

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 5 April, 1982

Time — 2:00 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER** by Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER, Hon. D. James Walding (St. Vital):** Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

**HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table another information piece with respect to the Crow package for the benefit of all members of the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**HON. AL MACKLING (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, I have a further report in respect to flood forecast and it continues about the same, really no change.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Notices of Motion . . .

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**HON. EUGENE KOSTYRA (Seven Oaks)** introduced Bill No. 2, The Residential Rent Regulation Act. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor).

**MR. USKIW** introduced Bill No. 17, The Proceeds of Contracts Disbursement Act. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor).

**HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Brandon East)** introduced Bill No. 21, The Community Child Day Care Standards Act. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor).

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**HON. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface)** introduced Bill No. 22, The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor).

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before we reach Oral Questions may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have three students from the R. D. Parker Collegiate. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Ashton. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Thompson.

The students have just returned from the Operation World Scholarship Exchange to Guyana and Barba-

dos. They are accompanied by three students from Guayana and three students from Barbados who came to Canada as part of this exchange. The students will be visiting the constituency of the Honourable Member for Thompson.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

**MR. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health. I would like to ask him who gave the authority, or who assumed the authority for resumption of tinkering and fiddling with the redevelopment plan in the first phase redevelopment of the Health Sciences Centre?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know if there's any tinkering but nobody has given any authority. If the honourable member is talking about the Children's Hospital, I was surprised as he was when I saw the announcement in the newspaper. I've requested information from the Commission; it hasn't come to the Commission or to the Board of the Health Sciences Centre either. This is something at the staff level only, I am told at this time.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Well, Mr. Speaker, there certainly is tempering and fiddling. The President of the Health Sciences Centre is quoted as saying, "It's not a fixed, frozen plan at anytime." Can the Honourable Minister of Health confirm that the President of the Health Sciences Centre and the Board of the Health Sciences Centre is operating at the present time under the illusion and the misconception that it is not a fixed plan?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, that question will have to be asked of the President. As far as I'm concerned, the information that I have; this hasn't come to the Commission or to myself, of course, nor to the Health Sciences Centre Board; I'm told this is only an exchange between the staff at this time and we'll certainly — especially now that we are aware of it, we'll be very careful, I can assure you that there's not going to be any ready acceptance of this concept.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether anything was said of any revisions to the plan for Children's Hospital during a recent meeting or any recent meetings between the Minister and the President of the Health Sciences Centre; the Chairman of the Board and the Vice-President of Planning?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Absolutely not.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that

progress on the redevelopment of the Health Sciences Centre was frustrated for some 12 years due to continual revision and planning and replanning, and what I refer to as tinkering and fiddling; and that steps were taken to terminate that and get on with the job of construction, Can the Minister confirm to this House that it is his intention and the intention of his government that position be maintained?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say to the honourable member that I'm very concerned with the long-time planning. It seems that things are changing constantly and that is the reason for changing the plans, and I'm certainly not very happy with that. I've instructed staff to review the situation, to start looking at the situation immediately to see if they need any little bit of coaxing or prodding or take over from the government because we can't keep on like this. I'm told that we spent the last twelve years or so just in planning, it has been a fabulous or fantastic sum. I'm inquiring into this at this time and I'm sure that we will discuss this during the Estimates, I'll be only to pleased to.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Health Sciences Centre unilaterally undertook the resumption of adult cardiac surgery without approval from the Minister, or the previous Minister I might say; in view of the fact that the senior officers of the Health Sciences Centre are now talking about phasing Children's Hospital, in effect, out of existence as a separate entity, again without the approval and even apparently without the knowledge of the Minister; can the Minister advise the House as to who's running the Health business in this province?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly can tell the honourable member, as he knows, that approval of anything, any change or approval of the funds, has to come from the government, the Department of Health, and we'll be very careful before any approval is given.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. I'd like to ask the Minister, in fact one of the reasons for a delay in the introduction of a beef program, the Minister kept indicating that he was consulting with producers, or producer groups. Could he tell this House what producer groups he consulted with before introducing the beef program that he has just announced last week?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member of Agriculture.

**HON. BILL URUSKI (Interlake):** Mr. Speaker, if the member had been in the House last week he'd have taken part in the debate when information was provided to the honourable members of the House at that time.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe that one of the rules of this House, Mr.

Speaker, is not to make reference to whether a member is in this House. Mr. Speaker, I was in the House until the House adjourned on Wednesday to go to Brandon Fair, which I attended, and continued on to meet with some of the constituents in the southwest corner of the province to discuss with them some of the current agricultural issues and concerns that the agricultural community are facing.

Mr. Speaker, on to the question; the Minister apparently does not want to answer the question of who he consulted with, or what farm group he consulted with to advise to him what they would feel was in their best interests as a support program for the beef industry. I will ask him again, Mr. Speaker, what farm organization or producer group did the Minister meet with and discuss his proposed program with that he announced in the House last Thursday?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, I'll take back the remarks that I didn't want to attribute to the honourable member, but he unfortunately was absent when the discussion took several hours in this Chamber. — (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, we were on Estimates for approximately an hour-and-a-half to an hour-and-three-quarters last Thursday, and information was provided. I indicated that for the honourable member and if he wishes to check Hansard, he will have that information, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister as I am aware he either has to answer or not. It's his prerogative whether he does or not and he is not desirous of answering who he consulted with, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister, Mr. Speaker, tell this House and the people of Manitoba that he has the support of the majority of the farmers, the beef producers of the Province of Manitoba, on the new beef program that he has just announced? Does he have the support of the majority of beef producers?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the honourable member is not able to read Hansard to get the information that was provided to honourable members. If he wishes not to avail himself of the opportunity, I apologize to him and to his constituents that he could take that time.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to support, this government has the mandate of the people of Manitoba. We have consulted with beef producers and we're hoping that beef producers will recognize, and they have indicated, that they are in trouble. After being sabotaged in terms of a program that was ending on March 31st of 1982 which was scuttled by that former administration, I find it very hollow in terms of their concern for beef producers who they told last fall that there was no support for them when they, last July, came and met with them and said there was no support for beef producers. I find those statements very hollow, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Minister is aware that Hansard is not out yet for the debate that took place last week, some of the Thursday Hansard, but the total debate is not available at this particular time and if it is, I haven't had time to peruse it.

However, Mr. Speaker, another direct question to

the Minister, he is unable to answer the first ones he received so one would have to question or in fact take the assumption, Mr. Speaker, that he does not have the support of the beef industry as far as this program is concerned. Mr. Speaker, is it correct that he has hired Mr. Joe Dunsmore to head up the new beef income or income assurance program or beef support program or to head the commission? Has Mr. Joe Dunsmore been rehired, the individual who was in charge of the old Beef Income Assurance Program, Mr. Speaker, that was not done away with by our administration, but in fact, the producers decided by their own decision not to continue on with the program — has Mr. Dunsmore been hired to operate the program?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, yes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

**MR. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, just one further question to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the Minister targeted a particular date for the start-up of the beef program?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, as soon as the contracts are developed, I would hope that within about eight weeks that there should be contracts and discussions to fine-tune the various points of the program that are still in the consultative process with producers. When those points are covered and decided upon, then the program and the contracts will be available for signing with beef producers in this province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. G.W.J. (Gerry) MERCIER (St. Norbert):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs. Could the Minister indicate whether or not he has received a report from Ms. Shapiro, an interim report with respect to the inquiry she's holding on the expropriations in the Logan Avenue area?

**MR. KOSTYRA:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that report is apparently to be in the hands of the Minister relatively shortly, will he undertake to distribute a copy of that report to members of the Legislature when he receives it?

**MR. KOSTYRA:** Mr. Speaker, once I'm in receipt of the report, I'll determine whether or not it will be distributed and when it will be distributed.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour. I wonder if the Minister could advise whether or not public hearings will be held before any changes are made to the minimum wage.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**HON. VIC SCHROEDER (Rossmere):** Mr. Speaker,

there is a Minimum Wage Board which traditionally holds hearings with respect to that issue.

**MR. MERCIER:** Will the tradition be followed, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SCHROEDER:** The Minimum Wage Board has already met and made a determination.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, were public hearings held then?

**MR. SCHROEDER:** No, they were not.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

**MR. GARY FILMON (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. Does the Minister support the proposal put forth by the outgoing President of the Manitoba Teachers Society that Manitoba adopt the so-called 20-20 plan, that is, that teachers be limited to a maximum of 20 hours instruction time per week and class sizes be limited to a maximum of 20 students?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

**HON. MAUREEN HEMPHILL (Logan):** Mr. Speaker, as is the tradition and practice of the Department of Education and the Minister of Education, I am awaiting the presentation of the resolutions that were passed at the teachers' general meeting and I will be discussing them and reviewing them at that time. I have not received them yet.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder then if the Minister could indicate whether or not she supports the resolution adopted by the Manitoba Teachers Society in its recent annual meeting that provincial aid to private and parochial schools be terminated.

**MRS. HEMPHILL:** Mr. Speaker, as a matter of courtesy I think that it is fair that the first discussion that takes place related to the resolutions passed by the teachers take place between the teachers and I.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Speaker, as a matter of courtesy perhaps to those people who support private and parochial schools in the province, could the Minister indicate whether or not her government has a position on this? I understand that it is under review and I wonder if therefore the Minister can give us an indication of what her position is on the matter since it is of concern to many thousands of Manitobans?

**MRS. HEMPHILL:** Mr. Speaker, I did indicate previously that all educational funding and all financing of educational matters in the Province of Manitoba were under review and aid to private schools is one of those matters that will be looked at.

I might also indicate though that the present funding that is in place in the existing budget which we can discuss during the Estimates review is the amount of money that was put in place by the previous government for support to private schools, Mr. Speaker, for

which there was no increase given. It is the same amount of money in the budget as was put in the budget by them.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin-Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. I wonder can the Honourable Minister of Agriculture oblige the House considering now that the supplementary supply passed by the House will give MACC money to look after the farmers, when will the farm loans some of which have been held back since January be approved?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that loans were in the process of being approved after the Corporation ran out of money by the end of December. We approved internally sums that had to be repaid from MACC to the Department of Finance. We held those up so there could be initial financing and now that this Loan Act has been passed, loans should be processed as they always have been in the normal manner.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

**MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Will the Minister of Labour be tabling the recommendations of the Minimum Wage Board?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Mr. Speaker, I expect to be tabling those recommendations shortly.

**MR. JOHNSTON:** Mr. Speaker, my question then is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. If the Minimum Wage Board did not hold any hearings to determine the recommendation that has been made to the Minister of Labour, was there any discussion with the Minister of Economic Development or was there discussion with small business in Manitoba before the determination of the report that was sent to the Minister of Labour?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

**HON. MURIEL SMITH (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, issues such as that are always under discussion in the Cabinet and my colleagues and I are in a regular consultative relationship. Whenever I've met groups or individuals representing the small business sector, it is also an issue which comes up and the relationship of labour costs, wages to their particular economic circumstance and the competitive environment they operate in is under constant review.

**MR. JOHNSTON:** Mr. Speaker, this is a different question, but it's to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Last week, the Minister informed the House that there was a five-man board being

appointed to study the applications for the Interest Relief Program for small business. The money has now been passed, the applications are out. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House the names of those small businessmen from private enterprise that will be on that board.

**MRS. SMITH:** Mr. Speaker, there are five people on that board and at the moment, my memory slips on the fifth person, but I am prepared to give the names of four of the five. The Chairperson is Jean Edmonds; the Vice-Chair is John Mundie; members of the Board are Maureen Prendiville and Richard Finkel. —(Interjection)— The fifth person is Gordon Peitsch.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Portage La Prairie.

**MR. LLOYD HYDE (Portage La Prairie):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. A week ago today, I asked a question in this House as to whether he was going to continue the program to supply the pumps and to assist the farmers that were in need of the use of these pumps and my question was to him, is that program going to be continued. He indicated to me that he would have an answer for me in the near future.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, that program is going to be continued. There will be a charge for them, but the pumps are being made available as they have been in the past and the program is being continued.

**MR. HYDE:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister just what that charge is going to be. In the previous administration, that service was made available to the farmers in need and today we understand from what he's telling us that there is going to be a charge. I wonder what that charge is going to be.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, that charge will be similar to that imposed in 1977, 1978, and 1979 with some inflation factor added to it. I will go from memory; I'm not absolutely sure, but I believe the charges are somewhere around \$200 to \$225 per dugout as they were in previous years, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

**MR. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Honourable Attorney-General and would ask him to inform the House as to what steps the government will be taking with regards to the problems that municipalities are facing in collecting outstanding accounts related to calls they received for fire assistance on provincial highways from RCMP?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**HON. ROLAND PENNER (Fort Rouge):** Yes, I would

like to take that as notice and respond to my learned friend opposite as soon as possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, I note that Mr. Richard Klassen, the former Chairman of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, and the entire board have been fired or released and replaced by new members. The new chairman, being a Leonard Harapiak, who I understand and the Member for Swan River certainly appreciates is a fine teacher, I believe, a high school principal also a pretty good politician whom the Member for Swan River ran against twice and defeated; my question to the Honourable Minister was the condition for the other directors also them having a New Democratic Party membership card?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, the new Board of Directors of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation is representative of farm people from all over the province and I believe that present — (Interjection) — well, there is some commentary about high school principals and teachers and farmers and the like — I believe that the credentials of the present board match any group that is appointed by any government in power. Certainly, I am very pleased to have been able to have accepted for the new board the number of people that have put their services forward and I'm sure that they will be doing an excellent job for the people of Manitoba.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, I have no quarrel with that — it's, I suppose, members of the fourth estate that I'm addressing. It's only when Conservatives do this from time to time that we talk of patronage and hiring of political friends. My specific question, Mr. Speaker is, are there active farm members, people involved in the farming business involved on the Board?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, every member that is on the Board is active in farming whether it be fishing because there's a fisherman on the Board as well because of his involvement in the fishing industry; and my knowledge of the members on the Board, they are all active in farming; including the Chairman because it's been alluded that the Chairman is and has been a school teacher. That is correct, but he's also active and is now in fulltime farming as he's always been connected with the farming industry in his area.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, along the same lines of questioning as my colleague from Lakeside; could the Minister confirm that one Mrs. McDonald from Dunrea, Manitoba; is she actively farming or is she the wife of one of the Crop Insurance adjusters who work in that particular community?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister

of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, she may be both.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health. I would like to ask him whether he has received any response or reply from his general letter to the medical profession of April 1st?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** No, Mr. Speaker, I didn't expect any either. It was more information and the government's position that I want to make sure that they realized they understood.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Could the Minister advise the House, Mr. Speaker, whether he has in respect to that letter or any other aspect of communications in the present situation received any communication from the President or the leadership of the MMA since last week?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, there is quite a bit of noise from other people speaking, I hope I understood the first question. The letter, or the answer that I gave was believing that the question was the general letter that I wrote all physicians, yes. Now, I think the member is asking any answer from the MMA Executive? No, there hasn't been anything new at this time.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, is the Minister contemplating striking a fee schedule for 1982-83 and implementing it?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, we're looking at the situation hoping that nobody is penalized at this time; none of the doctors giving their services, nor the people that are receiving help from the medical profession and I would imagine that we should have a statement fairly soon of the next action of the government.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Swan River.

**MR. D.M. (Doug) GOURLAY (Swan River):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs whether or not he has appointed a new Municipal Board?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**HON. A.R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose):** Mr. Speaker, there has been some members appointed to the Board and there will be further appointments in due course.

**MR. GOURLAY:** I wonder if the Minister could advise the House as to the names of the new members that have been appointed to the board.

**MR. ADAM:** I don't remember all the names, Mr.

Speaker. I can get all the names that have been appointed up to this point in time and make them available to the member. There's an O/C, Mr. Speaker, that has been passed so it's public information.

**MR. GOURLAY:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could advise the House whether this Order-in-Council has been filed at this time?

**MR. ADAM:** It has been passed by the Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, for those members that have been appointed but whether it's been filed, I'm not sure. I can check that out.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Attorney-General. I wonder if the Attorney-General could indicate whether he supports the position of a Senior Crown Attorney who has recommended to a Bar Association meeting that persons convicted of impaired driving for the second time should be given the maximum penalty of 14 days in jail.

**MR. PENNER:** Mr. Speaker, I am trying very hard as a matter of policy not to, in any way, make it appear that in my position which is essentially a political position, I'm interfering with the judiciary. I think the judiciary has to, within the confines of the law, as it is presently enacted, which is federal law and within the general guidelines laid down by the Court of Appeal, exercise its function. If on appeal — and the Crown does appeal, the Court of Appeal wishes to issue any statements as to principles of sentencing in such cases, I think that is pre-eminently a question for the Court of Appeal. However, there is something which can be done and perhaps ought to be done through our department. As the Honourable Member for St. Norbert knows, instructions were issued by himself when he was the Attorney-General as to those circumstances which ought to pertain when someone who has been charged for the second time when the charge should be laid technically as a second charge, which would then attract the possibility of the jail sentence.

The present position which was announced by the previous Attorney-General, I think, in 1980 is currently under review by the department and it may be that after reviewing it we will decide to issue instructions to Crown Attorneys that second charges or a charge should be laid as a second offence should be made somewhat more readily than has presently been the case. So the policy that was the policy of the former Attorney-General is under review and I'm saying that not critically, but as the former Attorney-General knows we must always review these things in the light of the incidence of a particular crime and I expect to have a position on that very shortly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Emerson.

**MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture, could the Minister indi-

cate whether there has been any changes in the Farmlands Protection Board to this date and if so, who has been replaced?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** To the same Minister, I am not quite sure what he said no to, whether he was going to answer the question as open government does, or whether there have been any changes taking place. Have any changes taken place on the Farmlands Protection Board?

**MR. URUSKI:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Swan River.

**MR. GOURLAY:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs whether a new Northern Development Agreement has been signed by the Federal Government yet?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

**HON. JAY COWAN (Churchill):** At this time I can indicate to the member that we have not yet reached conclusion of our negotiations with the Federal Government. As I indicated to him earlier, we are at the stage where I believe it is appropriate that the two Ministers involved initiate discussions, the staff having carried forward as much as they can under the circumstances. I have asked the Honourable Herb Gray for a meeting this week when I will be in Ottawa. If in fact he does meet with me at that time, I should be able to report back with more detail next week.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Emerson.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Speaker, I have a little problem here. I don't know whether it's a point of personal privilege or not, but under an Order-in-Council passed March 31, 1982, Order-in-Council No. 356 indicates that changes have been made under the Manitoba Agricultural Lands Protection Board and new members have been appointed. —(Interjection)— The Minister has just indicated that there have been no changes and according to the Order-in-Council, that I just indicated, the Board has been changed.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, I took the honourable member's second question to ask about the Farm Machinery Board, and I said "no." If the member talked about the Farmlands Protection Board, that's another question, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize if that was the question. I didn't get it that way, I took it as the Farm Machinery Board and that's why I answered "no" twice. If he asked the question about the Farm-

lands Protection Board, absolutely, Mr. Speaker, there's been a change in that board.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Speaker, I have a little problem with that because twice I made reference to the Farmlands Protection Board. If the Minister has had a little problem hearing it, that's fine . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Emerson may proceed.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Speaker, not to be repetitious, I wonder if then my first question, under the rules of the House I don't want to be repetitious, but I wonder if the Minister could now then answer the question the way I had asked it the first time — if there have been changes and then who has been replaced, if there have been changes, under The Farmlands Protection Act?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, the entire board has been changed under the Farmlands Protect Board.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** To the Minister of Agriculture then, has the whole previous board then been fired, is that what he's indicating?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, I should tell the honourable member I have to say that while I've been apologizing, I couldn't hear his question because of the chattering from the members of his own side of the House. To tell the honourable member specifically, Mr. Speaker, we have thanked all the members who have served on the boards for many years in terms of their service to the Province of Manitoba and their appointments are at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Mr. Speaker, we are making those changes as the times expire and/or we decide that there should be changes made.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Just once more, Mr. Speaker, the Minister then is confirming that the whole previous board has then been fired, is that right?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, no board member, no board appointments that the appointments are made by the Lieutenant-Governor are fired. They are at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and, Mr. Speaker, they have been replaced by other members.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

**MR. ABE KOVNATS (Niakwa):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've listened with great interest to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture concerning the beef income security plan and the Beef Marketing Board, which is being looked at to being set up. The Honourable Minister has advised that he has been checking and looking into the advice of producers in Province of Manitoba in setting up this Beef Income Assurance Plan and Beef Marketing Board. Can the Honourable Minister advise whether in fact he has checked with any of the consumers, of which there are more than 1 million in the Province of

Manitoba, on this Beef Income Assurance Plan?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Speaker, seeing as the marketplace has not returned producers an adequate return for their produce, this program in the marketplace hasn't worked to the benefit of producers; obviously this assistance will be a direct assistance to consumers in terms of making sure that there will be adequate supplies of beef in the Province of Manitoba and that we hope that this will enhance the slaughtering capacity in the Province of Manitoba to make sure that the packing houses in the province have adequate supplies of beef and the packing industry stays viable within this province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Swan River.

**MR. GOURLAY:** I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of the Environment, and ask whether the Minister can advise the House as to the problem with the odor in the Chamber and whether it would be harmful to the members and spectators in the gallery?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

**MR. COWAN:** Speaking as the Minister not only responsible for the Environmental Management Division but as the Minister responsible for Workplace Safety and Health, I can assure the Member for Swan River that those complaints have been brought to my attention today, and in some detail from members on this side of the House. I welcome his comments as well.

I fully anticipate contacting the staff of the Workplace Safety and Health Division, Mr. Speaker. I inform you of this action in this way to ask them to inquire as to what possible and potential problems could arise as a result of the vapours and the fumes which are obviously being emitted by work which I believe is being done to repair the roof of the Legislature. Having done so, I will ask him if there is any cause for any of us in this room to exercise our right to refuse to work under what we believe to be unsafe and unhealthy conditions.

**MR. GOURLAY:** I wonder if the Minister could tell us how much longer this situation will prevail here.

**MR. COWAN:** That brings us to the second right in the tool box of workers as they attempt to build safer and healthier workplaces as we obviously are trying to do here today, and that is the right to know, and I will make inquiries to the appropriate Ministers as the opportunity presents itself in order to determine if in fact the work which is ongoing at the present time will be continuing for some time and to try to derive from him a schedule so that we can make our actions accordingly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Morris.

**MR. CLAYTON MANNESS (Morris):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. Last week, the Minister indicated in questioning that at the request of officials, the government would be available to meetings on the Crow rate issue, and this would be in the rural areas, in order to make the present government views on the matter known. Can the Minister disclose the names of the people either in his department or the Department of Agriculture who would be made available to go to these meetings if they were called upon?

**MR. USKIW:** I believe the House Leader intends to make an announcement with respect to a presentation to the members of the Assembly out in Room 254 and that time, of course, members will become more knowledgeable as to who is involved and will indeed, if they have some suggestions as to who should be involved beyond that group, I'm willing to take that advice, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. MANNESS:** Thank you. Included in that group is the name of Mr. Bill Janssen. Is he included as one of these people?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Speaker, the person in question is not solely preoccupied with that particular area of responsibility, although he has played a co-ordinating role. It's essentially John Rae's department or branch that is heading the technical advisory group.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**MR. ADAM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Swan River asked a question a while ago in regard to the appointments to the Municipal Board, I would like to advise the House that what we have done is tried to appoint people to the Municipal Board from the different regions in the province, and we have six appointees up to this point in time. I can now provide the honourable member with the names who have been appointed — one Mr. Gunnar Helgason from Riverton, Mr. Ray Howard from Birtle, Everett Leader from Portage la Prairie, Jennie Keenan from the City of Winnipeg, Mayor Serfaty of the City of Brandon and Roger Smith of the Village of Ste. Anne.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The time for Oral Questions has expired.

The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. DAVID R. (Dave) BLAKE (Minnedosa):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like leave of the House and your permission to make an announcement of a non-political nature.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Does the member have leave?

The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

#### NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

**MR. BLAKE:** We were pleased again, Mr. Speaker, to host a Midget Hockey Tournament in Minnedosa. Due to the fact that they have artificial ice there, the Wesman region and Hamiota were the actual hosts of

the program, but due to losing their ice, they moved the tournament to Minnedosa. We were treated to some excellent hockey by teams from Dauphin, two teams from Winnipeg, Brandon, and representing the Tier I Midgets of the province. The hard-fought Round Robin Tournament, Mr. Speaker, was won by the St. Boniface Saints and that team by winning secured the Air Canada Cup for their club and will move on next weekend to Victoria, British Columbia to play in the Rigley Tournament for that particular cup.

I had the opportunity to visit with their coaches and management personnel and they're very desirous, Mr. Speaker, of obtaining some Manitoba crest pins to take with them on that particular tournament. My supply is a wee bit short at the moment, and I suggested that I would speak to their member and the Minister of Fitness and Recreation and see if we could secure enough pins for them to take with them. But I'm sure all members of the House would like to congratulate the coaches, the managers and the players themselves on bringing this glory to their club and representing Manitoba.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, I have no problem joining with the honourable friend in congratulating these players who won the Manitoba Championship. There will be an awful lot of pressure on me to make sure that they get the pins because one of the players is my grandson, but I want to assure the House that they will not be treated any differently than any other.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Education.

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**MRS. HEMPHILL:** Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I would like to table a memorandum I sent to all school board chairpersons today.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Does the Honourable Minister have that leave of the House? (Agreed).

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### ORDERS FOR RETURN

**MR. SPEAKER:** The first one is standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain. Does it stand? (Stands)

#### ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 2

**MR. SPEAKER:** The second one stands in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, that an Order of the House do issue a return of the following information as listing by original department and agency of all transfers of staff since November 30, 1981, and showing:

(1) name;



(2) position or title, classification and annual salary prior to and after transfer;

(3) department transferred to; and

(4) reason for the transfer.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Just before I respond, for clarification only, and this involves the next couple of returns as well, when the return asks for the information since November 30, 1981, am I to understand that it's from November 30, 1981, to the date of the request? There's no termination date here. I would like to know that because I've noticed that Orders for Return of this kind have a termination date. They can't be open-ended.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, it's up to the date this is accepted.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Accept the order.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 3

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, that an Order of the House do issue a return of the following information:

For each department and agency — the name, position, classification, annual salary and qualification of each person hired since November 30, 1981, and also showing:

1) How that person was appointed, i.e., Order-in-Council, contract, term;

2) If a civil service competition was held, and if so what the competition number was; and

3) If the person was a civil servant and what position and salary did that person previously hold?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes on the same understanding, accept.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 4

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Pembina, that an Order of the House do issue a return of the following information:

The number of permanent, term, contract and other

employees, and the total number in each department and agency as at:

1) November 30, 1981; and

2) The date this order is accepted.

**MR. PENNER:** Accept.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 5

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tuxedo, that an Order of the House do issue for a return of the following information:

For each department and agency a list of all persons whose employment ceased since November 30, 1981, and also showing for each person:

1) Name and address;

2) Position or title, classification and annual salary;

3) Employment status, i.e., permanent civil servant, term employee, contract employee; and

4) Nature of termination and in the event of discharge, the cause for termination.

**MR. PENNER:** On the same condition, accept.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 6

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert, that an Order of the House do issue for a return of the following information:

A list of all insurance contracts or policies purchased by the Province of Manitoba during 1981-1982, in all department and agencies showing for each contract or policy:

a) Department or agency purchasing the insurance;

b) What is the insurance for?

c) Annual cost of the policy or the cost for the term involved in the policy;

d) The name and address of the agency or broker;

e) The name and address of the insurance company;

f) Expiry date of the current policy or contract.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes, a question to the honourable member. I'm not quite sure what is meant during 1981-1982. Is that fiscal '81-'82?

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, I'm referring to the fiscal year '81-'82.

**MR. PENNER:** On that understanding, accept.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. MERCIER:** Yes, I wonder if I might just ask the Government House Leader a question? Would he indicate when he expects to call the government resolution on the Crow rate this week?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes, I've been discussing this question with the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transport, and if we could, by agreement, waive the Private Members' Hour on Wednesday for the technical briefing, we'd be prepared to call it on Thursday, if that's satisfactory to . . .

**MR. MERCIER:** I'll advise the Government House Leader later.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, before the House Leader moves to committee, I would like to table the Highways Department Construction Program since it is going to be in the other committee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I've advised the Acting Opposition House Leader that it would be our proposal to go ahead with Private Members' Hour today to see if we can dispose of the Resolution standing in the name of Mr. Filmon, and with that announcement I would like to move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Flin Flon in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture and the Honourable Member for The Pas in the Chair for the Department of Highways.

## CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

### SUPPLY — HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

**ACTING CHAIRMAN, Mr. Reeves (Clerk of the House):** Gentlemen, since the Chairman of this section of the committee is, shall we say, temporarily indisposed, we will require a temporary Chairman.

Mr. Penner.

**MR. PENNER:** I nominate Gerard Lecuyer to act as Acting Temporary Chairman, whichever you prefer.

**ACTING CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Lecuyer, would you please take the Chair?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Gerard Lecuyer (Radisson):** This committee will come to order. At this time we will start with the Estimates for Highways and Transportation.

Mr. Minister.

**HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac Du Bonnet):** Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank everyone for their patience. We did lose track of our Chairman and have yet to determine his whereabouts and I appreciate the fact that members here perhaps may want to get on with the business of the building of highways.

I would like to begin by simply pointing out that the government having been elected so late in the year and indeed not sworn in until December of this year, that it was somewhat awkward for me as Minister to enable me to receive all the briefs from various people throughout the province that would be normally the case. The programming of the whole government, indeed the Treasury Board operations were such that we had to set many things aside in order to get the Legislature convened and therefore a lot of the requests for meetings that came from municipalities and various interest groups throughout Manitoba had to be delayed and in fact some of them have yet to appear before me to the extent that they have not yet been able to present their views to me or to my department.

I would suppose one would have to assume from that these Estimates will not reflect that input and I think that is something that is at this point unavoidable. There were just not enough days to receive all of the delegations that wanted to be heard. That process is ongoing however. I don't look at the Highways Department as a one-year shot in any event and it's my hope that before the current year is out that we will have had an opportunity to meet with all groups who have something to offer by way of suggestions and recommendations with respect to the Department of Highways whether it be its general program or whether it be the construction end.

You will notice that in the first page of our Estimates that we have allocated just under \$200 million, \$195.7 million in this year's program. That's not quite accurate as a comparison to last year's program in that there's another couple of million in an enabling vote which would really bring it up to 197, but the arrangements are different this year as I understand it vis-a-vis the Northern Affairs section, so there is that slight difference in the presentation. On an equal presentation basis, the figure would be 197.9, so there's a difference of 2.160 that will show up elsewhere.

You will notice \$100 million is the figure for construction and the other large figure, of course, is \$49 million in the Highways and Airports Maintenance Program. That's an area where costs are increasing at a very rapid rate because of the fact that it's an energy-related area and so is construction for that matter. \$100 million against \$84 million probably

won't build us any more roads than we built last year for more dollars in other words; so that in essence, inflation is having its impact on the totality of the road programming, both in the maintenance area and in new construction.

I believe in the maintenance area we have covered off for the full effect of inflation. I don't believe that we have allowed ourselves room for an improved program; at least I'm not aware of it. There may be slight improvement in different areas, but by and large it's a figure that represents the increasing costs of operating.

Mr. Chairman, I have tried to put together a construction package that responds to the best interests of the people of Manitoba and I know that is always subject to interpretation. It is indeed the kind of department that is subjected to a tremendous amount of pressure from various groups for particular highway projects; and it's always an area of discretion when one decides to go or not to go with a particular proposal, so it is somewhat a political department in that sense that one has to interface, not only with members of the Legislature but with municipal councils and various organizations and try to respond and yet, at the same time, maintain a direction with respect to where highways want to be in the long-term.

One of the areas that I hope to examine in the next year or over this fiscal year is perhaps a slight change — I'm not sure how much of a change — in sort of giving preferential treatment to requests for new roads or road reconstruction or highway reconstruction. It's only my own particular notion at the moment, but I think we have to examine it in any event and that is that since the dollars that we have for highway programming are always limited, we do have to then make choices. We have to approve some projects and not approve others that we will have to give some consideration to, in particular in rural Manitoba as it relates to agriculture and, of course, as it relates to the resource industries, we may have to pay a great deal more attention to tonnage movements as opposed to just traffic movements in terms of upgrading or rebuilding a road system.

That's sort of my bent at the moment and I do say that I haven't concluded on that particular opinion, but it's the direction that I think is somewhat obvious, given the fact that we've had a number of rail lines abandoned throughout the province over the years and given the fact that there may be others and that the emphasis of movement of goods in the rural areas has shifted quite a bit to the larger trucks on country roads. We will have to take a very in-depth approach in that one, I believe, in order to come up with a traffic system or a highway system that will be able to respond to those needs. That's sort of the emphasis that I would want to place on where we are going with respect to highways into the future.

The demands in the immediate area around Winnipeg, of course, are phenomenal, to say the least, in terms of dollars that are required to respond to those demands. There is a legitimate argument to be made for a fair amount of four-laning on a number of highways leading into the City of Winnipeg or out from the City of Winnipeg and those are indeed expensive miles that have to be built. I think we have to sort of take on a certain amount of that kind of work each year

along with the other priorities of rural and northern Manitoba. You will notice in your package, the program itself, that we intend to make some start with respect to four-laning of 75 Highway south of Winnipeg and indeed continue on with the extension of the four-laning of 59 and indeed Trans Canada Highway. All of those are going to continue. Highway 75, for the first time, will have a section built this year hopefully, all things going in the positive direction, and I know that one sometimes sticks one's neck on the block because one doesn't know the technical hurdles that might have to be overcome in order to achieve those objectives, but that's the sort of direction in any event.

Winnipeg has become more and more a major concentration of people, unlike other provinces where there are five or six cities to our one. We find that the pressure for access into Winnipeg requiring four-laning and fairly expensive structures such as cloverleaves are eating away at our construction dollars quite significantly as compared to other areas in the country. That is a bit of a handicap in that sense because one interchange, as all members would appreciate, runs into many millions of dollars and the density of population that we have here in Winnipeg does indeed require, over time, a great number of these inner changes in order to bring about a fairly safe flow of traffic in and out of the City of Winnipeg.

So, essentially, those are the overview comments that I wish to make at this time and would hope that members would be constructive in their recommendations as to where we proceed in the year ahead, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Pembina.

**MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Minister for his opening remarks. I'm pleased to see that the Minister is enunciating some basic policy for the Department of Highways and Transportation that I think has been in place for a number of administrations. It was certainly much in line with what we were attempting to do in the four-year term that we have just nicely finished and to comment on the Minister's last statement about the transportation needs around the City of Winnipeg, he certainly will be faced, as Minister, with a great deal of pressure to make a number of improvements to Trans Canada West between Headingley and Winnipeg, as he is probably well aware of; 75 South; and No. 7 North, the interchange that's proposed there, and they are, I full well appreciate, major consumers of construction dollars at a time when construction dollars are not terribly easy to come by.

But I'm encouraged by the Minister's remarks in terms of attempting to provide for the communities in rural Manitoba a good highway system that's possibly targeted towards the, not necessarily the daily traffic counts, but indeed the tonnage counts — truck movement — because the Minister has identified something that has been gradually growing over the last half dozen years, and that being more and more major use of the truck to replace rail service in a number of areas, not only where abandonment has taken place but areas where the truck has become an

alternate mode to the rail even though rail service is still there. That requires roads that are a lot stronger in terms of their carrying capacity than the present system.

It would appear from the Minister's remarks that he agrees that for rural areas of rural Manitoba to grow they must have year-round access by truck which is, if not unrestricted, as close to unrestricted in the springtime as you can get. In that regard I think the Minister will be able to find that, for instance, in southern Manitoba on No. 14, I believe it is, between 75 and west over into the Altona and Winkler area, when we upgraded there in the last four years we upgraded with the objective of providing the 110,000 lb. loading unrestricted year round, because that belt of communities along Hwy. 14 up to Morden have really developed a number of industries in the last several years that depend a lot on truck traffic and their economic viability in rural Manitoba is dependent on year round unrestricted truck moves. The industries there cannot afford to have a six to eight week period in the spring where they can't compete with a Winnipeg competitor because they can't get the products out by truck.

I am pleased to see the continued emphasis on bringing upgraded roads and preferential treatment to requests for road reconstruction to a number of these communities because I think it will make them a more viable centre for future industrial expansion and growth. I think the Minister shares with all of us that desire to have all of Manitoba take part in any industrial expansion and not just have it centred in Winnipeg. I think if there's one problem with Manitoba, compared to say Saskatchewan and Alberta, it's the fact that Winnipeg essentially stands by itself in terms of a major centre whereas Saskatchewan of course has Regina and Saskatoon and a number of smaller centres competing for industrial expansion as does Alberta with Calgary and Edmonton and a number of other communities.

So, I will certainly support this Minister in any effort he undertakes to provide our various rural growth centres with the best road system that we can afford to put in place. I am pleased to see the Trans Canada West from Alexander is on the next leg of twinning. I think the Minister will find the first leg from Kemnay to Alexander removed the death curb in there that's been a very troublesome spot on the Trans Canada for some 25 years. I think that was welcomed by all the motoring public; traffic on Trans Canada has been increasing as it has on the Yellowhead, and I would suppose that in the not-too-distant future if traffic growth continues, particularly the truck traffic growth, we might have to continue the twinning program beyond Virden right to the Saskatchewan boundary; that's a possibility. The twinning of 75 and the first stretch below Winnipeg, of course — I appreciate the Minister's comments that he's hopeful to get that going. I was hopeful to get that going a year ago and that target seemed to slip by without being realized.

The Minister has indicated that he wants to adopt the preferential treatment to requests for road reconstruction rather than brand-new roads and I would assume he means brand-new four-laning projects that might from time to time come up, or indeed requests for new roads. That is a problem he's going

to have to wrestle with. We were, I suppose, unduly saddled with a lot of effective railway abandonments from 1977 on where a number of rail lines were pulled up and we responded by providing better than 50 percent of the construction dollars on the P.R. system over the last two or three years. Perusal of the construction Estimates when we get to that line will indicate whether the Minister sees that as an ongoing need and worthy of that kind of support and the construction dollars.

I would hope that the Minister is able to follow up much more speedily with the Federal Minister of Transportation than I was able to. I'm not faulting myself on this, I'm not faulting the Federal Department of Transportation. On the subject of following up with the Federal Government a program of cost-sharing and road reconstruction in areas affected by rail line abandonment, the Hall Commission Report had indeed recommended that prior to abandonment an attempt should be made to the Federal Government to come up with cost-sharing with the provinces. I think if the Minister goes back to his files, he will find Dr. John Rae and the transportation group had developed what I thought was probably the most — and I don't use this in a political sense — the most conservative estimate of increased cost to the province that could be developed. We could have developed a wildly optimistic set of figures and absolutely floored the Federal Government and then negotiated from there down to some reasonable figure. But we chose not to do that and we developed, I think, some very real costs to the province on reconstruction that could be attributed solely to the abandonment of rail lines. And that report, if my memory serves me correct, was delivered to a Federal Minister in about January of '81, and subsequent follow-up in May and June, and indeed July left us with the answer that yes, the report had been received, and yes, they were taking a look at it, and yes, they were analysing it. But quite frankly I didn't detect that we were getting anywhere and had I had the opportunity after the election, that was certainly an area that I thought should be pressed with the Federal Government because we're on what I thought to be the best of — could I call them constitutional grounds in demanding that. Because all the previous reports on rail line abandonment had recommended a course of action which we were suggesting.

I would just close by saying to the Minister that if he needs the combined support of the House to lobby, if that's the proper term, the Federal Government for an implementation of that kind of a funding program, he certainly has it. Because not only would it serve to recognize the additional cost to the province, and the the individual taxpayer in the Province of Manitoba, but it would provide Department of Highways and Transportation with much needed construction funds that the Minister is well aware, and as I was well aware, are in constant demand and you never can find enough dollars to meet the need.

So I want to thank the Minister for his opening remarks and, Mr. Chairman, we could proceed.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to respond on that last point. And that is that the discussions with Mr. Pepin broadened quite a bit far beyond

the railways that have already been abandoned, in light of the Pepin announcement on where they want to go with transportation rates for the movement of grain, and especially if they are going to take the variable route direction which will mean more abandonment of railways. Until that is clear we really can't give to Mr. Pepin a final package of costs that we can attribute to that decision. But they are certainly enlarging very quickly the potential for much greater spending in Highways at the provincial level with the direction that they have chosen to take. So while we were preoccupied with a number of lines that have already been abandoned or slated for abandonment fairly soon, we really won't know the total parameters of our problem until we know where we're heading with the issue of the Crow rate.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, Mr. Chairman, if I might offer some advice, and it's free and the Minister can do with it what he likes — but we were aware that the Federal Government for some time has been toying with the Crow rate proposal and they also bounce around from time-to-time this elusive western development fund of \$4 billion that has been on and off some three times now. And I think that the Minister can make, it's going to be a number of years before the fallout of any change, if any change takes place on the Crow rate before that is truly recognized, whereas we can identify right now some costs that we're going to be incurring over the next several years and I believe that funding for areas affected by rail line abandonment is a separate entity that can be pursued on its own and that's why I had the Transportation Division draw up that very extensive report. I think my advice would be that if the Minister intends to pursue a joint action Crow rate and end the area affected by rail line abandonment funding, you're liable to draw a great big blank from the Federal Government because they'll study it for another five years whereas I do believe you've got specific and definite grounds to approach them on a separate program right now. I wouldn't want to see the Minister lose what little momentum there was there in pursuing that one as a separate entity.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** No. I.(b)—pass; I.(b)(1) — the Member for Pembina.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Has the Minister got a sheet where he can show us the SMYs as compared to last year, this year? We had done that in past years, so that we don't have to bother asking each department, is there people up, people down to get a general idea. That would be sufficient.

**MR. USKIW:** I don't believe we have a handout, Mr. Chairman. We have the totality here. Mr. Chairman, perhaps the member would want to clarify. I have the sectional numbers and I have the total number. For 1981-82, the total number was 2983.9 staff man years; now that's 1981-82.

If the member is referring to Item (b), we have 67 staff man years in the Administration section.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I don't want to go through each section and find out what they were last year, this year. I

think the Minister could have the department develop just quickly a last year, this year to give us an idea of where SMYs are up or down.

On Item (b), would that be where we would be able to discuss the Minister's Special Assistant?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, I believe that's correct, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate Mr. Shafransky's duties for this department?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the nature of a Special Assistant varies from one department to another for obvious reasons and that is the nature of the department, but essentially a Special Assistant is a person that has very general responsibilities with respect to the functioning of the Minister's office and that's an all and sundry approach. We have not assigned and I do not intend at this point to assign any specific duties to the Special Assistant at the moment, but it is general office routine duties that he's pursuing as an assistant to my office.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, is Mr. Shafransky's duties in addition to — does the Minister have an Executive Assistant as well?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that is correct.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Where is Mr. Janssen's contract open for discussion. Is it under Administration?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I questioned the Minister some months ago, he indicated that a contract was being prepared. Has the contract for Mr. Janssen been prepared and could the Minister indicate the details of the contract, how long it's extended to and the dollar amounts involved? I assume that it's strictly a contract; it has no Civil Service status to it and what Mr. Janssen has been undertaking as duties as a result of this contract with the Minister.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the consultant that we have retained has been primarily involved with coordinating the Crow issue along with John Rae's staff to date. Although he is a general consultant to the department, he is on a six-month contract that I believe has a renewal option, but the six months terminates I believe in May.

**MR. ORCHARD:** And the value of the contract, Mr. Chairman?

**MR. USKIW:** I don't know if I have the specific number here, but it's somewhere in the order of \$5,000-some-odd dollars per month plus expenses.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Did Mr. Janssen have any duties as far as arranging the beef support program?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the member would have

to go to the Department of Agriculture Estimates to determine that. Mr. Janssen has been primarily involved in inter-relating between Agriculture and Highways with respect to the Crow issue. Whether or not he's been used otherwise by another Minister is not my responsibility to respond to, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Agriculture Estimates are before the committee in the House and that is the proper place to put that question.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Was this department drawn up with the Department of Highways and Transportation as the employer and paying the \$5,000 per month plus expenses?

**MR. USKIW:** The Department of Highways has a contract with the individual and the Department of Highways is paying the contract costs.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Then, Mr. Chairman, although the Agriculture Estimates are on right now, surely the Minister who hired him would be able to answer as to whether he had involvement with the Department of Agriculture in drafting a Beef Income Assurance Plan because after all, it's this Minister who's paying him and not the Minister of Agriculture who quite properly could tell us to ask the Minister of Highways and Transportation who's paying him.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I believe the member is pursuing a line of questioning that is totally irrelevant to this department. Whether or not that particular individual has assisted or will assist or whatever, another department is obviously an open question and whether it's for a fee or not for a fee is an open question. I believe it's recognized that the person that we are talking about has, over time, offered a tremendous amount of free time to, not only the government but indeed the political party that the government represents, so to say that there's never been a communication link between that person and the Minister of Agriculture would be an erroneous statement. It may have occurred on different levels, Mr. Chairman, to the extent of which the person was used in helping the other Minister prepare policy, the member will have to direct that question to the other Minister.

**MR. ORCHARD:** The Minister then I take it could assure us since he's paying Mr. Janssen's wages out of his departmental appropriation that none of the wage requirements or expenses incurred have been expended in having Mr. Janssen undertake work for any other department than the Highways and Transportation Department.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know the extent, if any, of his involvement officially in another department, but for ease of administration to the extent that it occurred if it did, I don't believe that it matters much as to which department picks up the costs of the consultant. It's something similar to seconding a person for a time period. I don't believe that presents a problem to anyone, whether if you're using one person for two departments, you can choose to split the costs, or one department might

choose to absorb the costs and yet another department may use the services of that person; but again I would suggest to the member that I really don't know to what extent at the official level that the other department had use of this person, although there may have been.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well then, the Minister cannot indicate whether in the past several months with the expenditure of the \$5,000 per month and expenses that none of those expenses, say, were incurred undertaking discussions on matters other than Highways and Transportation issues, namely the Crow issue, as the Minister indicated this person's prime responsibility would be coordinating the Crow issue . . .

**MR. USKIW:** I meant between the two departments.

**MR. ORCHARD:** . . . as between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Highways, but the Minister cannot now assure us that this individual on contract, Mr. Janssen, has not submitted expenses and part of his time allotment to the development of the beef income assurance scheme that was announced just recently, that assurance can't be made at this time?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, no, I can make an assurance. I believe the totality of the fee for that consultant will be paid out of the Department of Highways appropriation.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Agreed. We know that, but the Minister cannot assure us that all of the work for which we are being billed in the Department of Highways was Department of Highways and Transportation work and that some of it was indeed not work for the Department of Agriculture in drawing up a Beef Income Assurance plan, that assurance can't be given, that part of his wages did not go towards that?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I am not aware as to what extent there was any involvement with respect to the development of the Beef Income Assurance plan on the part of this person, although he may have been involved, but I don't know to what extent, if any. That is not something that I would be concerned about in any event. If there was involvement due to his own expertise, that is between him and the Minister of Agriculture. If in the course of their discussions on Crow, they entered into other discussions, that again is something that I could not relate on at this point in time. I would have to get that information, but it is not a situation where one department does not allow the use of a person to another department. That's a common occurrence in government as between directors' levels or Deputy Ministers' levels or almost at any level, there is cross-referencing, there is a borrowing of time if you like for the use of a person either officially or unofficially from time to time, so I really have no reason to be concerned about that. I think; it is a good practice.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, Mr. Chairman, certainly I'm not arguing with the Minister's ability to have Mr. Janssen undertake any sort of consultative process

on behalf of the government. After all, the government has hired him. We're not arguing with whether he has the ability to do that. That's entirely the Minister's prerogative. All we're interested in knowing is whether he did have a hand in the drafting of the Beef Income Assurance plan because that would certainly be valuable information and if the Minister of Transportation who is paying the bills can't provide that, then we will pose that question, I suppose, to the Minister of Agriculture.

In the general administration, are there any other people on contract, other than Mr. Janssen, providing consulting services to the department?

**MR. USKIW:** No, not that I'm aware of. Perhaps the Deputy has knowledge of someone. No. There will be a change, however, and I should have alluded to that in my opening remarks. There is going to be a person brought in, at least initially one person, that will have responsibility for employment programs within the department and employment programs through the contracting-out system, that is the tender system. That is yet to be developed, but there is a staff man year provision here for that to occur over the next fiscal year.

**MR. ORCHARD:** And what will be the hoped-for result of that person's involvement in the hiring practices of the department?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the department is assuming a role of a fair degree of affirmative action with respect to groups in society, and in this case, it will concentrate quite a bit on Native communities to achieve a greater involvement on their part in the mainstream of Manitoba's economy and certainly government has to play a leading role in that respect, and we intend to facilitate that course of events over the next 12 months on somewhat of an experimental basis and developmental basis, after which we will either modify or expand the program. It will involve assisting people in securing employment opportunities within the department. It will also involve assisting people in securing employment opportunities through the general contractors who provide services or bid on government contracts, namely the Department of Highway contracts, but it's still too early to be able to define fully the parameters of that program. So far, we have decided on bringing in one person for the department to set up such a program and over the course of time it will likely involve a number of other people.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Who is that person, Mr. Chairman, or does the Minister have that information now?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, no, we have not yet employed that person. The dollars are in this budget which in essence is a budget starting April 1 of 1982, so we have not brought a person on staff prior to that time.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Possibly the Minister could provide us with the Civil Service status of the person that's going to be hired. What sort of a — I think the Minister knows . . .

**MR. USKIW:** What classification?

**MR. ORCHARD:** Yes.

**MR. USKIW:** That is an open question at the moment. We have not yet decided that. It will be a high-profile position. It has to be a high-profile position in order to have the ability to interface with all of the sectors within the department and indeed to interface with the construction community outside the department. It has to be a prestigious position to say the least, Mr. Chairman, if it's going to have any meaning to it whatever.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Is the Minister hoping to employ this person in a role of moral persuasion with the contractors who from time to time bid on jobs, and I would assume that a lot of the target jobs will be any jobs that are, say, in Northern Manitoba, the Split Lake-Gillam Road being probably the most high-profile one right now. Is it the Minister's intention to use moral persuasion with the contracting community, the construction community, or would he envision a change in the contract specifications which would require a certain amount of Native hiring, for instance, in contracts that are close to Native communities.

**MR. USKIW:** That is a policy area that has yet to evolve and it will evolve subsequent to the employment of such a person who will then put a program together for our consideration. In other words those are all questions yet to be answered. We don't have the answers to those questions at this point. I'm not certain but I would want to investigate the possibility of a requirement in any tender process that is undertaken. But just what the logistics of that concept are I'm not fully knowledgeable and that's why I don't want to commit to that position. But that is certainly an area that we are looking at, that if possible, we may have a requirement that a certain amount, a percentage of works must be undertaken by people involved through that kind of an office which may involve either in-House or outside training components or on the job training components and so on. But again, at this point, we're not in a position to be definitive.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I would assume from what the Minister has said the key to making this decision would be any recommendation that this person might make when hired to fill that position is his recommendation or her recommendation might be pretty key to the formulation of whether it would be a moral persuasion policy or a required quota hiring type policy.

**MR. USKIW:** Again, at this point in time, I have quite an open mind on it. I tend to lean to the idea that there ought to be some requirements, but that is something that I have to refine in my own thinking.

The other point that I would like allude to is that the Member for Pembina as many do automatically infers that this would primarily be something that we would be very much preoccupied with in Northern Manitoba, and I want to suggest here that Native communities are located in every part of Manitoba, so that this program will not be confined to merely the north but to all of the geography of this province.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Will the Minister be developing this program after the person hired has consulted with the, say the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the association I think that represents a lot of the major contractors who bid on government work, will they have a significant hearing in the formulation of this policy?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, I have already given that indication to the Road Builder's Association at the recent conference.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Where was that, Sam?

**MR. USKIW:** At Phoenix. It was a good place. I did indicate to them that we will be setting up a consultative process with the industry in order to introduce this new employment program within the department and they were most interested in that kind of dialogue and I think we can develop something that would be mutually beneficial. And indeed beneficial to society as a whole.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister also mentioned when he introduced this concept that the SMYs for this fiscal year, and depending on the success, I would assume he's going to be moving fairly quickly on this because the construction season is going to be starting up within hopefully a month or five weeks. Will that allow the Minister sufficient time to not only get the policy in place, but indeed to provide the kind of analysis of its success that he alluded to as to whether he's going to continue with the program in the next fiscal year?

**MR. USKIW:** I don't envisage that we will set a pattern that will not change. After the initial thrust I believe what will happen is that it will be an evolutionary process that will refine in an ongoing way that kind of a thrust, that kind of a program. And we, of course, will want to measure the successes and the failures in order to do that refining, but we are committed to the fact that we must play a leading role — the public service must play a leading role — in trying to bring certain groups in society who have not been in the mainstream into that mainstream so that they can at some point hopefully, sooner, rather than later, be able to do this very thing on their own initiative. It is referred to by many as an affirmative action approach. Give it whatever name you wish, I do indicate that we have a desire to move very much in that direction in a major way.

**MR. ORCHARD:** One final question then — I don't know whether I misinterpreted or misheard the Minister — when you mention capability of the people to get into that line of work on their own initiative, does this mean an effort to support say Native contracting companies that would solely bid and undertake road contracts, the department supporting a contracting outfit, in order to get into that kind of an equipment investment so that they could undertake properly bonded road construction contracts for the department?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, essentially, that may evolve over

time and it will depend on the interest of the Native people themselves. But, essentially, what we are involved with here is getting the Native people more involved in what is ongoing and that is the department itself, which has some 3,000 people within which there may be job opportunities that will be opened up, on the basis of retirement or attrition, or whatever, where certain of these people will be brought in either without training or with a training component or whatever the package is that we will be put together. But an effort will be made to introduce them to play a role as employees in their government the same as all other sectors of society do to a much greater extent than they have. Likewise to play that role within the contracting community that the department will be doing business with. It's not a process that will be developed overnight. It's going to take some time. Certainly I don't believe a great deal will happen in the first year, but the groundwork is important to put in place in order that we put together a program that is acceptable to the government, is acceptable to the industry, and indeed is appreciated by society generally. I believe that is what the aim is.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So, then the program basically has two thrusts, not only the individual opportunity, creating and developing the opportunity for the individual, but also to allow groups of minorities to get into the direct contracting business. No, the Minister shakes his head.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, we have not been involved in that kind of discussion. I only alluded to it in the sense that it has taken place in the past and I'm not one that is going to determine whether it will or won't take place in the future. If the opportunity will be there, certainly we will have to respond to whatever is there, in a competitive way, or whatever. I can only think of winter roads where there is an involvement of that nature on the part of the Native people, where it's not on a competitive basis, but that has to do with our obligations, if you like, or arrangements with Indian Affairs who are funding part of those programs. I'm sure the Member for Pembina knows what I'm alluding to there. One doesn't have both hands free on some of those decisions, but no, generally this thrust has nothing to do with the setting up of Native companies or anything of that nature. That is not what we are attempting to do.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So, then it will be primarily enhancement of an individual's opportunity?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's correct.

**MR. ORCHARD:** The Minister keeps adding more questions by saying, at this point in time.

**MR. USKIW:** Only in the sense that I can't predict the future, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I thought you could, Sam.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Rhineland.



**MR. ARNOLD BROWN (Rhineland):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to make a few brief comments in regards to the Minister's opening statement. The Minister certainly seems to understand what the responsibilities of the Department of Highways are. He made mention of the fact that the Department of Highways and rural Manitoba as it relates to agriculture should be working in close co-operation and we certainly all agree with this. This is really where most of it's at.

In my particular area, for instance, we have a tremendous increase in tonnage of product movement and where we are moving from 80,000 to 110,000 very rapidly. Many needs are required and many changes are developing in our road system. We had a good start on a road system program within the last few years, No. 14 had been built to 110,000 pound restrictions. No. 30 also had been built to 110,000 load limit and this certainly has helped to a very large extent. I notice however that a lot of these programs have been dropped and the Minister apologized for the fact that he had not been able to meet with all the municipalities and with all the members in order to discuss some of the needs and we realize this. We took this under consideration and I suppose that some of us were naive enough to think that the programs, at least for this year would pretty well be continued as they had been planned on previously. I happened to look through the construction program and I notice that many, many areas in my particular area at least have been discontinued and this, of course, gives us some concern. I hope that we will be able to get the Minister familiar with the areas, with the requirements. He has been out of the area for a couple of years; we haven't seen too much of him although I believe that he is fairly well familiar with the area. As Minister of Agriculture, we've seen him around a number of times previously and we hope that he is going to come around and take a look at some of the problems that we have.

The Minister said that his department was a very political department and of course we notice this because that department certainly determines where the monies are going to be going as far as road construction is concerned. I'm sorry to see that his Executive Assistant isn't here at the present time; I would just like to say that I hope that he takes his job seriously and we're looking forward to working with him. We're familiar with him from another picture, so to speak, and we know that he's a person that we can work with and we hope that we are going to see co-operation from both the Minister and the Executive Assistant.

**MR. USKIW:** I presume the member means the Special Assistant because the Executive Assistant has not been in this committee.

**MR. BROWN:** The Special Assistant.

**MR. USKIW:** Right, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that we will have the best effort on the part of that individual and I'm sure that members who have come to know that person over the years would know his abilities and his limitations if there are any. I believe in the role that he is going to play, he will be able to function

quite well. He is a person that relates fairly well politically and I mean politically in the sense of interfacing with other political groups whether it's municipalities or town councils or whatever, delegations generally. So I don't believe we will have any reason to expect some difficulty in that area.

**MR. BROWN:** Those are really the only comments that I had to make on (b), unless there's somebody else.

**MR. USKIW:** Maybe I should get back to that, Mr. Chairman. I know it's easy to get off that one. I hope the member appreciates that not all projects can go at all times. Perhaps there are programs that are not on this year that the member would wish were on, but someone hasn't made that case to me and if there's a case can be made for them there's nothing saying that we can't put them on in subsequent years. I have to make my judgment within the framework of the dollars that we have available, as members can appreciate. We are looking at \$100 million of new construction and within that, we have to decide which programs are in and which are out. I know that it's easy to get into the area of political debate on that one and we certainly did when we were in Opposition.

I believe that the program which you have before you reflects perhaps a greater balance politically speaking than we've had over the last three or four years. That doesn't mean that there's an attempt there to satisfy every particular individual who is a member of the Assembly from rural Manitoba. There probably are gaps there, no doubt, but the reality of it is the limitation in dollars. If you look at No. 12 as an example, a tremendous amount of dollars have gone into No. 12 and there are a tremendous amount of dollars that have to yet go into No. 12 and the interchange on Trans Canada Highway. If one wanted to be purely political, one could put that on hold for three or four years, but I don't believe that would be in the public interest, Mr. Chairman. But that one project's going to cost several million dollars and it doesn't service a political bent from our side of the political spectrum; it services the needs of Manitobans and so that project is going to continue. There are others that have less priority and they are treated accordingly.

I don't believe to have the magic that can determine precisely without any doubt what the best priorities are for the whole of Manitoba. I can only use my judgment in light of the information that I have before me and in light of the political pressures that I have, Mr. Chairman. I mean let's not escape that. That is the reality of this department. And putting all those together, we have come up with a construction package which I hope is reasonably well accepted although I recognize that it won't completely satisfy all members.

I think I would also want to repeat that it probably will come closer to satisfying all members than has the program of this department over the last three or four years.

**MR. BROWN:** I don't particularly want to get into specifics because we can wait until we get to the construction program and to the bridge building program and so on. However, when I was talking about

the No. 30 highway and how it had been upgraded to 110,000 pounds. This was absolutely necessary because this highway services CSP Foods and there is very much traffic on this. However, we have one bridge on that road which will only carry 80,000 pounds and this has been a big sore spot in that particular area and noticed this especially last fall. We had worked on the 201, the 201 had been constructed from the No. 32, the No. 75, and because we couldn't use that particular bridge while it was raining, we had to put the heavy traffic on the 201 and we did considerable damage to the new road on the 201 and that bridge really is a very essential part of the road system in that particular area.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, if the member would look on page 18, it's in the program, Buffalo Lake Floodway Bridge and Approaches. Highway 30, South of PTH 14.

**MR. BROWN:** Very good, I must have missed that one. Thank you.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. BLAKE:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I see you looking at the clock and if there would only be one or two minutes before we go into Private Member's Hour, I would maybe just as soon wait and get the few remarks that I have to make made at once and the answer all in one sitting. I'm not that unhappy with the work that's being done in my area that has to be done but there is one particular area that's been near and dear to a great many people out there with the abandonment of three rail lines in the one area, as the Minister is well aware and — in fact, I've had three calls today, the rumour is out that 250 north of the Rivers is not going to be repaved and the fellows all in grain in there are starting to raise cane already so the Minister will be getting lots of heat from there and so will his engineer incidentally, who I think they maybe suspect him now more than they do me — so I may get some reprieve and the engineer is going to get the flack.

But, if you don't mind, Mr. Chairman, I would like to go into it maybe in one session and have the answer all at once.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The hour is 4:30, we'll interrupt the proceedings and . . .

**MR. ORCHARD:** I just want to clarify with the Minister if we want to get into any discussion on the department's role in Crow rate, is this the appropriation to do that, under No. (1)?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, one can choose to undertake that, but there is John Rae's department or branch.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Yeah, well that's what I mean.

**MR. USKIW:** Or even on the Minister's Salary.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The committee will reconvene at 8 o'clock

## SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon):** This meeting will come to order. We're continuing discussion on the Estimates of Agriculture, Item No. 1. General Administration, 1.(b) Planning and Management, 1.(b)(1) Salaries — The Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to make some specific observations if I may. First of all, when I look at the report of the Department of Agriculture for the past year I see an outline of the basic overall outline of the department and the reporting to the Minister, within that report the Minister has referred to quite a few areas. I know that he is reviewing particularly MACC and some of the other policies within the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Chairman. I will try in my opening remarks to make an overall broad observation of what I've have seen to date with the Minister's activities and the department's work.

I think that it's worth noting, Mr. Chairman, that particularly the department's efforts over the past four years certainly had a major part of the overall development of the structure of the department in the way in which they felt would work effectively and they could have input into the overall programming and operations of the department. I would hope that the Minister would make some comment on whether he plans to change the overall structure of the department. As he has indicated, Mr. Chairman, he has changed quite a number of boards.

In Question Period today, again, he has confirmed that there have been certain number of boards changed. I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that in the changing of these boards that the Minister is not developing or adopting a policy where he is just putting in people who are not strong agriculture representatives, or people who are going to speak on behalf of the agriculture community in dealing with whether it be credit, whether it's dealing with crop insurance, or whether it's dealing with farmlands protection; whether in fact, he himself is going to now take over the control of the Crown corporations directly, and those individuals who have been appointed to boards are merely figure heads and representatives of the farm community, he has indicated; or whether they are more representative of the political philosophy that he himself adheres to.

So, I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that is not the case, but I do think it's one area that I have some pretty major concerns; that we understand the policy direction that the farm community want comes from the farm community, not a particular dogma that he as a Minister feels is only the way that is right for the farm people of Manitoba. We, Mr. Chairman, will be watching in any kinds of activities that will be taking place. I refer to this in General Administration because I believe that's where the Deputy and the administrative staff's wages fall within.

I would hope, Mr. Chairman, there wouldn't be any major changes to weaken, I say, Mr. Chairman, to weaken the position of the farm community in speaking within a government that that truly have very little representation in the farm community. That, Mr. Chairman, is of course, a pretty major concern to me as the Agriculture critic.

I have to say again, the Minister has certainly made some comments about the difficulties that have plagued the farm community in the past few years. The fact that they've gone through excessive weather conditions or not normal weather conditions with extreme drought and then other areas of the province that have had extreme flooding conditions. But I guess, Mr. Chairman, the major issue that the agriculture community are faced with today, and the Minister's Deputy and administrative staff have to be very much aware of and keep pretty close contact with, and that's the day-to-day difficulties that the farm community are facing, particularly with the increased cost of production not only with the interest charges but the energy costs, which I believe very strongly are going to be one of the major costs, one of the major deterrents to continuing health within the farm community. I think that has to be addressed and certainly the policy guidelines which are established by his staff, the administration are in tune with.

I don't have any specific figures, but I hope the Minister is going to be keeping very close contact with the farm community when it comes to those numbers of farmers who are in extreme difficulty with some of the financial problems that they are going to be facing.

I have to again go back to making comment, and I've had one opportunity in the Capital Supply Bill, Mr. Chairman, to refer to it. I do not believe, and I'll put it on the record again, I do not believe the Interest Relief Program has any meaningful meaning to support the total farm community with interest relief to those producers, Mr. Chairman. I would hope that they don't continually try to mislead with propaganda and press releases, that there is a program there that will be of meaningful help to those people who are facing extreme financial difficulties with high interest rates, high energy costs. Mr. Chairman, I think it would only be false leadership on the part of the Minister and this government to ever indicate to them that they are able to help a lot of the farm people with the high costs of interest at this particular time. It's an overall major problem that the agriculture community are facing, and as much as the Minister may want to try to fool the people that he has substantial funds, he certainly is not.

I again go back to one of the other criteria that he has referred to, and his department, I'm sure, have been part of development of this, one of the criteria that has been used that you do not qualify for an interest relief program on land incurred debt. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you're going to lose your farm today, the first thing that you would lose would be the property which you farmed on, or in most cases that's what you would lose and you would be out of business. So, again, I think the program has not been conceived as far as a meaningful program to help the farm community.

I have referred, Mr. Chairman, to my thoughts on the overall administration or the departmental reporting. As I have indicated to him and will continue to indicate, I think the department has been structured, reorganized, during the past four years so that it does have its system of reporting both ways so that the Minister and his policies can be administered to the farm people and that in fact the farm people can,

through the system of the administration that reports to him, get their message back to him and there is a responsive mechanism in that particular area.

Mr. Chairman, I would have to say to the Minister, who I'm sure hopefully is taking on his job in a responsible way, that he is privileged or going to be privileged to work with one of the most sincere and committed group of people in society today. The farm community have been known to be the backbone of this province. They're committed to feeding not only Manitobans, but all Canadians, and produce food for the international and world market. They've done so, Mr. Chairman, not only at times when it's been profitable but when they've come under extremely difficult periods and that is what I've referred to that they're facing at this particular time. The old saying goes that "farmers live poor and die rich." I don't subscribe to that, I don't believe that it should be that way, I think they should have every right in society to enjoy the same standard of living that everyone else does, and still be able to retire in an admirable way.

I think, Mr. Chairman, it's important that the mechanism of working with the farm community that has been established, the direction that the administration has gone with the last four years, that they haven't been directed to work with any specific group in the agricultural community. I considered the Department of Agriculture resource people to work with all the farm community, to work with the food processing sector in a way in which was a team approach. I believe that the whole chain of events, right from the production, to processing, to transportation, to the consuming world has to run smoothly. It cannot work very well under a confrontationist-type system.

And one of those examples of particularly how it can't work under a confrontationist type system was last fall, Mr. Chairman, when we saw the strike at Thunder Bay; when we saw the chain of movement of grain from the prairies through Thunder Bay being disrupted because a certain group in society took advantage of a system that is available to them and, Mr. Chairman, I have to say that too many people, all the people of Manitoba, the farm community and everyone else are victims of that kind of a shutdown and it cannot afford to be allowed to carry on. I feel very strongly about that, Mr. Chairman, and I'm sure that the overall efforts of the Department of Agriculture should be directed to try and discourage that kind of activity.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that I've enjoyed my working with the staff that the Minister has available to him, that they were dedicated people. I'm sure that if they give him the same kind of dedicated effort that was put into our administration he will be well served.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister has made some kinds of reference to the fact that he has dealt, specifically last week, with some of the new programs and policies that he's introduced. My criticism of him would be that we have not seen any new or any policy direction coming from him. He has also indicated that he hasn't had time to give a full review of the Estimate process, or the Estimates that are before us. I hope as the Minister who is responsible for introducing of the Estimates, that he does fully support what he's laying before us. I would hope that we will be able to have all our members, who the majority of them are truly

either representative of the farm community or speak for a large section of Manitoba, participate in the Agricultural Estimates. I'm sure that their input will hopefully be helpful to not only the Minister but his department and in a meaningful way help the overall direction that we feel as a party that the Department of Agriculture should go.

So, Mr. Chairman, I will again revert back to some of the initial questions that I had in this overall general administration, and hope that we can get on with some of the departmental Estimates. And the specific question is, does the Minister have any particular intention, or any intentions of making any changes to the departmental structure, the overall administrative staff, the people who are involved in the roles that they're now performing in the future? And does he, or does he not feel that the appointments to the boards that he has made, the changes that he made, that they truly represent agriculture and are going to give directions to those Crown corporations, or does he as Minister plan to give the direction that the corporation should go?

**MR. URUSKI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comments made by the Member for Arthur, and I will try and deal with some of the comments that he made. Specifically, Mr. Chairman, dealing with the departmental structure, I want to tell the honourable member that there are now discussions on their way within the department dealing with the organization of the department and responsibilities within the department. The Minister knows the present structure and he knows that certain responsibilities by staff members — and there are Assistant Deputy Ministers who have heavy responsibilities in terms of the workload, and in terms of the whole area of staffing under certain people, and less under other Deputy Ministers, or Assistant Deputy Ministers. We are reviewing that area of responsibility to see whether or not some shifts can be made and improved upon in terms of the linkages between the departmental central staff, and the regional staff, and the farming community who we are ultimately responsible to. So we are looking at some restructuring in terms of the workload of some people, but that is still being discussed and there are no final decisions made in that area. We haven't made any final decisions.

The member made some specific comments with respect to the board and board appointments and changes in the board structure and the reporting of same. It is my hope, Mr. Chairman, that the boards that we do appoint, and the Minister knows the structure of the department, that the Crown agencies do report through to the Minister directly. It is my hope that I, as Minister, will have an opportunity to prior, and I've tried to do this, prior to having the board stake their position in terms of their assigned responsibilities to have a discussion with them. They're briefed by staff in terms of their duties and their legislative authority as to what their duties are, but as well I, of course, would want to, as Minister, share some of my concerns and my thoughts as to how boards operate. The boards of directors will continue to make the day-to-day decisions based on discussions and dialogue between government, but the ultimate decision ultimately has to rest with the Minister based on the

policies that are derived upon. Of course, and there should be continued consultation and development of policies whereby the boards should and would want to reflect the thinking of the government and not go off on their own way.

I think it would be a complete abandonment of responsibility on behalf of the Minister who would say, you do as you please and you're there and we've appointed you and you can go off and make the decisions that you want. I don't intend to operate that way, Mr. Chairman, but I do intend to share some of the feeling that I have in certain areas and I would hope that the board members would in return say, we have some ideas and that there would be a continued dialogue in process in terms of when the Board members get into the operation. Some views ultimately change in terms of perception of how an organization or a Crown agency should operate. One, sitting on the sideline of that type of an operation, may see and have an impression that it would be plausible and desirable for that organization to move in a certain direction, but once you get in there and look at the administration and see what is happening, one then has a better perspective and many times, one's views change once he is in, as one's views change one is in the position of power of being a Minister versus at times, being on the opposite side of this Chamber in terms of how one's views can change and how one's perspective can change on different issues.

Mr. Chairman, the member as well, raised the issue of the major problems in agriculture. We, as a party and as a government, have recognized that the economy over the last number of years and specifically in the agricultural areas has not been buoyant and farmers have been in great difficulty. We have argued very strongly for changes in thrust with the former administration, in the ways that governmental policies and programs should go and obviously we will be getting into discussion areas on some of those specifics later on.

I want to indicate specifically to the honourable member that there have been two major thrusts and the member indicated that there was no policy thrust of this government in the period that we've been in. We have announced a very major program of assistance to the beef industry in this province. What I would call the fine-tuning of the administrative details have to be worked out and we will want to do further consultations with producer groups as well as the major announcement in the early part of the year dealing with the interest rate program. Mr. Chairman, I acknowledge — and when we made the announcement on the program we said that this was not going to solve all the ills. This was a one time limited program. In terms of who it will affect, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the numbers our statistics tell us, at least those that we were supplied by FCC and other agencies that more than 70 percent of the farmers of Manitoba fall within those guidelines and we did not as has been suggested by members at times from the Opposition indicating that you promised that no one would lose their farms, homes and businesses, we indicated during the campaign that it would be on the account of high interest rates, Mr. Chairman.

While we recognize that this program is limited and the number of funds are limited, there is one portion

of this program that will be of benefit to us in government and hopefully if need be we can certainly follow up with respect to our lending policies through the MACC, and if need be further legislative action if that deemed be the government policy at that point in time; that is, Mr. Chairman, in the agricultural sector.

We will now be able to determine or at least find out the extent to which farmers in Manitoba are in severe financial difficulty. We can talk all we want in this House, but there is nowhere in government any statistics or any information available to us to say, yes, this sector is in trouble; these are the numbers and this is the extent of the problem. This exercise, if anything, will certainly give us information to tell us the problem is more severe than we anticipated or the problem is not quite as severe. My own gut feeling and I give that as such, my own personal feeling, is that the farmers of Manitoba are in many areas quite in financial difficulty. There are exceptions, Mr. Chairman. I acknowledge it. —(Interjection)— The members are agreeing with me, Mr. Chairman, we at least didn't go through the process of leading up to the election indicating that everything is rosy; everything is going to be fine. We are not saying that as well right now.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Morris seems to be flabbergasted — I'll use his own word — or astonished at my statement. If he was in this Chamber in 1981, he could have made up his own mind as to the position of his members and his colleagues as to how they viewed the economy of Manitoba and particularly the agricultural economy.

So, Mr. Chairman, while we readily admit that the interest rate program is not the panacea to assist the entire agricultural industry, but we do indicate that there will be some meaningful assistance to people who are hardest hit with respect to the rising interest rates, there is no way that any governments per se are able to — I don't believe that they even contemplated assistance; in fact, their program which they announced a week before the end of the election dealing with homeowners' interest rates, one can certainly lead into a lot of commentary on the merits of that kind of a program. I don't believe that there was any detailed analysis done by the former administration in terms of the extent of the problems that homeowners and other people in society face.

We will have a better handle at least in the agricultural area how we should determine and change our lending policies and to make sure that the financial institutions in the Province of Manitoba are in fact as supportive as we have been led to believe; that they will continue to carry the farm industry in times of distress; that they are not pulling the pin on farmers in Manitoba; that they will be living up to their obligations and not foreclosing on the farmers in Manitoba; that they will carry them through these hard times. Mr. Chairman, this will be certainly an exercise that we will be able to assist some farmers and by having our staff people involved with people in financial difficulty, we may be able to give them the best advice in management expertise that the department has in the field and to be able to assist those farmers in making some management decisions in reviewing where they're really at in terms of their total operations.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the exercise, while we have said that it's not going to solve all the ills, it will

certainly give us a window and a picture of the extent of the difficulties that many people face in agriculture.

With respect to some different increased costs that farmers are facing and the member mentioned them, there is no doubt that the agricultural sector is one of the most vulnerable in society in that they have yet to utilize their collective muscle to be able to make sure that they receive adequate support and adequate remuneration from the marketplace to make sure that those costs that they have to incur are met and that agriculture in Manitoba can prosper and continue to flourish in a reasonable way and that we can look forward within Manitoba to a steady, consistent, and a stable growth in agriculture and that people in the rural areas will, to the best possible way, retain their livelihoods and their desired lifestyle as best we can and best they can. We will try and mold our policies that we develop over the next months and years ahead to encourage and allow the family farm to stay option to be a thrust of this administration to allow young people again into the farming area, so that agriculture is maintained a No. 1 industry in this province.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for his comments on the overall general layout of the department. He has indicated that he is reviewing it and he does have some changes planned for it. He is indicating that not necessarily may be the case, however, he is looking at the overall layout of the board. Does he have any major changes or any plans to change the administrative staff that is employed by him; any major shifts or moves of people who are now in the administrative roles within this section of the department?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, when one deals with reorganization and any changes, there from time to time will likely and may be different duties assigned to staff in terms of — but when the member mentions anything major, I really don't foresee at the present time that there will be any major shifts, but there will be, and the discussions are going on in terms of staff duties and responsibilities that are being looked at there. But whenever there is reorganization of any magnitude, there will be some reassignment of duties and changes of responsibilities.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, there was the position of Associate Deputy Minister that I believe became vacant as of the end of December. Has the Minister, or is the Minister going to continue to carry that position? Has he filled it, or what is the status of the Associate Deputy Minister of Agriculture?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, that position has not been filled at this point in time and because there is a vacancy, that's the reason for the process now to look at possible reorganizational changes within the department.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I would hope that when the Minister makes his decision, if it's within the time that the House is sitting, that he would table any proposed changes or any new administrative changes that are within the department before the House so we are aware of who is carrying out the different respon-

sibilities and the positions that are available.

I have some serious concerns, Mr. Chairman, when the Minister confirms one of the concerns that I have had in the last few weeks with the replacement of a lot of top quality agriculture people who have been members of our boards and commissions, Mr. Chairman, not to say that the new members aren't qualified people, I'm not indicating that at all. I would not want them to feel that I'm making those kinds of comments, but I would like to indicate to those members, who were on the boards and commissions, and we are fortunate to have an individual who is now a member of the Legislative Assembly and possibly more, but the one that comes to mind is our new Member for Morris who acted, I think, in a nonpartisan and in a very effective way as the Chairman of the Natural Products Marketing Council, as well as many other people throughout the agriculture community, Mr. Chairman, who put in a lot of time and a lot of effort to service the different Crown corporations and committees that they worked on; not, Mr. Chairman, for the top dollar, that one might have expected, but I'm sure for the commitment that we've seen carried out in agriculture in general.

We didn't see the chairmen of our different boards and commissions drawing the same kinds of per diems or returns that some particular people maybe in the legal profession or other professions would expect, however, possibly carrying out just as equally important duties within the farm community. There was a lot of hard time and effort put into working with agriculture, but I have some serious concerns, Mr. Chairman, when the Minister is indicating that he now expects to become a pretty major part of the overall policy direction of these boards and commissions. I know that there is a relationship, Mr. Chairman, and through the consultation of the Minister and those boards and commissions that that is a normal process of discussion and development of policy. The recommendations as he indicates go to the Minister.

I do have some concerns though, Mr. Chairman, if there is an over-emphasis coming from the Minister to those boards and commissions that may fly directly in the face of the overall corporation that those people are acting as boards of directors or in their positions. That, Mr. Chairman, I don't think will be in the best interest of the overall democratic system or the appointing of board system that works within government and if the Minister's telling me that he's going to become overly exercised and involved in the direction of these corporations or these particular resource mechanisms for the farm community, then I have some serious concerns because there are decisions which may have to be made by the Manitoba Marketing Council, which he himself has indicated some time ago that he doesn't feel as a Minister that he should get involved in. Now, he's telling us, Mr. Chairman, the very opposite. Mr. Chairman, he's talking about the very opposite, that he's now saying that he is going to get involved in the decisions that are made by the boards and commissions that are in place within the Department of Agriculture. He can't have it both ways, Mr. Chairman; he's either going to let the system work on its own and be a part of the overall supervisory type nature that has to take place, or . . . he just can't have it both ways.

I again go back and say, Mr. Chairman, it's a real concern that I have that if he overly dominates, then the system isn't going to work in the best interests of agriculture because I think boards and commissions are appointed to do their job. If they can't agree, then he should either replace the board or commission, or he himself should let somebody else take over the job as the Minister, Mr. Chairman. However, I think it's important that system be allowed to work effectively for the farm community. I'm putting on the record, Mr. Chairman, I have some concerns because past experience has shown, particularly with the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, where some of their board appointments have directed the corporation, not in the best interests of the general farm community, but it made specific directives to the corporation to, in fact, do things that may play special favour to some particular person. I don't think, Mr. Chairman, that is in the best interests of the farm community.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister again has referred to the interest rate relief assistance or emergency interest rate assistance program. He's now saying that they don't believe or he doesn't believe that they made a commitment to the farm community.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I will refer to, again, some of the material that was distributed prior to the election, that an NDP Government would take action to prevent the loss of homes, farms, and small business due to abnormally high interest rates. Mr. Chairman, I think everyone is in danger of losing their homes, farms, and businesses due to high interest rates if we don't see some relief in the overall picture in the near future. That is, of course, not within his responsibility totally, but the point I want to make is that why would they indicate that very point if they knew they didn't have the influence that they thought they may have and the picture has certainly changed as far as he is concerned. The basis from which, I think, it's also an area that I have some major concerns and it's a specific area that I think it's important that the Minister and his administrative staff continue to work, and work I think effectively, if they can and that's in the influencing of the Federal Government or policies which there is an inter-relationship.

We all are pretty much aware of the fact that the majority of our agricultural issues or commodities are produced on a national basis; that there has to be a good working relationship between the administrative staff of both the Department of Agriculture within the province and at the federal level. A good example of when that didn't work very well — I don't mind saying that I'll point it out — and that was when we saw the disastrous drought program that was introduced by the Federal Government and lack of consultation and work with the provincial departments. I know that some of the administrative staffs of both were pulling their hair out. I would hope that the Minister's staff — maybe he could report what kind of a mechanism that he has established to make sure that there is a good dialogue of what is happening at both levels.

I have to say that I am somewhat concerned when we see the announcement made recently by the Minister of Agriculture on the beef support program that does not clearly state what he expects of the Federal Government. I would almost consider it Fed bashing

what he has said, that they haven't carried out their responsibilities and they felt that they had to move with a program.

Mr. Chairman, I think it would be helpful to the committee that are here and particularly the beef producers of this province, has he had a dialogue with the Federal Minister of Agriculture? Are his thoughts that he is now introducing with a program to blackmail the farm community, and I use that word, Mr. Chairman, into a marketing board concept for the beef producers. The big hooks that are in that program, Mr. Chairman, I would have to say that I think that there will be many many beef producers that will look pretty warily at that program that he has introduced to the beef industry as the answer to the ongoing stability of any industry.

Surely to goodness, Mr. Chairman, the Minister learned his lesson with the program that he was involved with during those years of a Beef Income Assurance Program. I guess the real question has to be asked because he's now indicating he doesn't mind getting involved in the operation of the Crown corporations or the directives that are given there. The program that he's introduced is now saying to the beef industry, we want to be hands on; we think we can hire people within the Department of Agriculture to direct how you should market your livestock. Mr. Chairman, we see the Minister has introduced a program where it's taken the management decision away from the beef industry. You know, he's almost introducing a program and introducing it under somewhat, I wouldn't call it false leadership, but I have some real concerns when he says that he's introducing it to help the cow-calf producers of the Province of Manitoba. In the next sentence he says, but as soon as you enter the program, you no longer are a cow-calf producer and, as such, that kind of a business operator. Now that you're in the program, that you have to turn from being a cow-calf producer, even though, Mr. Chairman, the farmer himself, he or she, may be able to in the fall of the year sell that cow or to sell that calf, that stocker animal, and make a profit. Mr. Chairman, the Minister is taking for granted, has said immediately that you no longer can qualify if you're going to be a cow-calf producer. You've got to change your whole operation, Mr. Chairman, and he has taken for granted that there is a tremendous profit in the finishing of beef cattle.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister is immediately telling us that now, as a cow-calf man, I can no longer be a cow-calf man to get support from this program. I can't, Mr. Chairman, think anything other than the fact that he as a Minister now wants to get involved in the management decisions of the beef industry, not only as far as the production is concerned, but as far as the marketing is concerned he's now going to force them to use a commission. Plus, Mr. Chairman, and this is the real hooker, he is asking the livestock producers to anti-up 4 to 8 percent of their gross income for the next six years. To do what, Mr. Chairman? To pay that money back to them, Mr. Chairman. — (Interjection) — Mr. Chairman, the Minister says how about the hog producers?

Mr. Chairman, I'll get into the hog producers in a minute and the whole industry. That, Mr. Chairman, is directed by a hog producer committee on their own;

that wasn't introduced with a lot of political fanfare. No, that was put in place with a grant, Mr. Chairman, a grant of \$5 million. Yes, Mr. Chairman, and the producers can run it on their own. If they don't want to participate, that's fine but, Mr. Chairman, I think we've got a whole different bailiwick that we were seeing for the beef industry. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll point out to the Minister what's different, but I think that as far as the overall beef producers are concerned, that their concerns are more at this particular time. The fact that whether you're a cow-calf producer, whether you're a stocker producer or whether you're a finishing producer that you should qualify for a program, not to force and change around.

We didn't tell the weanling producers that they had to become finishers of hogs. There was a Support Program for the weanling pig producers. There was a program and they got some payout retroactively, Mr. Chairman. We didn't tell them they had to become finishers of pork. The Minister can make all the funny faces he likes, that's true, the hog producers know that it's their program.

Mr. Chairman, I have some deep concerns that over a six-year period we are going to have a program that is of no meaning today; that it has political designs on it or designs that the Minister has to change the whole industry; and I have to say the Minister is somewhat inconsistent. There is a total lack of consistency with the policy of this Minister of Agriculture because, and I have no problem with this, because we know that there have been benefits through a subsidized freight rate on grain, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Chairman, if he feels that the best way to support the grain industry is through a transportation subsidy, why didn't he introduce a subsidy to transport finished beef out of this province? Why didn't he introduce a program to subsidize the transportation of stock or cattle out of this program? Where is this consistency, Mr. Chairman? I think he's going to find himself crossing his own sword. He's going to find out that he's in a quandary that's going to be very difficult for him to get out of.

Mr. Chairman, I think probably some of my colleagues may have some comments to make, but I wanted to make sure that he does give the boards and commissions the chance to operate in the way in which they are supposed to operate; that the staff are allowed to — something that they weren't allowed to do in their previous eight years — operate and support, the resource people to the total farm community, that they aren't directed to a specific group in society in saying that you can't talk to the progressive farmers, or people who are doing well, but that they're able to communicate with the total industry and be a supportive team to that total industry.

Mr. Chairman, possibly my colleagues may have some comments and I will yield the floor to them.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Morris.

**MR. MANNES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like just to make a couple of general comments and I would probably like to ask some specific questions which may or may not relate to the planning area, if they come in another area you will let me know I'm sure, Mr. Chairman.

I suppose as a new member watching a new Minis-

ter in action, one gains certain impressions. —(Interjection)— That's right and it leaves a depression sometimes. Good line, colleague from Arthur. I think one of the things that has struck me firstly has to do with the Minister's concern with the general farm community as a whole in the income situation or position that they now find themselves. I don't want, and I know we won't get on to any Crow rate issue although everytime I ask a question of the members in the House on agriculture that seems to be thrown back, so hopefully the Minister won't do that in this particular occasion. But, I guess I would wonder, how a Minister representing some 30,000 Manitoba farmers, or maybe there are more — I am wondering what position he takes in Cabinet when he sees other members within that Treasury Bench pushing forward proposals that will see major increases in property taxation, not for one year but for many years to come when we know that we're in a basic downturn in this whole industry. I am curious as to how he reacts in those situations and to what degree he represents truly, the farm rural thought. So, he may want to comment on that.

As far as his further comments on the Interest Relief Program and how it would provide a window into the general well-being of the farm community —(Interjection)— that's right, well the general well-being, it may or may not provide but he's indicated that at least it may afford an opportunity for the government and for everybody to have a better understanding in an economic number sense, in an accounting sense as to how our general farm community is doing. I wonder about a comment like that; that says to me that maybe the Minister himself doesn't believe that there is a problem out in the farm; that some of the horror stories that we hear of banks foreclosing and of credit unions being terribly concerned; maybe they are nothing more than stories and that they have no validity. That concerns me because as the Minister has to be aware and if he isn't I guess I'm disillusioned a little bit with where he's been and what he's been doing in his four months in that ministry because there are tremendous problems out there and we know that the position is only going to deteriorate over the next little while. I mean, with the costs increasing like they are and with grain prices diminishing in value, the situation can only become worse.

I also picked up on the Minister's comment that they're going to assist farmers with management decisions and I know this was tried early 70's and I'm not going to make a philosophical statement out of this, I probably could but I'm wondering what he's really getting at? Is he saying that in fact, that many farmers are poor managers and that their situations could be turned around if in fact, somebody was there to guide them. I would like him to expand on that particular line of comment that he gave us because I think he owes an explanation to the community as a whole, the farm community to determine whether in fact he considers part of the desperate problem we find ourselves in now is because of poor management.

Then, he talks about the family farm concept and I just want to again make one comment that — of course the NDP has no monopoly whatsoever with the family farm concept; and I think if there's anything that has disturbed me is these comments that keep

coming from the other side that you're the great protectors of the family farm concept. Well, let the record be straight as to who endorses the family farm concept.

Now specifically to Item 1.(b) Planning and Management — and to do specifically with boards, I would like to ask the Minister specifically what criteria he uses to change boards and before I give him an opportunity to answer, I ask that — he may think facetiously — but it's not because I've been on one of these boards and I don't know how many members of this House have been but I want to tell you that I realize of course there's a major political part to play and when changes of governments come about that there are changes. I'm wondering if in this Minister's mind they're strictly because of some philosophy which he thinks is different from the people that are sitting on that board, or is it because of some personality dispute he knows that he would have or has had with individuals on the board. I guess the question I'm asking, is there any room whatsoever to maintain, regardless of who or what that person believes in politically, to keep on that board a very objective person, someone who can make a very good contribution to agriculture, if for no other sake than for continuity? I would like to hear the Minister expand on this particular area if I could.

**MR. URUSKI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I'd like to deal with some of the comments of both members, the Member for Arthur and the Member for Morris dealing with boards and commissions. Maybe the members don't accept this, but there should be a liaison and an open-door relationship between the boards that a Minister and the government appoint and the Minister responsible for them, and there maybe I didn't quite elaborate on the difference between the various boards and Crown agencies. There are the regulatory boards which are completely different from the Crown agencies which administer policies and programs of governments. The regulatory boards are completely different in nature. They have their statutory authorities whereby they deal with specific appeals, either these marketing boards, or appeals, or investigations as a result of the authority that is invested in those boards. Those boards have their own function and the decisions that they make or recommendations that they make to the government, then the government has to either accept or reject those recommendations and those boards perform a function there.

With respect to the other areas specifically, for example, dealing with the Crown agencies, with the policy and program delivery boards, there I believe that the government really has a role to play and the Minister who is responsible for those areas should be in a position to be able to make his views known in terms of what he feels the general thrust should be, and the board members in return could say, "Yes, Mr. Minister we agree with you, or we don't agree with you. Here's where we recommend that any policy changes in the direction of our agency should go." And the Minister then is put in a position of either accepting those recommendations, or as the Member for Arthur said, he has to make up his mind whether he should replace that board.



With respect to having it both ways, Mr. Chairman, the member said we can't have it both ways about replacing members on the various boards and the government changing the membership and the composition of these boards. Today we heard, and I'm not sure, maybe I misinterpreted the member's comments, but it appeared to me they were complaining about that we were holus-bolus firing board members, Mr. Chairman. I have to say to the honourable members that I have as a Minister, met with some of the boards that you have and I have personally thanked them, because I realize it is a thankless job when citizens of Manitoba do take on the role and the activity of being involved in these boards, and for their work and their perseverance and many thankless hours. I know the Member for Morris has been, and I have been, as an MLA placed on some of the boards previous to my appointment to Cabinet whereby other citizen members were there. I realize as well as he does the hours and the dedication that it takes of people in Manitoba to serve on these boards where at times the remuneration in most of them is really not that great. If the board is very active, then of course the individual serving on that board at times almost has to make a decision whether or not he continues in the occupation that he or she is in, or whether or not they should devote full time on that board and yet the remuneration there is not to such a degree as to give them an income.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to comments made about our relationship with the Federal Government, we've had a number of meetings. I have met with various Ministers and the Minister of Agriculture and various Ministers of the Federal Government, the Minister responsible for DREE, dealing with the AgroMan Agreement. We've had discussions in those areas about the continuation and the future expansion of that type of a program for Manitoba and we've also had our staff people, our Deputy Minister, does meet regularly with both the Department of Agriculture as has been the case and with DREE in a regional director's way, but it's acknowledged, and we didn't argue that point with the former administration, that basically the thrust of agricultural policy in terms of income stabilization is, and should be, a national responsibility. We have never quarrelled with that. We did quarrel at a time when governments were knowingly where the Federal Government would not and did not act, that we were sort of sitting back and not moving to at least bring about some basic support for a portion of our industry in trouble, and that's where we found fault and we argued about this in this House.

Specifically, Mr. Chairman, the member well knows the hog industry, it took two years of cajoling and trying to plead with the former administration until they finally came up with a program dealing with the hog industry which really was — and the Minister talks about being ill-conceived. The Minister of Finance came into this House and the Minister at the same time was in Brandon announcing a \$10-million program which, when they announced the program, didn't have any intention of having those funds available for that program. The Minister of Finance came to this House and said we don't need the other \$5 million. It's in Hansard, read it. When we questioned

him in Supplementary Supply, he said, "We will not need those funds." Why announce to the world that you announced a \$10-million program, when within several weeks after the announcement of that program, you come into the House and say, "We will not need those additional Estimates. That money will not be spent." But, Mr. Chairman, within several months the initial \$5 million was gone and we were in a problem situation. There was no money. There was no authority in place.

Mr. Chairman, it was a game that the former administration was playing in terms of making sure that they could go the people of Manitoba saying that we will keep our budgets down. Mr. Chairman, because of that program we are now . . .

**MR. MANNES:** Mr. Chairman, I submit these Estimates are going to be drawn out a long time, but if we're going to hit every subject and every response we'll be here for longer than that. So I asked a specific question on boards and somehow we've ended up into the Hog Program from previous years, so the Minister may want to finish his question or he may let me pose another one, whatever he so wishes.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, it appears that the members opposite may not like some of the comments that I have made, and I agree that may not be music to their ears in what I am saying. I was merely responding to some of the comments that his colleague, the member for Arthur, the former Minister of Agriculture, was alluding to. —(Interjection)— Oh yes, well, the Member for Morris might say forget about the former Minister of Agriculture. The farmers of Manitoba obviously would like to do that; they would like to forget about the former Minister of Agriculture and I agree with the Member for Morris that we should forget about the comments of the former Minister of Agriculture. We will take them with a grain of salt then, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Beef Income Assurance Program and the handling of the program and the setting up of a Marketing Commission, the Member for Lakeside was in this House, I believe, in the early '60s — I mean he brought into this House, or his colleagues at the time set up a Marketing Commission and appointed —(Interjection)— well, it may not have been the Member for Lakeside but his colleagues who were under the Roblin administration at the time. It may have been — the member, he has passed on — it may have been George Hutton at the time or it may have been — I would have to check the records at the time, but there was a commission set up to market hogs in this province, not unlike — I mean the precedence is not — not only the precedence but the desirability of making sure that the program is run financially sound, and that there are no great problems with the administration in the payouts. I acknowledge to the Honourable Member for Arthur that the previous program did have features in it where farmers, that there could have been people, and there were accusations made like from the Member for Roblin, where farmers were collecting and being paid several times for their animals. That's what we are trying to avoid at the present time in this program here, so that the financial administration is

such that there's a payout only one time, and it be made on the finished animals, rather than being paid through several segments and the control of the program cannot be administered.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Member for Morris's comments dealing with appointments to boards, I have to say in all fairness that what I am trying to do is to recommend to Cabinet and to my colleagues, citizens of Manitoba who I feel can contribute to the well-being and to the assistance of the government in serving, in putting their talents on various boards and commissions, and involving in that, of course, we want to try and look at regional representation throughout the province in terms of having people serve on boards and commissions from all over the province, and those kinds of criteria in terms of being appointed to board members are some of the recommendations that we have been making. Obviously I don't want to begin the whole process of debating as to who has done a better job or who is a better person or another. I will be the last one to say this guy did a better job than the other guy. I believe all people who have served on boards and commissions, from whichever administration they have attempted to appoint those people, to reflect whatever views that they feel in government, the people who can best represent the general cross section of Manitobans and to give a lending hand to government in terms of carrying out the responsibilities that board or commission can handle. In that way, Mr. Chairman, we are trying to select the people to our boards, and we hope, as I'm sure his administration hoped, that the people that they chose and they appointed to the boards would do an effective job and have attempted to serve the people of Manitoba.

I take the comments of the Member for Morris seriously in terms of boards and certain boards with respect to trying to maintain the continuity in some of the issues that are developed, and some of those are the regulatory boards, where one has to be very careful in terms of issues that are facing the board and there may be appeals and hearings in process that you don't disrupt the whole process of an ongoing hearing, and at that point in time, one has to consider what is before the board. If there are no matters that are in front of a board, I then would see no great difficulty of making a complete and full transition on the board. But certainly I welcome those comments and that's an area that I will be and should be cognizant of, so that those kinds of moves and changes are not made completely, leaving appeals and the like in motion and matters not being dealt with.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Elmwood.

**MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood):** Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a few remarks on the principle of board selection, because that seems to be the topic before the Committee. I'm not going to talk about the content, but I want to talk about the principle, because I can see today that the Member for Emerson and the Member for Arthur and others are upset by the fact that the government's exercising its right as a government to select a board that reflects the thinking of the government. Mr. Chairman, that I think, is an old and established basic principle of government;

namely, that either the entire board or the majority of the board should reflect the thinking of the government. I don't see how anything else could be other than that. For example, would a government select a board that is in total opposition to its views and its policies? What sense would that be? What sense would there be to reappointing boards that were appointed in the first place by a previous government to reflect its thinking, why should a succeeding government reaffirm or confirm that particular board in opposition, because if it's right, if it was right for the Lyon administration to appoint boards that reflected its thinking, then why isn't it right for the Pawley administration to do the same?

Mr. Chairman, sometimes it's useful, however, to have members who are independent in their thought, and sometimes it's useful to have members perhaps who are opposed to government policies so that there is kind of a mix, but that doesn't detract from the basic philosophical position, from the basic principle that the board as a board, that the entire board should reflect the government. So, if you have seven members that are pro-government, and pro-Minister, and pro-NDP, and you have one or two independents and one Conservative, fine. Because when you add it all up and divide it, it comes out as a board that reflects the policies and the thinking of the new administration.

Mr. Chairman, I was on a board one time that didn't reflect the thinking of the government back in the Schreyer days on the Manitoba Centennial Corporation where a board was in effect left primarily or fundamentally or largely as a Conservative board. A few New Democratic Schreyer appointees were point on, but were a distinct minority. And you know, Mr. Chairman, it worked fine. It worked fine up until the crunch, and when the crunch came, when there was an issue that could prove to be embarrassing to the government, that board left the government on the hook and kept it on the hook for as long as was humanly possible, because that's when the political motivations came into it and that's when they came out. When the crunch came, people went back to their instinctive and political preferences, and I say that no government should expose itself to that kind of abuse, where an individual represents another perspective and is a minority on a board, then it makes sense.

It's sometimes like a bit of ginger or a bit of spice, but where the government has to wonder about the loyalty of a board, I say that the government is in an impossible position. So, I say to the members, if the members want to question individual appointments, if they want to question qualifications of certain individuals whether they know anything about agriculture, or whether they don't, or whether they know something about farm machinery or don't, or whether they're interested in consumers or not, I think that they have a right to do that and perhaps they should do that, but they cannot question the basic principle.

If my honourable friends want a three-hour lecture on this matter I would yield the floor to the Member for Burrows because he, more than anyone, I think in this Chamber, could speak with great force and insight and expertise on this whole question as a Professor of Public Administration and one who has read the literature and thought about the subject, and now comes to us as a politician as well as a

theoretician or an academician.

So, I simply say that this principle is well established. Even the U.S. Supreme Court, which one would think has a degree of independence, the saying on the Supreme Court as I recall, was that the court should follow the election returns, that the judges who are appointed should obviously reflect the new administration. So, when President Reagan is making appointments, I don't think he's appointing staunch Democrats who will undercut his legislative program.

So, Mr. Chairman, we can take extreme positions, the Member for Lakeside talks — I don't want to disturb his reading — but he talked this afternoon about firing; he liked the word firing. He thinks the government is firing members of boards. Mr. Chairman, I say that the government is upgrading those boards; it's increasing those boards; it's enriching those boards and the Minister has done a fine job in that regard, a fine job. But the fact of the matter, the real truth of the matter is that the boards are being replaced, and although that may come as a surprise to people outside this Chamber who don't understand this system, nobody in this Chamber, including all the rookies, they know very well that is a government prerogative and they should have no complaint on that account.

So, Mr. Chairman, I just say again in conclusion, the boards must reflect government thinking. If the Minister wants to appoint some well-known Conservatives, or some people of independent thought, or some Liberals if there are any left, he may do so, but that is his decision. He's not compelled to do that, and I think under certain circumstances that is a good principle to follow, especially where the board takes a lot of flack and you want to share the wealth on that side of the spectrum. So, if anybody wants to recommend a few fall guys for a few sensitive positions, I think the Minister would certainly be willing to listen to that.

**MR. MANNES:** I thank the Member for Elmwood for giving me the facts of life. I wouldn't want to go around with my eyes closed. I find it very interesting; I asked a question on whether the Minister would be prepared to weigh objectivity in some of his members and so far, we've covered the Washington scene, we covered some hog program, and we've been everywhere. Although we did get close to it, again I don't want to ask another question in this area because it may take another half-an-hour to answer, but I take it from what the Minister said that, and I agree basically with everything that was said in there, that naturally the boards, statutory or otherwise, have to reflect the government philosophy. I have no difficulty with that. But I'm asking him if there is any room to maintain that individual who is objective, not only in his eyes but the eyes of department people and in the eyes of farmers, if we're talking about this particular area that deal with that particular board, is there room to maintain somebody that has an objectivity, because as somebody sitting on the board, I have found on one board that partisan politics in many cases, in almost all cases, can be set aside. It does happen. — (Interjection) — No, I don't want to be on the board any more.

So, I'll leave that at that point and I'll ask another question now, specifically to do with Assistant Deputy Ministers. I'm wondering if the Minister can tell me who they are and if any changes are contemplated in

this area at all, either Assistant or Associate Deputy?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, before I go into that discussion, there were a couple of points that the member raised earlier about the thrust and the thinking of the government and its relationship with the farmers of Manitoba. I want to tell the honourable member and I had just forgotten about it when he was speaking but we do not consider, and I do not consider, that farmers are poor managers, but certainly we have a department and we have expertise in various fields, and management and financial advice and all areas of operations there are some expertise that we should be able to make available to the farm community. I think the farmer himself, or herself, has to make whatever decisions in terms of their own operations, that's up to them; but at least we should be prepared as a department, if we are serving the farmers of Manitoba, to supply them with whatever knowledge and alternatives and expertise that we have so that people can make better decisions, and in terms of periods of hard time we want to assist farmers in those areas.

Mr. Chairman, dealing specifically whether or not there is room for people with other thoughts in mind and other thinking in terms of policy direction, always there is room for that kind of a relationship and that kind of a mix on a board. Obviously, there are people I'm sure that even I have appointed, I don't know every person's views that is being appointed and what their backgrounds are totally, but yet no one person thinks alike and when you get three or four or five people on a board, you will have a mix of views at times that maybe one didn't even dream of, in terms of the thinking on the board. You may have thought, well these come from various areas of the province, they are known to other people in the province, but yet when you get those people together dealing with specific issues that the board deals with, as the member says, strange things do happen and views of people are carried on and are handled in that way.

Mr. Chairman, specifically, with respect to the Assistant Deputies within the department, there are three; in the Management Services Division is G. J. Lacomby, Mr. Lacomby who is here with me with the Deputy Minister; in the Production Division is Mr. Tom Pringle, the Assistant Deputy Minister there, the retirement of Mr. Ed Hudek, who was the Associate Deputy Minister - incidentally, I should mention that Mr. Hudek is involved within the department even though he is retired, he is acting in a capacity in several ways for us in terms of the Water Services Board, He's still acting on that board and, Mr. Chairman, I have appointed him on the PAMI board, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Board to act on our behalf, so he is still very active within the department even though he has retired. There is the Marketing and Development Division with Morris Kraut who is the Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of that area. Those areas and the whole area, as I've indicated to the Member for Arthur, that we are looking at various options of reorganization and there may be a reassignment of duties within the department but, at this point in time, and I should mention to the honourable members, if that decision is made prior to the ending of the Session, obviously all members will

know because there will be changes and reorganizations which would be announced. But at this point in time, we haven't made any direct moves, but there are discussions internally about possible reassignment of duties.

**MR. MANNES:** Thank you. I'm wondering if the Minister, and again he may want to deal with this under another item, I'm wondering if he's considering at all within this planning and management area and this restructuring and the whole review, if he's at all considering a review into such things as quota values, in general, in those areas of . . . You may not want to answer at this time; I'll be asking it again, I'm giving you notice.

Secondly, I would like to know how you see your government giving input into national agency-type matters. I'm wondering if it's this government's will to be more involved in presenting a Manitoba position at national agencies than may have been done in the past and, of course, you know there can be a different philosophy in this whole area, so I would like to at least have your views in that area.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, the member has raised those points. I would prefer and I think the honourable member will recognize that this item would generally fall under Item 6.(c) in the Estimates and he'll I'm sure raise those questions at that time and we'll respond to them.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Emerson.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have various comments here that I found very interesting. I unfortunately missed the opening shots the other day, but I understand under Planning and Management that pretty well covers the whole waterfront to some degree about the direction that this Minister is going with the Department of Agriculture. During the discussions there, one of the things when we talked about boards and I don't want to belabour that, but when he indicated that he wanted continuity and that no reviews have been stopped and what have you, I'd just like to refresh his memory in terms of the Crown Lands Review Board that was terminated on an overnight situation when the members were already into Winnipeg and had their lodgings booked, the appointments were terminated, the hearings were suspended. I don't know how he wants to justify continuity with that. All the review applications were suspended for a while, in fact, for quite a number of months. —(Interjection)— Yes, I understand they did, but you know that kind of thing makes me wonder.

I always enjoyed listening to the present Minister even when he was in Opposition because he's a great one for sort of window dressing everything as plausey-plausey, nice-nice and when we get down to the meat of the matter there's a lot of things here that we have to draw out into the open. One of the things that we have to be concerned about is the whole attitude towards agriculture, our major industry in the province —(Interjection)— Well, we'll get to that later, we want to get into that specifically. But their general attitude towards the rural population creates some

concern and obviously there is a reason for that because we can see the lack of rural members on that side. They have a few on that side but, by and large the farm community, the rural constituency elect Conservative members and that is because there seems to be more feeling for the agriculture community.

This Minister gets up and he says, well there's basically no major policy changes and then he starts off, and we already have some changes taking place right now even before we've even gone into the Estimates to any degree. One of them was under MACC, a major policy change in terms of who can borrow money and for what purpose. We don't know yet, but we know they're not borrowing for land anymore. If that is not a major change in the agricultural community then what is a major change?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Order please. It's now 4:30 and time for Private Members' House. I'm interrupting the proceedings and will return at 8:00 p.m.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. On Private Member's Hour today we have the proposed amended resolution of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo, the question is open.

The Honourable Member for Radisson.

**MR. GERARD LECUYER (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to begin by referring to the Hansard of March 8, at which time I spoke on the Throne Speech. In my opening remarks, in fact in my second sentence, I stated, "It is both an honour and a very humbling experience especially when I consider the many able men and women who have preceded me." Hansard has misheard what I have stated and has written "evil" for "able," and I would like the record to stand corrected because I think there may have been evil men and women here but I was primarily referring to the able men and women who have spoken before me.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Niakwa on a point of order.

**MR. KOVNATS:** As one of the able people that preceded the Honourable Member for Radisson, I would agree that the correction should be made.

**MR. LECUYER:** Now, in reference to the resolution at hand, I would like to begin by referring to a document entitled, "Public Schools in Manitoba, Statistics for 1981 to 1986," a document which was prepared in June of 1981 by the Department of Education. The provincial summary tables show that enrolments in Manitoba in public schools in 1973 were 234,569; in 1980, enrolments were 204,404, a drop of 30,165; for 1986 the projected enrolments are 188,143, a further drop of 16,261. The reason I wish to refer to these statistics is to indicate that Manitoba as all of the other provinces has not been immune to declining enrolments, a feature which holds true for all of the other provinces of Canada and, indeed, probably for all countries for that matter, especially of the North

American continent. The fact also remains that the largest impact of declining enrolments has already occurred. In fact, if we look at the statistics, we see that the greatest point of declining enrolment was in the year 1979-1980, and it seems now that although we will continue to see a further decline in school enrolments, this tends to taper off, and we should experience a sort of stable effect by 1986 or at least only minor effects afterwards. If we look at the statistics as well which were prepared at the same time in June 1981 in terms of private school enrolments, we see a very slight increase which small increase would not in any way compensate for the loss in the public school enrolment.

My purpose in citing these figures is primarily to draw attention to the words which appear in the WHEREAS of the resolution which we are presently discussing and that is, "evidence of the continued future reduction in school-age population." It is true in essence the statement, but as I've stated, it will not have as much impact as it seems to have had in the past, although the effects will continue to be felt for a number of years to come.

I also wish to remind everyone that this aspect of declining enrolment is not something new. By stating these figures, I wish to put it on the record as I assume everyone will agree, this is something that has been taking place for some years while we were in government, while you were in government and it will continue in years to come.

Studies have been carried out in a number of provinces of Canada to try and come to grips with this problem and I suppose, we in Manitoba could have done something in this respect to try and at least alleviate the burden of declining enrolments. But I think the important thing to keep in mind is that in a province like Manitoba in an age of enlightenment in a country, indeed, in a province with our tremendous resources and our stage of development, it should not remain a privilege of the elitist class or the enriched class, a privilege of the few, that a good education should, in fact, be a right for every child of school age in this province.

Indeed, we cannot see ourselves, and we must not see ourselves, as in the same conditions as still prevail in some of the developing or underdeveloped countries of the world. For us, I think it should be a right for all and there should be full accessibility for the best education for all our children, a right to be entitled, to learn, to grow to their fullest potential in this province. And, I for one, of course, will definitely support this resolution.

If I choose to speak on it, it's because right now, as my colleague from Niakwa pointed out, find a school division in the constituency which I represent presently trying to grapple with the effects of declining enrolment in St. Boniface. But when the Member for Niakwa states that we already have lost some schools in St. Boniface, I know of only one. I know that one is presently used by the division for school board offices. The other school I agree, underwent some changes but it is not a school that has been lost. If we speak of a school that has been changed over to a different type of program I wouldn't consider that a school that has been lost.

The member also makes reference to the fact that

advertisements and newspapers sometimes refer, located close to a specific type of school or simply mentioning close to schools. This adds value to property and I have no doubt that it probably does but sometimes to be located near a shopping centre also adds value to property. To be located close to a clinic adds value to perhaps a property or perhaps the opposite depending on what we are referring to. We know for a fact that we cannot have a school on every city block unless we have a sudden tremendous increase in population which we definitely cannot expect.

When the Member for Niakwa states that we've got to do something to give those students something that they can rely on for the next five years. I believe, I don't want to put myself in the position of school boards who are faced with the difficult decisions that they have to make in this day and age, especially at the moment; the fact remains that these decisions have to be made. I believe that school divisions are trying to make decisions based on long-range plans and if we do not come to grips with a global plan in our school divisions we will forever find ourselves in situations of conflict because every year we'll grapple with a new school to determine whether we should keep it open or whether we should close it or transform its program for another type of program.

Now, I realize in some instances these changes affect a large number of students, but I don't want the numbers to be exaggerated either. When the Member for Niakwa quotes in the letter that some 5,000 to 7,000 students are affected — I know he took from a letter that he received, because I have the same letter, so I'm not saying that he made that up — but, the fact that he quotes the figure has to be questioned because there are only a few more hundred than 7,000 students in St. Boniface and I know that not every school is affected so we can't say that all the students are affected.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Niakwa on a point of order.

**MR. KOVNATS:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether I have a good memory or not but I would just like to bring to the attention of this Legislature and this Chamber that I don't think that I ever made reference to 5,000 or 7,000 students. These figures are new to me and have been attributed to me by the Honourable Member for Radisson and I disassociate with these figures. They might be true but I didn't say them.

**MR. SPEAKER:** A matter of dispute over facts does not constitute a point of order as the honourable member certainly knows.

The Honourable Member for Radisson.

**MR. LECUYER:** Well, perhaps the member did not, the fact is that he was quoting from this letter and he quoted other passages and I can quote other passages as well that he's quoted. But, the figures given in that particular letter, from which he was quoting, do state this information which I have just stated — (Interjection) — That remains to be seen.

The member stated also that the decisions of the school board were based strictly — I quote now from

the Hansard — “decision reached by the Trustees on March 10, 1982 was, by their own admission, based solely on economic considerations.” Now, I wish to refer to the Preamble of the Resolution which the member probably has as well, which states, “and WHEREAS enrolment projections for 1984-85 indicate further decline throughout St. Boniface . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Niakwa on a point of order.

**MR. KOVNATS:** The last remark from the Honourable Member for Radisson to be attributed to me, Sir, are wrong. I was making reference to a quotation from a letter and the Honourable Member for Radisson has just made a statement that these remarks were attributed to my words and my statements; they were making reference to a letter which I had received which he had received.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Radisson I'm sure accepts the word of another honourable member as being the truth.

**MR. LECUYER:** You're correct, I hadn't noticed the quotation marks but they are there. I still wish to mention that the Member for Niakwa quoted this from the letter he received and in that reference say go to the Preamble for the Resolution which brings about these changes in St. Boniface, and state the Preamble are: “And WHEREAS enrolment projections for 1984-85 indicate further decline throughout St. Boniface; and WHEREAS the Division's four programs can be strengthened while, at the same time, reducing the number of school facilities; and WHEREAS the quality of education need not be adversely affected and may in certain circumstances be improved by the regrouping of students; and WHEREAS the Board has consulted parents and the senior administrators and has discussed the issue frequently is not appropriate to bring forward an initial and partial solution to the problem of declining enrolment and the rationalization of school facilities.”

Now, it is not for me to state whether the school board is making the right decision or the wrong decision. I think that parents who are affected by these decisions will make their representations to the board if they feel they are being adversely affected but, to insist that the Minister has to intervene in every one of these circumstances where parents feel they are adversely affected by a decision by the Board, is asking the impossible; first of all because the board is a group of men and women who are elected by the people they represent.

When the Member for Niakwa says I hope the Honourable Member for Radisson is going to get up and support my position on this, I am not sure that I can support every aspect of his position because in the end he finally said he wasn't sure that he would support this resolution, but I do agree in many respects. I am concerned as a member representing this constituency which sees many of its people in a conflictual situation at the present time and that is indeed a matter that definitely concerns me greatly. But to say that one school has to remain open at the expense of another program is not something that I can take a

position on at this time, not having all the facts, that I'm sure the school trustees and indeed probably most of the parents have at this time after having met with members of the administration many times in the past.

The Minister has indeed announced that she would be reviewing all aspects of school financing and in that would be the amendment that is included in the resolution, the matter of small schools and declining enrolment will also be indeed reviewed. I believe on that ground, it is important for us whether we be on this side of the House or on the opposite side of the House that we endorse this resolution which will see the province assume some of its responsibility in this area which is indeed of concern to us all, but I do not want to suggest that the province should automatically assume all additional costs which these problems are creating in many of the school divisions in this province at the present time.

In closing, I wish to urge all members to support the resolution. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Tuxedo will be closing debate.

The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

**MR. FILMON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege for me to close the debate on the resolution as amended. Now that the Member for St. Boniface has given me back my notes I'll proceed with my final closing remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I'm interested to hear the contributions that have been put forth by various members on the other side. There appears to be some confusion — or perhaps at least some difference in opinion on the other side — as to just exactly what their government stands for with respect to this particular issue.

We have, for instance, the comments that were made in the initial debate on the resolution by the Minister of Education, the comments that were made by the Member for River East, the Member for Dauphin and recently the Member for Radisson. If one compares the comments along with various pronouncements and announcements that have been made from the Ministry of Education on this issue, one doesn't seem to find a great deal of similarity with respect to their position.

I say, for instance, after the initial introduction of this resolution in mid-March, the Winnipeg Sun of Friday, March 19th indicated that the Education Minister, Maureen Hemphill, could not be reached for comment with respect to this proposed resolution when it was introduced in the House, but Assistant, Brian O'Leary — this is a special assistant to the Minister of Education I'm told — said the department has made no plans to examine the issue. Three days later speaking to the issue in the House the Education Minister said, “How delighted I am to hear the members opposite and individuals standing up and supporting what I have been saying as loudly and as clearly as I can say it to everybody that I have been speaking to out in the field since we took office four months ago.”

She further went on to say and I quote, “The concerns that they have raised cannot afford a year for a task force.” She said, “Further things on the matter,” indicating that the issue has been well studied and

she has all the information necessary, her cohort, the Member for River East, said, "Mr. Speaker, we are well aware of the problem and I can assure the Member for Tuxedo that this is included implicitly in the one-year education financing reform. It is not something that we can rush into overnight. It is something that's going to take at least a year to set down any sort of procedures which are lasting for several years rather than just one-year ad hoc procedures which we are forced into now." That's what the various members said about this resolution several days after it was introduced into this House. But, the special assistant to the Minister of Education said, "The department has made no plans to examine the issue."

A few weeks later the Minister tabled today a memorandum which she sent out to all school board chairpersons which indicated and I quote: "Her department is developing comprehensive policies to provide for support to maintain and enhance the quality of education and range of program offerings in small schools, guidelines to be followed in considering school closures and the disposition of alternate use of vacated school buildings." She indicated that the current review that was being undertaken for education finance in the province will address the financial impact upon school divisions of declining enrolment, various language programs in small schools.

So it appears, Mr. Speaker — and I'm grateful for the response that has been made by the Minister after her special assistant indicated that no plans were being made — she has now formally agreed and has sent out a memorandum to all school board chairpersons to the effect that this task force that is examining education finance in the province will now review these problems that I brought forward in the resolution. I am delighted to hear that because they are indeed problems that need to be addressed; they are indeed problems that are being faced by all divisions in the province particularly the urban divisions and they are in need of guidelines, of criteria, of a process that can be followed by all divisions when they face this very important task of deciding what needs to be done and how it needs to be done when declining enrolments result in very serious decisions, hard decisions, that are being faced by school divisions throughout the province.

I wish that the members on the other side, particularly the Minister and her colleagues, and particularly the support people in her department, would decide just exactly where they stand on the issue, because I think it's too important an issue to be bounced around like a football, and I think it's too important an issue to have confusion on the other side in dealing with it. I think it's an issue that needs the support, needs the involvement of the provincial Department of Education in a variety of different ways, but primarily with respect to developing a process that involves parents, as well as perhaps even students, in some cases, certainly educators, certainly administrators and certainly the departmental people who have to deal with this.

The one area of weakness that I see in the turning over of this issue to the review team that is going to be reviewing education finance in the province is that it isn't merely an economic issue, it isn't merely an issue that deals with finance. If it were we wouldn't have any

problems today because I'm sure that, if it were strictly based on economic terms, there wouldn't be the kind of controversy, the kind of upset that we see in so many divisions throughout Greater Winnipeg right now, if not throughout other parts of the province, at the measures that are being taken by individual school boards.

We've had some discussion from the Member for Kirkfield Park, the Member for Niakwa, the Member for Radisson with respect to current burning issues that have to do with this rationalization question. I'm interested to hear the Member for Radisson say that he supports the decision taken by the school division in his area with respect to the rationalization that's taking place, because I know that it is causing a great deal of controversy and unhappiness among many of the parents in that area, as well as students, and it isn't just a decision, it isn't just the economics of the decision, that are at stake or at question; it is the process that's in question. People who should be involved in the decision are not being taken into consideration; their opinions are not being solicited or valued; and indeed, the final decision does not represent something with which the community feels happy.

I said before, we have neighbour turning against neighbour, community entity against community entity, factions turning up to fight decisions, and it's because the process is not adequate, Mr. Speaker, not because the economics are not being properly addressed. I believe that, for the most part, the economics of the issue are being properly addressed but we don't have an adequate process to satisfy all the many concerns that should be taken into account with respect to this question of declining enrolment.

Another concern that I have, when this issue is turned over to a review of education finance, is that I don't have a great deal of confidence in this government's ability to deal adequately and fairly with education finance in this province. All we have to do is look at the record, and the record is a very sad and sorry one, Mr. Speaker. In eight years in government, one of the cornerstones of education finance tinkering that this government left us with, one of the millstones around the neck of our government was the so-called Greater Winnipeg Equalization Levy; a levy that was introduced in 1972 by the former Schreyer administration which was designed to fudge about some of the inequities in property taxes that took place as a result of The Unicity Act. That Greater Winnipeg Equalization Levy, and I can speak to so many newcomers here who are not familiar with it, that levy started out transferring about a couple of hundred thousand dollars from the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 to the outlying suburban school divisions in Winnipeg; and within eight years it was transferring over \$7 million, resulting in the fact that Inner City properties in the constituency of the Member for Logan, the Minister of Education, for instance, her property taxpayers were paying to reduce the taxes in places like Tuxedo, Garden City, Assiniboia and other areas of the city that I don't think are considered to be as economically deprived as are some of the Inner City properties. And her taxpayers who couldn't afford the taxes that they currently have on their properties were being asked to pay substantial amounts extra to reduce the education property

taxes in the suburban school divisions as a result of that ill-thought-out plan known as the Greater Winnipeg Education Levy that was introduced by the former Schreyer administration; and that's the track record of that government in dealing with education finance matters.

Further to that, we have this year's evidence of what the first blush and the first thrust at a reworking of the education financing through this province has resulted in. We have, this year, almost every jurisdiction, almost every school division in this province, looking at an increase in mill rate for education property taxes, an average from the figures that are made available to us by the Minister of Education, an average of eight mills across the province is going onto education taxes throughout the province. That's their thrust at a more equitable solution to education finance in this province. Throw it onto the property taxpayer where it shouldn't be; where they have argued in the past that it's inequitable, that it doesn't bear any relationship to one's income; and they have argued so strenuously in the past and yet the very first thing that they have done as a government, with respect to education financing, is to thrust a greater burden on the property taxpayer in this province. So I am not very well convinced that by putting it into a review of education financing, that this issue, the issue of declining enrolments and the response to declining enrolments in school divisions throughout the province, will get a proper hearing, will be considered in any terms that are reasonable or that bode well for the future of education in this province, because their track record in education financing is not a very good one, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think it's going to result in any kind of solution that's comparable to what I had in mind when I suggested a task force ought to be appointed.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the members opposite really understand the issue, although they stood up to say that they did. The Member for River East said this isn't a new issue, it's been going on in rural areas for 40 years; that's true, Mr. Speaker. The difficulty is that it's an entirely different issue in rural Manitoba since the busing of children to schools is a normal thing; and what did happen when one school was closed down as a result of population shifts to another, meant that children still had to be bussed, but they had to be bussed to a different location; what happens when there is a school closure in an urban area often is the destruction of a neighbourhood. It's an entirely different problem; it's an entirely different issue. But the Member for River East says it's an old issue, it's been around for 40 years, what are we worried about? Well I think that he ought to check with the people in the St. Boniface School Division today; in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division today; in Assiniboine South School Division today; in Winnipeg School Division today, and find out if they think that this is an old issue an nothing to be concerned about. Fortunately he's not the Minister and his Minister does believe that there is something to this issue, and has added it to the terms of reference now that her Committee on Education Financing's looking at, and has indicated that she thinks it's important enough to have them give consideration to developing recom-

mendations for the process that ought to be followed.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's taken a great deal of effort but I think that it's been worth the discussion that's taken place. You know, the Member for Dauphin decried the fact that people in his area were paying so much more as a result of the education finance program that was introduced by our government; he said that the people in Dauphin constituency were paying so much more as a result of the education financing plan. Here's the interesting thing that he doesn't tell you that, across the board, on average throughout this province, 48 percent of the cost of schools are being paid on the property tax. In the Dauphin division, Dauphin-Ochre River Division, only 42 percent of the total school costs are on the property tax. They are at least 6 percentage points better than the provincial average in terms of what percentage of their costs is being paid by on property tax and yet he says that they were hard-done-by by the Education Finance Program that was introduced by our government. That program, Mr. Speaker, was a very far-reaching program that provided an assurance of funding for three years to all divisions throughout the province, and it had in it a part of the program that allowed for declining enrolments. And the safeguard against declining enrolments was that the student-base population upon which the financing was founded was the 1980 data, and that continued for three years. So that even if they lost students, even if they lost 10 percent of their students over the succeeding three years, they still were being given funding based on the 1980 number of students they had in their division plus the CPI inflation rate every year. So they would not be penalized by declining enrolments, in fact they would benefit by declining enrolments.

So that was a plan that had some consideration for what might happen to divisions faced with declining enrolments. It had guaranteed increases for three years based on CPI increase in funding requirements, and as long as their spending increases annually did not exceed the cost of living index, then they would have sufficient funds without having to increase their special levy. That was the kind of program that members opposite and the Minister of Education said wasn't good enough.

Well what's the alternative that they have come up with in their first year of office, increasing the property mill rate for school purposes. Last year only five divisions out of 58 experienced an increase in their property tax, this year virtually every division will. So, Mr. Speaker, although I agree with the intent to do something about the problem, to refer it to a review committee, Mr. Chairman, I'm not confident that the results of the review committee on education financing will solve the problem because they're obviously not solving the problem with respect to education financing in this province this year, and they're obviously not looking at it from the proper perspective. When they take their funding and their financing for education and put it back onto the property tax role in greater percentage and in greater numbers, then I say, Mr. Speaker, they don't understand the problem, and they aren't going to solve the problem with respect to declining enrolments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Mr. Speaker, with the consent of the members opposite I would like to have it called 5:30, and have the House adjourned with the committees to continue this evening at 8:00 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Is the Honourable House Leader prepared to indicate to the House what will happen on Friday.

**MR. PENNER:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think it's been agreed that we will call Thursday, Friday - only in a House of this kind do you have the prerogative of doing things of that kind - and the House would meet on Thursday at 10:00 a.m. to be adjourned at 12:30 p.m., and we would continue the following week with the regular schedule.

**MR. SPEAKER:** With the agreement then that the members will reconvene into committee this evening at 8:00 p.m., it's been moved by the Honourable Attorney General, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, that the House do now adjourn. Is that agreed? Agreed and so ordered. The House is accordingly adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow afternoon