it is something that is going to be worked out with the City and the Province. We are working on a protocol, and we have some drafts back and forth.

As well, of course, the issue of apportionment is behind us now, and that is what is different.

Mrs. Smith: I thank you for that answer. It is good to see the issue resolved or resolving. I am sure that members opposite feel the same way.

Having said that, going back to my previous question in terms of the code of conduct. What I neglected to ask is: When do you think I would be able to receive that in my office?

Mr. Mackintosh: Staff advises that they will make every effort to have that delivered along with the international standards tomorrow morning.

Mrs. Smith: I thank you for that very much.

I want to move on to another issue now. Earlier this month, we had talked about the possibility, and in the paper there was quite an article on the possibility of a joint trial for the gangs here in Winnipeg. I understand that some discussion has happened around that issue.

Could the Justice Minister please give this House an update on what is happening? Is this trial going to be able to be taking place in the province?

Mr. Mackintosh: Just a few brief points. I understand that is being dealt with in the Prosecutions service. I will just leave it with them to make the professional assessment as to how that matter should proceed.

In terms of policy direction, we only have the courts and Madam Justice Krindle's direction that there should be trials of no more than, I think I said in the House eight or nine, but I think it was seven or eight accused in any trial. In fact, the whole experience of the Warriors' trial indicated just how virtually impossible it was to have a trial with the numbers that were there at the beginning of that process. But that is a matter that is outside of my office. I just will not interfere in any way with that.

I am just advised, in terms of my office is advised of these kinds of things and I can ask questions but I do not direct; I do not get involved. The advice I have from Prosecutions is that the decision-making process is still ongoing.

Mrs. Smith: So, just to clarify, what the Justice Minister is telling me is that the possibility is there. It is in Prosecutions right now to assess whether or not the feasibility of having a joint trial is workable with dollars and cents, with the legalities and the complications, whatever needs to be done. Is that clear?

Mr. Mackintosh: Any strategies around whether there be joint trials, or whatever, really has been speculation, I think largely from the defence counsel that have been connected with this matter or have an interest in it, but it is speculation only. I mean I will await an announcement from Prosecutions and their decision on this, but in terms of how they are proceeding I understand that decisions are being made in terms of I guess the strength of evidence and all of those related matters.

Mrs. Smith: Concerning the courthouse on Chevrier in Fort Garry, would this courthouse be useful in your view or in this Government's view to utilize to prosecute gang members? There is a concern in this province and in this city about the security within courthouses, courtrooms, as you know. There have been documented incidences of intimidation of police officers, and I daresay I have some information, direct

information about intimidations of Crowns and some of the lawyers involved. Is this Government in any way looking at utilizing the courtroom for this purpose?

Mr. Mackintosh: No. If there is a large trial, and I am not getting into any particular circumstances or the nature of any kinds of accused, but the Courts Division staff have had plans on how it can manage larger trials in the existing facilities, if that should ever arise again in the future. The department I am advised is not considering reopening Chevrier as a courthouse. That courthouse was designed for 32, 33 or so accused, and really it is just not usable as a courthouse. For virtually any kind of use it would have to have some conversion.

Mrs. Smith: I am wondering why the Justice Minister feels the courthouse is not usable, given that there are other jurisdictions in Canada that have very similar facilities that have housed trials for gang members.

Mr. Mackintosh: I will not comment on what experiences may unfold in other provinces. We have learned lessons, and we have shared lessons with other prosecutors, other prosecution services in Canada. In fact, we have had some leadership on that. There was a subsequent meeting, I think, in Toronto a little while later in terms of managing these large trials, and that is a very serious decision for our jurisdictions to make. I cannot comment today on the nature of how the trials elsewhere are unfolding, but in Manitoba the direction from the courts and from the criminal decision is that there should be no more than seven or eight accused in any trial.

* (15:50)

Mrs. Smith: With all due respect, I would like to put on record that I would encourage the current Justice Minister and the current Government not to be more mindful of saving political face when they made such an uproar about the courthouse a few years ago, but, if it is prudent to do so, I would hope that this Justice Minister would say, yes, at this point in time, it is prudent to do that, and any rationale can be used. We live in a different age right now. The Hells Angels are here. There are many different reasons that the circumstances might be different

than they were back a few years ago. So I would hope that political agendas would not get in the way of that happening if it is needed.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, if I had professional advice from Prosecutions or, indeed, from Courts that that facility would be useful and we could make use of that investment, I would not interfere with that, and I would respect that, but that is not the advice I am getting, based on the experience and the court decision in the Warriors matter. I do think it is important to look to see if what I have called, the Government has called, the white elephant in terms of the way it is designed as a courthouse for 32, 33 accused, which clearly is extraordinary, if there is some use that can be made of it as a public facility, then we should try.

There may be some use, whether by the province of Manitoba or outside agencies, and there are some options that are being considered. I know the member opposite had discussions with the minister responsible for that facility and what the market was telling us with regard to that. So those options are always under consideration.

Mrs. Smith: With all due respect, I have observed and know quite categorically that this present Justice Minister has many of the same staff that were on board at the time that recommendation was made to build the courthouse. So could the Justice Minister please explain what changed because, right now, and we have examined it very closely, looking at the staffing currently in place, some of the people, as I said, who recommended the courthouse and endorsed the courthouse and pushed the courthouse are on staff now. Could the Justice Minister please tell me what the difference is? Why the change of heart?

Mr. Mackintosh: There were, of course, very unique circumstances surrounding the decision to convert that particular property for use as a 32-person-or-so courtroom. There were some extraordinary pressures resulting from the whole situation—transportation, the security issues. What has transpired is the trial itself and the subsequent proceedings. Most instructive has been, of course, the view of people involved that this was unwieldy. Even more important was the

view of the court that there should not be more than seven or eight accused tried in one trial. That is what makes the courthouse a white elephant actually. That is looking back at the time decisions were made, and so be it.

I think what we have to do is recognize the challenge of dealing with that facility. I hope that we can find some use for it, perhaps a Justice use. So there are discussions ongoing. We will see where those go over the next little while. I am more than happy to share some of that progress with the member opposite when we get to a point where there may be something more concrete, because I believe it is in your riding.

Mrs. Smith: Yes, it is in my riding, and very familiar with the structure and very familiar with the story around that structure, also the concern that residents have about the structure, in some respects. I would hope that in view of the fact that today I heard the Justice Minister say that he could not comment on other jurisdictions, in actual fact, with all due respect, the Justice Minister has been very adept at comparing and contrasting different provinces, depending on what the flavour of the day is. I would say that this courthouse was something that was rallied against with great vigour when the present Government was in opposition.

The concern I have right now is that we do have rigorous gang activity in the city. We do have cases before the courts right now that need serious attention. We had what I call a first, to my knowledge, firebombing in a police officer's home. We have had open intimidation of police officers in court. We have had open intimidation of some lawyers at some points in this past year. This is of great concern. I would hope that this Attorney General would rise above the political agenda that is obviously there against the courthouse for holding trials, because courthouses can be modified. They can be utilized. It is a secure courthouse. It is designed for gang cases.

Having said that, there are prototypes, there are trials ongoing in different parts of Canada that have much the same kind of facility. So it is hopeful that the Justice Minister would take a second look at that courthouse and utilize it, if need be. It seems to me right now that we are at

a point of need be, because there is a backlog in the courthouses as we speak, there are serious trials pending as we speak, and I think politics needs to be taken out of the mix.

I would say on record I would be very willing to applaud the Government openly for utilizing a courthouse that, in my view, seems to have a lot of benefits to be utilized. On the other hand, if the Attorney General feels everything is fine and these cases can be tried in other courts and that this is totally not useful to use the Chevrier courthouse, will the Attorney General please tell me—I have heard for three years—what is to be done with the courthouse? I have heard for three years, I met with Minister Ashton, I have met with various people because there was an actual real estate agent who wanted to buy the courthouse or had some clients who wanted to buy the courthouse and was willing to pursue buying the structure. He was virtually turned away. There was opportunity for the Government to recoup some monies. I am just wondering why it is in the state it is now where nothing is happening with the building. If it is indeed a white elephant, why was that opportunity not taken?

* (16:00)

Mr. Mackintosh: It was my understanding actually that there was an offer, but it was about half of market value. There was something like that that was of concern to the department responsible, but I do not have first-hand knowledge.

The member should know that facility was only developed as a temporary structure. I believe there have been some writings I have seen. Coming into office I was advised that it was never intended to be a permanent facility. There was a time constraint. There were certain options that were available at the time.

Second of all, I think it has been recognized that the location was less than ideal. There were many challenges in terms of transportation of inmates. There were other challenges as well. I think that is important to have on the record. I do not know if that has ever been publicly talked about, that it was seen as temporary.

In terms of the Opposition's views of that building at the time, there were not expressed concerns about that decision that had to be made at that time. I have often said, reflecting on that, it is a white elephant. The minister responsible had said that because that was the experience and the result of the decision of the court and the experience. I think some of the remarks may have been misconstrued by those that report or interpret them.

What has to be recognized is that in Alberta where they had a mega-trial there were about 25 accused there. The trial virtually, I guess the best description might be imploded. They are certainly learning lessons there.

In Québec, they considered the experience in Manitoba. It is my understanding that there is a breakdown of the trial into groups of about 6 to 8 accused, in other words, along the lines of the Krindle directive.

That is the state of play in Canadian law and mega-trials. That is what makes that facility unusable as a courthouse. It is just this huge, big room for 32 or more, 34 accused.

Now in terms of whether we can get some use out of that, I remain very hopeful that we can find some other way to convert what I think we have to recognize now in light of all the law, the experiences, a white elephant. Whether there is some way to convert that to make it usable, if it can be used for a Justice purpose, then I would say, great. There may be some use by outside agencies of that, but I am not in a position now to have that discussion with the member. I would like to have that discussion, if there is progress, in terms of some dialogue with stakeholders on that in the near future. I will undertake to do that with the member.

Mrs. Smith: I thank the Justice Minister very much for that. Thank you.

Turning to another issue right now, when the present Premier (Mr. Doer) bought a new house in the River East constituency I got several calls to my office that said, well, he is moving out of the dangerous part of the city to a less crime filled part of the city. Now they also asked me the question: Have other MLAs, are they so

concerned about the crime in their specific areas? Because they are not talking about MLAs that are moving from a district that is less crime ridden than others. They are talking about MLAs who have moved from relatively high crime areas to less crime areas.

There are some MLAs I know who move to different districts. It is very valid to do that. Sometimes that does happen. Personally, I live in my riding in Fort Garry and am very pleased to be there, have been for many, many years. In fact, my husband moved there when he was two, and we have raised our children there, so we are long-time residents of Fort Garry. I do know some MLAs, for whatever reason, if their family grows and they cannot find a house that fits the size of the family, there are lots of reasons for moving, other than safety. But I could not answer that question because I did not know, quite honestly, what MLAs lived in what ridings.

As I say, I want to emphasize the fact that if an MLA from either side of the House moves from one district to another, that can happen for a variety of reasons, but when the allegation was made that they were moving because of the high crime rate, I really could not say that one way or the other. I also could not say clearly, I could not even debate, because I really do not know where the MLAs from the opposite side of the House reside. Now not in terms of specific addresses, but, for instance, the area of Cris Aglugub. Is he a resident of The Maples? He represents The Maples.

Mr. Mackintosh: In my portfolio I have never dealt with that issue. I would be really reluctant to talk about anyone's place but mine, because it is not something I follow. Unrelated to Justice, I know where the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) lives; I have been over to his house. There are a few others I can think of, but I cannot really assist the member with that research here.

Mrs. Smith: Perhaps to assist you, I could give you what I know. I know the Member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan) lives in St. Vital. I know the member from Thompson, to my best knowledge, lives in Thompson, or here, but his place of residence, it is my understanding, Thompson. I understand the member from Riel lives in Riel.

Is that correct? You do not know? I will put a question mark, then.

The member from Inkster lives in Inkster. Is that correct? We will find that out. I understand that the minister from Brandon East now lives in Winnipeg, or has a house here in Winnipeg where he resides. I understand the member from Radisson lives in Radisson.

So the Attorney General, after working with all these people all these years, has no idea what MLAs live in their ridings. Well, I would say that is a bit suspect.

The member from Kildonan, I understand, lives in Kildonan. Well, I understand the minister has been to his house. So can you recall if it was Kildonan? That is a good thing. The member from Selkirk, does he live in Selkirk? You do not know. The member from Concordia, does he live in Concordia? Your Premier, excuse me. No? Yes. I just said he moved to River East, so I am sure, yes.

I understand the member from Wolseley, does she live in Wolseley? You do not know? The member from Point Douglas, does he live in Point Douglas? It is my understanding he lives in St. Vital. I am not sure about that. The member from Flin Flon lives in Flin Flon? *[interjection]* Pardon me?

An Honourable Member: Cranberry Portage.

Mrs. Smith: Cranberry Portage. The member from St. James, I understand, lives in St. James. The member from The Pas lives in The Pas, I understand. The member from La Verendrye lives in La Verendrye? Do not know? The member from St. Johns lives in St. Johns? Good. You are going to pass this test if we get a few more.

The member from Elmwood lives in Elmwood? You do not know. The member from Burrows lives in Burrows?

An Honourable Member: I think so.

Mrs. Smith: But you do not know for sure. You know, you are going to have to have a street party one of these days and get these all

straightened out. So you do not know. The member from Lord Roberts lives in Lord Roberts, I understand. Is that correct?

So your answers are all you do not know. The member from Minto was right here. Maybe you could consult with her. Does she live in Minto?

An Honourable Member: I believe so.

Mrs. Smith: Good. The member from Interlake lives in Interlake, I understand. You do not know? And the member from Transcona?

An Honourable Member: I am not certain on that.

Mrs. Smith: The member from Rupertsland lives in Rupertsland, I understand. You do not know. So all of these you do not know.

The member from Assiniboia lives in Assiniboia? In all due respect, I am not getting any answers. You do not know where any of your colleagues live. *[interjection]* Excuse me, I am sorry.

The member from Fort Rouge lives in Fort Rouge. *[interjection]* Well, I can tell you he lives on North Drive in Fort Garry. Does that help? The member from Wellington, does he live in Wellington?

An Honourable Member: I think he lives by the university somewhere.

* (16:10)

Mrs. Smith: I think so too, yes. The member from Rossmere lives in Rossmere, I understand? The member from St. Boniface lives in St. Boniface?

An Honourable Member: Yes. I am sure of that.

Mrs. Smith: My goodness. That is a good thing. The member from Brandon West, I know, lives in Brandon West, at least to the best of my knowledge. Is that correct?

An Honourable Member: It is my understanding.

Mrs. Smith: And the member from Dauphin-Roblin lives in his constituency in Dauphin-Roblin?

An Honourable Member: I believe so.

Mrs. Smith: And the member from Swan River, does she reside in the Swan River constituency? *[interjection]* You are not sure? *[interjection]* You think so, okay.

Well, I hate to tell you, but you did not get 50 out of 50. Having said that, though, I think it is important when those questions do come to our offices that, you know, just a heads-up. It is good to be prepared.

The residing MLAs need to be prepared with answers as to why they do or do not live in their ridings, and especially with the safety issue here in the inner city and in Winnipeg, it is important that we are able to live in any part of the city that we feel comfortable in. When we are elected members, it is important that we feel safe enough to live in our own ridings.

This came as a result of three phone calls I had, and I could not answer those questions. So here today, could I just ask the Justice Minister how long you have been here at the Legislature? I am not certain.

Mr. Mackintosh: I thought you were going to ask how long I have lived at my house in St. Johns.

I was first appointed to the table here in 1979, and then I went to law school in 1984, as I recall, and continued working at the Legislature part time for a while in that year and then returned here in September of 1993 in a remarkably different capacity.

Mrs. Smith: I hate to use the Education Minister's phraseology, goodness sakes, but it is passing strange that since 1993—it is now 2002—one does not know where one's colleagues live, but I thank you for trying to answer that question.

I would ask the Justice Minister: What would he advise me to say when I get phone

calls like that? I have had three of them. That did not come from me; they came from the public.

Mr. Mackintosh: Perhaps the member could clarify. Was the question whether members, MLAs, live in their constituencies, or was the question whether MLAs were choosing not to live in higher risk neighbourhoods? Is that the nature of it?

Mrs. Smith: Thank you for clarifying that. The nature of the calls, and it came from different parts of the city, and they were talking about both sides of the House. But two of the calls were very pointed when they came about members in this Government, and they said, well, how is it that members from the Government have moved out of their constituencies and are living in safer areas? These calls did come from areas, I hate to put on record exactly where they came from, but I thought they were legitimate questions, and, to tell you quite honestly, I did not have an answer. I said my answer to them was that many MLAs sometimes, depending on the circumstances in the family, if the family grows or whatever, sometimes they will look for housing to fit their family. It is not always available in the districts they represent. Quite honestly, I did not know what else to say.

So I thought today in Estimates, because it is my intention very shortly to bring Estimates to a close today—you will probably be very grateful for that new news—but I did not know this would land up to be quite as humorous as it was.

I have to admit I am absolutely astounded the Attorney General does not know where his colleagues live, but, quite seriously, how does the Attorney General think I could answer these people? In all fairness, I think our private lives are our private lives. I just want to be able to answer.

Mr. Mackintosh: I know that people choose their homes for many, many reasons. I think one of my predecessors lived outside of her riding. Actually a newspaper tried to make a point about that, where she lived. One of the reports that infuriated me the most in my tenure as being an elected member, the words that were attributed to me reflecting that that individual was out of touch because of where she lived. It was not

what I had said whatsoever, because I had no view of whether there were break-and-enters in her neighbourhood or what.

I understand that from time to time people do look at those things. As MLAs, of course, your personal decisions about where you live actually have perhaps a public import. I know, as the AG, I live I think in the heart and soul of my city, I will argue, in the heart of the North End. I have lived there for about 15 years. I think it is one of the best parts of our family's life. I know my neighbour and colleague the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) recently purchased another home in the North End.

That I know. Of course, I know the Member for Kildonan's (Mr. Chomiak) house. I was actually invited there once, although come to think of it I think it was for a political purpose. I have been to the leader's home. I have been to the former home. It is actually a beautiful neighbourhood, a very special part of Winnipeg as well. It is a nice property across the river from my constituency.

Yes, the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) and I, of course, go back on floods. We get the nervous tic when we talk about riverbank property. I know that, yes, the Premier (Mr. Doer) in '97 had to do some serious sandbagging on that property.

I cannot comment on what the reasons for that move are. I have had discussions with members of the family. I know the concern that may be expressed by some people in public was not borne out by the reasons that were given to me by the family. There were other reasons.

Mrs. Smith: Well, the last question, I am going to be so bold. What I did ask, just for the benefit of the member that just walked into the House, is I had three calls talking about MLAs who have moved from what they consider to be unsafe districts to more safe districts. Having said that, that is why I very clearly asked which of the MLAs in the ridings that the current Government holds live in their ridings. Not addresses, but just do they live in their ridings. I also asked the Justice Minister what I could say when I got those phone calls.

An Honourable Member: Conrad lives in my riding.

* (16:20)

Mrs. Smith: Really.

Having said that, I am astounded to know today that the current Justice Minister, after being here since 1993, still does not know where his colleagues reside and if they reside in the constituencies they represent. I would ask if the Attorney General would be so kind to just give me, when he has time, a breakdown of which MLAs live in their ridings, and if they do not what riding they do live in. Could that be possible to get that information? I would share it with the Justice Minister so he knows as well.

Mr. Mackintosh: Just in my portfolio I do not have that information. I think the Legislative Assembly office has that information. I think the addresses are set out or they used to be set out on a list that is available to MLAs in terms of their addresses and postal codes.

I have some ideas. I want to just save myself here for a minute. I have some ideas on parts of the city where some MLAs live, but I do not know within which constituencies they live. For example, the division between Radisson and Transcona, I always found to be an odd one. So I do not know the answer to that.

Mrs. Smith: I want to thank the Minister of Justice and I want to thank the staff for taking all the time. We have been in here since May. I want to thank you very much for contributing in such a positive way. Your expertise and your intelligence are so much appreciated. I say that sincerely.

It is great to end this on a lighter note, should we say. I would certainly give an open invitation to the Minister of Justice to come to my house and know where I live. I would be very glad for you to meet the family and share a cup of tea—*[interjection]* Certainly would love to have you.

If we could commence the passing of lines that would be very much appreciated.

Mr. Chairperson: 4.1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$539,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$89,600—pass.

(c) Prosecutions and Criminal Justice Policy (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$304,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$103,300—pass.

(d) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$949,500—pass; (2) Other expenditures \$296,800—pass.

(e) Human Resource Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$861,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$165,400—pass.

(f) Computer Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$972,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$467,800—pass.

4.2. Criminal Justice (a) Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$255,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$27,900—pass.

A point of order being raised, the honourable Minister of Justice.

Point of Order

Mr. Mackintosh: In light of the way the Estimates were dealt with on the global basis, I am wondering: Is it not entirely legal and appropriate that we would deal with the main resolutions, rather than line by line.

An Honourable Member: You cannot do it anymore. Under the old rules—

Mr. Chairperson: These are the old rules.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Item 4.2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, the item is accordingly passed.

(b) Prosecutions (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$10,215,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,034,000—pass; (3) Witness Program \$623,500—pass.

(c) Provincial Policing \$66,442,400—pass.

(d) Aboriginal and Community Law Enforcement (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$466,800–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$155,600–pass.

(e) Public Safety (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,855,100–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$539,700–pass; (3) Grants \$165,000–pass.

(f) Compensation for Victims of Crime (1) Other Expenditures \$3,130,000–pass; (2) Less: Reduction in Actuarial Liability (\$100,000).

(g) Law Enforcement Review Agency (1) Salaries and Employment Benefits \$234,900–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$57,900–pass.

(h) Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$626,700–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,641,100–pass; (3) Inquest-Flin Flon Smelter \$764,400–pass.

(j) Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits; (2) Other Expenditures.

(k) Sophonow Inquiry.

Resolution 4.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$89,135,500 for Justice, Criminal Justice, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

* (16:30)

Mr. Chairperson: 3. Civil Justice (a) Manitoba Human Rights Commission (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,192,600–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$404,000–pass.

(b) Legislative Counsel (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,546,100–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$368,900–pass.

(c) Grant to Manitoba Law Reform Commission \$60,000–pass.

(d) Family Law (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$911,800–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$114,100–pass.

(e) Constitutional Law (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$930,000–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$183,900–pass.

(f) Legal Aid Manitoba (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$7,372,500–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$7,157,200–pass.

Resolution 4.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$20,241,100 for Justice, Civil Justice, \$20,241,100 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 4.4. Corrections (a) Corporate Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,258,000–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$452,100–pass; (3) Programs \$199,400–pass.

(b) Adult Corrections (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$51,891,500–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$7,972,600–pass; (3) Programs and External Agencies \$1,907,600–pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$30,000).

(c) Youth Corrections (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$19,088,000–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,324,600–pass; (3) Programs and External Agencies \$2,360,200–pass.

Resolution 4.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$87,424,000 for Justice, Corrections, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 4.5 Courts (a) Court Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$3,861,100–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,287,900–pass.

(b) Winnipeg Courts (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$5,931,500–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,214,200–pass.

(c) Regional Courts (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$3,541,200–pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,767,300–pass.

(d) Judicial Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$9,076,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,390,000—pass.

(e) Sheriff Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,343,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,505,200—pass.

Resolution 4.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$33,918,300 for Justice, Courts, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003

Resolution agreed to.

* (16:40)

Mr. Chairperson: 6. (a) Desktop Services (1) Amortization Expense—Hardware and Transition \$589,600—pass; (2) Amortization Expense—Enterprise Software \$105,600—pass; (3) Enterprise Software Licenses \$433,700—pass.

(b) Amortization Expense \$607,900—pass.

(c) Interest Expense \$161,800—pass.

Resolution 4.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,898,600 for Justice, Amortization and Other Costs Related to Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: The last item to be considered for the Estimates for the Department of Justice is 1.(a) Minister's Salary, contained in resolution 1. At this point we request that the minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item.

Mrs. Smith: Section 7(1) of The Balanced Budget, Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Accountability Act provides for a 20% salary reduction to each member of the Executive Council, should the Government project a negative balance in the third-quarter financial report.

The Minister of Finance provided to this Assembly a third-quarter financial report projecting a positive balance only through the illegal transfer of \$150 million from Manitoba Hydro. Not only is this transfer retroactive, it is,

according to section 43(3) of The Manitoba Hydro Act, illegal. Every person who violates this provision is liable to a fine of not more than \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

For failing to deliver to the citizens of Manitoba a balanced budget, and for illegally raiding Manitoba Hydro of \$288 million, including \$150 million to cover Budget 2001's operating deficit, the Minister of Justice be subject to the penalties as prescribed under section 7(1)(a) of The Balanced Budget, Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Accountability Act.

I would like to move that line 4.1.(a) Minister's Salary be reduced by the sum of \$5,680.

Mr. Chairperson: It has been moved by the honourable Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Smith), seconded by the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), that line item 4.1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary be reduced by \$5,680.

Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In the Chair's opinion, the Nays have it.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairperson: On division. Agreed.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Item 4.1 Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary—pass.

Resolution 4.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,779,000 for Justice, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2003.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: That concludes the Estimates for the Department of Justice.

The hour being 5 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

House Business

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a matter of House business.

I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Law Amendments will meet on Tuesday, July 23, at 6:30 p.m. to deal with the following bills: Bill 19, The Mines and Minerals

Amendment Act; Bill 22, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Francophone School Division Governance Structure); Bill 32, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act; Bill 33, The Private Vocational Institutions Act; Bill 43, The Polar Bear Protection Act; Bill 44, The Provincial Police Amendment (Aboriginal Policing) Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Conrad Santos): The Standing Committee on Law Amendments will meet on Tuesday, July 23, at 6:30 p.m. to deal with the following bills: Bill 19, The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act; Bill 22, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Francophone School Division Governance Structure); Bill 32, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act; Bill 33, The Private Vocational Institutions Act; Bill 43, The Polar Bear Protection Act; Bill 44, The Provincial Police Amendment (Aboriginal Policing) Act.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hour being after five o'clock, being called six o'clock, as previously agreed, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 18, 2002

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