



First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupert Island	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	LIBERAL
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, September 29, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of the Manitoba Telephone System): I am pleased to inform the Legislature today of a new policy which will set higher standards for basic telephone service in the Province of Manitoba.

This policy establishes four new requirements for basic telephone service which will be implemented throughout the province:

First, all telephone exchanges in Manitoba will be converted to modern, digital equipment.

The telecommunications industry is going through major changes. The traditional electromagnetic equipment which operated for many years at the core of all telephone switches is now obsolete and computer-controlled digital switches are the emerging standard.

The needs of telecommunications users have also been changing. Businesses, small and large, are becoming increasingly dependent on modern and reliable telecommunications systems. Manitobans throughout the province want access to business services such as automated bank tellers, instant credit card verification and computerized inventory control, all of which require sophisticated communications networks.

MTS has, over the years, been replacing its older switches with modern digital equipment. Customers in various exchanges throughout the province such as Lockport, Morris, Deloraine, and Sherridon have recently experienced the improvements which come with the installation of digital switching equipment. However, there are still many exchanges operating with older equipment.

This policy will extend modernization to all our exchanges in the Province of Manitoba.

* (1335)

The second point in this policy recognizes the need to ensure that all subscribers have full-time access to the telephone network. At present, some 46,600 subscribers in rural areas receive "party line" service. They must share their telephone line with as many as four other households. As a result, they only have access to the telephone network when someone else is not using the line. Furthermore, when the line is available, there is no means of assuring privacy; so that the telephone cannot be trusted for calls such as private consultations with lawyers, accountants or doctors.

We believe that this standard of service is no longer acceptable and, therefore, the policy stipulates that MTS shall "establish individual lines as the basic service throughout the Province of Manitoba for permanent residences and businesses." This will relegate party lines to the history books in Manitoba.

The third point in this policy responds to the needs of thousands of subscribers in small rural exchanges who cannot reach medical, educational, municipal or business services without calling long distance.

MTS will now be required to "reduce the number of calling areas in the province by expanding rural calling areas to offer access to local business and service centers in exchange for basic local rates which correspond to the increased calling range provided." This will then link rural telephone exchanges with regional commercial centres as part of their basic service.

Finally, the fourth aspect of the policy addresses those subscribers throughout Manitoba who, because of physical disabilities, have limited access to the telephone network. We have the opportunity to harness new technological developments to meet their communications needs. Accordingly, this Basic Telephone Service Improvement Policy requires MTS to "improve access to basic telecommunications services for subscribers with physical disabilities."

In summary, Mr. Speaker, this policy will give Manitobans a higher standard of communications and will grant full access to those who have had less than adequate service in the past. These changes will not take place overnight, as implementation of this policy will require major enhancements of the MTS network.

I joined MTS staff this morning for the public release of these proposed programs to implement this Basic Telephone Service Improvement Policy. Their multi-year plan, which will be filed with the Public Utilities Board for consideration at public hearings, will also offer long distance cost-reduction programs, including reducing interprovincial toll rates, discount packages for calls within the province, and discount packages allowing subscribers in the exchanges adjacent to Winnipeg and Brandon to reduce their costs for calling into these two cities.

This policy and the programs offered by MTS will set a new standard of service which will respond to the telecommunications needs of Manitobans in the 1990s.

Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased to address this opportunity to present this to the Legislature. I know all MLAs in this province will support this program. We are very confident that MTS will presently pursue this program and meet it on target.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): We, on this side of the House, welcome the announcement today from the

Minister. We realize that these changes have been in the works for a long time.

We are particularly pleased that some aspects of our own policy have been adopted by the Government. In particular, I make reference to the small rural exchanges which cannot reach medical, educational, municipal or business services. This is something that he have advocated for a long time. We are also very pleased that the Minister is improving access for those with physical disabilities.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that with 47,000 subscribers of MTS who now happen to use party lines with a very speedy implementation of this new technology is very important. We also want to pay particular attention to the policy that deals with exchanges nearby the City of Brandon and the City of Winnipeg. We note that the possibility of optional tolls is also against the possibility of direct linkages so people could call the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon; but in general, we think that this is a welcome step and the questions that we have to ask will be asked in the very near future.

* (1340)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House on the Minister's statement today on the Manitoba Telephone System. I am a little surprised he took so long, given it looks very, very similar to the proposal that he probably found in his office on his swearing-in some four months ago.

I think a policy of seven-year single-party elimination makes sense. I do not know why we are waiting till 1990 rather than implementing it in 1989. I do not know why I support the policy of the proposal we had and indeed that has been endorsed by this Government in terms of having 160 calling areas go down to 60.

I would ask the Minister to pay special attention not only to rural Manitoba but the major problems in northern Manitoba. We look forward to seeing his proposed map. We hope it is drawn as fairly as possible in terms of the saving of that.

The handicapped proposal was approved in January of 1988. I am surprised to see it in this press release, but I am pleased that the ongoing process would relay everything else.

Mr. Speaker, the rural telephone improvements are absolutely essential for this province. Also, this Government, in terms of its communication policy, has to deal with a huge shadow of deregulation competition in terms of long distance rates that will potentially increase the rates for every local consumer by 40 percent if the federal Mulroney Government is allowed to continue on with its deregulation policy. How a Minister could stand in this House and have half a package without dealing with the other major competitive policy issue in terms of deregulation is beyond me. There is a Supreme Court case coming out in a few weeks, and I hope this Government has a policy of its own dealing with deregulation.

The last point I would like to make is that we believe it is very important for rural services to go ahead, that

we have an intelligent rate structure to phase those improvements in. We clearly wanted to have a phase-in of the rates. We did not want to treat the bureaucratic increase in Winnipeg and the world telephone service improvements and the future needs of the Telephone System in isolation.

Mr. Speaker, what we need is a coordinated approach, not an ad hoc approach to telecommunications. I think there will be a real backlash with the 25 percent rate increase over the next four months, and we believe that we should have a coordinated approach and a phased-in approach to the rate increases so that there will be greater cooperation between all Manitobans in terms of this proposal. Thank you very much.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Telephone Services Rate Increases

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I promised the Minister that our questions would be asked shortly and here they are.

In the corporation's proposal entitled, "Service for the Future," reference was made to labour . . . for subscribing to—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of the Manitoba Telephone System): I would just say that I cannot hear the Member because the telecommunications system is

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are experiencing technical difficulties one more time. Staff is presently looking at trying to correct it. We are told that Hansard is recording. I would ask all Honourable Members just to kindly keep it down and give the opportunity for the Ministers to hear the questions.- (Interjection)- It appears the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) is attempting to get the floor.

* (1345)

Mr. Carr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will try to speak out.

In the corporation's proposal entitled "Service for the Future," reference was made to rate increases that would take effect December 1, 1988, but at this morning's press conference, the president of the Manitoba Telephone System stated that the corporation will ask approval for rate increases to begin in April, 1989, and April of 1990. Would the Minister tell the House, will there be any rate increases prior to April 1, 1989, of any kind whatsoever that will be charged to the subscribers of MTS?

Mr. Findlay: There are two separate issues here. One is the rate increase that is being proposed for December 1 of 1988, which relates to the tenth rate group for

the City of Winnipeg. It is separate and distinct from the "Service for the Future" proposal which has its first rate increase April 1, 1989.

Mr. Carr: A supplementary question to the Minister. As the Minister knows very well, with so many Members of his caucus representing rural Manitoba, MTS subscribers, for years, who live on the fringes of Winnipeg and Brandon, have advocated that there be direct linkages to the urban exchanges of those two cities. What is being proposed, I understand this morning, is not a direct linkage, but only optional ones for those subscribers of MTS at discount prices. Why does the Minister not support the concept of direct linkages to the Winnipeg and Brandon urban exchanges?

Mr. Findlay: Several proposals were considered. One was the so-called free calling. If free calling was allowed in those exchanges outside of Winnipeg and Brandon, it would cost every subscriber in Winnipeg and Brandon an additional \$3 to \$5 a month. We ruled that out because we did not think the Winnipeg or Brandon citizens would be in favour of it.

The second one was that there be a vote held to determine if all the residents in a particular exchange wanted to opt to pay \$15 and \$20 more of a charge to have access to the City of Winnipeg or Brandon. We believed that was not fair, because those who did not use that calling option would be paying \$15 to \$20 and get nothing.

The program we have chosen is an optional one where anyone who wants to purchase the right to call into Winnipeg or Brandon can do so for the cost of \$5 a month, and get 50 percent off their total charges into that city, for up to \$50.00.

Mr. Carr: As the Minister knows very well, those who are hardest hit by basic increases in all utility rates, and including the Telephone System, are those who are on fixed incomes. While the Minister was preparing his plan, was there any consultation with the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Age and Opportunity Centre, or in fact the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization?

Mr. Findlay: The proposal we have brought forward is to supply a relatively equal level of service to all Manitobans. Rural Manitobans have not had that level of service that the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon and several other towns in this province have had for up to 20 years. We believe it is time rural citizens have equal telecommunications opportunities.

Just for the Member's information, I will tell him that the average Winnipeg bill consists of basic toll, intraprovincial toll, and interprovincial toll.

Interprovincial toll is calling outside the province, in the United States or across Canada, and makes up almost half of that Winnipeg bill. There is a 10 percent reduction in that toll as of January 1, 1989. The increases that are being offered and the increases that are needed to pay for the ILS service and the expanded calling groups, the average Winnipeg phone bill would go up 2.5 percent on April 1, 1989.

Mr. Carr: As the Minister knows, blanket increases affect all equally, those who are on fixed incomes and those who are more wealthy. Did the Minister consider a policy whereby basic premiums, basic rate increases would be kept to a minimum and then the charge for luxury services or extension services could be charged at a higher rate?

Mr. Findlay: That is really what we have attempted to do in a fair and equitable way. It will give equal service to citizens across all of Manitoba and charge an equal rate to everyone, basically the telephone subscribers.

Mr. Carr: The Minister proposes rate increases to take effect in the spring of 1989, but the enhancement and improvement to services will not take place until 1990, and in fact they will not be through the system until 1996. So people are going to be paying the increases between now and 1996, but they will not be getting any of the benefits of the enhancement of service until eight years from now. Why is the Minister not implementing some of these changes immediately?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, improvement of services will start in 1989, and they will go step by step across the province, exchange by exchange, as it is physically possible. You can not instantly do the construction work that is needed to put this plan in place. It takes some time. It takes about six months to get all the wire and equipment ordered. It takes about another six months to do the construction that is needed in terms of laying the lines and putting in the digital switches that are an integral part of this program, and it takes some time to get it in place. Some communities will be done as early as 1989 or 1990; others will take a little bit more time. In the long term, all citizens, when this program is complete, will have high quality, equal service across Manitoba.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with one final supplementary to the Minister. It is our understanding that all of these proposed rate increases will go to the Public Utilities Board. Will the decision of the Public Utilities Board be final or is it subject to a Cabinet override?

Mr. Findlay: This is what represents the Public Utilities Board and anybody who wants to intervene and make representation for or against has the opportunity at that time, and the ruling of the Public Utilities Board will be binding.

* (1350)

Economic Development Government Policy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). This morning he made a speech to the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce talking about the stable economic climate in Manitoba. Does the First Minister have any strategy—he certainly did not articulate anything besides boosterism at the Chamber of Commerce today—in this province to deal with the realities of economic development?

The reality is that 3,000 more people are unemployed in August this year over August last year; the reality is that all economic predictions show the province going down before the effect of the drought takes place; and to deal with the reality that the Toronto Dominion Bank, in its next publication, is predicting a .5 percent growth rate, not the growth rate predicted in the last Budget in terms of the Province of Manitoba—it is citing a significant decline in the economic performance of this province over the last couple of months—does he have any specific strategy to deal with the economic problems that are developing in this province under this hands-off approach to Government?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, everyday the criticism changes. I heard the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) say that I was taking on too much on my own, that I was getting involved in too many things, taking two hands on an approach. Now he says that I am taking a hands-off approach to the economy and to the Province of Manitoba. I do not think he knows what he wants in this province.

Of course, we had the evidence of that when he had a chance to be in Government. We had waste and mismanagement and huge deficits. We had the development of some difficult circumstances for our economy that resulted in the projections for the investment this year being low and reduced, that resulted in the beginnings of out-migration in this province, starting last year and continuing on this year. Those were all of the signs of economic decay that we had to assume when we took office on May 9.

The reality of the matter is that we have set before the Chamber of Commerce and the people of Manitoba, in our Budget, firm plans to get our province back on track to see us attracting economic growth, opportunity for investment and job creation in the future of our province because of the investment that we are making in this province and because of the new and better policies that we are bringing to this province.

The people who came to our province were very pleased, unlike the researcher who was sitting there from the N.D. Party taking notes for his Leader. The people in the Chamber of Commerce were pleased with the initiative that we are taking.— (Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Doer: Tell that to the 3,000 people who are now unemployed and the more that are going to be unemployed under the lack of leadership in terms of economic development in this province.

Federal Projects Cost to Manitoba

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question again is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). Every time the Prime Minister promises us another billion dollar boondoggle in terms of his pre-election buildup, it costs Manitobans some \$40 million, the taxpayers of Manitoba some \$40 million. Indeed, the \$13 billion worth of promises that have

been made in the last four months will cost Manitoba taxpayers \$520 million to fulfill those promises.

Can the First Minister tell this province and the people of Manitoba, where has he got his \$520 million in terms of the promises the Prime Minister is making with Manitoba's money?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): If we were to get more than we have been getting in the past little while—and I have recounted for him the fact that under Western Diversification, we went from \$5.7 million to \$28 million in projects approved in Manitoba. Just yesterday, the two major laboratory structures that were announced by the federal Government in Winnipeg are \$145 million being addressed in Manitoba.

I point out to him that who would have thought two years ago that The Globe and Mail would be running a headline story on the front page of their paper today, complaining about the fact that Winnipeg got two major projects, \$145 million and 125 jobs that were taken away from eastern Canada?

When we do get additional investment, and we will from the federal Government initiatives, he is going to stand up and say, it is a deal, it is a trade off that we are doing for Rafferty and Alameda or something else, and he says that is going to be his line. The fact of the matter is that we are getting a good deal of support from the federal Government and we will be getting many projects from the federal Government.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

* (1355)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Winnipeg unemployment rate has gone from the third lowest in the country to the sixth lowest in the country under the last three months of his administration. So the facts do not back up his empty rhetoric.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon)—Mr. Epp last year promised that Manitoba's share from the Western Diversification would be \$300 million. That is outside of the \$520 million our taxpayers are going to have to pay. I would ask the First Minister—where is the \$120 million that would be, at minimum, Manitoba's share of both Mr. Mulroney's promises and our share of the Western Diversification?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, in the last month that the NDP were in Government here, our unemployment rates—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I want to put it on the record that the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer), before knowing what I was going to say, said, "Not true." He has absolutely no credibility and that is why he was driven out of office unceremoniously.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Filmon: In the last month that the NDP were in Government in Manitoba, for the first time in living

memory, more than a couple of decades, Manitoba's unemployment rate was above the national average. That is the kind of pretext we had for six years of NDP policy in Manitoba. Those are the kinds of policies that have laid such a difficult ground for us to deal with, but we are committed to do better. We are committed to utilize funds available to us under the Western Diversification Initiative, under federal-provincial programs that we are negotiating, and we are going to build a better Manitoba. I guarantee it.

Mr. Doer: The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) well knows that we had the lowest and second lowest unemployment rate over the six years and had growth above the national average for six out of seven years.

Crown Corporations Accountability

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). The speech again today talked about greater accountability of Crown corporations. Yesterday we saw the First Minister whimpering about the tough Session and the fact that they could not get to their offices to do their work.

Could the First Minister please tell this Session and Manitobans why, after 10 weeks, not one Crown corporation has appeared before the public committees in this Legislature, and considering the fact that Manitoba Hydro is going to lose their \$60 million—they are talking about 30 percent wage increases—why has not this First Minister got his Ministers in line and appeared before the public committee in terms of public accountability to this Legislature?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I did not talk about the tough Session of this Legislature. I talked about the boring, unimaginative questions and the grinding through of all the things that those people are doing because they have no initiative and no understanding and no focus and nothing secure in this Legislature.—(Interjections)—That is a matter of interest, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) is attempting to get the floor? He will have ample opportunity. We are still experiencing difficulties with our hearing equipment. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, obviously, much time is being spent on the Estimates, on urgent public debates that disappeared from sight two weeks after the urgent public debate. The fact of the matter is that we will get in due course to all of those things. He can show us what tremendously difficult questions he can put forward when the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources comes forward to hear his presentations and his questions of Manitoba Hydro, of Manitoba Telephone System, MPIC and all of those Crown corporations. They will be accountable, they will be open, and they will have answers this year, unlike previous years.

* (1400)

Telephone Rate Increases Impact Seniors

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): My question is for the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld). On July 21, this Government followed the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) in Manitoba and adopted our policy to establish a ministry responsible for Seniors.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mavis said yesterday it was our policy.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Herold Driedger: It was our policy. We applauded that move and we gave the Minister time to plan.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the Honourable Member for Niakwa—the Honourable Member.

Mr. Herold Driedger: As I said, we applauded that move and we gave the Minister time to plan. Yesterday, the Minister revealed to us that he does not understand the special health needs of the elderly, that he has not read the available reports on the elderly, that he does not know what to do about the White Paper on Elderly Abuse, and yet he told us yesterday that his Seniors' Directorate will act as an advocate for seniors. An advocacy directorate, Mr. Speaker!

Seniors' Directorate Advocacy Role

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Will the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) advise this House what strategies he will use to advocate for seniors in the face of rising telephone rates announced today? For example, will he be speaking out on behalf of seniors with his colleague, the Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephones (Mr. Findlay)?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, aging is not a disease. Aging is a process; it is a process of life. We have to deal with that. The central thrust and purpose and direction of the Seniors' Directorate is to address the specialties of seniors. If we do as the Opposition suggests—

An Honourable Member: What was that last sentence?

Mr. Neufeld: If we do as the Opposition suggests and pass the deal along to the seniors, we would be paternalistic with them and that would just add to the problem. We are going to consult with them first and then we will act.

Mr. Herold Driedger: I understood the Minister to say "consult" now. Yesterday he said "advocate on behalf for." This means that he has strategies that he wishes to advocate, that he wishes to address.

Pharmacare Pharmacard System

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): A supplementary to the same Minister. Will the Minister commit himself today to speak to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to advocate the introduction of the Pharmacard system, another proposal of the Liberals, so that hard-pressed seniors will not have to wait weeks to receive their Pharmacare refund?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Instant solutions breed instant problems—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Neufeld: No, I will not speak to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Property Taxes Deferral

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): A final supplementary to the same Minister. I understand then that this is not an advocacy department, that he will not be speaking on behalf of the seniors to the Minister as he suggested yesterday with the statement of the advocacy role.

Will the Minister commit himself then to perhaps advocating, on behalf of seniors, the deferral of property taxes which would be paid in full out of the sale of their homes when they finally got to that point, or on the proceeds of the sale of their estate? This would assist those people living independently on fixed incomes to be able to continue to live on their own.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): That is an interesting idea. I think we would have to speak to the municipalities who would have to give up their money for the time that the people stayed in their houses until they are able to pay for it. It costs money to run the services of any municipality. If we are going to continue to defer the payment of expenses, then who in the end will pay for them? I would like a suggestion from the Opposition of who is going to pay for it. If the city is not going to get their money, who is going to pay for it? Where will they get the money? Is this some more money that the province should put up? It is an amazement. I am totally confused. Where is the money coming from?

Elderly Care Monitoring

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): My question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld). The Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) expressed very serious concerns about the lack of modern training for care of the elderly in their homes. She has stated in committee that the Minister responsible for Seniors is also responsible to solve this issue. I ask the Minister

responsible for Seniors, what specific steps has he undertaken to resolve these serious problems affecting our most vulnerable elderly?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about the elderly. We are concerned about those less privileged than we are. We are discussing it, we will discuss it, and we will come up with a solution.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Elderly Abuse White Paper Participants

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): I understand that a White Paper on Elderly Abuse may be forthcoming from the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld). Will the Minister table the terms of reference for this White Paper, and could he tell us if a working group composed of individuals who would be knowledgeable in the field will be established to prepare the White Paper?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Of course, we will be looking for knowledgeable people in the area of seniors when we establish the White Paper.

Group Homes Elderly

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Could the Minister for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) tell us—has he initiated a meeting with the Manitoba Society of Seniors and the Age and Opportunity and himself to find out some of the concerns of the vulnerable elderly? And has he initiated a meeting with the Residential Care and Community Services to discuss problems of the vulnerable elderly in the group homes?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): We, of course, are not in active consultation, Mr. Speaker. We are doing something.

Ms. Gray: Have you set up a meeting?

Mr. Neufeld: We are consulting. We have Betty Havens, a provincial gerontologist, on staff. She is going to help us. We are not acting in isolation. We will consult within the Government; we will consult with people outside the Government.

Substance Abuse Programs for Athletes

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) asked a question in my absence of the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), who was acting in my stead, on what programs were available for athletes in Manitoba to educate them about the dangers of drug abuse.

On October 31, November 1 and November 2, there will be a national Sport Ministers' Conference in

Manitoba. That agenda, which was struck about a month ago, has a very high priority on it, the question of drug abuse and how to deal with it on a national scope. On a provincial scope, we have included in our budget \$70,000 for a multi-part program for next year. Part of that will be used for the question of drug abuse and education with respect to drug abuse.

In addition to that, there will be a seminar November 17 to deal with the question of drug abuse involving the many people involved in the sporting community. Over and above that, the federal Government has provided some \$90,000 to the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association who have undertaken, and have under way at the present time, a program dealing with drug abuse in the high schools.

* (1410)

Oriented Strand Board Project Financial Assistance

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). Realizing the tremendous potential of the hardwood resource in the Parklands area of the province that has been borne out by numerous studies, our Government had been aggressively pursuing the construction of an oriented strand board project in the Parklands area near Swan River that would create hundreds of jobs in the area.

Earlier this year, we granted study rights to the Penn-Co group, a Manitoba company, for the cutting area. This feasibility study, which has not yet been released, has identified firm U.S. markets for the product. I understand, as well, that it has also confirmed the requirement for substantial federal assistance during the construction phase in order to make this project a reality.

In view of this fact and the fact that the Mulroney Conservatives had earlier this year announced a discriminatory policy change that would have detrimentally affected Manitoba and hampered Manitoba's ability to qualify for forestry projects of this nature—

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Plohman: —can this Minister advise this House as to the extent of provincial financial assistance for the oriented strand board project in the Parklands; and, with the federal election call imminent, whether the federal Government has advised him that they will reverse their discriminatory policy and indeed fund this project from the Western Diversification Fund?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The question of a strand board plant for the Swan River area is very important and high on our agenda. I have personally asked the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) to visit Swan River to discuss the question of the strand board plant with the local people there.

I have discussed the question with the Honourable Bill McKnight, the federal Minister responsible for the

Western Diversification Office. I am advised by the Assistant Deputy Minister that expectation of about two weeks will indicate whether the Western Diversification Fund will provide funding for that and how much. I have also discussed the matter yesterday with Mr. Epp. I met with Mr. Ernie Penner of the Penn-Co group in the last two weeks to discuss the question and indicated to him that we will have all those parts put together within approximately three weeks' time in order to have a package to present for Cabinet.

Mr. Plohman: Obviously, the timing is coming together well for the federal election.

Federal Funding

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Dauphin, with a supplementary question.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Can this Minister confirm—(Interjection)—My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner)—a supplementary. Can the Minister confirm that he is in the process of allocating timber-cutting rights for hardwoods in the Parklands area to the Penn-Co group? Can he also outline to this House what steps he has taken to ensure maximum benefits and participation for local timber operators and residents in the area?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): The question that has been posed is a good one because it has to do with the numerous employment opportunities in the Swan River area. We are very cognizant of the opportunity that exists in establishing a plant such as has been described by the Honourable Member opposite. There are, however, many considerations that must be made before the kind of announcement that he is seeking can be made. I want to indicate to the Member opposite that we have indicated very clearly to the Penn-Co group that there will be every consideration given to areas and cutting rights, and that consideration to the private operators will be uppermost in our minds.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Dauphin, with a final supplementary question.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: First of all—order, please—let me apologize to all Honourable Members for that interference. I would ask all Honourable Members just to kindly remove your earplugs; and, Honourable Ministers, when you are answering your questions, speak up a little bit. There are some mikes that are working, but many of them are not. The Honourable Member for Dauphin will kindly put his question.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, thank you. A final supplementary to the Minister of Industry and Trade (Mr. Ernst). Since the Minister has admitted during his Estimates in this House that the trade deal that his Government supports will provide no protection for regional development programs in this country against American countervail, can he assure this House that

the \$40 million in federal assistance that will be no doubt announced during the election and the hundreds of jobs that would be created by this project will not in fact be jeopardized by this same trade deal that the Government supports? The U.S. will almost certainly slap countervail on the product. Is that the reason for the delay of this project, because of the free trade deal that his Government supports?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that question is no, and it is a silly statement to bring before this House. The fact of the matter is I have indicated already we are working very hard to try and bring that plan to fruition. The Free Trade Agreement does not deny provinces or the federal Government from dealing with regional development issues. That question shows the lack of understanding of the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and his caucus.

Substance Abuse Education Programs

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Yesterday, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) took as notice a question from the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) with regard to substance abuse education in the primary, elementary and secondary school systems in Manitoba. I do have the answer and I would like to share it with the House this afternoon.

First of all, there is in place at the present time, within the health curriculum in the province, a unit on "Tuning in to Health," which is offered to the Grade 2 to Grade 9 area. Approximately, at this time, we have about 50 school divisions who have implemented the program at one grade level or another or at several grade levels. The program is about four to six weeks in duration, and the instructional plan per week varies from 40 minutes to 75 minutes. The 40 minutes is in the Grades 2 and 3 areas, 60 minutes in the Grades 4 to 6 areas, and 75 minutes in the Grades 7 to 9 areas.

In terms of total time, I guess in the Grades 2 to 3 areas, there are about two to four hours; and total time in the Grades 4 to 6 areas, about six hours; and in the Grades 7 to 9 areas, about seven-and-a-half hours.

I would like to also indicate that at this time there are plans to revise the junior high program in the high schools regarding substance abuse. I might say that the program is a popular one and we are getting inquiries from across the country as to our curriculum.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

CSIS Agreement Confidentiality Information

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I am going to try and keep my question simple because I realize that stress is a dominant factor on the other side. The Opposition is just a little too good.

Earlier this month, both myself and my Leader pleaded with this Government to amend its hasty and

ill-advised agreement with CSIS, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. The Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) responded that there was nothing to worry about. Manitobans' privacy rights were protected because only locator information was what would be asked for and what would be given out.

Well, Mr. Reid Morden, director of CSIS, is now reported by the Toronto Sun as saying, indeed, it is the personal files that they are interested in, and that is what they see these agreements as giving them. Mr. Reid Morden is reported as saying, and I want to quote briefly—

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Edwards: My question, Mr. Speaker, is—I will save that quote; it is a jewel. I will pass it on to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) later.

My question is, will the Attorney-General now stop being so naive and tighten this agreement? It is clear from the director of the agency what they are after. We know we have the weakest agreement in this country. Will he wake up?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, I think I heard most of the Honourable Member's question. He began by referring to stress. It seems to me it must be quite a stressful matter for the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) that he really does not have any issues to raise with me so that - (Interjection)- There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Province of Manitoba and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. The perceived weaknesses in the agreement arrived at—I invite the Honourable Member to review the agreements reached with each of the other provinces. I would ask him to look at each of those and compare them with the Manitoba one, which compares rather well indeed.

If the Honourable Member had given me a little notice, I could have—in fact, I might very well sit down with him one of these days and go over some of those agreements and show him the shortcomings that might be perceived in some of the other provinces' agreements, but those do not show up in the Manitoba agreement. I have had the opportunity to compare them, and Manitoba's agreement provides more protection to the people of Manitoba than the agreements in some of the other provinces do for their people.

* (1420)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, we raised the Alberta agreement. We raised it about five weeks ago. The Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) knows full well that ours is far weaker than that one. Mr. Morden again, of CSIS, has talked about a reporter being a spy on other reporters and being paid off with information stories.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Edwards: This is another story in the less than illustrious history of CSIS.

My question is, Mr. Speaker, why has the Attorney-General not guaranteed in writing in this agreement

his role in the process of giving any records other than locator information to CSIS, including and in particular health records? The privacy of Manitobans is at risk in this agreement.

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member and his Leader raised this issue some weeks ago now. I invited them at that time to bring me examples of Manitobans whose privacy has been invaded or information about them, other than locator information, that has been given out by representatives of the Government of Manitoba. I remain convinced, Mr. Speaker, that the agreement that we have reached does far more to protect the privacy of Manitobans than to put the privacy of Manitobans in jeopardy.

The Honourable Member has not brought forward any examples of information having been given out that should not have been given out. If he has any case like that, it would be a matter of some concern to me and I would want to hear about it. The Honourable Member cannot just drive away, or beat away, at the dead horse which I suggest died some time ago.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. James, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Edwards: That is precisely the point. The people investigated will not know, the Attorney-General will not know. That is the whole point; he is not going to know. He has not ensured his role in the giving out of information.

My final question, Mr. Speaker, is: will the Attorney-General, at the very least, having told this House that The Freedom of Information Act offers some protection, which it does not according to Section 64(3), will he, at the very least, move to amend that statute to protect the health records of Manitobans?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, there is a reason that I do not know. Because there are not any; that is the reason. The Honourable Member certainly does not know or I am sure he would have brought it to my attention.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the safeguards are there to protect the privacy and the rights of Manitobans. That is precisely why this Government involved itself with that agreement, is precisely why other provincial Governments across the country signed similar Memorandums of Understanding, but I suggest that the Manitoba agreement is indeed stronger than that of other provinces, rather than weaker.

Home Care System Program Flexibility

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld). Given that approximately 80 percent of those receiving home care are over 65 years of age, and given that Drs. Robert and Rosalie Kane have clearly identified Manitoba's Home Care Program as one of the best programs on the North American continent, and had further indicated that one of the best features of that best program on the continent is its flexibility, can the

Minister indicate, in light of the above two facts, what action the Seniors' Directorate, or he, will be taking to stop the Government's tightening up of the home care system and their strict enforcement of home care guidelines which is going to undermine one of the best programs in the North American continent by reducing that flexibility?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the Honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) raised a question about home care. Yesterday, the Health critic for the NDP raised a question of home care. As of one o'clock this afternoon, those two honourable gentlemen have not provided the name of a single Manitoban to either the Premier's Office or my office about the alleged reduction in home care services.

It reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of the circumstance in 1981, when their colleague, prior to the election, the Member for Transcona, raised an issue of home orderly service disruption. And did he raise it at the time he heard it? No, he waited until the election was called. Again, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are playing politics. They do not care about helping people because they have not given us a single name.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May I remind the Honourable Minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible, should deal with the matter raised, and should not provoke debate.

The time for oral questions has expired.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill, on a point of order.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility as Members to bring to your attention and the attention of the House whenever we think the rules of this House have been violated. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), as is common practice, has clearly refused to answer the question, but that is not the violation, I would just bring to your attention, but it is a note that must be put on the record and taken because—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: And the point of order is?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): It is not a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will decide.

Mr. Filmon: That is an abuse of the rules.

Mr. Speaker: And the point of order is?

Mr. Cowan: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister would care to stand on his feet, and I know he will have an opportunity to participate in discussion—

Mr. Filmon: If you have a point of order, raise it.

Mr. Cowan: —rather than chirping from his seat, as he does so often to try to detract attention from the Members of his Government.

The point of order is with respect to the answer by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) who indicated that he has not received, or the Premier has not received, the names of individuals; that the Members of the Opposition, particularly the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), and myself, as Health critic, are playing politics with this issue. Mr. Speaker, that is a direct imputation of motives and thus a violation of the rules of this House.

The Minister of Health may indeed be sensitive about his failings, but he should not try to detract attention away from those by suggesting that others in this House are not most honourable and most sincere in their approach to try and solve problems which his Government has evaded for so many—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Churchill. The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, to the same point of order.

Mr. Speaker: To the point of order.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, the issue was raised by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) two days ago, alleging a great discomfort for senior citizens. If, in fact, that was the case, why have we not received those names so that I can pursue it as has been the case?

Mr. Speaker, if there was concern for people and not simply the concern for politics that always comes from the NDP, we would have received those names.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Concordia, are you rising to the same point of order?

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): On the same point of order. In terms of the accusation from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), he knows full well that yesterday I told him in the Chamber that we would be providing names to him and the Premier on these cases; and, secondly, that the greatest problem we had was the whole issue of people in terms of their dignity and that, but did not want to produce the names.

Mr. Speaker, those names of the three cases we mentioned are on their way to the Premier's Office, but I think we should deal with the policy issues instead of the politicking.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, to the same point of order as the Leader of the New Democrats (Mr. Doer). That exactly makes the point. The politics came first two days ago; the people come first now at last!

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, while this debate is interesting, there has not been a clear imputation of motives, and I think the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) should be asked to withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: Let me thank all Honourable Members. I will review Hansard and I will come back to the House. Thank you.

* (1430)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION 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 Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Community Services; and the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture.

* (1450)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I call this committee meeting to order. The Minister has a statement.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): The Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) requested three different items. We have them for her here, and to hand out to the other critic and the chairman as well.

A Regional Operations Organization Chart was one thing the Member wanted; the job description for Director of Quality Assurance; and Crisis Intervention Program description. Those three items are to be tabled today.

Also, a request was made regarding salary and a classification of Bob Burns—a classification of Planning Consultant, working title, Senior Program Consultant, salary of \$59,065—the only person in the department and program with a particular background, knowledge

and experience in VRDP. A cost-shared program is needed right now. He is a former director and has extensive credentials.

The other thing that was asked was for an information request on who is the Steering Committee for the Case Waiting and Caseload Review Workload Measurement. The personnel are as follows: E. Hasiuk, N. Koop, B. Law, P. Leveille, R. Loeppky, I. Nadeau, and D. Weatherow.

Also, a question was asked about the bridging position in Winnipeg South Region. The title of this position is Resource Financial Worker, reporting to the Regional Administrative Officer. The main duties and responsibilities identified in the position description are:

- interviewing and assessment of new respite workers to determine interests and abilities;
- matching service providers to client requirements;
- scheduling service providers into client homes;
- conducting on-site visits and providing supervision to service providers;
- orienting new service providers to the program;
- maintaining payroll and service delivery records and information;
- preparing statistics and reports for senior management.

The incumbent is working toward assuming all of these duties while she receives the necessary training support and education. At the moment, the function concentrates on the provision and coordination of financial and payroll information. As well, the incumbent is participating in the development of procedures related to the overall function of the position.

Also, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), I believe it was, asked for vacancies in WASO. It has been approved for a maximum of 68 clients. When vacancies arise, they are filled with clients whose needs can be met by the WASO program within our authorized rates and within regional budgets. As of September 28, 1988, WASO's occupancy is 71 clients. Of this number, 65 are currently funded by Community Services, and funding is being processed for two more, for a total of 67. Two clients have left WASO at the agency's request. These spots have not been filled. WASO would like the total occupancy to be 90 to 100 clients.

The question was asked on grants to day program agencies for Capital costs. The Manitoba Community Places Program, with Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, continues to accept applications from day program agencies for Capital costs—no change in policy or eligibility. Further details should be requested from Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation. The Red River-St. Malo application is in process and will be reviewed by Culture, Heritage and Recreation. I believe that was the question asked by the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis).

A question was asked regarding the task force on day programs. ACL Manitoba did request a task force on day programs. The department prefers to listen to the range of constituents involved and interested in

day program services. There is also a process in place to define and clarify the role of Vocational Rehabilitation Services offered to the department. This process includes Program Branch regional staff and representatives of Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, Canadian Paraplegic Association and Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The steering committee members for this process include: J. Cels, Assistant Deputy Minister; J. Ross, Executive Director, Operations; E. Hasiuk, Acting Director of Vocational Rehabilitation; B. Burns, Chief Program Consultant; S. Hiltz, Regional Director, Central Region; and M. Klachefsky, Program Staff.

Also, the question was asked about waiting lists for day programs. My staff completed a survey of all regions at September 27, 1988, and obtained day program waiting lists for each region. The results were: Winnipeg West Central, 6; Winnipeg South, 7; Winnipeg North, 22; for a Winnipeg total of 35. Rural: Westman, 2; Eastman, 6; Interlake, 5; Central, 0; Norman, 1; Parklands, 0; Thompson, 8; giving a rural total of 22, for a grand total of 57.

I want to ask the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray)—she had asked about the Crisis Intervention Program by region. Does she still want that information? I could read it into the record.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Do you have copies of it?

Mrs. Oleson: No, I could read it into the record if she wants the information.

Ms. Gray: Okay.

Mrs. Oleson: In 1987-88, Crisis Intervention Program, by region: Winnipeg North allocated \$44,100 and expended \$78,858; Winnipeg South allocated \$43,600 and expended \$94,254; Winnipeg West Central allocated \$29,800 and expended \$119,322; Westman allocated \$10,000 and expended \$23,216; Central allocated \$10,500 and expended \$3,488; Eastman allocated \$7,200 and expended \$18,367; Interlake allocated \$10,200 and expended \$16,734; Parklands allocated \$5,200 and expended \$7,944; Norman allocated \$4,300 and expended \$3,850; Thompson allocated \$6,500 and expended \$9,475.00.

The 1987-88 average cost per client was \$3,024.20 and the 1987-88 range of crisis funding, the lowest cost was \$12 and the highest cost was \$19,563.19.

* (1500)

In 1988-89, Crisis Intervention allocations are: Winnipeg North \$46,000; Winnipeg South \$45,500; Winnipeg West Central \$31,100; Westman \$10,100; Central \$10,500; Eastman \$7,200; Interlake \$10,200; Parklands \$5,200; Norman \$4,300; Thompson \$6,500, for a total of \$176,600.00.

The breakdown of Crisis Intervention funds spent on alternative facilities: The breakdown of specific items covered by Crisis Intervention would be difficult and time-consuming to obtain and would be at the expense

of service. Each intervention is covered by a Letter of Agreement specifying the service to be provided and the funds to be paid.

All of these agreements would have to be collected and tallied manually in order to provide the requested information. Most crisis funding is applied to an additional staff support and supervision. Smaller portions are used for temporary accommodation and items such as transportation, program supplies, etc.

Ms. Gray: A few questions arising from the information that the Minister has tabled today. Does she happen to know with the range that she gave for Crisis Intervention, does she happen to know that this largest sum, this \$19,000 plus—does she know for what period of time those dollars were spent?

Mrs. Oleson: No, but we could find out that information.

Ms. Gray: Yes, I think that would be interesting to know that, and I certainly appreciate all the information gathered. One of the reasons for asking those questions was that there were concerns expressed about the fact that the Crisis Intervention dollars were somewhat out of control. Obviously, by the amount of dollars that were spent, in fact the budget amounts certainly were—we went over those budget amounts by a fair amount of dollars. I noticed in the allocation for this year that the amounts allocated are similar to what were budgeted last year.

Could the Minister tell us, have there been any serious concerns expressed from the regions that because of the—in some cases—doubling of dollars spent last year, that they will have difficulties keeping within those dollar budgeted amounts?

Mrs. Oleson: The staff advised me that one that you had asked about, the \$19,000, was in all likelihood at least a year, and that because of that concern, because the definition of “crisis” would not fit in with a year, but new guidelines have been prepared.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if there have been any concerns expressed by any of the regions in the province about their allocations for Crisis Intervention dollars, given that there is no increase over last year, or very little?

Mrs. Oleson: They have not received their allocations. We have to finish the Estimates before they can receive them.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have information—when regions prepare budgets, do they basically ask for increases in their budgets for Crisis Intervention or do they ask for similar amounts to '87-88.

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there was concern expressed but we have revised the guidelines. We think they should be able to live within that amount this year.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has given us some information on the waiting lists in various regions and some information as well on WASO. She has indicated that

two clients recently left WASO and those have not been filled. Is there an intention to fill those two vacancies?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Is there money in the budgets to fill those two vacancies?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there is.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister clarify again for me when there are vacancies such as she has indicated at WASO—we now have two vacancies because two clients have left—are there dollars in budgets for people to enter into these vacant spaces or must these two spaces vacated by clients, must these clients not have taken their dollars with them or transferred to another facility in order for new spaces to be utilized?

Mrs. Oleson: There are approved dollars for the spaces. The Member should be aware that I said at the first of that when I gave her the information, that was of that particular day, there were those two spaces. I am not aware when they were vacated. They may have already been filled.

Ms. Gray: Therefore if there is, let us say, a client from West Central in Winnipeg and from South Region who want to enter into WASO and WASO admission and discharges have accepted them, even though I know they prefer to take clients from their own district, that there would be dollars that could be attached to those clients so that WASO would be paid a per diem?

Mrs. Oleson: At the present time there are dollars, but they would have to be assessed.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us, have regions overspent their budgets in the day care line, the amounts budgeted for this year or are they under?

Mrs. Oleson: They are under budget at the moment.

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicated the other day that there were 15 new spaces being created for day programs. Does this mean that there will be above and beyond the individuals who are all currently in day programs, that in addition to that, there will be 15 more people who will be able to enter into a day program in the province?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, yes, that is the case.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister indicate to us why a decision was made to only allocate dollars for 15 more people, given that there seems to be crisis situations in day programs in the province, and then certainly even looking at the waiting lists as of September 27 or 28 we have over 90. What was the rationale behind the decision for 15 more spaces?

Mrs. Oleson: The number of 15 was allocated because there were 15 coming out of the child education system. We are aware, of course, of their needs, but we cannot meet every need.

Ms. Gray: If the Minister could clarify for me, she said there are 15 people coming out of the child education system. I assume she means the educational system for those individuals reaching 21?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that is the case.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister explain—is she saying that these 15 new spaces will be specifically for people coming out of the educational system?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that is correct.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister tell us if any of these people on the waiting lists are people who are currently in the educational system?

Mrs. Oleson: Some of them might be. We do not know that at the moment.

* (1510)

Ms. Gray: One would assume that out of the 92 places, probably very few would be given that the young adults would be starting the school system in September.

My question is why was the decision made to only offer day programs to the 15 people coming out of the school system, albeit it is a priority? What about the 90 plus individuals who are currently in the community who have no day program at all? Was there any consideration given to their needs?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the main reason would be budgetary, and we are very aware that there are other needs, but as I have said before, we cannot meet all the needs. We have to use money for other programs. Fifteen was what we could budget for this year.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if her department receives any ongoing special proposals/requests for establishing day programs, perhaps, for three or four individuals? Is her department still receiving those kinds of proposals from community groups?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there are some being received. I should remind the Member that earlier when I gave her information on the waiting list for day programs, the number was 57, not 90 as she has indicated.

Ms. Gray: Did the Minister answer if in fact her department is receiving proposals?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Are these proposals being approved?

Mrs. Oleson: They are being considered, of course, with budgetary guidelines, but they are being considered.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if any of these proposals, or could she indicate what the per diem rate is that these proposals are requesting per client?

Mrs. Oleson: It varies with needs of individual clients.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister give us a range of what these per diem rates might be?

Mrs. Oleson: Staff would have to go back and look at the proposals before we could get that information for the Member.

Ms. Gray: My understanding is that there have been some proposals submitted to this Minister's department for day programs for three or four individuals from various groups, and that these proposals suggest a per diem rate of anywhere between \$35 to \$50 a day. Could the Minister tell us if in fact that is correct?

Mrs. Oleson: If the Member wants to go onto another question, we can find that information in a few minutes.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister be able to tell us, these people who are on waiting lists for day programs, with the exception of individuals who may still be in the school system, what would these people now be doing during the day? Do they have any type of program at all, or would they be at home?

Mrs. Oleson: We would have to look at each case. It would vary. Some people may be at home, some residents, but we would have to look up each case and see what these individuals were doing.

Ms. Gray: Surely, the senior staff in this department must have some ideas. I do not want to know exactly what all 57 people are doing, but some indication about where these people are or how they are using their days because obviously the people who are on waiting lists and then other proposals that get submitted are usually on a basis that these people are in fact at home with no program at all and are deteriorating. So, therefore, a proposal gets sent in to see if some sort of day program can be approved.

Mrs. Oleson: As I indicated before, some of these people will be in residences and, as I have indicated before, it is unfortunate but we cannot meet every need.

The Member asked just a moment ago about the requested rates for individuals in the proposed programs that were coming forward. I could share with her the information that the needs range from \$10 to \$70.00.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has said that some individuals are in residences. Could she tell us if these people in residences have day programs established for them within the residence?

Mrs. Oleson: There may be programs for some of the people within the residences. We would have to look at each individual person and each residence just to ascertain for the Member what exactly was happening with each person. Some of them may be taking part in some program that is done within the residence, some may not.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us what her department's policy is in regard to having day programs within the confines of a particular residence?

Mrs. Oleson: It is not normally done to have a program within the residence, but it is in place in some residences. It varies from residence to residence.

Ms. Gray: Does this Minister and her department support having day programs within community residences?

Mrs. Oleson: It is usually discouraged because it is felt that it is better for clients to have a change of scenery, if you want to put it that way, and to go out of the residence for a program, but there are residences in which there is a program. It would vary with the needs of the client as well.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate—these 15 spaces, she said there would be an allocation within a couple of weeks—have any new spaces at all been allocated to Sturgeon Creek Enterprises?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, yes, some are going to be allocated to Sturgeon Creek but the number has not been settled on yet.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us how it is being decided that Sturgeon Creek will have some spaces? I understand that in a number of workshops that I spoke to yesterday, they have no idea where these spaces will be going and, in fact, if there are even 15 spaces to be allocated.

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the agencies will not know yet because it is still being decided and it will be decided on waiting lists and needs.

Ms. Gray: Obviously there must be some identified need in relation to already making a decision about Sturgeon Creek. Could she explain to us what that rationale is?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, is the Member asking specifically for Sturgeon Creek or just an indication of the needs in general?

Ms. Gray: No, specifically why Sturgeon Creek has already been allocated? I am assuming there is a rationale based on need behind that, if she could explain that for us?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, there was some commitment made earlier to Sturgeon Creek, so that will be taken into consideration. There is also vocational training to be considered and the needs of specific clients. But as I said before, this is still being decided, the exact number and the allocation of the 15 spaces.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister explain what she means by the vocational training needs to be considered?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, that involves the job preparation of clients, whether that is the need of people who would go to Sturgeon Creek.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if other workshops would have a similar job preparation program?

Mrs. Oleson: WASO does and some others do—Versatech Skills Unlimited.

* (1520)

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I still do not understand. I had asked why Sturgeon Creek to this point has been definitely considered for spaces, although the number is not sure, and the Minister has talked about needs of the client and vocational training to be considered. Yet, she said there is a similar type of vocational training available at a number of other workshops listed in the city. I do not quite understand how that ties into Sturgeon Creek specifically. If she can maybe clarify that, and if she could also clarify when she refers to the needs of the client.

When you look at the waiting list for day program spaces for Winnipeg, the greatest number of people on a waiting list happen to be in North Region. North Region clients, you would think, would want to travel to workshops in a specific geographical area and, in fact, the lowest waiting list is in West Central and South. That is why I am wondering why would Sturgeon Creek, albeit it may be a good program which is in St. James, have already been considered for spaces when by far the majority of clients on a waiting list in Winnipeg are in the north part of Winnipeg.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, the Member is asking a question that is being—all these things are being looked at by the department in the allocation of spaces. I indicated that some were being allocated to Sturgeon Creek, the other areas are being considered. You cannot look at each region and how many they need. You have to look at the needs of the people as well. So all these things are taken into consideration and it has not been determined how many spaces Sturgeon Creek will get. All the other regions are being looked at as well.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, first of all, are the staff within the regions, or the supervisors within the regions, throughout the province, being consulted as to where they would like to see those spaces allocated given, of course, that those staff are in the best position to very clearly identify what the particular needs are of the particular clients?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the regions are consulted. The needs of the clients are taken into consideration when all these decisions are made.

Ms. Gray: Could I ask the Minister, could I get a commitment from her that with these very limited number of spaces that are being allocated, and she has said that they will—and correct me if I am wrong—all go to individuals who are coming out of the school system?

Mrs. Oleson: There are 15 additional spaces in recognition of children coming out of the school system. They may not all go to those spaces, those individuals. It depends on the needs of those particular individuals.

Ms. Gray: We appreciate the recognition of children coming out of the school system. What has the Minister

done in her department to recognize the needs of individuals who are living at home, who have been without day programs for a number of years?

Mrs. Oleson: They are being fitted into the system wherever possible in the priority of space allocations.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if these individuals and the ones who are currently on waiting lists, never mind individuals who obviously would probably surface in the system in any given year, could she tell us if, for those who will not be able to have the opportunity to participate in day programs with these extra new spaces, is her department looking at any alternate plans to meet the needs of these individuals through the day?

Mrs. Oleson: Each individual case is looked at by the worker who is assigned to them, and future planning will hinge around the needs of these people. Their needs will be met as soon as we possibly can but, as I have indicated several times, we cannot meet every need but we will try to accommodate as many people as we possibly can.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has said there will be an attempt to meet the needs of these people and there will be planning that will take place of each individual. Could the Minister tell us what suggestions are being given to staff, who would be planning with individuals and possibly parents or advocates, as to how they may be meeting the needs of these individuals or what other options would be available to them for planning?

Mrs. Oleson: In some cases, a part-time program might be available for these people and, in many cases, there will be someone who is moving out of a particular workshop, a training program, and into another area, maybe a work position, and that would accommodate another client to fill that space.

Ms. Gray: What is the part-time program?

Mrs. Oleson: We are looking at individualized programs where people can be fitted in for part of the time to a program. They could be space sharing, for instance. But we are looking at proposals to see how we could better accommodate these people.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has said that the people move in and out of workshops. Does she have information as to what the turnover rate might be for the workshops?

Mrs. Oleson: The information is obtainable. We could get it for the Member.

Ms. Gray: I will only ask for the information if it is easily obtainable. I will let you decide what is easily obtainable.

Mrs. Oleson: Okay, we will take that under advisement.

Ms. Gray: The other day, there was some discussion about support employment programs, or I believe there was a discussion of this. I have an understanding from

some of the workshops that there has been a program whereby, if the workshop can place someone in a job outside of the workshop setting, they are allowed \$1,000 for having that individual placed in a job and that it is a billing system that is used, whereby they bill the regions. Could the Minister indicate to us—there seems to be some confusion in the community about whether this program still exists—is this program still in effect?

Mrs. Oleson: The program that the Member refers to is a federal Government program called "Follow-Up Goods and Services," and I understand it is still in effect.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us—are the workshops clear that this program is still in effect and that they can continue to bill monies where appropriate?

Mrs. Oleson: I understand it is. If someone places someone in a job, they can apply to the VRDP Program for federal funding, to Follow-Up Goods and Services for funding.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister explain what the difference is between this program and TOJ, Training on the Job?

Mrs. Oleson: The Training on the Job is a placement in a job. The other program that we are talking about, the Follow Up, it monitors them while they are in the training and while they are on the job. It is part of the training program, but it is on the job.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, the Training on the Job, are those dollars at all available to workshops who may have training on the job opportunities for some of their clients?

Mrs. Oleson: No.

* (1530)

Mr. Chairman: We are on item 3., Community Social Services (a) Administration, No. (1) Salaries, \$368,100.00. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Just a couple questions to follow up on the response regarding the Follow-Up Goods and Services Program, I think on Tuesday the Minister made no indication that this was a totally funded federal program. Could I get some clarification on that? I asked a number of questions pertaining to this program. I certainly understand it to be something that does fall in this area, federal-provincial joint funding. Is the Minister now saying that no provincial funds were put in place to do this pilot project, if you will, in the neighbourhood of \$50,000.00?

Mrs. Oleson: It is a cost-shared program. I am sorry if I had given the wrong impression.

Mr. Chairman: The Member for St. Johns, with her second question.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Yes, I have only got four.

Could the Minister confirm whether or not, in January of this year, groups interested, organizations or individuals could make application for Follow-Up Goods and Services funding to the tune of, I believe, \$1,000 per person?

Mrs. Oleson: It is based on individual applications, and we have put in about \$1.5 million this year. This year's funding is about \$1.5 million, but it is cost shareable and it is on an individual basis.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Sorry, Mr. Chairperson, but the answers always beg a few more questions. It just happens that way.

Is the Minister saying that there is \$1.5 million in the Follow-Up Goods and Services pilot project?

Mrs. Oleson: It is part of the total budget, it is part of the vocational training budget.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Okay, I would like to ask specifically about this fairly small project instituted, implemented presumably on somewhat of a pilot basis in January of 1988 for assisting those members of the mentally handicapped community who have been able to find employment in mainstream workplace situations and are eligible for some sort of Follow-Up Goods and Services funding, whether or not that program—first, could she confirm whether or not it was brought into existence in January of '88 with a total of about \$50,000, and whether or not that fund is still in place and individuals can still make application for this particular program?

Mrs. Oleson: It is part of the total allocation of the VRDP budget and it provides money for federal cost sharing and \$50,000, as I understand it, is available to be applied for through that program, specifically for Follow-Up Goods and Services. This follows people in the job and monitors them to be sure that they are—and it is based on individual applications.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am sorry, I am still not getting a clear answer. Is that program still in existence? Has there been any indication to the interested participants in terms of this program not to make application to this program?

Mrs. Oleson: I am sorry, I missed that part of my answer. Yes, it is still available.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is the Minister then saying that there was no communication from her department for interested individuals and organizations somewhere in the summer of this year not to make application to this program because those funds were not in place and in fact had been cut?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the department was looking at it and noted that the allocations were such that most of the money was going to be spent. So if that was the case, they were looking at it to be sure that we did

not go overbudget because it is a continuing thing and you have to monitor it to be sure that you are not going over the budgeted amount. So that would be the directive to make sure that we did not take any extra clients and go beyond what we were able to spend on it. It is still ongoing.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Well, the Minister says the program is still ongoing. Yet a communication was delivered to indicate that applications would not be accepted. Now how can a program be ongoing if applications are not going to be accepted and if a message has gone out through her department delivering a message that applications should not be made to this program? It seems to me that either we are talking about a fund in place and a program in place or we are not. Is the program there or not? If groups are being told not to make application, has there been a cut of this particular program?

Mrs. Oleson: There has been no cut to the program. It is a limited part of an individual vocational training program. If the directive went out that no more people were to be taken into it, that does not mean that it has been cut. The people who are in the program are still being funded but there is a cap on the funds that can be used. We cannot just spend indiscriminately and take people into a program if we have no money to fund it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is the Minister saying that all funds available for this program had been spent and, if so, could she table or provide some information with respect to how the money was spent, where it went, why it is that a program that only started in January of 1988 would, after a few months, be no longer in existence?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, the Member is misconstruing it. The program is in existence. People are still under the program. But the funds have been committed to the maximum or almost, and the staff have to make sure that we do not go overbudget. There are still people in the program but the funding is almost committed. In order to stay within budget, you have to make sure that you do not take people in when there will be no funds to fund them.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson, but it does beg the question, and I have posed it several different ways, how is it possible for a program to be in existence that is based around a fund to provide follow up for individuals who have entered mainstream workplace situations? How can she, on the one hand, say the program is in place and, on the other hand, say it is true that groups have been told not to make application?

* (1540)

Mrs. Oleson: Perhaps this is indicative of the problems the NDP Government have had over the years. They do not understand that you have to live within budget. You do not just keep on spending and taking people in if you do not have money to spend on a program,

and for the Member to sit there and say that the program is not ongoing when it is. People are being served by the program but you can not go beyond the budget. Is the Member telling us that we should just spend, spend, spend and be totally irresponsible as to budgets or what is she trying to imply here?

There are people being served under this program. There was a very large take-up that had not been there before. Obviously, there was a need for the program. We will be looking at it for next year when we are doing budgets to see how much more money we can put in or how we can accommodate these people. To say the program is not ongoing, when it is, is totally wrong.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I would simply like a straightforward answer. Is this program in existence? How can it be in existence if it has no funds? I think all I want is a straightforward answer. If she is saying the funds dried up which is in essence the program, then the program has dried up and the program is no longer in existence. Now the Minister cannot have it both ways. It is one or the other. Either it is in existence or it is not. Either it has been maintained with proper funding or it has been cut. Now what situation are we looking at?

Mrs. Oleson: I am trying to explain this to the Member but I am having a little difficulty figuring out her thought processes. People have applied to this program, they have been accepted, they are in the program, they continue to be in the program. Is she saying that we should take a whole bunch more people into the program and then suddenly realize a month from now that we have not a dollar left to spend on it and we should cut everybody off and then nobody has the program? Is that how we operate? That is not how I operate.

The people have been accepted. The program is ongoing but we do not want to overexpend and be in a bad situation at the end of the year. I am beginning to more clearly understand why there are such problems in this department with regard to funding, deficits and overexpenditures and so forth and so on that are crossing my desk every day. I am getting to better understand them, the more I hear the Member ask questions.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? On to item 3.—the Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I would like to make one more attempt at seeking a clarification around this issue because I think that what the Minister has presented to us so far has been a lot of baffle-gab to, in effect, disguise the fact that there has been a real cutback taking place here. As I said, it is not possible to have it both ways.

If you have a program that has been put in place to help service the community, to help individuals who would like employment, would like to be employed in the mainstream work environment and that requires some assistance in terms of follow-up work through agencies and through employers, then there has to be

money in place. So either could the Minister confirm that there are no new persons being accepted in this program and, if so, what is being provided by her department to meet the needs of those individuals seeking mainstream employment and requiring assistance to meet that objective?

Mrs. Oleson: With regard to this program, people have applied as I indicated before. They are taking part in the program. At the moment there cannot be any more taken on because all the money is committed. Should there be a case where we could see that someone maybe would drop out or that there would be available funds, that we would certainly fill those spaces. But because of budget allocations, we cannot take any more people on at the time because there are no further funds. The funds have been committed, but the people that have been accepted are still in the program. It is still ongoing.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I guess what I need from the Minister is a clarification on how this program operates. My understanding is that there was roughly \$1,000 available per individual and that individuals were assisted by way of an agency making application on behalf of that individual and that the money would then be used over a period of time to assist that person in the workplace. If that is the case, could the Minister indicate what other components there are to the program which are ongoing, how it is that the money—if we are not funding spaces, but funding real people—could be moved around and new people accepted into the program and so on and so forth?

It maybe would help if we back up and get some concrete details about how the program actually works.

Mrs. Oleson: The program that we have been discussing is one part of a 1.5 million program for vocational training. We have discussed and gone over how that part works, but as I indicated to the Member, it is a part of the overall program of vocational training.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Minister refuses to answer my questions. If that is the case, is she saying that this one component of this \$1.5 million, the one component being follow-up goods and services funding, has been cut?

Mrs. Oleson: The program has not been cut, it has been fully utilized. Maybe I can think of a few more synonyms along the way that would maybe get the message across.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Then perhaps I could go back to seeking the same information I tried a few minutes ago and that is to ask exactly how much was set aside for this program. How many applications were made? How many of those applications were accepted and whether or not there are any dollars left in this program?

Mrs. Oleson: We could undertake to get that information for the Member and an evaluation of the program.

The Member should realize that there are dollars there but they have all been committed.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? We will go on to item 3.(a)(2).

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Let me just indicate that I would be quite prepared to pass this. If the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) agrees, pass this line. However—

Mr. Chairman: Are we agreed then?

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I would like to serve notice that pending the information of the Minister, we will be back on this particular issue once she has provided us with the details of the program.

Mr. Chairman: Is it agreed? On item 3.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$128,700—shall the item pass?

* (1550)

Ms. Gray: No. Under the Development and Training section in Operating Expenditures, could the Minister tell us what the dollars are used for in Development and Training and then, secondly, why the dollars have been cut by some \$90,000.00?

Mrs. Oleson: That line is Staff Development and Training. It was cut because there were no plans in place to make use of it.

Ms. Gray: What is done under staff development training? Which staff are training, just Civil Service staff or do we look at training group home staff or contract staff?

Mrs. Oleson: There is Civil Service staff and agency staff. That is why, as we were discussing earlier I believe, in one line or another—I cannot remember which one—that was why I have been asking staff to prepare a plan for development of training because there was nothing really in place when we came into Government. There was no time to review and develop a program to make use of the dollars, so we cut them from this year's budget. That is something we are reviewing and looking at for next year.

Ms. Gray: Was this the section or the line where the advance studies for mental retardation courses were provided for staff?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, I understand that is correct.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us who actually made the decision and cut the dollars out of this year's budget?

Mrs. Oleson: It was sort of a cooperative decision between the Minister and Treasury Board and Cabinet.

Ms. Gray: I am somewhat in a quandary here because when this Government came into power there certainly was information available, that staff training, particularly for agency staff was a very, very great need. I am surprised that the Minister would choose to cut these dollars out of her budget when you have reviews going on right now. It is obvious, from a number of the

investigations internally and from Judge Newcombe's recommendations, and from advocacy groups who have spoken with the Government, that staff training is a great need. Certainly, I would think that it would not require that much planning, that some sort of training and courses could be developed before the end of this fiscal year, and that those dollars could certainly be utilized. Would the Minister comment on that?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that cut has been partly offset by assigning staff to training. We did not have Judge Newcombe's decision at the time that we had to make the decision. The Member indicates and she is correct, there are needs, but a Government has to assess those needs. There was nothing in place at the time. In fact, the previous Government had also—that was the same cut that was in the former Budget that was defeated.

As I have indicated before, staff are reviewing the training needs, will be looking at the Winserv report from Mr. Wiens, which will further identify needs. We will be designing some training, hopefully designing some training programs for next year. In the face of having to prepare a budget and not having a program in place at the moment to go with, we decided this would be the best route.

Ms. Gray: How many dollars were spent last year in staff training and development?

Mrs. Oleson: \$60,000.00.

Ms. Gray: I have concerns that, with the money taken out of this budget, I would imagine that when Mr. Wiens finishes his report, with all the information available, it is obvious that staff training, certainly of agency staff, has been identified as a major, major need in the area of Community Services. I would think that programs would be able to be established, certainly before the end of the fiscal year. Even when we move into April 1, it is oftentimes those dollars are not available to us, depending on the situation of when Estimates are, when Governments are sitting, etc. I would see this as being a very unnecessary delay by not keeping those dollars within the budget for this year.

Mrs. Oleson: I recognize that there are training needs and that is one thing that has been brought to my attention over the weeks, before this decision was made and since. There have been staff assigned for training, so there is an offset, other places in the budget. The staff show up elsewhere in the lines. But there is a three-phase plan of development for training. The first step is basic health care and safety training, and Phases II and III are continuing of Phase I plus initiation of program training, board training and training for Government field staff, so that the whole training area is not being ignored. I do recognize that there is a need for training, but this was an interim measure while we develop some definite training programs.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister tell us who the staff are that have been assigned to training?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, the names are Hardy, Leader and Greene, and also there are some MDC staff

and some staff who show up elsewhere, as I indicated before, and staff through the Civil Service Commission.

Ms. Gray: Are these individuals the same individuals who will also be involved in the training for the three phases?

Mrs. Oleson: We expect that will likely be the case.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, is there one person in particular who has the responsibility for the staff training and development?

Mrs. Oleson: The Assistant Deputy Minister.

Ms. Gray: Do these individuals report directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they do.

Mrs. Gerrie Hammond (Kirkfield Park): Mr. Chairman, in the Wiens investigation of Winnserv, is apartment living included in the investigation?

Mrs. Oleson: It is part of Winnserv's operation so it would be included in the review.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Just to seek a clarification on the Wiens Review. Based on the different answers, I am still not sure whether it is just reviewing Winnserv, or if it is reviewing the broader field, broader issues?

Mrs. Oleson: The main focus is on Winnserv, but in carrying out the review the reviewer will be talking to other agencies as well, but the main focus is on Winnserv. But it will have implications on other agencies as well.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

* (1600)

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated that these people responsible for training report directly to the ADM, yet on the information I received, at least one J. Greene, if this is the same Greene, reports to the director of Residential Care, no?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, just to clarify, that those people report to the Assistant Deputy Minister for this function and for this training plan.

Ms. Gray: This individual named, is this Dr. Hardy, and is that person also the same senior provincial behavioural specialist?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: That behaviour specialist also reports to the executive director of Regional Operations?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that is the case.

Ms. Gray: It is bizarre, but—

Mrs. Oleson: Making good use of staff.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) just brought a few issues to mind. It is a clarification of the Wiens Review because either it is an independent review of Winnserv that, by the nature of the review, happens to look at other issues or touches on broader issues, or it is a broader look at the issues outstanding in this whole field.

Certainly, in some of the articles in the press, presumably based on what the Minister has said, there has been an indication that this review will look at the general questions of training for group home workers, at general situation with respect to all homes in the situation and the community generally. I think we need to know exactly what it is and what the terms of reference of the study are. If it is much broader than Winnserv, then what process is in place for involving the broader community?

Mrs. Oleson: We can provide the Member with a copy of the terms of reference if she does not have them. They were attached to the press release. When I say that they will have some impact or involvement with other agencies, the problems are the same in most of the agencies. The subject matter is the same, and as I indicated before, the main focus is on Winnserv. No doubt, when the report is in and the recommendations are made, it will have implications for other group homes, other agencies as well.

That is what I mean by what I said because there are training needs, safety needs and the whole gamut of the needs of clients in all the residences. What you study in one has implications for the other. Mr. Wiens will be interviewing some other agencies in his study of Winnserv for comparative purposes perhaps, or to just generally study training needs. We will provide the Member with a copy of the terms of reference if she does not have a copy.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Just a final question on that then. Since the Minister says by implication it will touch on broader issues, does she have in mind a process by which concerned groups and communities can be involved in the review process? Is that part of the terms of reference or is that something separate that she has communicated?

Mrs. Oleson: As part of his study, the lawyer, Mr. Wiens, wants to take a consultative approach and would be talking to other agencies. Part of the reason for this study is to ascertain the problems that are within group homes and, of course, it was particularly triggered by the problems at Winnserv. We will be wanting to get the recommendations, and they will impact on other agencies as well. But Mr. Wiens is undertaking a very consultative approach to this where he studies the Winnserv Corporation itself and also consults with others to ascertain the training needs. Mr. Wiens has also indicated publicly that he would entertain submissions from other agencies if they wish to have input.

Mr. Chairman: Just to clarify, before we can pass 3.(a)(2) we have to pass 3.(a)(1). 3.(a)(1)—pass; 3.(a)(2)—pass.

3.(b) Operations: Provides for departmental field resources delivering social services, vocational rehabilitation, child and family services and mental retardation services, including the use of public funds by external social service agencies. Item (1) Salaries, \$10,641,000.00. Shall the item pass? The Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I understand that there is a review currently going on about the structure of the three regions in Winnipeg, and there seems to be some thought that this is initiated by the Department of Health. Is the Department of Community Services involved with this review?

Mrs. Oleson: The two departments are equal partners in this study and we are awaiting the recommendations of the group that is studying.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us who was asked to study or look at this whole issue? Is it staff people or was an outside agency or group tendered?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, it is Deputies and Assistant Deputies. It is internal staff, not an outside agency.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have the information as to who exactly is on that committee that is reviewing or heading up the review?

Mrs. Oleson: We can compile a list right away but it is the two Deputy Ministers, the two Assistant Deputy Ministers and directors of agencies. We can compile the list for the Member if she wishes it.

Ms. Gray: What does the Minister mean by the "directors of agencies"?

Mrs. Oleson: Sorry, I meant to say the regional directors—directors of the regions. I am getting my words mixed.

Ms. Gray: The Minister is indicating that the regional directors were involved in this review and I understand this review is basically to look at the service delivery and the structure of the three Winnipeg regions. Were these three regional directors involved in the interviewing of staff?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes. No, just a minute. Maybe you should clarify that.

Ms. Gray: What I am asking is: I understand a part of the process was that staff would be interviewed and asked a series of questions. Given that these regional directors are part of the review team, were they part of the interviewing process?

Mrs. Oleson: No, the review team interviews the staff.

Ms. Gray: Is not one of the review team members Joan Bickford, Acting Regional Director for North Region?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Therefore, there were regional directors who were involved with interviewing staff. I am wondering if the Minister could tell me, given that this is a very sensitive issue and has caused a number of problems and difficulties, this whole structure of Winnipeg Region when it was formally moved into three a number of years ago by the previous administration, a lot of concerns had been expressed and it is a well-known fact that staff morale in this area is probably the lowest that it has been, and I do not mean that in any respect to the new administration.

I mean that it has been low for a number of years and has continued to be very low, so that the whole area of management-staff relations and trust has somewhat deteriorated over a number of years, whether that deterioration—without going into what all the reasons are for that deterioration—I am wondering, given that staff have been asked and been interviewed on the whole area of the review of Winnipeg Region, and you have on your review team a regional director who is certainly a part of this three regional system because she is their boss, she is the regional director, how possibly could a decision be made to have her as part of a review team? How did staff feel very comfortable to express their true views and confidence when their boss is sitting in the room?

* (1610)

Mrs. Oleson: She is an acting director and was chosen by the Health side of the subject and she is on the team. She would be interviewing people as part of the team, would be interviewing people from all the regions, not just her own.

Ms. Gray: Did the department and the Minister of Community Services agree with the choice of having a current regional director interviewing her own staff, albeit the fact she is acting, she is still the regional director?

Mrs. Oleson: That person is only part of one member on the team and it was agreed to. The Member wanted the names of the review team. The chairperson is a person by the name of Fiorino; and also on the team are Suss, Bickford, Wall, Cadotte and Fenwick.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us the first name of Wall and Cadotte?

Mrs. Oleson: Georgina Wall and Darleen Cadotte. The Member should be reminded that this is internal review.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Ms. Gray: No. Would the Minister tell me why she is insisting on telling me that this is an internal review. I do not understand the comment.

Mrs. Oleson: Because that is the case. The Member was asking me a while ago why somebody internally was helping with the review and I told her that it was internal review.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister herself not have any concerns at all about the fact that a current regional

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director who was part of an existing system that is in fact under scrutiny and under review is part of a review team where staff who report to her are being asked to express their true feelings and express their thoughts and ideas about the system?

Mrs. Oleson: The person that you are discussing is an acting director and, if the Member has some concerns about this, I certainly do not expect her to put them on the record, but if there are some specific concerns about this, I would be pleased to hear them.

Ms. Gray: As a matter of fact, those specific concerns, I have actually already spoken to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who I understand was initiating this review, so he is certainly well aware of my concerns about the review. I am wondering if the Minister could tell us is there any time frame as to when this review is expected to be completed.

Mrs. Oleson: It should be completed very soon.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us what time frame very soon is?

Mrs. Oleson: It was originally decided that it should be accomplished by the end of August, but it soon became apparent that that deadline would not have been able to have been met. So I expect to get a report on this within a few days.

Ms. Gray: As part of this review, has there been a discussion with the personnel or Human Resources Branches of both departments regarding if there is a change in structure how one would go about implementing that change so that concerns about job classifications would certainly have the consultation of the Human Resources Branches?

Mrs. Oleson: Since I have not got the report on the review, and naturally no decision has to be made as to exactly what structure would be put into place, no decision, naturally, whether there would be any changes, what changes there would be. So, it would be difficult at this time to give the Member a clear answer on that as to how we would implement it because we have not had a report yet.

Ms. Gray: We will await the information on the review of the three regional system.

This particular section which deals with Operations, and there are 10 regions in the province, just as a clarification with regional operations, do regions get involved with policy development?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there is input through the regional directors. They have regular meetings. They do have input on policy.

Ms. Gray: The regional directors then have input on policy, but they do not actually develop policy for programs in the regions?

Mrs. Oleson: They are involved in different ways through task forces, through the recommendations that

they may have for their own regions, through reviews, and so they do have input into policy.

Ms. Gray: Since we are on Operations, I had a couple of questions when the Minister had tabled information this afternoon in regard to the HS1 position in the South Region and that was in reference to the bridging position. I understand that the Minister mentioned that position interviewed respite workers or hired respite workers, is that correct?

Mrs. Oleson: The person's title of the position is Resource Financial Worker. He reports to the administrative officer and the main duties and responsibilities identified in the position description are:

- interviewing and assessment of new respite workers to determine interests and abilities;
- matching service providers to client requirements;
- scheduling service providers into client homes;
- conducting on-site visits and providing supervision to service providers;
- orienting new service providers to the program;
- maintaining payroll and service delivery records and information;
- preparing statistics and reports for senior management.

Ms. Gray: Is the Minister telling us then that this person would actually hire and interview and assess potential candidates who would wish to be respite workers and respite workers within the mental retardation program?

Mrs. Oleson: This would be the first level. As I have indicated, that person interviews and assesses, but that person would not have the final decision on the hiring. That would be the first stage of the assessment.

Ms. Gray: Who has the final decision on the hiring?

Mrs. Oleson: The supervisor.

Ms. Gray: Whose supervisor?

Mrs. Oleson: The supervisor of the resource financial worker.

Ms. Gray: And just to clarify, these respite workers are respite workers who work within the MR program?

Mrs. Oleson: MR coordinators.

* (1620)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell me why this individual, whose interviewing and assessing qualifications of respite workers who then would be providing a very important service to MR clients out there, why the person making the final decision would be an administration officer who has no expertise in the MR program?

Mrs. Oleson: It is the MR coordinator who would make the decision on the hiring.

Ms. Gray: Does the MR coordinator sit in on the interviews as well?

Mrs. Oleson: We could clarify that later.

Ms. Gray: What I wanted to know is, if this person is involved with the MR program and is interviewing respite workers in assessing, I do not have a problem with someone in an HS1 level doing that, but I am questioning why that person reports to an administration officer when to me it would make more sense that the report to someone within the MR program who obviously has the expertise and could give advice to this individual in an HS1 level, if she or she had concerns about the particular qualifications of an individual or could give assistance to that person even in terms of developing questions?

Mrs. Oleson: The regional director has the prerogative of setting how the structure is in their particular region. So we could get the information that the Member was inquiring about as to who sits in on the interviews. It is up to the regional director to manage their region.

Ms. Gray: The regional directors across the province who report to the executive director, is that executive director also responsible for health?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: In the information given today it mentions that a special regional assignment has been given to a T. Locke. Which region is that person assigned to?

Mrs. Oleson: Winnipeg South.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister be able to tell us what the nature of that assignment is?

Mrs. Oleson: We do not have a job description with us but we could provide that. It was worked out by the regional director.

Ms. Gray: Would I be correct in assuming that this Mr. Locke, who is a program analyst, would be obviously doing something different since he is in a region?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: The Freedom of Information Act will be proclaimed on September 30 of this year. Correct?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that is my understanding.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister please tell us what structures have been put in place in the various regions to accommodate a community in obtaining or at least applying for access to information under The Freedom of Information Act?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been access officers assigned and there is an access system in place, an access manual. Further information could be supplied to the Member on that. We do not have it with us.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if these access officers are new SYs or are they existing staff who have been given an additional responsibility?

Mrs. Oleson: No, there is no new staff. It is existing staff that have been assigned that function.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister be able to tell us, was there an attempt made to have consistency across the regions for individuals who may want to obtain information under this new Act?

Mrs. Oleson: There is consistency right through the Government. The guidelines are the same for all departments as to how access is obtained to information. This actually was passed in the Finance and Administration line many, many days ago.

Ms. Gray: Freedom of information is certainly something where there are assigned access officers throughout the regions. I am aware of that, so it seems quite appropriate to ask questions in this area. Now is the Minister then saying if a community group or an individual phones and requests information from Westman Region, that they are going to be given similar information and have to go through a similar procedure as if they phoned West Central Region as an example?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if all staff throughout the province in her department, particularly in the regional offices, that the front line staff have been trained in The Freedom of Information Act and what the implications are?

Mrs. Oleson: Anyone who will have anything to with the freedom of information has been trained. There was joint training between the ministry of Community Services and the Department of Health on access to information.

Ms. Gray: Then I assume that means all staff have been trained since all staff, particularly field staff, will have something to do, because there are specific guidelines they should be concerned about in terms of how they do case recording in the future, because of that information being available to the public.

Another question about the regions, some years ago, there was a move towards Workplace Safety and Health Committees within regions. Do those committees still exist?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they do.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us what the structure is as far as those committees, who they report to up through the system?

Mrs. Oleson: Those are joint staff-management committees, and they give advice to the regional director.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if these committees have any clout at all to make changes, if they feel that

there need to be changes made in workplace safety and health issues?

Mrs. Oleson: They bring forth their concerns and issues and make recommendations to the regional director.

Ms. Gray: Do the regional directors have any power to act on these recommendations, particularly if they happen to involve money?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they do.

Ms. Gray: Does the regional director have a final say? As an example, if a request was made to improve ventilation in a particular building, would the regional director have authority to make that decision?

Mrs. Oleson: He would have to make a request, because naturally it would impact on the budget. He would have to make a request of Government Services, for instance, if it was a Government-owned building. He could not make the decision alone with no thought to the budget.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, are there any monies allocated in regional budgets at all for any improvements to workplaces?

Mrs. Oleson: Minor capital budgets. We do not get into major capital expenditures in this department, but there would be minor capital expenditures allowed.

* (1630)

Ms. Gray: The various regions across the province have different structures as to how they operate. Some of the areas in rural Manitoba have gone to an area director, area manager concept, where that person is responsible administratively as well as responsible for programs. Could the Minister comment on how well that system appears to be working?

Mrs. Oleson: The Member must recognize that some of the regions deliver different programs from others but, by and large, it is working.

Ms. Gray: The Minister is indicating then that in some of the rural areas where there is that dual responsibility, there have not been major problems identified?

Mrs. Oleson: It would be impossible to say there were never any problems identified, but no major problems have been brought to my attention.

Ms. Gray: Correct me if I am wrong, I thought that there was a review that was under way maybe within the last year, year and a half, in—I cannot remember the name of the region, it is Gerhard Suss's region—where they looked at these particular issues because the managers in those regions expressed a lot of concerns as to how well the system was working, because they could not cope with the dual workload.

Mrs. Oleson: I understand that was in Eastman region and it was a year, year and a half ago, but there are ongoing reviews at all times of structures and systems.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister know if those problems are still prevalent? Has the system remained the same since those concerns were raised?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been no problems brought to my attention, but I can certainly inquire and see how things are going there.

Ms. Gray: I understand, in fact, there were major problems, particularly with some of the managers who have fairly complex and wide-ranging duties in other programs such as home care.

In regard to the Winnipeg regions, although we are in a three-regional system, I understand there are still direct offices in which staff are housed. Could the Minister indicate to us who is responsible for managing these individual district offices?

Mrs. Oleson: The regional director will assign leading staff in each of those offices to manage them.

Ms. Gray: These individuals who are delegated this responsibility by the regional director, do they have line responsibility over the staff in those offices?

Mrs. Oleson: No.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us then, if they do not have line responsibility, what do they do as managers for the office?

Mrs. Oleson: They have a functional responsibility to look after the office, to make sure things are running smoothly. They would report to the regional director.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister explain to me what she means by functional?

Mrs. Oleson: The day-to-day operations.

Ms. Gray: The Minister is indicating that these people have responsibilities for the day-to-day operations. Would that include the day-to-day intake systems of these offices?

Mrs. Oleson: Could the Member clarify what she means?

Ms. Gray: By day to day, or intake?

Mrs. Oleson: Intake.

Ms. Gray: You want a clarification of what intake is?

Mrs. Oleson: In the context of your question, what did you mean?

Ms. Gray: What I am asking is, when you refer to day-to-day operations in an office, I am wondering if those day-to-day operations would include the intake system which would be contained within those various offices?

Mrs. Oleson: It varies from office to office.

Ms. Gray: Who usually then would be responsible for an intake worker to ensure that an adequate intake system was working in an office?

Mrs. Oleson: A supervisor would be responsible. Every office has a system of intake of one kind or another, but the supervisor would be the one responsible for it.

Ms. Gray: Do these district offices still function as multidisciplinary teams?

Mrs. Oleson: It varies from office to office.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate, are these variations rural to urban or what is the reason for the variations?

Mrs. Oleson: It would vary according to size and region.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us which regions operate under a multidisciplinary team system and which do not?

Mrs. Oleson: Does the Member mean in Winnipeg or across the province?

Ms. Gray: Across the province. I would never want to limit my comments to just Winnipeg regions.

Mrs. Oleson: I understand the Norman Region, the Thompson Region, Eastman, Westman and Interlake operate under a multidisciplinary system.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated a number of rural regions operate under this system. Then do we conclude that the Winnipeg regions do not operate under this system?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, the Winnipeg regions report on a program basis.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, are the staff aware that they do not operate under a multidisciplinary team basis in Winnipeg?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, we are talking about the reporting system. In the rural areas it would be different. Because they are in a multidisciplinary program, it would vary, but in Winnipeg they report on a program basis.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, regarding a multidisciplinary team and if that is in existence, I do not confine my remarks specifically to what the reporting mechanism is. I am wondering in regard to the various programs that are out in the district offices, I understand that there are still family counsellors who operate in some of the regions. I am not sure, could the Minister clarify, do family counsellors also exist in rural Manitoba and northern Manitoba?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, they would be in the Child and Family Services program.

Ms. Gray: Thank you for the clarification. Is she saying that the staff in rural Manitoba who are family

counsellors are part of Child and Family, and how does she define Child and Family? Is it the mandated program?

Mrs. Oleson: The statutory program.

Ms. Gray: I understand there still are family counsellors who provide non-statutory services in Winnipeg regions anyway, and there has been a lot of discussion over the last number of years about this particular program. They have been subject to cuts and transfers into other programs. Is there still a program in Winnipeg where there are staff who consider themselves family counsellors and provide non-statutory family counselling services?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, I understand there are four, and that subject is under review.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, those four family counsellors, do they have one program person who they report to or do they report to a variety of people from a variety of programs?

Mrs. Oleson: They are in two different regions and the staff feel that they report to M.R., but we would have to clarify that later.

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicated that is under review. Could she elaborate on what she means by this program being under review?

Mrs. Oleson: There has to be a determination whether we can use our resources in this way or we should go into a more program-specific way of using the resources.

* (1640)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, is there data available about the need for individuals who do provide specifically family counselling services?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, is the Member requiring data about the people who provide it or the people who need the service?

Ms. Gray: I am asking if she is aware of what kind of need exists in Winnipeg, because these people seem to be specific to Winnipeg, who requires services in the area of family counselling. Part of that need, I would think, might be identified by the number of the cases or the workload of these particular family counsellors?

Mrs. Oleson: Data is difficult to get. There are other agencies that perform this function like church groups and other services, Child and Family Services. Some are funded through the United Way. There is a variety of ways in which this service could be provided.

Ms. Gray: I am asking the question about need identified because I am wondering if there is information that the department has or has been attempting to collect on what type of a need there is, because she says that this particular program is currently under

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review. She states the Child and Family Services provide family counselling. They do that only within a very, very limited context. We also have Family Services of Winnipeg who have months and months of waiting lists, and we have also Family Dispute Services who do not enter into long-term family counselling either. I am wondering, does the Minister have information about the kind of situations or cases these few remaining family counsellors, what kind of need that they provide in the community.

Mrs. Oleson: No, we do not have a complete breakdown, a complete picture of the need. There are, as I indicated before, many groups who provide this type of service, ministerial associations, various other ways, and there always is a need. It is a need that is very difficult to identify. We do not really have a complete picture of the need.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate what form this review is taking?

Mrs. Oleson: It is a review with the executive director and the regional directors. It is an internal review as to how we can best allocate funds.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister consider as part of this review being in contact with a number of the other agencies, non-government, across Winnipeg who do provide some of these services such as the university, the ones that I have mentioned, and Interfaith Pastoral Institute?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, we do not really have the capacity to do a review such as the Member is indicating. There are so many agencies, so many groups that provide or attempt to provide service. I think the Member is perhaps misunderstanding when I said the review of the four positions. It is an internal review looking at how we can best use our resources. It is not a major review.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister not think, given that you are reviewing the four positions, and unfortunately over the last few years the number of family counsellors has dwindled because of attrition and people being diverted into other areas, I suppose the first question is, does this Department of Community Services feel that they should be in the business of providing family counselling?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, it would be nice to provide all the services that we could. That is why we have some people providing the service, but we cannot possibly meet every need, and there are people in private practice providing counselling. As I had indicated before, there are other agencies, and it is difficult to get a handle on just what is taking place, but we really do not have the capacity to do a study like that.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, could not Research and Planning undertake such a review, or is there not any dollars in the budget to contract this out to Social Planning Council?

Mrs. Oleson: I think the Member should realize that to undertake a review of that size and magnitude of

the whole City of Winnipeg as to what the counselling needs are would be quite an undertaking. It would certainly be beyond the capacity of this Research and Planning Branch.

Ms. Gray: I am not sure if the Minister is underestimating her Research and Planning Branch or not. I mean this whole department undertakes many reviews. They get into interprovincial negotiations. There are reviews going on every time we turn around. I do not see why Research and Planning would not be able to undertake such a review. I am not suggesting that the department necessarily stay in the business of family counselling, but I think rather than slowly these people, SYs, being diverted into other areas that it should certainly be examined as to if these individuals are providing a service and if that service can be better met with other agencies, which to me would mean reviewing and discussing the needs of people in Winnipeg with some of these other agencies who do currently provide this service.

Could the Minister indicate if these family counsellors provide any other services other than what would be classified as family counselling?

Mrs. Oleson: They may. Perhaps the Member could give us a specific description of what she means by general counselling. Is she asking us to survey the entire City of Winnipeg? Maybe I am misunderstanding what she is asking for because I do not underrate the capacity of the Research and Planning Branch, but from what I understood from what the Member is asking, it is a massive undertaking. Maybe I am misunderstanding her intent. Perhaps she could clarify what she means by general counselling because it would be very difficult for us as a Government to undertake complete general counselling to meet everyone's need.

Ms. Gray: One of the things that could be done, and I hate to use this word but in this particular instance, here is an area where in fact there could be an inventory of services that are available. It would be a matter of, there are a number of agencies across the city who do provide family counselling, who provide marital counselling, and I understand these family counsellors who are part of your staff also provide some of those services. They provide services to couples who are undertaking difficulties in their marriage. They provide services to adolescents who are not part of Child and Family Services, who are not picked up necessarily by the school system, but who are individuals who require some sort of assistance and counselling from a qualified social worker, and some of these family counsellors do provide services in that area. They provide services for families who are going through a grieving process. They provide a variety of services that could be classified under family counselling, and there always seems to be intakes, and there always seems to be a need for these kinds of services. When the Government in the past has tried to refer people to other services, such as Family Services, or Interfaith, there appears to be long waiting lists, so I would think that to work with some of these agencies, to contact them and talk about the needs in this area, it would not take massive, massive undertaking to determine in fact what the needs are.

Now, some of these services, there is a cost attached. So the other thing that has to be looked at is should it be the business of a department, such as Community Services, to provide a service in the area of marital counselling or individual family counselling for individuals where they are not paying a fee for that service?

All these questions, I feel, need to be addressed before some unilateral decision might be taken to move these family counsellors into another area. That is why I also asked the question, are there other duties that these family counsellors also provide, other than the individual cases that they pick up. Are there any other responsibilities that they have? Are they already picking up cases in the mental retardation and mental health field?

* (1650)

Mrs. Oleson: With regard to the last part of the Member's question, we would have to get the specifics on exactly their caseload to provide that information. As I indicated before, we are reviewing it. We are not necessarily moving them anywhere or doing anything with them. We are looking at it, we are reviewing it. That does not necessarily mean that we change their function. Maybe we will find out that is the function we want to maintain. That is why the process of review. You check up to see how you are doing and if you could do it better.

I think perhaps what the Member was referring to when she talks about assessing the needs was the availability of services. We do have an inventory of services available, if that is what the Member is thinking would be useful. It is not the case that there are just strictly those four family counsellors in existence and no other work on counselling is done in the department. We provide counselling in various agencies and areas that are funded by this department. So there is more address of need than the four that we were talking about here earlier. But to undertake to give a universal service to people on counselling would be quite a major undertaking. So that is something that would have to be given considerable thought.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us who else in her department provides these types of counselling services?

Mrs. Oleson: There is counselling through various agencies. There are people who work with single parents or it is done through Child and Family Service Agencies. There are a number of agencies that provide types of counselling to individuals.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if any of the other programs within the Winnipeg region, because this is where these family counsellors seem to be, also provide counselling to families?

Mrs. Oleson: Within the regions there are many churches, for instance, that give counselling, if that is what she is talking about or if she means individual staff. Within my department, there are other areas of

my department that do counselling with people, for instance, in the wife abuse shelters, in women's resource centres. There are all kinds of programs that would be—it would not be an exhaustive list of course because every need is not met and cannot be met, but there are various agencies that do counselling.

Ms. Gray: The type of counselling I was referring to was more in relation to particularly marital counselling or individual counselling for adolescents or single people. But I am wondering if the Minister could tell us, has her executive director and staff been in contact with Big Brother and Big Sister. I understand we have a relationship with them in the regions as far as services we provide?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, we do and that is covered under the Child and Family Services line.

Ms. Gray: Correct me if I am wrong, but do not the family counsellors provide some sort of monitoring in the Big Brother, Big Sister programs?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they do.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us exactly what the nature of this monitoring is?

Mrs. Oleson: We can get that information for the Member.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if the family counsellors in the regions also are involved with the child day care office in doing special needs assessments for individuals with families who want to place their children under the special needs category in day cares?

Mrs. Oleson: If they are working with the family they might be involved. This is a possibility that they could be involved in that way.

Ms. Gray: There used to be a system whereby if there was a family who wanted to have a child placed in day care under a special needs placement that there was an assessment that was carried out by the family counsellors. Is now that responsibility being taken away from the family counsellors?

Mrs. Oleson: That would be one avenue.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister clarify what she means by "That would be one avenue"? I mean is it a system that is in place or is it not in place?

Mrs. Oleson: We can get the details in a moment.

It is the day care coordinators who are involved in this. The counsellors are not really asked to do this function any more. It is the day care coordinators that would mainly be involved in that.

Ms. Gray: So that function which used to be a responsibility for family counsellors has totally been taken out of their jurisdiction and it is totally handled by the day care staff?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that would be the case; unless they were working with that family, then they would have of course input into it. You would not separate the two then. It is possible that they would still have some input if they were working with a particular family with a child who had specific needs who needed day care.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, too, is each region responsible for developing staff training and staff development guidelines?

Mrs. Oleson: Each region would have some staff training capacity, but it would be coordinated and it could be worked in with the Civil Service Commission and with the Personnel Department. They would have a more specific program. Each region has some function with training.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us though, has there been any policy direction given by her department as to how regions should look at the whole area of staff training and development? Is there any policy in relation to whether do we ever pay for staff to attend training courses? Is there a policy from her department in regard to that?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there are allocations for staff to take training. It would be, for instance, the day care would look after their training needs; the MR, it is divided into specific programs at this time.

Ms. Gray: Oftentimes when new staff apply for jobs in various regions, that is always one of the first questions at the end of the interview they ask, about what kind of career, staff training and development opportunities there are. I am wondering if there is any type of policy about the number of days per year that a staff person may be allowed to attend courses. Is there any specific policy about whether we can attach dollars for staff attending? Is there a policy about whether staff can attend on Government time to conferences outside the province?

Mrs. Oleson: It has to receive approval, of course. There is no set number of days, number of weeks. It would depend on the needs of the particular area, the training requirements of the position. There are a lot of variables in there so there is nothing set too rigidly. We should be able to accommodate people if the need arises.

Ms. Gray: My next line of questioning is getting into the MR Program in the regions and resource coordinators.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Ms. Gray: No. Do you want me to go ahead?

Mr. Chairman: The hour being five o'clock, it is time for Private Members' Hour.

Committee rise.

* (1700)

SUPPLY—AGRICULTURE

Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko: We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture. We are presently considering item 1.(g)(1) Program Analysis: Salaries.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Chairman, earlier on I had indicated that I would indicate, as we went along, the vacancies. In this particular area there is presently one vacancy. Another question was asked last time about vacancies now in this particular fiscal year—then there were 39. The question was asked: how does this relate to previous years? The year before, at the same time, it was 38.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): In this area is one vacancy. Can he indicate what position that is within that branch? Is it a clerical, technical or what is it?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, Mr. Ross Cameron retired as director and Greg is acting right at this point.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Chairperson, my question involves the Port of Churchill. I would ask the Minister if this section under Program Analysis—does any analysis of the use of the Port of Churchill, the benefits of the use of the Port of Churchill, the problems that are being experienced by the Port of Churchill, on behalf of the province as well as on behalf of farmers, who might wish to use the port as their designated port for shipment of their products to eastern Europe?

Mr. Findlay: Certainly the Port of Churchill has received a lot of attention this year. I can almost guarantee it will receive a lot of attention in the next year because of the circumstances of low volume of grain available for export in this country. The Wheat Board, as the Member knows, has found two buyers to take grain out of Churchill, two shiploads. Certainly, that is nowhere near sufficient to keep the port viable nor sufficient to meet the objectives that a lot of farmers in a catchment basin would like to see happening.

We have not at this point in time done any analysis. There are a lot of developments occurring from various directions with regard to the Port of Churchill as a grain handling facility, and the facility for other things: a national park, a museum, and maybe some other commodities moving in and out of the Port of Churchill.

No, at this time we have no analysis under way but certainly, in conjunction with other departments, they may well develop a need and an opportunity to a broad scale analysis for that port in the coming months.

Mr. Cowan: I would certainly encourage that sort of analysis to be undertaken and to be published as well.

I would ask the Minister if he knows of any information that would contradict the analysis of the Port of Churchill Grain Shipping Cost Study done by the IBI Group in March of 1986 under the federal-provincial agreement that clearly indicated on page S-6 of the report, and I quote: "During medium ocean freight market conditions, a total rate via Churchill in 1985 dollars is

about \$14 less than via Thunder Bay direct and about \$12.40 per tonne less than via Thunder Bay and a St. Lawrence port. During the years of low ocean freight market conditions, a total rate via Churchill is about \$7 per tonne less than via Thunder Bay direct and about \$17 per tonne less than via Thunder and a St. Lawrence port. During high ocean freight market years, these differences are about \$10 per tonne and \$6 per tonne respectively."

I would ask the Minister if his department has done any analysis or will be doing any analysis that would be intended to substantiate that or if he knows of any information which would contradict that cost advantage which was identified in the 1986 IBI Report?

* (1450)

Mr. Findlay: That report, I am assuming when those kind of analyses were done and those figures were projected, was done on the basis of everything else being equal. The Member well knows, in our meeting with the Canadian Wheat Board, that there is a tendency on the part of buyers and shippers to have—I hate to use the word—but a sense of reluctance sometimes to go into Churchill. They say, we will go in there if you reduce the export price of the grain by so much. I would say that in those circumstances, if somebody is not prepared to go in there and is going to ask that the price of the grain be reduced for it to go in there, then the grain farmer actually is going to potentially lose on that market and those figures may not be totally valid under those circumstances. I would have to say now it is unfortunate those things do happen and I would hope that the exporters do not resist going in there.

This past year for barley, the Wheat Board had told us that there was not enough volume of barley for them to make export sales during the shipping season or part of the shipping season this year, and that was one of the factors that weighed on their inability to market grain through that port. Certainly the Member's information there I am sure is totally adequate and right, every other condition being equal. Unfortunately, it is not always that case.

I would have to assume that when we get back to high production years in the catchment basin and across western Canada—and I am talking normal precipitation and those factors—and a high export volume of back up around 30 million tonnes, I would have to perceive that Churchill with those kinds of economics would be a very significant export point for this country. I hope we get back to that condition very, very soon.

Mr. Cowan: I do not want to get into too much discussion as to what was said during the meetings with the Wheat Board because a lot of that information was provided in confidence, but I do not think it would be inappropriate to indicate that the Wheat Board at that time confirmed once again that it is cheaper to ship grain products through the Port of Churchill to a large number of ports in eastern Europe and in that part of the world. So, in fact, the Wheat Board in its most recent discussions with us has clearly indicated

that there is a transportation advantage for the Port of Churchill.

They also in the IBI Report—and I will quote two more sections—indicate very clearly that, No. 1, there is a marine transportation advantage associated with the use of Churchill compared to Thunder Bay for grain moving to northwestern Europe and other Atlantic markets; and No. 3 on page S-12 of that report: "To the extent that the Canadian Wheat Board captures a marine freight advantage in prices charged to buyers, these differences will represent a gain to Canada and to grain growers."

Does the Minister know if any advantage had to be offered to those two countries that are now shipping grain from the Wheat Board? Again, if it is a matter of confidentiality, I will recognize that and respect that. But does he know if they had to be offered any advantage to get them to ship out of Churchill this year?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, no. It is certainly confidential information. I have no idea what the price was that was offered, though I do believe very strongly in the Wheat Board's ability to deliver on the principle that they will sell to the best advantage of the western Canadian grain farmer. I have to assume that they have followed that principle such that they have sold to the best advantage of the western Canadian grain producer. He knows that we as a Government support the use of the Port of Churchill, and we want to see it get back into its normal usage and improve from there because what has happened with the Thunder Bay and St. Lawrence system over the last three years, with two major closures through the Welland Canal area and a bridge that was hit out around Montreal somewhere, cast a lot of doubt on that export point or that export seaway area to be reliable for exporting grain.

That, in my mind, meant that Churchill became a more important port for the future. I think that was the general feeling of a lot of people in western Canada. We have hit an unusual period of time, and I would hope that more ships will come in this year and that price advantage will keep us shipping more and more grain through there, and the use of bigger and better icebreakers will allow us to make it a safe sea lane for the ocean-going vessels.

Mr. Cowan: There is one point that the Minister makes which we do differ to a degree on with respect to our own opinions, and that is with regard to the impact of lower export shipments on the Port of Churchill. It is my understanding that when we were only exporting 20 million tonnes back a decade or so ago, perhaps a bit longer than that, the early Seventies, we were shipping almost 3 percent of that or 600,000 tonnes out of the Port of Churchill. Just because there is less grain being shipped, I do not think it necessarily should hold true that there would be a significant impact on the Port of Churchill such as there is this year, when we had shipments of around the same range. In the past, we have had shipments out of the Port of Churchill which were higher than shipments we have had when we were shipping much more export overall. I do not think it has to coincide that when you have low exports you will necessarily have a low season for Churchill.

I certainly agree with him, and I know of no information to the contrary, that the Wheat Board did give the best cost advantage for the shipments which it is proceeding with out of the Port of Churchill this year. If the IBI report is right, and I think we agree on that, to the extent that marine freight advantage is captured by the Canadian Wheat Board, it will go back and add benefits to the farmer.

That is why I was particularly concerned when I received a report of the Wheat Board, September 1988, which I believe the Minister has probably seen, and he has mentioned it. In the first instance, the one report in that magazine that caught my attention was one that was entitled, "Farmers don't want Political Interference with the Canadian Wheat Board." Let me just put that on the record. It is a short article.

"The Canadian Wheat Growers' Association says that farmers do not want politics to interfere with the operations of the Canadian Wheat Board. The association is upset at the request by Manitoba politicians that grain and oilseeds Minister Charlie Mayer force the Canadian Wheat Board to export grains through the Port of Churchill.

"Such an action would set a dangerous precedent for political interference with the operations of the Board, and that is certainly not desirable," said WCWGA vice-president, Paul Orsak. "Churchill should compete for grain shipments on the basis of cost and customer preference, just like other ports. If the port is used, it should be used because it provides some benefit to the farmers, not because politicians want it to be used."

Then the last line in that report says, "Several studies have shown that the costs associated with shipping grain through Churchill are substantial. The association believes that grain should be shipped in a manner that incurs the least cost for farmers."

The implication that is left on the record in that article is that it costs more to ship grain through the Port of Churchill than it does through other ports, based on the last paragraph where it says, they are substantial, and they believe that "grain should be shipped in a manner that incurs the least cost for farmers," suggesting that Churchill costs more.

I would ask the Minister what action he is prepared to take to advise them that even although there have been politicians involved in promoting the Port of Churchill this year, they have been involved in promoting the port because they believe the port was being disadvantaged, and that disadvantage was resulting in less returns to farmers than there would be if the port were used. I would ask him if he can take this time to clear up that record and to put on the record very clearly the fact that he does not agree with that statement.

Mr. Findlay: Given that there was no direct statement that the Member read which indicated that they were saying that there was a cost disadvantage to Churchill, he is only surmising or trying to read something between the lines. I think it is inappropriate that he tries to put words in somebody's mouth that are not actually there. I do not think there is anything to clear up, because

it is clearly stated in there that it should be shipped to the advantage of the producer, and that is a principle we all believe in. Everybody is on the same wavelength.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. Before we continue, some of the Honourable Members' mikes may not be working, so I would ask all Honourable Members to speak maybe a little bit more loudly than they may normally otherwise.

Mr. Cowan: How does the Minister reconcile the fact that they say that the grain costs associated with shipping grain through Churchill are substantial?

Mr. Findlay: This is really a red herring. I did not write the article and I do not know what the word "substantial" means. Unless the Member can identify what the word "substantial" means, I do not know that we have any issue to debate over.

We all know that we believe in the Wheat Board, we believe in the Port of Churchill, and we believe in shipping grain through any export point to the best advantage of the Canadian producer and the economy of western Canada. I do not think there is any difference there in what we are talking about. I do not see why we want to create an issue with a particular organization when they are not saying anything negative specifically against the Port of Churchill. I do not know what the issue is. Let us not get into a harangue over something that does not exist.

* (1500)

Mr. Cowan: If the Minister thinks this is a harangue, he has not seen us at our best. The fact is we are trying to make a logical and reasoned plea to the Minister to follow up on one of the recommendations of the delegation which met with the Ministers and Mr. Bill Blaikie of the federal Parliament a number of weeks ago as part of the fulfillment of the resolution which was passed in this House in support of the Port of Churchill.

One of the recommendations very clearly at that meeting was that there be education about the major cost benefits of the Port of Churchill to farmers in the Churchill catchment area, and that there be a proactive program on the part of the Government to ensure that the myths and the mythology about the Port of Churchill costing more or the costs of shipping grain through the Port of Churchill being substantial are laid to rest.

In that same paper then, we have another article which says "The WCWGA meets with Manitoba Ag Minister," and let me put that short article on the record if I can: "On August 8, members of the WCWGA Board of Directors had an opportunity to discuss a number of important issues with Manitoba Minister of Agriculture, Glen Findlay"—and I am going to edit it a bit without taking away from anything that is said about Churchill. They talked a bit about the proposed check-off for farm organizations. They talked about developing more effective individual coverage for the Manitoba Crop Insurance program, and then I will quote from that article again.

"The WCWGA expressed concerns to the Minister over attempts by Manitoba politicians to force the

Canadian Wheat Board to ship grain through the Port of Churchill this year. 'The WCB has a clear mandate to maximize returns to producers,' said first vice president, Paul Orsak. 'Grain should be shipped in a manner which minimizes the cost to the farmers.'"

And then the article goes on to quote some other issues that they discussed. In that meeting, did the Minister very clearly indicate to Mr. Orsak and the delegation from the WCWGA that it is our analysis, based on expert advice, that the Port of Churchill does in fact maximize returns to producers when used to ship grain from the Churchill catchment area to certain ports in Atlantic communities?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, the short answer is definitely yes. We expressed our position and our opinion that the Port of Churchill was a very viable port and, given that as long as the producers' interest were looked after in terms of the price of grain, we supported it and wanted to promote it, and want to see it expand in the future years.

They have a reluctance maybe to support the Port of Churchill from their members way out in the southern part of the Prairies who look at the West Coast as the primary export point, but there is no question they knew our position of support for the Port of Churchill without a doubt.

Mr. Cowan: What bothers me is, if I were reading this article, my impression would be that the Port of Churchill costs more for farmers just based on the line that the costs are "substantial and that the grains should be shipped in a manner that incurs the least cost for farmers."

At best the article is somewhat implicitly negative. At worst and, if one wanted to harangue, one would phrase it this way, the article is explicitly and outright negative to the Port of Churchill. In deference to the Minister's concerns about the definitions of words, let us just agree—and I will look to him for a nod of the head if he agrees or disagrees—that one could, reading this article, read into it the fact that this group believes that the costs of shipping grains through the Port of Churchill are substantial and that is not the best cost advantage way to ship grain for many of the farmers in the Churchill catchment area. Could one take that from the reading of this?

Mr. Findlay: I think the only thing that is appropriate for me to do would be to write them and ask them what they meant by the word "substantial," and at the same time express our belief with regard to the Port of Churchill as we have discussed it here today and in our meetings that we have held over the last two months or last month and a half.

Mr. Cowan: I appreciate the Minister for his intuition and for perceiving what the next question would be, and that was to have the Minister write to the Wheat Grower and indicate to them that this House has passed a resolution that this Government and the Opposition combined believe that the Port of Churchill should be used more and clearly identify what the IBI Report has

identified, that there are cost advantages and to set the record straight that we were not asking for political interference. We were asking for a fair share for the Port of Churchill. I think that will defend our actions as well as his own actions and as well will educate those who might derive a misconception from this article.

That is extremely important given one other part of the paper. I will put it on the record as well just so that Members who might not have it in front of them are aware of what my third concern was, and that is in a column called, "At A Glance." It says, "The CWB is coming under pressure from interests along the St. Lawrence to ensure that the eastern route receives its 'fair share' of grain traffic in 1988-89. There is a concern that export shipments through the eastern route could fall as low as 5 million tonnes this crop year. This could lead to numerous layoffs and put the squeeze on several lake carriers and elevator terminals."

Certainly, the CWB comes under pressure from all sorts of groups. We know that it is going to be coming under pressure from the eastern interests. I think that the pressure we have already exhibited has had results. I thank the Government and the Members of the combined Opposition for the support that they have shown the Port of Churchill in making that happen, but I think we cannot let down our guard. As the Minister said, next year is going to be a much more difficult year and we have to start right now ensuring that our pressure is at least as much if not more so than the pressure of the eastern interests who would like to see the Port of Churchill closed entirely or at least cut back significantly.

So I appreciate his suggestion of a letter. I hope he will do that soon. I look forward to seeing it in the Wheat Grower. I think it can be just a part of those overall education activities which we are undertaking as a combined Government and Opposition to ensure the Port of Churchill receives its fair share in the next year.

Mr. Findlay: Just a comment on the eastern route of export, there is no question that there is going to be pressure from the West Coast, pressure from the East Coast to have grain going in those two directions. We have been shipping around 30 million tonnes to export. This year, projections raise anywhere from 14 to 20 million tonnes, so we are looking at a half to two-thirds. We would like to see 3 percent go through Churchill, but there is no question that there is going to have to be continuous pressure kept and attention paid to seeing that the grain is moving in a direction we would like to see it for the good of the economy in this province.

I can tell the Member that there are already happening out in the rural part of Manitoba some strange shipping patterns with regard to east versus west. Wheat has been moving to the West Coast this fall, which is unusual. One elevator manager I talked to, pretty close to 30 years with the elevator in one particular company and has never shipped wheat to the West Coast in his life, and he has shipped a whole bunch this fall. If there is grain moving to markets because of the urgency of

filling orders in the West Coast, then it is going to cause concern in the East Coast, no doubt, in terms of the amount of grain moving. We have a continuous battle between those two forces to keep enough going in the direction we would like to see it going. I hope that we have not seen the last shipment this year, I sure hope so.

I think it will take some effort on the part of all persons interested in Churchill to do some work late next winter, early next spring, earlier after the new year to look towards getting grain moving and pursue markets and pursue buyers that will take the grain through there starting July of '89.

* (1510)

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): I would like to pursue the issue regarding Churchill just a little further than our colleague from Churchill because I have read the same article. The one concern I have is the fact that the individual quoted there is Paul Orsak who is a Manitoba vice-president of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers' Association. It is not someone from the far western part of the Prairies who is making that statement.

I am not sure whether the Minister agrees or not, but I am satisfied that there is a significant element in the grain industry who are not particularly pro the utilization of Churchill. This includes the railway itself. Some of the grain companies have been on record at times indicating they were not enthusiastic about its use.

So while one can perhaps argue as to how much one can interpret or infer from the statement that was in the newsletter, I think it would be preferable, either instead or even in addition to the Minister writing to the editor, I think it would be of value to have a response from the legislative committee. Not only a response saying we are somewhat concerned with the tone of that article, but I think that the Honourable Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) as chairman of this committee and his staff probably have more information on the studies that have been done on the Port of Churchill over numerous years. Perhaps he already has at his fingertips some comparative data that could in fact be submitted to them. In the IBI report there is considerable, but there are other reports that have been done on this as well.

Perhaps it would be a challenge for the legislative committee to see if we could not convince the Western Wheat Growers Association to devote an issue again to this. They have, I believe, devoted an issue to it once in the past several years ago. I am not sure if I can dig up that particular newsletter or not but if my memory serves me correctly, in that particular article, they were also somewhat negative in terms of the larger-scale utilization of Churchill.

So I think it is imperative that the committee take a hold of this as well and have it put on record with them that we feel strongly about that. If that is not successful then it may be of some merit to somehow or other get our attitude and the relevant data into

some other parts of the farm media, because I do feel, and maybe it is my own biases here, but I do feel that there is a strong feeling out in the rural communities, particularly in parts of Saskatchewan and Alberta, that if Churchill was shut down as a grain port it would have very little significance to the movement of grain in western Canada. Perhaps, in some cases, they even regard it as something that is long overdue. So I think we should be making a little more effort, and I would welcome the Minister's response, in terms of whether he feels going a little further via the committee, would be appropriate.

Mr. Findlay: A couple of points, I have no problem with the legislative committee writing me the letter. The Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) being chairman of the committee, I have no problem with that at all. Maybe that is the appropriate way to put some weight behind the statement. I would have to perceive it would have more weight than just my writing, because I would be perceived to be a small component of the total Legislature, and maybe the legislative committee writing would be the appropriate fashion. I have no difficulty with that and I am sure the Minister of Transportation would have no difficulty by doing that.

With regard to support on the Prairies, it is difficult to speak for Saskatchewan and Alberta. I am just going to speak for Manitoba. But the catchment basin area covers a good portion of the northeastern, at least, portion of Saskatchewan and goes pretty well, I think, over to the west of Saskatoon and down halfway between Saskatoon and Regina, I think that is where the catchment area basin draws from. So probably more Saskatchewan grain goes through Churchill than Manitoba grain. But the people who are active in the Hudson Bay Route Association, people like counsellors and that, they come from well down into southern Manitoba, well down beyond the catchment basin area.

So there is strong support out there, surprisingly strong support for Churchill even in the area where they do not ship grain, up through there, or would not ship because they are not in the catchment basin area. There is no doubt that the railways have been clearly on record as not supporting expenditures to maintain the line up there, would prefer that they did not have to haul grain up there. They have made those statements at various times. Elevator companies most naturally are not supportive of Churchill because they do not have any export facilities up there. It is a Government elevator. So they are trying to keep grain moving through their facilities at the East Coast and the West Coast. So you cannot blame them for taking their position. We have to take our position from the standpoint of what is best for the economy of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Laurie Evans: All I would ask the Minister is if he would go on record as being prepared to take the initiative with his colleague, the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) to take a look at this and report back, either to the Estimates or in some other fashion, so that we know what steps are being taken.

Mr. Findlay: I will do.

Mr. Cowan: Just a couple of points on the Port of Churchill, because some of the things the Minister said with respect to the support of the Port of Churchill, I think can be reinforced by a campaign which we put on called "Support."

As the Minister is aware, about two-and-a-half, well two-months ago, we sent out a number of cards throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The card was addressed to here and we were then going to pass it on. We were to pass it on to Charlie Mayer, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. This is when Mr. Mayer was being somewhat reticent about meeting with the committee. He later changed his position on that and was being, I thought, somewhat less than supportive of shipping grain through the Port of Churchill. But that is a judgment, and others may disagree with it. I have the highest respect for the gentleman in a lot of ways; I worked with him quite closely when I was Minister of Cooperative Development, and he was Minister responsible for Co-ops, and found him to be an honourable gentleman, and one who was sincere in his approach, and I respected him for that. We have our differences of opinion on some matters, a few political matters, some very fundamental political matters, but we also had a very severe disagreement and difference of opinion with respect to the shipment of grains through the Port of Churchill this year.

So we sent out these cards and the card read, "I am a supporter of the Port of Churchill, and am extremely concerned that there may be no shipping season at the port this year because of a lack of commitment by the Canadian Wheat Board to ship grains through the port." It then said, "I am asking you as Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, to ensure that the Port of Churchill receives its fair share of grain export shipment starting immediately."

Now I have sent campaigns of this sort out previously, and if one gets back a couple hundred cards, or a few hundred signatures on a petition, one feels as if they have struck a cord out there with the public, and that they have hit on an issue that has a great deal of support. We are now approaching 3,000 returns. These in my hand, which approximates probably about 1,000 returns, are from outside of the Province of Manitoba. This portion here, which is probably 600 or 700, perhaps a bit more, is from the Province of Saskatchewan. These, I have returns from Alberta, British Columbia, Labrador, Minnesota, Northwest Territories, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia—

An Honourable Member: Any from Saudi Arabia?

Mr. Cowan: Well, you know I have returns—for the Member who has shown such great interest in the Port of Churchill in the past. I have returns from Tokyo, and returns from Australia, and returns from Sweden. Now I am not certain how they got to me, except that I believe they were probably given to people visiting the community of Churchill and on a short visit could very clearly see that port required support and encouragement to make certain that it was fully utilized.

We have returns from all over the province. These are the returns right here from The Pas alone. Now

The Pas has a vested interest because there are a lot of farm —(Interjection)— the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says they grow a lot of wheat in The Pas. They do grow wheat in The Pas and they would like to see it shipped through the Port of Churchill. As a matter of fact, I believe it was not the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), it was perhaps the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) who was in The Pas to open up a Polder III this last weekend.

An Honourable Member: Last Friday.

Mr. Cowan: Last Friday—I am certain he has informed the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) already that the farmers in The Pas said, can you please help us get our grain shipped through the Port of Churchill, because we want to get our grain shipped through the Port of Churchill, and that is not the port that is being utilized now. Normally the grain that they ship there would not be appropriate for shipping through the Port of Churchill because of protein levels, but this year for some reason it is appropriate and they want to see the Port of Churchill used.

So when there are people that say there is not support by the farming community or by individuals for the Port of Churchill, these cards clearly demonstrate just how wrong they are. The representations that have been made to the Government and to the legislative committee show how wrong they are.

* (1520)

We have cards here from Anola, from Barrows, from Belmont, from Brandon, from Camperville, from Easterville, from Dallas, from Grand Rapids, from Lac Brochet, from Brochet. Cards went out to all sorts of individuals who have written back and indicated their support for the Port of Churchill. These came in, by the way, from The Pas just the other day.

The reason we have not sent these on to the Minister responsible yet is that we are still receiving about 50 to 100 cards every day. This is approximately a month to two months after the original cards were sent out, although I have to tell you we did send a second mailing.

We received back resolutions from the communities, from the Rural Municipality of Birtle. We sent each of the municipalities in the Port of Churchill catchment area and members of the Hudson Bay Route Association five cards. A lot of them sent back resolutions to us and the cards. This one says that the R.M. of Birtle go on record as supporting the Port of Churchill receiving its fair share of grain shipments, signed the 12th day of September, 1988.

Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet: "In response to a letter from Jay Cowan, MLA for Churchill"—myself—"and John Plohman, MLA for Dauphin, Council agreed that you be advised"—this is to Mr. Mayer—"this municipality has been in support of the Port of Churchill for many years. Therefore, they would like to urge you to ensure that the port receives its fair share of grain export shipments this season."

One of the things that happened has not happened before. I am just trying to point out how widespread

and how deep the support is. As we said, we sent out five cards to each of the municipalities. In this instance, we probably only had four—no, there are five cards there. They went out to a municipality in Saskatchewan. They had not enough cards for everyone on the Municipal Council to sign them, so they xeroxed the cards and sent them back. That is not the only xerox copies that we got back, we got back a great number of other xerox copies.

The reason I make that point is I want to reinforce for anyone who had any doubt that the support for the Port of Churchill goes beyond these walls. It goes beyond the borders of the Province of Manitoba. It goes beyond certain economic groups. You do not have to be a farmer to support the Port of Churchill. There are businesspeople in here; there are councillors in here; there are unemployed in here; there are trappers in here; there are miners in here; there are people who worked on the railway in here; representatives of the rail unions who worked in here; representatives of the Chamber of Commerce who worked in here. As a matter of fact, there are probably, in this batch of cards, representatives of almost every occupational group, every economic group and every province in the country.— (Interjection)— The Member says how. They were sent out—

An Honourable Member: How many?

Mr. Cowan: How many were sent out? About 10,000 were sent out.

An Honourable Member: What kind of group?

Mr. Cowan: Well, they were sent out to the municipalities. They were handed out in some communities: The Pas; Gillam, we handed out door to door; Churchill, we handed out. They were sent to leadership.

I would say—(Interjection)— I do not believe they were sent out specifically to the NDP membership list, but when you have such a cross section of individuals like this, you are bound to include on that a great number of NDP members. Of course, the NDP members supported the Port of Churchill over a period of time as consistent and strong, so we would expect that there might be by percentage a few more come back there.

I do not want to make this a partisan issue, quite frankly, because I think it has worked well by the Legislative All-Party Committee, and by definition it not a partisan issue. Believe me, there were times when I was tempted to harangue about the Port of Churchill and I held my tongue.— (Interjection)—

I assure the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) that I did, that there were days when I sat in my seat when I wanted so dearly to rise and say things which I knew would make me feel so much better but might not be to the longer-term advantage of the Port of Churchill. I have to tell him that it was one of the rare instances, because it is so important, that I was able to exhibit a modicum of discipline and not give way to my own strong desires to perhaps state the case in the strongest of terms and take a direct

frontal attack at the Conservatives and perhaps a bit of a back hand at the Liberals. I did not do that because I did not feel it would help in this particular instance.

I am going to ensure that I do not get caught up in my own flight of rhetoric today and do that.

An Honourable Member: Do not blow it now.

Mr. Cowan: No, I will not blow it now because I think the legislative committee has worked well. I think what worked even better was the All-Party delegation, because the day on which we had the meeting of the All-Party delegation was the day on which we had the announcement of the first ship. Maybe we need another meeting or two, I do not know.

An Honourable Member: I think we need another 30 meetings.

Mr. Cowan: Perhaps another 30 meetings, yes.

My point is that when the Minister writes to the wheat grower, and perhaps even a letter that goes to all organizations—and I like the recommendation of the Liberal agricultural critic (Mr. Laurie Evans) that that letter come on behalf of the All-Party Committee, because I think it strengthens it. I think it is a good recommendation and we should follow that suggestion if at all possible. When we do that, we not only write to the wheat grower but we write to the other farm organizations to thank them for their support—we do not have to reference this particularly but we do know there is that support—and to encourage them to keep up the good fight to ensure that we receive our fair share.

The other point that I think is more immediate, however, is the point with respect to future ships this season. The All-Party delegation did ask for the positioning of icebreakers in the area—a commitment to position icebreakers in the area—to ensure that we are able to carry on the season as long as possible. Although it is somewhat balmy outside here today in Winnipeg, it is getting chillier in the community. It is not at the point in time where we require icebreakers yet, but that time is fast advancing.

So I would ask the Minister if he would reinforce that recommendation of the All-Party delegation to have ships positioned in that area and to encourage the Wheat Board to try to find as many more ships as it can so that we can have an even better season. Two ships does not a season make. Although one does not look a gift horse in the mouth in that respect, one does want to see a fair share—that is what we are asking for—a fair share of the shipping season, and we should continue the battle until we have accomplished that. I just ask him to take under advisement the suggestion of the Liberal Opposition agricultural critic (Mr. Laurie Evans), and also the concerns of the committee that we have and the delegation, that we have icebreakers positioned in the area and encourage the federal Government to do so.

Mr. Findlay: Well, certainly, I have already recognized the Member for Fort Garry's (Mr. Laurie Evans)

suggestion as being valid. I will approach it to the chairman and I am sure he will see no difficulty with that.

With regard to the icebreakers, as the Member well knows, at our meeting when the federal MP was there, the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, that was mentioned to him and I believe, if I recall rightly, he responded in a positive sense to that. I think again that committee should maybe be making a statement or sending a letter to them to follow up on that request. I guess through the Wheat Board, or through the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, I believe there is no difficulty in following up with that, getting a confirmation that that request is being considered by them and the fact they are prepared to act on it should that eventuality develop in the coming three, four or five weeks.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Chairman, just briefly, I missed some of the discussion and I am not going to take a long time. But on that one point about the icebreaker, I think it is important that the Minister and his colleague, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), and as well the other Minister involved on the committee, but particularly the chairman—and that this Minister would convey that to him—that he should be imploring his federal colleagues to be making a public statement about that commitment regarding icebreakers. I think we were far from getting that at the meeting. I think there was some, I could say, sympathy to the idea, or empathy with the idea, but certainly the kind of thing, well, we will consider when and if it comes up, rather than taking a pro-active approach and saying icebreakers will be made available should the Wheat Board arrange sales after the normal season when icebreaker support is required.

If that kind of a statement was made, I think it would go a long way to ensuring that there is no uncertainty about this. It would ensure as well that the Wheat Board would be aggressively continuing to pursue sales during that particular time.

I think it is important to really reinforce it and not wait for the Committee to write that letter. I think some phone calls, some letters from the Minister all will support the efforts of the Committee that we should definitely do that as a Committee and that should be done through the Secretariat of the Minister of Transportation. He has the staff there to put that together. In the meantime, I think the Minister should be using whatever channels they have available to them to ask their colleagues federally to make those statements unequivocally.

* (1530)

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, we have already made the commitment that we want that to happen, as Ministers, as a legislative committee. I see no problem with either the Ministers or the Committee or all following it up with letters of request that the time is getting near or it is time to hear from the federal Government in regard to a formal commitment to do that. I think a letter that

states that is adequate in my mind. I do not think it has to be a public statement from them. I think a letter to the effect that they are prepared to do it. If the Wheat Board has a sale that they can negotiate for that period, I think that is sufficient and that will happen I am sure—basis the sort of commitment I felt that the MP was making at that meeting.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Chairman, the formal commitment in public ensures that everyone knows about it, but that is something that the federal Government has to weigh in terms of how relevant this issue is for them at this particular time or at any time and that is up to them.

I agree that a letter making these statements would do for our purposes, and I want to tie this in with those remarks that were made by the wheat grower. The fact is that is typical, the remarks that were read into the record by Mr. Cowan. I am very pleased to see that a letter will be put together to dispel some of those comments. That is a typical kind of statement that is made by the grain companies over the years, rather misstatements about the actual costs of shipping grain through Churchill, inferring, if not directly saying that there is a lot of additional costs there and really it is inefficient and terrible and we should not be shipping through there.

They do it in a veiled way by saying, we want the Wheat Board to get the best price and all of this. Really what they are saying is putting Churchill down. That is why it is so important that these public statements be made by the political leaders so it dispels that uncertainty that is created by those constant under the table kind of statements and massaging of the issue in a negative way by the grain companies with their members and so on. That is the reason I wanted a public statement. Again, I think that we are moving in the right direction if we can get that commitment.

Mr. Findlay: The Member is talking about grain companies and the Western Canadian Wheat Board. They are an association of producers, not a grain company. I think I have already said that the grain company, you can not fault them for them trying to promote their own export positions. That is member-owned cooperative elevators that are doing that sort of thing. Our commitment, as the Member knows, is strong and true and we have had a fair bit of discussion on where we all stand. We are standing and moving in the same direction. I do not think there is any problem with where we are going as regard to our commitment to it. It is just a matter of seeing more ships come in there this year and a substantially increased number next year would be what we would all like to see happen.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Mr. Chairman, I believe we are now prepared to pass 1.(g)(1) and (2).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

1.(g)(1) Salaries—pass; 1.(g)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

I would like to now direct the attention of all Honourable Members to item No. 2. Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I believe the Minister may want to have some additional staff come in at this time.

Mr. Findlay: We are now in the section of Crop Insurance and I would like to introduce the staff we have here: Mr. Don Forsberg, the Acting General Manager, and Hank Nelson, both from Portage—good decentralization. I would like to inform the Members that there are six vacant positions in Crop Insurance at this point in time. The positions are the administration secretary, processing clerk, research clerk, records management clerk, and regional manager.

Mr. Laurie Evans: This has been, I am sure, a rather interesting year for the Crop Insurance Corporation, and I am sure my colleague and myself have quite a large number of questions. I am wondering whether the Minister would be inclined to make some sort of an opening statement, a sort of an overall view as he sees Manitoba Crop Insurance.

I guess one of the concerns that many of us have is the fact that there is only something like 47 percent of the acreage in Manitoba that was covered this year, and personally, I think the fact that the federal Ministers, and I assume the provincial Minister concurs in this, are looking upon Crop Insurance as perhaps the major source of support for the grain producer, and obviously the level of participation that we are now realizing certainly does not lead to what I would regard as a satisfactory measure of support for the grain industry. While not being critical of the corporation, per se, obviously there would have to be some changes, and I am not too sure what they may be. Maybe the Minister has some views on this, but it would appear to me that there has to be some change contemplated in order to have it more attractive to the majority of producers so that the level of participation increases.

If I am not mistaken, Manitoba at the present time has the lowest level of participation, where I do believe that earlier on, and I cannot quote the dates, but I believe earlier on our level of participation and our so-called ranking as far as other provinces was concerned was better than it is today. I would invite the Minister to maybe comment on some of those aspects before we get into more specific questions.

* (1540)

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, certainly I would not mind commenting a little bit on the crop insurance. I, as a producer, and my father before me have been in crop insurance ever since it was first available to us. I believe very strongly in the voluntary ability of producers to purchase risk protection. Certainly, crop insurance is in that category.

It is unfortunate that we have as low a percentage as has been well published this past summer enrolled in crop insurance, particularly this year. I would just tell the Member that the percentage of acres that are enrolled in crop insurance, although it is 48 percent or 47 percent over the province, it ranges from a low in Beausejour of 22 percent to a high in Somerset of 74 percent. There is considerable range, albeit most areas are around the 40 percent to 55 percent range.

Certainly when the Ministers of Agriculture met in Toronto in July, there was considerable discussion about crop insurance and a high commitment from all provinces, particularly Ontario through to Alberta, that crop insurance needed to be improved to attract a higher level of participation. Over the last period of time, I have heard lots of comments from producers as to the reasons why they are in it or why they are not in it, and I think the one thing that emerges to me most clearly is that—well, there are two things really that come out loud and clear—there needs to be an enhanced level of coverage. The general coverage that most producers get, say \$60 to \$70, is not sufficient to cover their total operating costs, so they say it is an inadequate program.

At the same time, even with that level of coverage, there are producers out there complaining that they do not join crop insurance because of the abusers, the people who are farming crop insurance instead of farming the land. At \$60 or \$70, they can still do it because they can spend \$10 or \$20 on inputs and just throw inferior seed and very little fertilizer and poor weed control and spend far less than the level of coverage and claim each year. Even though the rates are rising, there is a 25 percent surcharge, you can go up to a 25 percent surcharge for repeated claims, it still is not a sufficient deterrent to prevent the abusers. The better producers are saying, why should I buy crop insurance and pay a premium so that guy next door can abuse the program and get crop insurance every year.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Ed Mandrake, in the Chair.)

I think, if we are going to look at an enhanced level of coverage to attract producers in, at the same time we are going to have to be fairly aggressive in identifying the abusers. I guess we will have to go so far as to have a clear policy on only so much abuse is allowed before you are expelled from crop insurance. I guess I will say personally that I see nothing wrong with a claim that is being filed if the producer is in a repeat position and it is apparent to the corporation that they may not be using appropriate farming practices, I see nothing wrong with them having to produce evidence, receipts that they actually used the right chemicals and the right fertilizers for the kind of crop they were trying to produce.

I also see nothing wrong with the corporation if somebody, just picking some figures out of the air, say approximately two years he is an habitual claimer when people all around him in his area are not claiming, I do not see anything wrong with them doing a mid-season or two mid-season inspections to see if the producer has followed the guidelines of good management practices of producing a crop.

I think if we are prepared to look after the abuse side, we can enhance the coverage side and I think we will get a higher level of producers participating. Financially, if we enhance the level of coverage, the premium has to rise because it has got to pay our way.

So in general, I support crop insurance very strongly. I believe it has done a good job of giving the kind of protection that it was deemed necessary to do in the

past. I believe we have to start looking at ways and means of promoting it as a program that serves the needs of a wider range of farmers. We have heard talk about individual coverage. Some producers promote that very strongly. I think the corporation's position on that is that it is going to be more costly to administer, because every producer's records of production have got to be very carefully monitored.

So there are some areas that need some work. I can assure the Member that it is a desire from my office, from the board and from the corporation that we address those situations fairly aggressively, and hopefully have some more attractive program in position for '89, because the drought of '88 does not mean the drought cycle is over. We have some precipitation occurring right now in various parts of Manitoba. We will have a fall reserve of some magnitude. Hopefully, it is of greater magnitude than what we have now, and if we have reasonable snow over the winter we will have a good moisture situation going into '89.

But even that will not guarantee a crop unless we get rain in the growing season of '89. So I think there is a real need to have a higher level of producer participation in '89 so we do not have to be looking for an ad hoc program, because this is clearly the way producers can protect themselves from any reason why they should lose their crop.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I would just like to move into some of the areas that were brought up by the Minister here, perhaps with a little more elaboration on some of them. I think one of your first points was that in order to make the insurance more attractive, the level of coverage would have to be increased. Can you just give us briefly, what is the normal coverage, the maximum coverage that is currently available? What would you see as perhaps being the level of coverage that would have to be introduced, in order to get more people interested in participating?

Mr. Findlay: The figures I used previously of \$60 to \$70 are in the reasonable ballpark. The lower price is right. In this past crop year it has been, \$55 would be an average, but next year the initial price of grain will be higher, will be in that range of \$60 to \$70, as a normal average level of coverage. Certainly there are some areas lower, some will be higher. But those people who are talking \$60 or \$70 are looking at operating costs in the \$80 to \$100 range. So they say to go from \$60 to \$90 would be something that many producers would be quite happy with, but that is a 50-percent increase in the coverage from \$30 over \$60.00.

So there are proposals being discussed and evaluated in that direction and we will certainly be in discussion with the farm community, with whatever proposals we believe are workable. So that is the kind of ballpark figures that are being talked about on the dollar-per-acre basis.

* (1550)

Mr. Laurie Evans: There has been some discussion as the Minister well knows, and I believe it was our

colleague who brought it up as a form of a question earlier in the House, and that was one of increasing the levels this year. I believe the Minister's response to it was that once these levels are set, to change them in midstream of course would create a chaotic situation.

Can the Minister tell us how these initial prices are determined? What criteria are they? Are they related to the initial price, cost of production, or just what basis are those initial prices determined on? I believe that determination is made—what?—about April each year, is it?

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

Mr. Findlay: I was just confirming that really what has been my belief is the case, that the initial price that the Wheat Board sets is the price used by the Crop Insurance Corporation.

This year, just as an example, letters went out in, I guess it would be March. The initial letters went out saying that the initial price was \$100 a tonne but, if the price moved up before the end of April, that would be the price used, and it did move up \$10 a tonne before the end of April. It was up to \$110.00. We are talking wheat now. It did move up to \$110, so that is the price that is used for wheat or for all grains for the crop insurance coverage.

That has been the principle in the past, so naturally we are looking at the opportunity maybe of some flexibility with that in the future, some mechanism that is workable to allow any—thinking out loud, I guess, maybe a producer could fix his price, he would have an option maybe of fixing his price in the spring if he felt it was going to go down, or he may want to let it float and pick it maybe, say, 60 days later, but he would pay the higher premium if it rose.

You can see, there are producers out there. Take myself, for example, we are not in a claimable position but we would just as soon the prices stay where they are at, because we do not have to pay the higher premium because we are in a non-claimable position. There are always two sides to the coin.

Certainly, that is the mechanism. Those are the guidelines, the policies that have been used. It is April 30, initial price, but now there is pressure to look at allowing it to float.

In the past—what was it? Approximately three years ago, when the price actually floated the other way, it went down so that the crop insurance coverage was pretty attractive that year.

Mr. Laurie Evans: A secondary that the Minister touched on in his brief opening statement was related to the abusers and a surcharge on premiums, I believe he said, was a maximum increase of 25 percent. My question would be then to the Minister, when is an individual identified as an abuser. Is it simply after two years of collecting in an area where others do not? Can the Minister give me any idea of just what percentage of the participants would fall into that abuser category?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, certainly the corporation has some difficult tasks to sort out the whole process

but, just to give you an idea of how they handle the abusers and the people who are good farmers, you start at zero and you can go both ways. You can have a discount of 25 percent if you are a good farmer or a penalty of 25 percent if you are a poor farmer.

Just to give you some figures, if you take—and this is taken from the Carman area—just some average figures. In the Carman area, a 1,000-acre farm is estimated at a variable cost of production of \$81,000.00. If he stays with basic coverage, he gets \$70,000 coverage. It will cost the farmer—I will give you this line first, basic coverage, \$70,000. If he is in a good experience category, he rises to the top in terms of good experience, his coverage level could rise to \$79,000.00. If he is a poor farmer, his coverage level can fall to \$57,000.00. At the same time, his premium at zero is \$3,300 a year. If he is a good farmer, it can be reduced down to \$2,500; if he is a poor farmer, it can rise to \$4,100.00. The premium rate for the good farmer ends up at 3.2 percent, the average farmer at 4.8 percent, and the bad experience farmer at 7.3 percent. Once you get into that bad experience category repeatedly, recommendations can go to the board for eventual withdrawal of the insurance. Roughly half-a-dozen cases a year are in that category now.

You can see that if you have a bad experience or are a poor manager, you do end up with lower coverage at a substantially higher premium so a significant deterrent is built into the program. I believe I am right in saying it takes about 10 years to rise to the top or about 10 years to fall to the bottom, so it does not happen very fast. But I would say to any producer that got himself, say, three or four years into the bad experience side, it would take him a quite a considerable period of time to get back up to zero and on and start moving towards the direction of being a good farmer. There are some incentives there, but it still appears in the way the producers approach it in terms of discussion, they do not think that the deterrent to bad farming practices is sufficient even with this.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I think it is clear from the comments the Minister has made that someone who falls into that abuser category, you would not expect him to remain in business very long. I would not think that you could farm crop insurance and keep on being a so-called viable farmer very long. Did I hear the Minister correctly that to date there have only been less than a half-a-dozen cases per year where they have been denied any coverage because of poor or bad performance? That is very few.

I was a little intrigued by the comment of possible mid-season inspections relative to farm practice. I wonder, has this actually been done or is this just something that is contemplated as far as a sort of a check system.

* (1600)

Mr. Findlay: Yes, the corporation has been doing that on selected cases where it is deemed appropriate. The agent will do it—head office. They follow up with an inspection and then a recommendation was made to

the board. It has been going on, and I think my feeling is maybe it needs to be done, even to a greater extent in the coming year. What it does is it will put a good image on the corporation that they are trying to promote good farming practices, and making sure, or trying to their very best ability to prevent abuse.

Mr. Laurie Evans: What, in fact, can the corporation do if someone has gone out, an agent has gone out and checked the farm and then reports back and says, this particular farmer is not utilizing acceptable farm practices. Is there anything that can be done, or is this just noted with a view to identifying him as an abuser in subsequent years?

Mr. Findlay: They have the right to go out and do some inspections and look at that particular producer, relative to the other producers around him, and can make recommendations under poor farming practices to reduce or deny insurance to that particular producer in that year. Naturally he is under significant scrutiny in the following year, if he is not deemed to be using good farming practices.

They have in place right now a compliance officer and had been intending to step up their action in that regard this year, but obviously this is not the year to do it because extremely abnormal circumstances are in place. That activity will be stepped up next year, if we are in a normal farming year where there can be normal production across the province.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Another comment made by the Minister was the interest by many producers in so-called individual coverage. I think you have indicated that the administrative cost of this would be substantially higher. Does that, in your opinion, preclude bringing in individual coverage and individual analysis, or is this just too cumbersome to contemplate?

Mr. Findlay: What is being proposed for the year 1990 is some degree of being able to compare a particular producer with his peers in the risk area and, if his records prove that he is better than the average, his level of coverage can rise, and the converse of course occurs, as an alternative to strict individual coverage. So his experience and records can allow him to have an increased level of coverage over time in his particular risk area. That is an option or something that is going to be floated in front of the farm community to see how receptive they are to it. It is a partial answer towards individual coverage, but not the complete move towards the complete individual coverage.

Mr. Laurie Evans: The Minister indicated that some attempt will be made to improve the coverage availability for 1989. Can he give us any indication of the nature of those changes and are those changes that are contemplated, can they be done without any changes in the Act? In other words, are they within the mandate of the board of directors and the manager and so on, or does it have to come back into an amendment of the Act in order to have them put in place?

Mr. Findlay: Certainly one option that is in place is the ability to move the dollar value up because the

initial price is going to rise. That will improve coverage. Secondly, there is the enhanced coverage option that is available. It came in a year ago or two years ago which, if a particular risk area has indemnities that are twice the premiums, then they automatically kick up from 70 percent to 80 percent.

This past year, Risk Area Two was in that position from the previous year. Its coverage level for this year went up from 70 to 80 percent. Given the kind of experience we have had this year, I am sure there will be a number of risk areas in southern Manitoba that should qualify for that enhanced coverage for '89. There should be a higher dollar value, so it may be reasonably attractive in terms of the amount of coverage that can be obtained in certain places in '89.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Now with that enhanced coverage in '89, all participants would be eligible, regardless of whether they were covered in '88 or not, or do they have to be past participants in order to be eligible?

Mr. Findlay: The regulation is that they have to be in last year to qualify this year, or in this year to qualify for next year. All they have to do is have a contract. If they had a contract this year, all crops that they grow next year will qualify for the enhanced level of coverage.

Mr. Laurie Evans: In the Supplementary Estimates of course there is not very much information included as far as crop insurance is concerned and I understand that, being that it is a corporation, but you have indicated in expected results that the provision of crop insurance between 14,000 and 15,000 producers.

What would be the maximum figure? What figure does the Crop Insurance Corporation use as the total number of producers who could conceivably be eligible for crop insurance in the province? Is it somewhere in the range of 25,000 or do they have a figure that is, sort of, that 100 percent figure?

Mr. Findlay: The Member is pretty close—25,878 tax matters here.

Mr. Laurie Evans: In that same vein, looking ahead at—I am not sure when you said expected results in the commentary here. I do not recall the number that are covered participants right now, but of those that are participants, do the majority of them actually cover all of their acreage, or are there a lot that are just partial coverage, and therefore the acreage could be a lot more if you could convince those who are participants to cover everything?

Mr. Findlay: Really, in terms of the number of participants, it is about 62 percent of participants for 47 percent of the acreage are actually covered by crop insurance because there is, just as you have identified, a producer may enroll, but he may only cover 40 percent or 60 percent or 80 percent of the actual acres of crop he grows. Myself, I do not cover barley or feed wheat. I cover wheat and rape in my crop insurance contracts. I am probably about in the three-quarters position of the acres that I actually grow that I cover with crop insurance.

I have taken that position over the last few years. I used to insure 100 percent, but as you go on over the years you feel a little more secure that you are not going to fall into a claimable position, so you drop off some crops that you believe you are not likely to ever be in a claimable position. You decide to take a bit of the risk on your own shoulders, I guess. But if there was enhanced coverage, there it may change my thinking. Because really in crop insurance you have very attractive hail rates for hails crop loss. If you balance all the factors with enhanced coverage, you might get me back in 100 percent.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Getting into a little more specifics here as far as the personnel is concerned. It is identified that there are 81.26 staff years. Does this include permanent staff, adjusters, everybody? If so, how many of these 81.26 would actually be full-time staff members as opposed to part time?

* (1610)

Mr. Findlay: Yes, the 81.26 is permanent staff, and then the adjusters are on top of that. The normal number of adjusters would be around 150, but this year at this point in time there are 196 adjusters spread over the 19 crop districts who are out there doing their work. I would have to say that they will be doing more hours of work this year than normal years.

Mr. Laurie Evans: In the Annual Report, the adjusters wages and expenses and the salaries are split between the general insurance and the hail insurance. I was wondering why the corporation feels it is necessary to split those into two separate areas, because I assume it is the same people for the most part; or is the general insurance and the hail insurance actually handled by different personnel?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, the additional hail coverage. Part 2, hail is a self-sustaining program. Some of the overhead of the operation of the corporation must be charged against that program. Around 17 percent to 20 percent of the overhead costs are charged against Part 2, hail. That way it is competitively fair with the private hail insurance offers.

Mr. Laurie Evans: That is essentially just an accounting procedure.

Another area within the accounting that I think has been brought forward in the House before in other issues and that is the unfunded provision for the corporation's superannuation. This is sitting at something like 1.56 million at the present time. Is this just another case where one hopes that nothing serious happens, because it looks to me as though there is no item in the budget that would provide for this shortfall and that is, I think, similar to what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicated with all of the superannuation programs within the Civil Service.

Mr. Findlay: It is handled the same as for the Civil Service. If somebody retires in a particular year, then it is budgeted in that year to pay his retirement. It is maybe not the most—

Mr. Laurie Evans: But it is in fact an unfunded liability?

Mr. Findlay: Right.

Mr. Laurie Evans: In looking at the organization chart, I guess depending on one's biases, one could get the impression that it seems to be a little top heavy in terms of managerial. The reason I say that is that there is a board of directors, which includes five people, a general manager, three directors, administrative officer, an executive secretary, eight managers, and five regional managers. Now the question is then, are all these full-time permanent positions or are some of them such as regional managers not full time?

Mr. Findlay: I will tell the Member that they are all full time. Certainly it is an area where some review is probably going to be taking place.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Without wanting to dwell on that particular area after the Minister's response, I am just wondering whether he could give me, in general terms, the responsibility of an individual identified, for example, as the program manager, special props or the manager, soils research. This may just be a very minor issue but neither of those seem to be tied with a line to anybody else.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, the Research Management of Soils, and Research Management of Crops, both report to the Director of the Research and Planning who is Hank Nelson. The duties with the soils area deal with the productivity rating and that sort of thing. It is an ongoing position and it is necessary for the corporation.

Mr. Laurie Evans: As long as they are doing research, I am not going to argue with them.

Just one further question before I turn it over in the spirit of cooperation to my colleague here, although I have many other questions and so we can probably get into those later today or at a later date. The one other area, looking at the Annual Report and I believe the Annual Report for '86-87 is the most recent one that is available, it indicates there that the federal Government contribution in '86-87 was \$23,094,597, but on page 21 under Insured Persons, which I assume are farmers' premiums, it is \$23,861,352 or almost \$800,000 less. If it is that the premiums are matched by the federal Government, why would this figure not be the same? Just for the Minister's—if he has not spotted where I am coming from, on page 9 of the Annual Report it says the federal Government's contribution to this program totalled \$23 million, 94 something. Then if you go over to page 21 it indicates the exact figure for the Government, but under Insured Persons it identifies it as \$800,000 more. Is there some simple explanation for why the federal Government's contribution is less than the total premiums from the farmers?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, it is a good question. It causes us to think a moment. What happened is that producers get into a position—and we talked earlier

about surcharges, penalties and interest, and the federal Government does not match those payments. It matches just the premiums. So that is farmers paying premiums plus penalties and surcharges, and that \$800,000 are the penalties and surcharges.

* (1620)

Mr. Laurie Evans: One would safely infer then that the farmers who are in a penalty situation then should pay double the penalty because it is not being matched by the federal Government, or is that calculated into that premium so that it is actuarially sound?

Mr. Findlay: The federal contribution matches the premium the farmer pays. What the farmer has done is he is late-payment, he is in a penalty position because he has not paid on time. That is really why he is into that position. You can appreciate that does happen on occasion; sometimes accounts that are difficult to collect on, period.

Mr. Laurie Evans: A final question, before I turn it over to the Honourable Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski). Just a quote that is in the Annual Report. It states, "The corporation went on-line in January 1987"—this is referring to the computer. In the Annual Report it states that "In 1988, farmers should see considerably faster service." Are any comparisons available yet? In other words, has the computer done the job you were anticipating?

Mr. Findlay: I am pleased to report there has been some improvements in turnaround time to pay claims. We take post-harvest claims: 1984 turnaround time was 64 days; '87, 47 days; and this year the estimate is 35 to 40 days. In hail claims in 1984 it was 52 days; in 1987, 38 days; and estimated this year, 25 days. We are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate what the reserve position of the corporation is at the beginning of this year? I note from the Annual Report that there was a net reserve of \$10.5 million at the end of '87. What is the present reserve position?

Mr. Findlay: The reserve in the corporation is \$31,620,000.00. In the reinsurance reserve, there is \$14,409,000 to the Manitoba Reinsurance; in the Canada Reinsurance Fund there is \$37,515,000, for a total of \$83.5 million. I can anticipate the next question. The probable payout is around \$100 million. That will leave the Manitoba Reinsurance Fund \$10 million in deficit and the Canada Reinsurance Fund \$6 million in deficit. That is the probable position that we will be in.

Mr. Uruski: That is really what I was getting at in terms of where we see ourselves at the end of this claims period.

I am assuming that in terms of the administrative costs from what we had budgeted for in our Estimates

that were posted, the increases primarily for adjusting cost, the difference, there is about an odd \$100,000 increase in administration. Those would be for the adjusting costs based on the drought that you have experienced. Is that accurate?

Mr. Findlay: That is true. It will be for the increased adjustments that were perceived at the time these were drafted. But I must tell the Member that it is obvious that additional adjustment costs are going to be happening because things are a lot worse than what was perceived back at the beginning of June. So adjustment costs are going to be above projections.

Mr. Uruski: Could the Minister indicate, given that the corporation will be in a total net deficit position this year and of course it has taken a number of years to build up those reserves, I am assuming that those reserves of 83.5 were strictly in terms of Manitoba's account with the federal Government and Manitoba's claim period. It does not include in any of the other provinces. They have their own reserves.

Does the corporation know what the liabilities—I do not mean in actual numbers, they probably will not have the figures—how our position in terms of what I would consider over the years of modest deficit, although of concern, rates to, for example, what is the situation in, say, Saskatchewan and/or Alberta over the last number of years? How do we rate?

Mr. Findlay: Because of the droughts that were experienced in southern Saskatchewan and southern Alberta in '83, particularly, in '84 and '85, going into this year we were in a somewhat better position than they were. About 86 cents on the dollar was our position and theirs was greater in dollars. They were just not quite as well off. He can appreciate Saskatchewan, their projected payout is—I have seen \$500 million and \$800 million, and it is probably somewhere in that range, substantially greater than ours. So they will be in a much worse position than what we are even at the end of this year, I would have to assume from that.

Mr. Uruski: What is the corporation's advice in terms of replenishing those reserves? Over what period of time does the corporation view the replenishment as being a reasonable method of operation? You could have a projection of replacing them very quickly which means one heck of a boost in premiums overnight. What is their time line in terms of working their way out?

* (1630)

Mr. Findlay: To the Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski), presently, of the premiums that the corporation receives this year, say 7.5 percent of that goes to the reinsurance fund in Ottawa, 15 percent goes to the reinsurance fund in Manitoba. The way the agreement is struck, because we are in a deficit now, next year 15 percent of the premiums paid will go to the Ottawa reinsurance fund and 15 percent to Manitoba. The total amount of next year's premiums that have to go towards reinsurance jump from 22.5 percent to 30 percent. So

more of next year's premiums go to the reinsurance funds.

But the premium increase that is needed really to replenish these reserves will not start to increase, in any fashion, until 1990 because the experience of this year will not be in the calculations until 1990. It is really a two-year delay. And really, in wheat you are using a 25-year moving average so there will not be much increase in premium because of this. The repayment, so-called, into the reserves is going to be slow.

Mr. Uruski: Does the province then, in a net deficit position—I am assuming that even on a cash basis the corporation requires funding from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to run its operations, or is there funding because this is an accounting figure? Is there basically cash in the corporation to continue the operation, notwithstanding the net deficit position of the reserves?

Mr. Findlay: The corporation has written a letter as of September 21 to Mr. Mike Ellis of Agriculture Canada requesting that the reinsurance monies from the federal Government be advanced more swiftly to the province, because we are going to be making significant payouts. As you well know, the province in the interim, the Minister of Finance advances funds to the corporation to pay their indemnities on the rapid turnaround that we talked about earlier. But we have to wait for Ottawa to advance the money, and there is a particular time frame in which that is normally done. We are asking for a speeded up transfer of funds from Ottawa to here, so that we can reduce our interim finance costs to fund these indemnities.

Mr. Uruski: The Minister did not answer my question. In terms of dollars, so that I can put it as clearly as I can, you are basically now cash short. The province has to advance day to day—when I say day-to-day, a lump sum amount to pay for the claims outstanding and all administrative costs at the present time. That has to be advanced because of the net deficit position of the corporation. Is that correct? Okay.

I just have one or two more questions in this area. When the corporation goes into a net deficit position and the province has to advance monies, what happens to the interest charges on borrowing that goes to the corporation? How is that handled in terms of the corporation's accounting? Does the province absorb its share and in the reverse, if it is in a surplus position, does the federal Government, out of its fund, keep the interest in the province? How is the accounting done in this area?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, the corporation does not receive interest on the money it has in reserves that it does not pay. The money that is advanced to the Crowns of the corporation, the province and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) picks up the interest costs, and that is why we need the federal money to flow in as fast as possible to restrict that time.

Mr. Uruski: So basically over the long term, there is no interest paid or earned. It is basically a long-term balancing out, okay.

I just wanted to get back to one point before I turn the floor over to my colleague, the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans). When we talked about the whole area of trying to enhance the number or increase the number of producers into the program, the Minister—and he will correct me if I am wrong—listed two areas of producer concern. I want to find out whether those are considered to be the main issues in the corporations in the Minister's mind, or producer's mind, as to the lack of entry into the program. He talked about enhanced level of coverage, or lack of it.

Secondly, the whole area of concern about abuse. I want to come from this angle. Could I ask the Minister, what is—and he started giving us participation rates by districts. Some areas, some he said were over 70 percent and Lac du Bonnet was something like 22 percent. Could he list the participation rates? What I am getting at, and I may as well lay it on the table, I have some concern if those are the only two areas that producers are not, or the two main points that the producers are not in as to abusers. I am not sure of the translation of that information to the areas where there is low participation. I mean, does that tell you that there are in Lac du Bonnet, the issue there is because there are a lot of abusers or the Interlake, where there may also be low participation, a lot of abusers. I do not want the Minister to leave a misimpression on the record because it can leave a misimpression on the record. I just want him to clarify that because I am sure that is not the case.

* (1640)

Mr. Findlay: Does the Member want me to give the level of participation district by district? Okay. St. Pierre, 29 percent; Altona, 57 percent—

Mr. Uruski: Percent by?

Mr. Findlay: Crop district—Carman district, 63 percent; Somerset, 74 percent; Glenboro, 58 percent; Souris, 54 percent; Virden, 56 percent; Portage la Prairie, 43 percent; Sanford, 53 percent; Beausejour, 22 percent; Stonewall, 25 percent; Neepawa, 44 percent; Hamiota, 51 percent; Birtle, 47 percent; Grandview, 42 percent; Dauphin, 33 percent; Swan River, 47 percent; Deloraine, 65 percent; Fisher Branch, 23 percent.

The two comments that I mentioned are the ones that I have heard most often addressed to me. There are some other issues that certainly have been brought up over time, that the coverage is not high enough, that the cost is too high. The premium rate is too high relative to the coverage they believe they get. Some people just dislike Government programs, period, so they say they do not want to participate. They consider themselves to be too low of a risk. In other words, the coverage level is not going to be high enough in that area.

I see what the Member is getting at. There are a number of areas up in the Interlake that are on the low category side. There may be some different issues involved there. I guess the level of coverage is probably one of them in that area. It is the intent of the

corporation and the board and my office to try to address all issues for all areas. I just identified the two that have come to me most commonly. There certainly are some more.

Mr. Uruski: I really did not want the Minister to leave the impression because one could take—I know that he did not mean it in that way. But leaving that on the record, if I took the participation rate in a district which may be low and then said, well the two areas that the Minister talks about is abusers. Well, do I ask the question is this area very highly abusive, a lot of abusers in that area and that is why everybody else is mad at the corporation and not going in it? That is what I do not want to leave on the record. I know by his nod that is not what he wants to leave on the record.

I appreciate there are in various regions, I guess because historical data has not been up to current trends—basically because of low participation, the corporation has not done as much work in that area. I say, I think the Interlake is one of those where people have tended to move away from crop insurance historically because their production was higher, at least they felt, higher than what the corporation was rating the soils and the like.

One of the areas that I think those are the reasons—I do not know, the corporation may disagree, but my intuition and it is an intuition and it is an assumption is that historically, since the corporation began, and it is no reflection on anyone because I think it was an attempt at that time, and the circumstance at the time, that the corporation sold the program as an inexpensive way for protection rather than say that that protection is needed and not relating to the cost. Basically, it was cheap protection.

I think almost a mental attitude over the years built up on that basis and then when there were loss years premiums had to be raised because, obviously, losses have to be covered. Farmers started saying, well, this whole thing is not so cheap any more. Notwithstanding the 50 percent participation of the federal Government, they still do not think it is cheap.

I guess, historically, I believe it will take—and I ask the Minister in the corporation—a number of years of an attitudinal change and, through it, a marketing change in terms of how farmers perceive crop insurance and the corporation. I think there has to be some worth in that area because of that long-standing mentality, and not lessening the points that the Minister has made as to why they are not participating in those two major points, but because I think the marketing end of it has to be structured in such a way as to start turning that sort of mentality around.

I guess, secondly, that the corporation continue moving towards individualized production, although recognizing the squeeze on staff and salaries, that will undo or lessen the complaint about the enhanced level of coverage, which can be enhanced if we started moving towards more individualized record-keeping, recognizing that it will take a number of years or at least some innovation in programming, but I would like to hear the Minister's comments in those areas.

* (1650)

Mr. Findlay: I think the Member's comments about the perception of cheap protection certainly is true over the past period of time. I think that no doubt that we need to do a bit of a marketing objective with the corporations and to sell it as a risk protection.

I would say, particularly to the young producer, who is the person that has the highest risk, he probably has some mortgages outstanding and he does not have any reserve to work with, I know that over time I would say that I consider myself who live in the southern part of the province by and large and always considered that I was protecting myself against lack of rainfall. Really, that was the wild card you had no control on. It was luck whether you got rainfall or not and I felt crop insurance had to protect you from that. - (Interjection)- You have the problem in the opposite direction often, excess moisture. You would like to average it out a bit.

The other thing is that with higher costs of production as over the last few years, I guess I am disappointed that farmers have not chosen to protect themselves from those high costs by looking at crop insurance, because really, in terms of the percentage of their total operating cost that would be used to pay a crop insurance premium, it is really relatively small considering the kind of risk protection, even if you can get \$60 to \$70 an acre in the average situation.

I think it is a reasonably good program that needs to be sharpened up in terms of attracting people in and a bit of a marketing initiative, I think would be beneficial, because as the Minister or the former Minister identified—I am still going to call you Minister—there is that perception out there. There is cheap protection and what not. We need to address that. I think we will use the same philosophy here as we used with the soil testing. We have a man out on the road there selling the service. If we want to have service here, we want to sell it to the producers. If we are not out there selling the service, they probably think something is not worth buying. The marketing angle is pretty important in any service nowadays.

Mr. Uruski: Just one comment before I turn it over.

I just asked the Minister basically in the area of low participation that I say to him that I certainly will not use that area. I do not believe I have as a political argument. I would hope that this is the one area that I have, I guess maybe felt fairly sensitive on when I was Minister because I believe that whoever has been in Government, it has been the intent to try and build up the program and the participation in the program. It is my hope, and I leave that on the record, that this one area is left out of political bantering. If anything sends out mixed signals to the farm community, that somehow that the politicians are bantering about, well there is not enough, and we then get into the whole question of the psychological downgrading of the program just by the question of participation. I say to the Minister, I will not use that. I believe that we should all as Members try not to use that one. We then ruin it ourselves because we send out mixed signals in this whole area.

Mr. Findlay: The Member is completely right. A corporation selling a service and politics plays absolutely no role in delivery of this service from the corporation to our clients out there, the farmers of Manitoba.

I guess one of the things that we want to try and do is supply insurance so that it is giving a producer insurance basis management rather than management plus luck which sometimes in a way it is right now. But it will revolve so it reflects his management. If his management is good, his level of coverage will rise, his premium will fall; if his management is bad, it will reflect in that direction.

So moving towards not totally individualized coverage but, I guess, less regional coverage than we have now is the objective. The cost of going to complete individualized coverage would be the administrative cost projected at maybe \$600,000.00. We are looking at something, maybe what we are talking about and looking at is somewhat less expensive than that, maybe in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range. But certainly we have to move in that direction, and political bantering has got nothing to do with delivery of the service. I welcome all comments from any Members who can sort of give the corporation assistance and advice as to what is appropriate for the various areas of the province.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Well, I would certainly endorse the comments of both the Minister and the Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski). I think that the corporation obviously, the arm's length operation and the keeping politics out of it is critical. In some respects, it has somewhat the same sort of attitude I think that has to prevail as with the Canadian Wheat Board. It is there for the purpose of serving the farmers and to maximize not only their income but the stability of their income and certainly should not be used as a political ploy.

Looking at what might be a totally different area in a sense and that is the corporation's responsibilities, I think in the Annual Report it refers to the fact that the major ones of course are the general crop insurance and the hail insurance. But it goes on to indicate that the corporation is also responsible for the administration of various agricultural-related programs on behalf of the Government of the province and the Government of Canada. We know that this year the corporation has been responsible for the administration of the Greenfeed Program, I believe. Are there other programs of that nature that are now or have been the responsibility of the corporation?

Mr. Findlay: The corporation administers the Migratory Waterfowl Program which pays out for crop damage done by migratory waterfowl, and they also do the adjusting for the Manitoba wildlife under The Manitoba Wildlife Act for damage by wildlife, which is administered by Natural Resources but the corporation does the adjusting.

Mr. Laurie Evans: The Greenfeed Program, I think everyone agrees, has been a very useful program this year. Can the Minister indicate whether any thought is being given to the incorporation of a program such as

this on an ongoing basis rather than having it kick in on an ad hoc basis in a disaster year, because I would assume that in a province the size of Manitoba there may be isolated areas where a greenfeed type of program may be of significance on a more regular basis.

To me, it would appear as though this might be another drought-proofing innovation that could be looked at. I have not given this a great deal of thought. It may be that the Minister would argue that unless it is widespread there would be adequate feed to come in from other places. But at the same time, it might provide a little greater level of self-sufficiency for some producers.

Mr. Findlay: There are two other ongoing programs that have been in place, one for a fairly long period of time and the other for a shorter period of time. The longer period of time has been the cultivated 4-H Program where alfalfa—I guess grasses too—can be insured for production. It is a program that is used to a fair degree. The other is the Livestock Feed Security Program which kicked, I believe, in 1984. It started with seven municipalities and then went to 22 municipalities in '85, '86, '87 and '88—all municipalities have qualified.

The number of contracts rose up to around 4,000 in '86, and it has tailed off a little bit. This year it is below 2,000. That in some sense is a bit of a sort of feed security method for producers to protect themselves for losses of their feed, so if Greenfeed Program were on a regular basis, it would be a third program.

There certainly have been some problems with the Feed Security Program in the way it is perceived out there. Maybe the program just got a bit of a rough ride as we get started into the process of putting it in place. There are some improvements needed in the Feed Security Program. I will tell you, my feeling is that as long as we are monitoring physically on the ground by measuring bales, there will always be difficulty with that program. Some will always argue that it did not fairly represent my area, or I should get paid because my production is less than the average of the municipality.

I think that if we can get in the future, and I hope that in a year or two that we can go to infra-red monitoring. In other words, measured from above, nobody can argue. The facts will be there. You cannot say that you moved one way or the other. We hope we can improve the Feed Security Program so that it is the method of allowing producers to protect themselves from losses of their feed. Maybe a modified Greenfeed Program could be part of that on an ongoing basis. If there is interest at the farm organization level, we will be interested in looking at it and discussing it.

But yes, the Greenfeed Program has been quite successful this year. There has been good participation. I know producers that seeded acres with the intention of getting greenfeed produced would have liked to have seen some more rain in July. They would have been

much better off. An awful lot of salvage acres occurred this year, crop that was in a pretty poor position was rolled up for bales in a very high quality state because there was no rain to interfere with the curing process, so it worked fairly well. Payouts will be occurring very shortly on that program. I guess we will get into it a little more the next day.

Mr. Chairman: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Mark Minenko (Chairman of the Committee of Supply): The Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Private Members' Business, I would like to draw Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's gallery where we have with us this afternoon the Honourable Elwood Veitch, who is the Minister of Regional Development and Minister of State for Mainland/Southwest Region from the Province of British Columbia. On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 2—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) Bill No. 2, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). (Stand)

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? (Agreed)

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday).