



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

---

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS  
(HANSARD)**

---

39-40 Elizabeth II

---

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan  
Speaker*



**VOL. XLI No. 58A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, MAY 4, 1992**



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

---

<b>NAME</b>	<b>CONSTITUENCY</b>	<b>PARTY</b>
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Cliff	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 4, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Andrhea Lande, Brenda Austin-Smith, Deborah Carlson and others requesting the government consider restoring the former full funding of \$700,000 to fight Dutch elm disease.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** I beg to present the petition of Katrina Boyd, Jean Davidson, Marise Leblanc and others requesting the government show its strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I beg to present the petition of Sandra McLaughlin, Joyce Jones, Natalie Strohman and others requesting the government consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned residents of the Province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba announced that it would establish an Office of the Children's Advocate in its most recent throne speech and allocated funds for this Office in its March '92 budget; and

WHEREAS the Kimelman Report (1983), the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (1991) and the Suche Report (1992) recommended that the province establish such an office reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in a manner similar to that of the Office of the Ombudsman; and

WHEREAS pursuant to the Child and Family Services Act Standards, the agency worker is to be the advocate for a child in care; and

WHEREAS there is a major concern that child welfare workers, due to their vested interest as employees within the service system, cannot perform an independent advocacy role; and

WHEREAS pure advocacy will only be obtained through an independent and external agency; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) has unsatisfactorily dealt with complaints lodged against child welfare agencies; and now

THEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba strongly urge the provincial government to consider establishing an Office of the Children's Advocate which will be independent of cabinet and report directly to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

\* \* \*

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Human Resources Opportunity Office has operated in Selkirk for over 21 years providing training for the unemployed and people re-entering the labour force; and

WHEREAS during the past 10 years alone over 1,000 trainees have gone through the program gaining valuable skills and training; and

WHEREAS upwards of 80 percent of the training centre's recent graduates have found employment; and

WHEREAS without consultation the program was cut in the 1992 provincial budget forcing the centre to close; and

WHEREAS there is a growing need for this program in Selkirk and the program has the support of the town of Selkirk, the Selkirk local of the

Manitoba Metis Federation as well as many other local organizations and individuals.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) to consider a one-year moratorium on the program.

\* \* \*

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), and it complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

The Brandon General Hospital is the major health care institution for southwestern Manitoba; and

The citizens of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba are deeply concerned and disturbed about the downsizing of the hospital and view it as a threat to the quality of health care in the region; and

The Manitoba government has chosen not to review the current budget to ensure that cutbacks to vital services do not occur; and

The administration of the hospital has been forced to take drastic measures including the elimination of the Palliative Care Unit and gynecological wards, along with the layoff of over 30 staff, mainly licensed practical nurses, to cope with a funding shortfall of over \$1.3 million; and

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs):** I would like to table, Mr. Speaker, the Supplementary Estimates for the Department of Urban Affairs and the Department of Housing.

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I have a brief statement to make to the House.

It was my privilege to have recently signed a proclamation designating the week May 3 to May 9, 1992, as National Forest Week in Manitoba. I would like to take this opportunity to read into the record the proclamation that I signed.

WHEREAS Canada's forests are one of the major aspects of our national heritage; and

WHEREAS our forests provide millions of Canadians and visitors with opportunities for healthful recreation and sport each year; and

WHEREAS these same forests provide protection in our watersheds for soils and crops and form a home for wildlife and also provide thousands of Canadians with jobs in the forest products industries; and

WHEREAS the losses suffered each year through man-made forest fires are detrimental to the interest of all Canadians; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Forestry Association is well known for its efforts in reminding us of our ever-present responsibility for the conservation of our forest wealth and is co-operating in the promotion of a national week focusing attention on our forest resources;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT KNOWN THAT I, Harry J. Enns, Minister of Natural Resources, do hereby recognize the days from May 3 to May 9, 1992, as National Forest Week in Manitoba and do commend their observation to all citizens of the province.

Mr. Speaker, honourable members will be pleased to note that the tradition of the House continues with a presentation of a white spruce tree. These were supplied by the Manitoba Forestry Association in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources.

Today is recognized as Arbour Day. It is an occasion to plant trees and to reflect upon the future of our forests and forest industries. It was my pleasure this morning, in Brandon, to be able to join with my federal colleague, the honourable Frank Oberle, in announcing a farm forestry program to encourage the private wood lot industry.

This \$1-million, three-year program will help to ensure that owners of treed lands have alternatives to clearing their land. As well, it will encourage owners of marginal land to replant their land in trees, which in years to come will benefit both our

environment and economy; in other words, sustainable development.

I was also pleased to advise honourable members that this principle of sustainable forestry development has been applied in the urban tree planting program that I was able to announce just last week. That program will see the planting of approximately 3,500 green ash and basswood trees on the properties of land owners who have lost trees to Dutch elm disease. Only through a combination of tree removal and tree planting will we ensure that our urban forest remains sustainable. This program will ensure that the city of Winnipeg remains green now and in the future while providing jobs for our young people today.

I would ask all honourable members to take these trees with them to ensure that they are planted where they can grow and be enjoyed. I might suggest that maybe some of them need some watering pretty soon. Thank you.

\* (1340)

**Mr. Clif Evans:** It is certainly my privilege to reply to the minister's statement this afternoon regarding National Forest Week in Manitoba.

The minister's statement has indicated that the announcement of the \$1-million federal announcement—that the program is to ensure that trees will be reforested and regrown. I would like to also remind the minister and members on the opposite side of the House that the forestry department and forestry in Manitoba is of great importance to this province.

We are well aware of the fact that some years ago, in the Interlake itself, we had devastating loss in forestry, and I would encourage the minister to not only include the urban renewal of the growth of trees in maintaining the greenery in Winnipeg but also to encourage his department to expand in rural Manitoba, where we also have a tremendous need for further sustainable development for jobs, Mr. Speaker, and also to remind the minister that in his announcement on the Dutch elm disease, Dutch elm disease is also spreading very, very quickly throughout rural Manitoba. I would ask the minister that in his department, he provide, not only the urban centre with more funds to be able to prevent this disease but also to enhance the growth of future trees, not only in Winnipeg, but in rural Manitoba.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would just also like to comment and thank the minister for his lovely trees.

We certainly will, on this side of the House, grow them at the appropriate spots. I know that this tree here will be in the Interlake some time this week. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank the minister for yet another tree. I have a row of these growing in the back of my property, and for any of those who are not using them, I will be happy to take them off their hands.

Forestry in this province is at a critical juncture. I think all Manitobans who have been following issues with respect to our forests and forest management realize that. There are some very hopeful signs. I point to the experimental forest application to the federal government, which has come forward now from Abitibi-Price and from various environmental groups, presently in the hands of our federal counterparts.

We are waiting for information as to whether or not the Manitoba application has been chosen, but we are all hopeful. The most hopeful sign, at the outset, was that environmentalists and the foresters themselves, Abitibi-Price, in particular in this case, came together in a joint application. That was a very, very hopeful sign for the future of forest management in this province, Mr. Speaker.

That consensus building was seen again in response to the CEC decision of a couple of months ago. When the decision came down, of course, Abitibi-Price, the people in Pine Falls, are very upset because they perceived it to mean that their livelihoods were threatened. Mr. Speaker, when they came together with the environmental groups involved, I think both sides were surprised that they could reach consensus, and they did.

They went down that road, and for unfortunate reasons, it did not crystallize in a positive recommendation to the minister at that time. The point is they came to an agreement on the critical factors and a way to implement the CEC decision so that it did not mean that jobs were cost at Pine Falls.

Now, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), I believe, dropped the ball, Mr. Speaker, and did not take them up on their offer to appoint a mediator, and for that I think he will regret that decision. The point is that we are seeing signs of a coming together and a consensus building between both the forest companies as well as the

environmental groups, and that is a very, very positive move.

We are now at a stage where certain states in the United States require 40 per cent recycled product in their paper products. That is clearly the way of the future. The way of the future for Abitibi-Price, for other manufacturers including Repap and others, is to include recycled materials, to join the move towards sustainable development, which means higher and higher levels of recycled product.

\* (1345)

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see this announcement today, specifically to do with turning private forest into areas of economic growth in a sustainable way that is consistent with our environmental principles. I do believe that if we are going to capitalize—and there is every reason for this province to do it as much as any other province in this country—on the desire of the community at large to ensure sustainable forests and capitalize on the good will of both the environmental groups who are involved, as well as the producers, government must lead.

The CEC decision stood for the principle that government in this province was not leading. I call on government to lead in all areas of forest management, and I congratulate them on this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Supplementary Information for Legislative Review on the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Hydro Act):** Mr. Speaker I have a ministerial statement to make.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform you and my honourable colleagues that the negotiators for the Province of Manitoba, the Government of Canada, Manitoba Hydro and the Split Lake Cree First Nation have recommended a comprehensive agreement to settle the outstanding obligations flowing from the Northern Flood Agreement. This proposed agreement is the result of more than two years of intensive, determined negotiations involving all four parties.

Each party must go through the formal processes required for approval. This includes a referendum to be held by the Split Lake chief and council by asking for the approval of the Split Lake residents. The chief and his council have attempted to

maintain an open line of communication with the residents of Split Lake to build a consensus and ensure the agreement is understood.

Both federal and provincial governments, along with the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board, will go through a further process of review. This is a comprehensive agreement that fully and finally releases the province from all obligations under the 1977 Northern Flood Agreement and provides the Split Lake Cree with \$47.37 million.

The funds from this agreement will be administered through trust arrangements. The proposed agreement also includes resource management, environmental monitoring, land transfers and social and economic initiatives. Honourable members know our government has indicated our commitment to settle outstanding claims under the Northern Flood Agreement. It is a responsibility and an obligation we take very seriously. In solving our differences, we will be able to move on to new challenges.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement will fully release the province from any further obligations to the Split Lake Cree under the Northern Flood Agreement. That does not mean we stop working with the Split Lake community. We have clarified our various roles and can now move on to tackle other challenges.

I think this agreement involving the Split Lake Cree shows hard work and determined negotiations. The four other bands affected by the Northern Flood Agreement have chosen to implement their claims under the original 1977 agreement. The invitation to globally negotiate remains open to the four bands: Norway House, Cross Lake, Nelson House and York Landing, who are still under the original Northern Flood Agreement.

I am pleased with the efforts that all parties have made, and I look forward to future co-operation that can benefit all Manitobans. I will be providing further information for members of the Legislature and the public as the process allows. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** We, on this side, certainly welcome any progress that is made on the Northern Flood Agreement. It was signed in 1977 by the then Sterling Lyon government. It has been 15 years. There are many lengthy, complex

negotiations that have been part of this set of negotiations, Mr. Speaker.

As the member of the Legislature representing Split Lake, I know. I have had the opportunity to talk to the chief and members of the council and with the community on a regular basis about the progress of negotiations. Also, I am sure the minister is aware, there are continuing negotiations and continuing concerns of the four other bands which were signatory to the Northern Flood Agreement, concerns still related to environmental assessments, part of the original 1977 Northern Flood Agreement.

In commenting on the particular agreement, I would indicate to the minister that I know the position of the Split Lake Band is one, of course, that will be subject to referendum, but it is clearly, from their point, not a question of giving up all their rights as aboriginal people in terms of questions related to land in terms of environmental damage, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that in suggesting that this releases the province from obligations under the Northern Flood Agreement, the specific wording of the 1977 agreement, the minister would also acknowledge the position of the Split Lake band and other bands which have yet to sign a final agreement with the government that they are no way seeing this process of negotiations as leading to anything other than the implementation of the 1977 agreement.

\* (1350)

They still reserve the right to deal with governments related to any environmental damage that may result from past or future dams, hydro developments, in fact, any resource development. I think that is important because aboriginal people, I know, have said very clearly in regard to the Northern Flood Agreement that this, in many ways, has mirrored their experience generally, whether it be in terms of treaties, whether it be in terms of land claims, whether it be in terms of self-government. One lesson I think we all need to learn in society, Mr. Speaker, is to understand that the aboriginal people have a unique relationship with the land.

When we are talking about the legal system, whether it be a flood agreement with all its frustrations and lengthy negotiations, long after the flood agreement is merely a footnote in history, the aboriginal people of Split Lake, the aboriginal people of northern Manitoba, will still have their unique relationship with the land. So we should not

be assuming, Mr. Speaker, that the signing of any agreement in any way changes that. This is really just another chapter.

It is nice to see that this final negotiation has taken place for the community of Split Lake. We have much more to be done, not only in terms of the Northern Flood Agreement, but in terms of clearly recognizing the right of aboriginal people to the land which they have traditionally used. Indeed, we will be making comments on that I am sure in this session and in many sessions to come in the Legislature.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, we, too, certainly want to join in our thanks to the parties involved on both sides of this and our congratulations that they have been able to come to an arrangement after 15 years of dealing with this issue. It is high time.

I notice that my friend from Thompson indicates that we have all learned certain things. I think, if we learned one thing about this, it is how not to go about northern hydro development, and that is not the way that the NDP let us down in the 1970s. I note that Mr. Eliesen was representing us back then, and now he is the head of Ontario Hydro, better than Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, after 15 years, it is time that these people had a future and had some opportunity to maximize what they have in northern Manitoba and to move forward and beyond the destruction of some of the hydro developments. Recognizing the human and the financial cost of hydro development in northern Manitoba today should be a necessary part of hydro development, and it should be what we do before we build these dams.

Unfortunately, this government, I think, purports to have learned the lesson from prior failures of the NDP, but I am not sure they have. I see increased investment and increased evidence that the government is pushing forward with Conawapa no matter what. Everything in between is just something to go through to get the ultimate result, Mr. Speaker, and that is wrong. We have surely learned by this point that we have to think first and build later and recognize the full cost before we not only invest but wreak havoc in areas where 15 years later, like this, we will still be trying to settle the outstanding claims.

Mr. Speaker, I want to raise one issue for the minister. The minister indicates that this will be the

subject of a referendum. I know in the past, he knows in the past, there have been problems in dealing with membership and who gets to vote on these things. Those are issues that I will be looking for answers on. I look forward to some of his promise of further information. He has indicated that further information will be forthcoming, and we certainly look forward to that.

We also look forward to progress reports in the upcoming Estimates on the negotiations that are going on with the other bands, Mr. Speaker. We hope indeed that reconciliations can be had with them as well. As my friend had indicated correctly, much work is left, but surely at this point, recognizing the agreement that has been reached here, congratulations must go to the parties involved.

\* (1355)

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Economic Growth Government Initiatives

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, on November 1, 1990, the Premier stated to us in this House that we are faring better in this recession than most other provinces and talked about the good times Manitoba would enjoy in the future.

On March 13, 1991, the other part of the economic troika of the government, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) stated: You must realize that Manitoba is doing much better than the rest of Canada, and it is coming through this session reasonably well in comparison. The government must get credit for this performance, the minister said.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) told us in 1990 when we were faced with the 1991 recession: Manitoba is a beacon in the dark because we are performing so well in a relative sense to other provinces in this country.

Mr. Speaker, Friday, the gross domestic product as a factor cost came out in this country, the measurement of all economic performances, private and public of the government, and unfortunately, Manitoba was last in economic performance in the whole country—dead last. We have gone back through the years, and the last time that Manitoba was last was when Walter Weir was defeated by Ed Schreyer in 1969 in terms of economic performance and last place.

I would ask the Premier: Why are we in last place, and what is his government doing about a situation that has not taken place in this province for 23 years?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I note that the member was quoting from comments that I made in 1990 and comments that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was making in 1990. At that time indeed, according to Stats Canada, we had a growth rate in 1990 of 3.5 percent. Indeed we were faring better than the national average. Those were accurate comments that you found, so I thank him for confirming the veracity of those comments.

In 1991, as I said publicly on Friday, it was a bad year right across the country. Everybody suffered and suffered dramatically from the recession. In Manitoba terms, the reasons that are put forward by Stats Canada are that we had the lowest growth in labour income in the country, and that primarily is because we chose strategically to freeze public sector wages and set a target that was matched by most private sector employers.

The wage increase kept taxes down in this province. Unlike other provinces, we chose not to raise taxes, so we have had five straight budgets of no increase in taxes, and we have positioned ourselves better for the recovery for the future. As a result, Stats Canada, the very people from whom he derives his information, along with most of the major forecasters, are suggesting that in 1992, '93 and '94, we will perform better than the national average, probably in the top four provinces in the country.

We think that is good news, Mr. Speaker, and we think that looking to the future positively is the sort of thing that everybody should be doing. We regret that the Leader of the Opposition persists in his gloom and doom, dark approach to all of things in society. That is not what the people are looking for. The people are looking for positive leadership, and that is what they are getting.

\* (1400)

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the people are looking for jobs. The young people waiting in line today are looking for jobs. They are looking for economic opportunity. They are looking for performance. They are not looking for last-place finishes that this Premier brags about in this House. He quotes 1990; in 1990 we were in eighth place. I guess 1990 was a great year according to the Premier because,



in 1991, we were in tenth or in last place of all provinces in this country.

I would ask the Premier, as head of the economic committee of cabinet, that \$900,000 secretariat that they created and he chairs: What action is he going to take to start dealing with the 60,000 who are unemployed, the thousands of young people who cannot get jobs, the increase in welfare rates that are developing on the basis of Manitoba being in last place in 1991 in economic performance? What action is he going to take?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that we are beyond 1991 and that the economic forecasters, the banks and Stats Canada are suggesting that 1992, '93 and '94 will all be better years because we have kept the taxes down, because we have kept the deficit down. We have built the kind of foundation that people are looking for.

They are projecting a 31.7 percent increase in manufacturing capital investment. They are suggesting that as a province in 1992, we are going to have the highest overall increase in capital investment, the second-highest increase in private capital investment. Those are the kinds of things that the Economic Development Board of Cabinet has been working on.

### Government Forecast

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** These are the same recorded announcements we received from the Premier in 1990, the same recorded announcements we received from his economic ministers in 1991, and it is the same kind of recorded announcements we get from the Premier again today, not acknowledging the pain and suffering that is induced on Manitobans with a 10th or last-place performance by this government.

I would ask the Premier: In light of the fact that private sector investment and many other sectors of investment have gone down, and in light of the fact that banks are downgrading the growth predictions for Manitoba, even as we speak today—[interjection] Well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) gets upset from his seat. I guess I would be upset too if I predicted we would be doing better than any other province in Canada and came in 10th place or last place—[interjection] 10th place is fair.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

**Mr. Doer:** My question to the First Minister is: When will we in this province, in 1992, be equal to the lost growth in 1991 so that we are even with what happened in the election? What are his predictions, in this House, when we will gain back the lost jobs, the lost opportunities, the lost investment, the loss in our future in 1992 to make up for the tremendous decline in growth and economic opportunity suffered under his government in 1991?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the fact is that every one of the economic forecasters, major economic forecasters is suggesting that in 1992, '93 and '94, we will be among the top four.

### CareerStart Program Funding

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I have a question for the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, youth unemployment is now at 18.6 percent, which is abnormally high. In fact, it is the highest ever recorded since statistics were kept on youth unemployment in this province.

Unemployment is expected to remain high during this year. In fact, Mr. Speaker, these high unemployment figures are reflected in the disappointment and the frustration of students who are finding it almost impossible to find jobs this summer.

I ask the minister, Mr. Speaker, will this government reconsider its allocation of money slotted for CareerStart? Specifically, will the government increase the CareerStart funding from \$3.5 million back to \$7 million, where it was a couple of years ago?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services):** The member references the youth unemployment rates in Manitoba, and I say to the member that youth unemployment rates across this country are high. For the January to March period, 1992, Manitoba was in third place. The Maritime provinces and other provinces have a much higher unemployment rate with their youth than Manitoba.

Having said that, however, we have maintained our CareerStart Program at last year's levels. We have also introduced a new program, the Partners with Youth program, that is now taking applications, that there are a lot of municipal level governments and nonprofit organizations interested in that program, and that will allow us to create an extra 700

jobs this year as those applications come in and are approved.

### Status Report

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Young people are looking for jobs that are not there.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: How many youth job positions were cut by this government since it took office in 1988; that is, how many job positions for youth were there in '88? How many are there today under the downscaled youth CareerStart Program?

**Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services):** I say to the member that we have maintained that program, even in very difficult economic times, maintained it at last year's level. We have introduced a new program, and I might point out to him that we are also maintaining some 44 youth job employment offices across this province.

Last year, we had some 13,000 students registered at those job offices which are located in 44 of our communities, and we were able to place almost 9,000 of them. So our budget for those youth employment offices has been maintained and again will be in operation this summer.

### Youth Employment Programs Northern Manitoba

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I ask this minister: Will the government re-establish the youth employment program in northern Manitoba which was abolished last year? I ask this in view of the fact that northern unemployment is dramatically higher than the provincial average for youth unemployment.

**Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, the program that the member references was operated by the federal government last year. We have maintained our programs, and young people in the North have every opportunity to access the job employment offices, to access CareerStart programming, as well as the Partners with Youth program.

### Student Aid Application Statistics

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, today Canada Student Youth Employment Centres opened up across this

nation. They opened up for business in a climate which is less than positive. We know that there are no jobs for young people. That is why we have such a very high unemployment rate. We know that jobs have been cut in the private sector as well as in the government sector. We know that they are facing 18 percent increases in student fees, and we know that there is less money available to them in the student loan system than there was two years ago.

The Minister of Education says she has increased it from last year. Well, yes, she has, but she is still, through her ministry, \$600,000 less than she was two years ago. At the same time, she, by her own figures, admits there will be an increase of applicants by 43 percent.

Can she tell the House today where those 43 percent of new applicants are to go for student assistance in the province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to add to the figures to clarify for the members in this House. Over the past four years, there has been almost \$4 million more put into the student assistance program. I would also like to remind the member that the program is not capped, and that this year we put in over \$600,000 more for student assistance. If students are in greater need then, certainly their cases will be examined.

### Funding

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is putting misleading information before this House. I traced back to 1989-90, and the figure for grants is very clear. It is \$10,597,300. In 1990-91, that went to \$11,456,900. Last year, it went back to \$10,277,000. This year it went up by \$10,892,800 total. That is, to be exact, a \$573,100 increase year to year, but a \$615,800 decrease from two years ago.

Can the minister tell us where in God's name she comes up with \$4 million?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training):** During the Estimates process, I will be happy to provide her with the detailed information of the additional funds which have been put into the area of student aid in the past four years.

I will also remind the member that again this year there has been a commitment by this government. We have increased our funding to student aid by

\$615,000, and in addition to that, the fund is uncapped.

### Appeal Process

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, if this lack of capping is accurate, can she explain to this House why she expects a 24 percent increase in student appeals for student bursaries?

\* (1410)

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, we certainly want to take a look at the particular situation of students who find themselves in financial need during the course of their studies. The appeal process is available to those students, whatever their age and whatever their family circumstance, if they believe that they have a concern which they would like to have brought forward. Those are estimated numbers, and I am very pleased that we do have a process where awards can be re-examined where necessary.

### Dept. of Highways and Transportation District 10 Headquarters

**Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas):** My questions will be directed to the Minister of Northern Affairs, who is also responsible for hydro and is also the Deputy Premier.

In view of the fact that the North West Company is laying off 15 employees in The Pas, as well as the continuing layoffs in the woodlands division of Repap and other layoffs in the area, and the importance of roads to the northern economy, could I ask the minister whether he will consult with and urge his colleague the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), and indeed the cabinet, to commit his government to keeping The Pas as District 10 centre headquarters, with the same number of employees that are there now.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs and responsible for Native Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the specifics dealing with Highways and Transportation, I will allow or request my colleague the Minister of Highways to respond to that.

I do think, Mr. Speaker, to be fair, to point out to the member for The Pas the activities that are going on in northern Manitoba, particularly northwest Manitoba, this government's commitment of \$55 million to the smelter in Flin Flon, which is a major

impact, this government's commitment to the tree operation at The Pas.

The member has to be, as well, aware of the fact that when the government of which he sits left office, there was still some 90 percent unemployment in most of the northern communities, excluding probably The Pas, but in a lot of the remote communities, we saw 90 percent plus in unemployment, which the member for the Churchill constituency knows as well.

### The Pas, Manitoba Employment Opportunities

**Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas):** I want to ask the minister again: What has the minister done in conjunction with his colleague the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) to protest to his federal counterparts in Ottawa concerning more proposed job cuts at The Pas?

You see, these were only 15 jobs, but there are three more jobs being proposed to be terminated in six months in The Pas, at The Pas airport. If he has not consulted with his colleague the Minister of Highways, can he tell the House what they are prepared to do to speak on behalf of those people, northern people, who face job cuts in The Pas?

I would like to ask the minister finally: When is he going to give the people of The Pas a fair shake?

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs and responsible for Native Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that we are very concerned about The Pas and the North. We have established, as he knows, a Northern Development Commission, which will bring forward policies and recommendations to assist with activities that are going on.

I want to remind the member, as well, that he sits with a government that frittered some \$27 million away in a bridge without a road to it, north of Selkirk, that would have given the Department of Highways a little more latitude. He sits with a government that frittered \$27 million away in Saudi Arabia, left us with an annual interest charge of \$550 million.

Tough decisions have to be made, Mr. Speaker, and it is a matter of trying to make sure that we get through these difficult economic times and we get onto future economic activities.

### Norway House Fisherman's Co-op Compensation

**Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas):** Mr. Speaker, my final question is again to the minister.

We have just listened to a ministerial statement regarding hydro settlement. I want to ask the minister: Why has his cabinet and treasury board not yet approved the outstanding sum agreed to by Manitoba Hydro to the Norway House Fisherman's Co-op for compensation for the period of June 1, 1991, to May 31 of this year when it should have been paid, as per the agreement, within 30 days of the signing of the order of the arbitrator?

**Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Hydro Act):** Mr. Speaker, I will hold our record up as far as northern settlements are concerned with Manitoba Hydro, with the Manitoba government. In fact, in the Grand Rapids forebay settlement, he and his colleagues ignored and neglected and continually said they did not have a legal obligation. This Premier (Mr. Filmon) said to Manitoba Hydro, let us take a look; let us take a look at what obligations we have. Settlements have been made in his community. As the process proceeds, we will be making those kinds of settlements when all the work is done.

### Ashern, Manitoba Ground Water Contamination

**Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Environment, concerning ground water pollution in this province and specifically in the village of Ashern.

I would like to ask the minister what actions his department has taken for the residents of Ashern since his letter to my inquires on the subject in November of last year, in which a consultant's report was to be released on the problem.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, this has been an ongoing problem, one of historical origin as a matter of fact. That is one of the difficulties that we have in dealing with it, that there is probably more than one source of contamination. At the same time, I recognize the concerns that the people in the community have, but there are no good immediate alternate sources of water other than for small amounts of water for consumption.

We have not proceeded beyond the study phase, but we are planning on meeting further with the

representatives of the community and trying to develop an action plan from that.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Speaker, can this same minister inform this House as to whether or not his department was involved in the negotiations between the Ashern water supply committee and Petro-Canada just in the past three weeks?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I would characterize the involvement of the department as negotiations. We are obviously involved at almost every step of the process.

If the member has a specific issue that is concerning him beyond just the general principles, I would be more than glad to work with him.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Speaker, will the minister today commit his department's speedy assistance in order to provide the much-needed support for the community of Ashern and the health and well-being of the people in Ashern?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, we are more than willing to work with the community. There are a number of other communities besides this one that have considerable problems associated with ground water contamination. To put the whole issue in perspective, we also have a number of communities that do not have a supply of water, period, contaminated or otherwise. It is an increasing problem across the province of contamination and one which the Department of Rural Development, the Department of Environment, in all of our various responsibilities, we know that the future development of the communities will be tied to the ability to have a good potable source of drinking water.

### North American Free Trade Agreement Water Exports

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, since 1988, we on this side of the House have been very concerned about the impact of the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement, and particularly its impact on this province.

Some new statistics from Statistics Canada suggest that over this last four years, Canada has lost something in the order of \$8 billion in economic activity, and industrial production in this country has dropped some 9 percent while it has increased in the U.S.

I note that the Minister of Trade has come back from some meetings with the federal Minister of

Trade, and we have been asking some very serious questions about the U.S.-Canada-Mexico agreement. In particular, I have some questions on the impact of the effect on water, on the cross-border transportation of water.

I would like to ask the minister today: Did he receive some assurances from the federal minister that water is not included in this new deal?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** From our review of the documentation that has been provided to us in confidence from the federal government, water is not an issue in terms of the proposed Canada-U.S.-Mexico free trade agreement, other than potentially the issue of bottled water for distribution between countries.

\* (1420)

**Mr. Alcock:** Did the minister share with the federal minister the concerns that have been raised in this House, particularly given the very poor performance that this country has had under this agreement?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, I have on several occasions raised the concerns of the citizens of Manitoba as outlined to us when we did our consultation process back last year, back in June and July of last year.

I have also raised concerns that have come to light from our perspective from review of the documentation we have been provided with. I have also raised some concerns that have arisen from comments and questions in the House.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, we raised the concern about the cross-border pipelines to transport water.

Did the minister receive an assurance from the federal minister that those pipelines would not be transporting Canadian water?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, I will take part of the question as notice to get back to the honourable member with the details.

Again, our review of the internal working document that has been provided to us in confidence shows that this is clearly not an issue. The pipelines being referred to are not for the distribution of water, and water is not an issue in the proposed North American free trade agreement, other than, as I have already mentioned, in the area of potential bottled water, Mr. Speaker.

### Impaired Driving Stayed Charges Review

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In a recent court case involving alcohol and driving in Brandon, the Crown has stayed a charge against an accused based on inadmissible evidence. The minister has indicated to the press that an appeal will be launched or is pending.

My question to the minister is: What process is in place in his department for a review of stayed charges to ensure that these kinds of decisions receive the appropriate review and attention?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Just to correct the honourable member, I do not think I said that an appeal would be launched in that case. I did say, however, that senior prosecutors would review that case to see if there is any area that had not been uncovered, that if it were uncovered, would leave us in a position where reasonable and probable grounds might exist which would thus make the use of the blood test legal under the law.

We have a mechanism, since the reorganization of the Department of Justice, Prosecutions Division back in 1989, a process for reviewing cases, and senior prosecutors are involved in those reviews.

That reorganization happened because at that time, under the previous regime in this province, people were waiting up to 14 months to have their trials in our criminal court system, Mr. Speaker. That problem was resolved within the space of about seven months. I just do not understand why that problem had not been addressed before that.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Will the minister advise the House whether or not the particular case that I referred to in Brandon would have been dealt with and reviewed in the normal course of events if the matter had not been raised in the press and publicly outside of the court case?

**Mr. McCrae:** We try to be consistent in telling people, like honourable members opposite, specifically the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), for example, we do not run our prosecutions office based on what we read in the papers.

The case the honourable member refers to was reviewed by the prosecutor in charge of the Regional Courts, who is a very senior person. When it came to my attention, it was also reviewed

and is in the process of being reviewed now by other senior prosecutors, as well.

When you can get the best minds on a case like that, then you should do that, and that is what we are doing.

### Judicial System Bail Reviews

**Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan):** My final supplementary to the same minister of a related matter: Does the minister have in place a process for reviewing bail decisions such as the one recently in Winnipeg, where an alleged abuser was to get out on bail based on a decision of the alleged victim? Has the minister had an opportunity to review that? Is it going to be appealed, and what is the process in place?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, under the reorganization I referred to earlier, these decisions and reviews are made in a more structured way than they were previous to the reorganization. Certainly, more emphasis was placed on these issues with the Pedlar review and the emphasis this government is putting on the issue of domestic violence.

Here, again, the case the honourable member refers to is a case in which we felt the judge's decision in that case was somewhat out of line with the provisions in Pedlar and with the position this government takes. We announced last week that there was going to be an appeal of that matter.

### Residential Tenancies Act Proclamation

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, thousands of Manitoba tenants and, I hope, all landlords are wondering when this government is going to finally proclaim The Residential Tenancies Act and wondering whether they have any commitment to it at all since it was passed in this Chamber 14 months ago.

Can the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs tell us when the act will be proclaimed, since she said in the House on March 25, late spring or early summer, and since March 21 was the first day of summer, when will this act finally be proclaimed?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a different understanding of the calendar than the member opposite. I always thought that the first day

of spring was the date that he mentioned, not the first day of summer.

The answer remains the same as has been given many times in this House before. The question has been asked and answered several times.

### Rent Regulation Bureau Director's Status

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Why has the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs demoted the director of the Rent Regulation Bureau and transferred him to the Public Utilities bureau, since everyone agrees that he was doing an excellent job as director of the Rent Regulation Bureau?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the word "unloaded." That could be the member's word if he wishes to use it. It is certainly not the word that was in my mind. With every department, as you know, members of various talents and abilities are moved where those talents and abilities are most needed.

In this case, we have a situation with the PUB that the members opposite dwelt on very, very strongly during the Centra Gas debate saying: Are you going to have capable people? Are you going to have talented people? Are you going to have competent people with ability and experience to handle some of these things that are going to come up? We assured them we would and we do.

**Mr. Martindale:** There is a big difference between working on gas shutoffs and being director of a department.

Why is this minister watering down the regulations to The Residential Tenancies Act in response to pressure from landlords and developers who are lobbying this minister and the Premier (Mr. Filmon)? Did the minister get rid of the director of the Rent Regulation Bureau in order to find someone who is more compliant?

**Mr. McIntosh:** Mr. Speaker, this was an administrative decision. It was a management decision with which I concur because I think it was a good management decision.

The member has not taken a demotion as is being implied by the member opposite. It is a lateral transfer. We needed a senior manager to assist with the anticipated 3,000 lock offs that we are going to have this summer, plus other duties at the PUB.

We have had extra hearings, as you know. We have had a wide variety of new initiatives and incentives being brought before the PUB. We have an extremely capable person handling landlord and tenant affairs right now, and I object strongly to the implication that the person acting as director in that capacity is not competent. I very much resent that.

### Suche Report Working Committee

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, last December 6, as a result of the Pedlar Report, the government with great fanfare announced a community advisory committee. This committee did not meet until four months later.

Ten months after the Child and Family Services agencies were struck down and restructured into one large agency, the community advisory committees that were to be established as a result of that restructuring have not yet met.

Last Thursday, in response to the Suche report, there was a working committee established to implement standardized reporting procedures and other items.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

**Ms. Barrett:** What guarantee does this government provide to the people of Manitoba, the people who work in child care organizations, the children of Manitoba, that this working committee which is made up of excellent people, will be anything more than window-dressing, will actually immediately begin to do some work?

\* (1430)

**Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services):** I have a great deal of respect for the people who have agreed to serve on this working committee, and I am surprised that the member would feel that they are just there for window-dressing. These are people who have devoted their lives to working with children, who are very interested in the Suche report.

We have accepted many, many recommendations from that report, and this working group will be commencing work in the near future to look at some of the recommendations made there to see in what manner we can implement them.

As well, we have included people from a number of other departments, from Justice, from Health and Education to give that perspective on the Suche

report. I anticipate that they will begin their work in the near future.

### Recommendations

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain the delay in the Suche report government response, the delay in the review of 17 of those recommendations which deal with Child and Family Services Act changes to 1993, instead of beginning to implement those changes immediately?

**Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, The Child and Family Services Act was first enacted in 1985, and there have been no changes made to that act since that time. We have a number of organizations within the province and a number of government departments who have brought suggestions for change to us.

When we open up the act in the next session, we want to make comprehensive changes and not just react to the Suche report but also encompass within that some of the changes that other bodies have been advising us on.

### Children's Advocate Mandate

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Will the minister give this House and the people of Manitoba the assurance that the Children's Advocate will, in all cases, be an official part of the provincial investigative teams that are being set up as a response to the Suche commission when they examine abuse allegations in the child welfare system, not as a result of a report, but as an integral part of that?

**Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, I anticipate when we have the legislation passed and the Child Advocate's office set up, that the Child Advocate and the Child Advocate's office will be involved in all cases of children in care.

I would ask that the member not confuse the Child Advocate with the provincial Ombudsman. The provincial Ombudsman's office has a section within it that deal with children and children's issues.

I look forward to the member's support as we have a chance to debate that legislation and send it on to committee.

### St. John's Ambulance Funding

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns):** Mr. Speaker, this government keeps cutting back in areas of health care policy that do not make sense from a public health policy point of view, nor do they make sense from a cost-effectiveness point of view.

Two weeks ago I raised the cutback to the Association for Childbirth and Family Education. Last week I raised the cutback to the dental program. Today, I would like to ask the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) why they have chosen to eliminate total funding for a very important program with the St. John's Ambulance program, which in fact saves money in the long run for our health care system and for rural Manitoba.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, we have in the past provided a block funding grant so that members of staff of the ministry of Health might access the training program free of charge. We are now accessing the service as needed and paying for the services employee by employee.

#### Point of Order

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, a grant was not provided for—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It is clearly a dispute over the facts. The honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Lels) does not have a point of order.

\*\*\*

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** I would like to ask the Minister of Health: Which option should St. John's Ambulance take now that this grant has been cut back? Should they pass on the increased cost required to service the rural community to the rural community, or should they reduce their training staff by the one position the government is supposed to cover at a time when their resources are already overtaxed?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know which of the options will be followed, if any of the options, as advanced by my honourable friend, since I doubt whether she is close enough to the administration that she would be able to presuppose the decision they might make.

Mr. Speaker, I would fully expect that St. John's Ambulance will carry on in the fine tradition of

providing ambulance training services to volunteers and others throughout the province of Manitoba. In doing that, should the ministry staff continue to access that program as we expect, they will be paying the fees on an individual basis to achieve that.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Would the minister at least follow the advice of his own Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, which he set up last week for all members in this House to meet with, the advice of that centre being to make decisions—

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** From the media's point.

#### Point of Order

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member for Inkster suggests that we are raising questions from the point of view of the media only.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for St. Johns does not have a point of order.

\*\*\*

**Mr. Speaker:** I will recognize the honourable member for St. Johns for one very brief question.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** I will proceed with the question even though the member for Inkster is imputing motive.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** We are raising these questions because of the interests of Manitobans in quality health care.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Would the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) start making decisions that are done on the basis of cost effectiveness and preserve good preventative, healthy public policies for the province of Manitoba?

**Mr. Orchard:** At the risk of taking advice from my honourable friend when she shouts and yells that certain things are happening, Mr. Speaker, I simply indicate to my honourable friend that the decisions we are making are decisions which leave in place services for individuals.

In doing that, particularly in terms of the grant structures that my honourable friend has attempted to relate as having dire consequences to the people of Manitoba, I say to you, Sir, that in each and every case, the existing or alternate services are



available, and the compromise to access of those services is not at all inhibited by decisions of this government.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for Oral Questions has expired.

### Speaker's Ruling

**Mr. Speaker:** I have a ruling for the House.

On Friday, April 24, 1992, during consideration of whether or not there was urgency of debate on a proposed motion regarding a matter of urgent public importance, a point of order was raised by the government House leader (Mr. Manness) regarding whether more than one person from a recognized party could speak to that matter.

As members will recall, I said I would have the matter researched and would report back to the House. All motions for emergency debates have been researched as far back as 1988; that is, since we have had three recognized parties in this House. In no instance did more than one person speak for each party to the matter of urgency of debate.

What may have confused the matter is that when a matter of privilege has been raised, Speakers have allowed more than one member per party to comment on whether or not the conditions of privilege have been met.

I trust this clarifies the issue.

### MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), under Rule 27.(1), that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely the decline in this province's gross domestic product in 1991, which saw Manitoba record the worst performance amongst all the provinces for the first time since 1969.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before determining whether the motion meets the requirements of our Rule 27, the honourable member for Brandon East will have five minutes to state his case for urgency of debate on this matter. A spokesperson for each of the other parties will also have five minutes to address the position of their party respecting the urgency of this matter.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Speaker, our economic decline in this province, both relative to other

provinces and absolutely in terms of our economic history, is the greatest problem facing this province today and is reflected in the high unemployment levels, the high poverty levels that we have and the social distress that occurs in our province.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that two conditions must be met to consider this a matter of urgent public importance, one of which relates to the fact that the topic cannot be debated during the ordinary business of the House. I point out, of course, that the Throne Speech Debate has passed, the Budget Debate has passed, our Interim Supply Estimates debate has been completed.

I realize I could bring a grievance, but that is limited, and we are limited in the number of members who could participate in that fashion today. Also, I note that we are in the Estimates of the Departments of Health and Education, neither of which are considered to be economic departments. Therefore I believe that condition is met.

\* (1440)

The other condition is regarding the matter of public interest. I would indicate here that it is in the public interest to debate this issue, since this Legislature must grapple with the problem of economic decline, of intolerable high levels of unemployment and we must together seek solutions.

Mr. Speaker, in 1991, Manitoba had the worst economic growth rate in the entire country. That is a record we should be extremely concerned about. Manitoba placed 10th in performance. This 10th place performance is the worst since 1969 when the Walter Weir government was defeated by Ed Schreyer of that day.

According to Statistics Canada, this is the first time that Manitoba has had negative economic growth based on their present method of calculating. This is going back to 1961, Mr. Speaker. I would also observe that employment declined in 1991 by 2.2 percent; that is, our number of people in Manitoba actually shrunk. We are not going forward. We are going backward.

Also, I note in the provincial budget the prediction is that the economy will grow below the national average in 1992 and 1993, and also that the Toronto Dominion Bank and the Royal Bank have downgraded their expected economic forecast for this province. Mr. Speaker, according to the Royal

Bank, the largest bank in this country, virtually no growth in jobs is forecast for 1992. It is virtually a stagnant situation that they are forecasting.

Secondly, our unemployment rate is forecast to remain at unacceptably high levels in 1992. We were 8.8 in 1991 and will more or less be at that rate again in 1992. This is just intolerable, Mr. Speaker.

I would also point out, Mr. Speaker, that nonresidential investment is expected to decline by 3.3 percent in 1992. I repeat that we are talking about nonresidential investment; that is, investment that pertains to business, that pertains to industry and commerce is expected to decline by 3.3 percent. That investment is the basis of economic growth, is the basis of job creation, and if we are going to have negative investment in the business sector, then how can we have job creation for this province as a whole?

So I would say, Mr. Speaker, that we have a poor economic situation, a very bad situation in terms of those men and women who cannot find jobs. You can see it on the faces of the young people today who are going to the employment offices looking for jobs that are simply not there. They are frustrated, they are disappointed, they are angry, and, unfortunately, this government has done nothing to help. In fact, this government has been cutting back on the CareerStart money. It is cutting in half from two years ago, and certainly this is the wrong way to go if we mean to create jobs for our young people.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the economic situation has an impact on our social situation. You have more abuse; you have more social problems when you have high levels of unemployment, so we have to tackle this No. 1 one problem facing the province today. Therefore I would urge that all members of this House support me in this call for an urgent public debate. There is no question that it is urgent that we debate our economic situation at this time.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today, the substance of the motion, the issue is urgency as we stand in our allotted five minutes. I guess the best way to describe the comments coming from across the floor is sheer hypocrisy.

Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where exactly one week ago tonight, when because of illness there was an opportunity to debate the reality of our situation by bringing forward Estimates of the Department of Finance, that members opposite

chose not to. There was an opportunity to speak, not for a few minutes, but indeed the whole evening from eight until midnight and leading to the next day. The NDP decided not to. The issue was, I would think, just as important a week ago as it is today. What was the problem then? The hollowness of the argument and the urgency rings, and it rings hollow indeed.

Mr. Speaker, the member points out in his submission that he has an opportunity to grieve today, tomorrow, Thursday, any time he wishes with respect to the state of economic affairs of this province—concurrence motions, many money bills to come, when indeed the member over the next few weeks will have an opportunity to debate this issue.

I hope to bring forward some of the money bills for second reading as early as two or three weeks from now. The member will have an opportunity at that time to debate, and I expect him, given what he claims to be the urgency of these numbers, to rise on that occasion and to put his points of view on the record.

Mr. Speaker, seeing that the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has gone into the substance somewhat in trying to present his case for urgency, I would like to point out that, although by his analysis—and I do not suggest for one moment I support his analysis—1991 may be the first year where Manitoba had the lowest economic growth, I point out to him in 1984-85 that Manitoba had the ninth lowest level of economic growth.

I want to point out that what we are talking about through all these assumptions and all of these measurements, assumptions built around him, is a fall from \$27.700-and-some billion to \$27.710 billion as a measurement of the Manitoba economy in terms of 1991. I want to point out to him that in my budget on page 10 of the appendix, I said that the economic growth in Manitoba would be negative 1.2 percent in 1991. As it turned out, it is now 1.6 percent by Stats Canada's number, one of the forecasters, Mr. Speaker. I would like to point out, using the magnitude of the numbers, that for '92 and '93, by all the forecasters, Manitoba is at the Canadian average or going to be above the Canadian average.

So I say to you, Mr. Speaker, if you were to grant a debate, and I am calling on you, given the fact that the members have not established urgency, that there should not be a debate, but if there were, what

would be the essence and the substance of the comments coming across the floor?

The members over there would ask us to spend more, increase the deficit, increase taxes deferred and try and buy jobs. We have categorically rejected that approach; so has the NDP government in Ontario, because they have cut government positions, they have reduced taxes to businesses, but yet increased taxes to individuals. So I say, Mr. Speaker, where would the debate lead? The debate would lead to the same type of discussion that has been in this House for several months.

Mr. Speaker, in my view, urgency has not been established. The members will have plenty of opportunities over the course of the next number of days and weeks to debate this issue fully. Thank you.

\* (1450)

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, there are two conditions in our rules and a third opportunity that is referenced in Beauchesne. The two conditions have been spoken about. The third condition that is referenced in Beauchesne is a general willingness of the House to debate this matter.

Now, I am delighted frankly that the member for Brandon East has brought this motion forward because I think there is a different situation here today than existed a week ago, and that, Mr. Speaker, is that we now have information that suggests that after four full years of operation, this province has fallen to 10th out of 10.

The Finance minister made some comments about the magnitude of that drop, that drop from \$27 such-and-such to \$27 such-and-such, a drop of some \$500 million, which translates in this province to about 16,000 jobs, and that is what is occurring in this province.

The Finance minister also referenced, Mr. Speaker, what he called the poor performance in 1984-85. In fact, this province grew against the national GDP in '84 and '85 and in '82 and in '83 and in '86 and in '87. This province began to falter in 1988, and it has slipped badly.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister makes much about Stats Canada. Stats Canada tracks some 15 indicators every month. I would encourage the Finance minister just to stop and to step aside from his ideological position and just stop and reflect on what has occurred.

Four years ago, this government came to office—four years ago. They had a plan. The Finance minister spoke about that plan in his budgets. Today, on 11 of the 15 indicators that Stats Canada tracks, we are faring worse today than we were four years ago. Virtually every economic policy that this government has put into place has failed.

That came to a crescendo, if you like, on Friday when we discovered that this province for the first time in over two decades is now 10th out of 10 in this country. That fact affects a great many people in this province, and I think that is worthy of debate. I think that is something we should be debating in this House, and I would urge you, Mr. Speaker, to support this motion.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I would like to thank all honourable members for their advice as to whether the motion proposed by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) should be debated today.

I did receive the notice required under our subrule 27.(1). Members know that our Rule 27 and Beauchesne's Citations 389 and 390 set out the conditions necessary for a matter of urgent public importance to proceed. First, the subject matter must be so pressing that the ordinary opportunities for debate will not allow it to be brought forward early enough. Second, it must be demonstrated that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention. I note that the member for Brandon East has not used his opportunity to raise a grievance.

The Estimates for the Departments of Finance and of Industry, Trade and Tourism are still to be considered by the Committee of Supply and may be appropriate for discussion of the issues raised by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). Further, Private Members' Resolutions 24 and 25 are upcoming and are areas too where this issue could be addressed. Further, I do not believe that the matter is so pressing that the public interest will suffer if the proposed motion is not debated today.

Accordingly, I am ruling the motion out of order.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I challenge your ruling.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The ruling of the Chair having been challenged, shall the ruling of the

Chair be sustained? All those in favour, please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

**Mr. Ashton:** Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

\* (1540)

**A STANDING VOTE** was taken, the result being as follows:

### YEAS

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

### NAYS

Alcock, Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** Yeas 27; Nays 25.

**Mr. Speaker:** The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

### Committee Changes

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) for the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay); the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) for the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer). [Agreed]

**Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas):** I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar); Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). [Agreed]

**Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface):** I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: St. James (Mr. Edwards) for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). [Agreed]

### House Business

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, before I move the Supply motion, I would like to indicate to the House that there may be a slight variation in the Health Estimates inasmuch as there might be agreement not to complete one line of those particular Estimates. I would beg the leave of the House to save that for some period in time, potentially, and therefore bring forward then the next item, the next department on the Estimates review, that being the Department of Rural Development.

Once a decision was made as to how this was going to be accommodated, I would bring this forward tomorrow for retroactive passage.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the honourable government House leader.

\* (1550)

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Under those conditions, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**Motion agreed to,** and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### HEALTH

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Bob Rose):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of Health. When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 5.

Health Services, (a)(1) Salaries on page 87 of the Estimates book.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns):** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think we should take a couple of moments and deal with the outstanding issue of how we will handle capital estimates.

I would first like to report to the committee that I have had discussions with my caucus about this situation. First, let me indicate that I am having a great deal of difficulty convincing my colleagues that there are legitimate reasons for this delay. There is, I must say, not a great deal of sympathy on the part of my colleagues for the fact that the minister is not ready and that he has these problems or issues to deal with in terms of capital spending.

I want the minister to know that I am doing my best to convey his difficulties in this instance. I will continue to indicate to my colleagues that the minister just is not prepared, due to unforeseen circumstances, and apparent inclination to revamp capital estimates according to this so-called health care reform strategy that will be released any day now.

I wanted to pass that along, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, for the benefit of the committee.

Secondly, I would like to indicate that at this point I believe we are over 40 hours. We are at almost 42 hours, which is beyond the hours negotiated between all parties for the Department of Health. We had set a goal of 40 hours. So clearly we are beyond 40 hours, and we still have a significant number of lines involving a lot of money for the Department of Health left before us.

After considerable discussion it is the feeling at least of my caucus that we deal with capital estimates during concurrence, if the minister is prepared to give us a commitment that he will be ready to deal with capital estimates at that time in concurrence. It would in the interests of being as close as possible to the negotiated agreement that we try to tidy up Estimates over the next couple of days and actually do the vote on the Minister's Salary as early as we can this week. Whether that is tonight or tomorrow, it is hard to say at this point, but that we do actually try to accomplish as much as we can in today's Estimates and tomorrow's Estimates and see if we cannot conclude health care Estimates, have the vote on the Minister's Salary and deal with capital estimates during the time of concurrence.

That is my recommendation, following the minister's information.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am at the will of both of my honourable critics in this regard because either process suits me. I understand that with our global hourly numbers of 240 there are constraints, that each critic naturally wants to have a certain budgeted amount of time. I did not intend to leave a one-only kind of an option. That is why I suggested concurrence as well as the potential of leaving just the salary line open.

Concurrence is fine in my estimation, and it would allow us an equal opportunity, of course, to use the concurrence motion to discuss the general agenda of reform should that be deemed appropriate. So that is fine by me, and I would look forward to maybe some thoughts from my honourable friend the member for The Maples to see what sort of approach might be considered reasonable by the Liberal caucus.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples):** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, from our point of view, both opportunities would have been equally good for us, but I did not think that the timing was effective. When I discussed this, they said whatever the consensus is. It seems like the member for St. Johns and the minister do agree with the concurrence idea that we can debate. That is fine with me.

So we can finish the Health Estimates mostly likely tonight then because we still have from eight to 10. That will give us another three or four hours. If we are going to do that, then I would like to probably finish here tonight so that we can have the other members to start their own fresh Estimates tomorrow in their own respective departments. I have no difficulty with that.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** In line with what I sense is a consensus around leaving capital estimates to concurrence and trying to finish up as quickly as possible, I am wondering if the minister would be prepared, with staff on hand, if need be, for us to jump all over the place in terms of the remaining lines with perhaps the exception of the AFM. I know that some of my colleagues would have concerns about particular constituent problems and issues pertaining to hospitals and programs that fall under the insurance line. I am wondering if we could have some agreement as much as it is possible to jump

all over the place without necessarily moving line by line.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think if there is some sense that we might be able to expedite the total discussion of the remaining amount of Estimates, bearing in mind that we have already had a substantial amount of discussion around most of these issues already, I would have no objection to really taking a look at the last remaining portions of the Estimates and, to the best of our ability, have sufficient staff here. If it took another half an hour or so to get an answer if I did not have the right staff available, I would find that probably to be the most accommodating way to speed the process along. Also, should there be questions that we simply cannot answer tonight, the same thing as has applied in the past, we would undertake to provide a written response as quickly as possible after the conclusion of our Estimates.

If there seems to be a sense of moving along so that we might conclude Estimates today, later on this evening, I would certainly attempt to have as many of the staff, particularly the executive director of AFM, available. Can I make a suggestion of maybe having AFM at eight o'clock this evening? Would that be reasonable?

\* (1600)

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** First, let me indicate to the minister that I am not sure we can actually finish up tonight if we go till midnight. So I would say we should perhaps play that by ear. The other concern I have is, some of my colleagues have asked for an opportunity for coming to this committee and asking some questions on some of their facilities in their own constituencies, and I have suggested this evening might be a good time. I also have a speaking engagement that will take me out of the building for about an hour between eight and nine. If the minister is willing, I do not think there is any point at this hour to call the AFM in for this evening until we see if we are moving along quickly, but I would doubt it.

**Mr. Orchard:** Just so to make sure I understand, you do not think that we should have the executive director of the AFM here for this evening, then. Okay, the answer to that being no, we will make sure they are here at an appropriate time then and not this evening.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose):** Is there unanimous agreement to abandon the

line-by-line approach in order to skip ahead or to revert back to lines already passed? Unanimous consent is required from the committee. [Agreed]

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** I would like to ask a few questions where the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) left off on Thursday pertaining to the situation with respect to our hospitals. I know the minister has indicated that he can only give us so much information, and that he is in the middle of discussions and planning. I would like to ask, though, a question we have raised before in Estimates and get a better understanding of financing of hospitals. What are the reasons why the minister could not give us a breakdown of increases being provided to each hospital in the province of Manitoba at this point, or could he do so?

**Mr. Orchard:** We have not discussed individual hospital budgets ever apparently. I cannot speak forever, but as long as I have been here we have never dealt with individual hospital budgets for current-year planning. As I recall my time as critic, we have not done that either.

The reasons are individual hospitals have differing plans and agendas. There are varying degrees of deficit carry-over, et cetera, and varying methods of handling each of those that are somewhat of an individual discussion with each hospital. I guess that is why there has never been, in the current year, an attempt made to discuss the projected budgetary requirements of each hospital. That is why we will attempt to provide the kind of global figures across hospitals as to what was approved last year, what sort of deficits that we expect to be incurring across the system, and what kind of an increase we are able to provide, and then give global figures in that regard.

Also, I guess it is fair to say that we have not got final reconciliations on year-end March 31, 1991. We do not know whether some hospitals will be in modest surplus or modest deficit positions. That has a significant impact on how far the dollar will go, I guess put it that way, of this year's budgetary increase. Certainly those who have operated without a deficit or even with a modest surplus, upward of 2 percent, will have no encumbrance on this year's hospital increases.

Should a hospital, in the final reconciliation, find that they have incurred a deficit, of course, that becomes first call on any new dollars that are

provided to that facility. Those are the kind of detailed discussions that are ongoing right now in terms of planning around how hospitals will expedite their program, and what are the parameters of that program delivery this year given the current budgetary allocation of \$950-some million or \$949 million, whatever the number is globally.

But it is an issue that we have never dealt with on an individual hospital basis, and I think it would probably be appropriate to not break with that long-standing tradition because there are areas where the hospitals and we are even agreeing to disagree going back to a two- or three-year period of time in terms of reconciliation of potential deficit from the past. We have never brought those things forward because they are very much before the commission on a regular basis.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Can the minister confirm that there will not be then an across-the-board percentage increase, hospital by hospital, but in fact that an increase is negotiated separately with each institution?

**Mr. Orchard:** Each institution's budget is developed on the basis of (a) the historical budget which provides a sense of their base-line funding, if you will, I guess the minimum amount of funding that they carry into the next fiscal year, and then a general allocation of increased monies and the targets for where we will provide resources, i.e., to carry existing negotiated contracts, et cetera, are then provided to the hospitals.

In advance of that, I guess it is fair to say the hospitals have made their requests of government as to what they believe they need to undertake a range of operations that they envision for any given fiscal year. That can include maintenance of existing programs, expansion of programs, et cetera, so that sometimes hospitals will not be consistently granted.

Like in the Estimates, the budgeted allocation last year and the increase this year amounts to 6.1 percent in terms of total hospital funding. That will not be necessarily evenly distributed across the hospital in a final figure, hospital by hospital, because for instance a hospital might be undertaking the opening of a capital construction project which has renovated their facility. Those capital costs will become part of the current operating budget, because government retires that capital.

\* (1610)

That can mean that one hospital—and I am using extreme figures—may receive something more than 6 percent because of the new program costs of a new facility. Other hospitals may, although there is not too much brand new program initiative, but some hospitals will have an expansion of a given program which other hospitals for instance do not have and would receive somewhat of an increase.

In addition to that, the hospitals will have a varying opportunity to access the life support supply fund and also the new innovative fund of \$3 million. That definitely, I would anticipate, will not be evenly distributed across to all hospitals. It will be accessed according to the program that a given hospital might bring in, in terms of meeting the innovative guidelines. The government's commitment is to provide some \$53 million more this year to fund hospitals, and the distribution of that is in terms of salary increases on existing contracts, some supply increase and then, as part of the \$53 million, we have a commitment for the first year of a three-year funding commitment on current negotiations. Of course, then there is a commitment in there in terms of new capital projects, any increase in costs which may be incurred through retirement of those newly operational capital projects and any associated program costs.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, is it possible for the minister to provide for members of the Legislature, or at least the two critics, copies of hospital budgets?

**Mr. Orchard:** That has not been done in the past.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Is it possible? I realize it may not have been done in the past. I did not know that. I do know it is hard to get all this information together. I am wondering if the minister would agree at this point to provide us with copies of the hospital budgets, at least for the year we have just ended, and as they become available for this fiscal year.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the Manitoba Health Services Commission annual report, when tabled, outlines the total of payments, hospital by hospital, I believe. That was some of the information that I was providing, some of the historical spending information that I was providing to my honourable friend about a month ago. I would not be prepared to bring to committee individual

hospital budgets to discuss line by line the hospital budgets, if you will.

**Ms. Wasylcia-Lels:** Is the minister suggesting that, if we feel it is important to get that information, in order to do our job as critics and so on, we will have to ask for that information from each institution, each facility?

**Mr. Orchard:** You might take that course of action, but you might get the same answer.

**Ms. Wasylcia-Lels:** I will keep trying to find ways to get that information. Throughout all of these discussions on health care, and especially as we hear talk about changes coming, there are more and more questions being raised about why we are not able to look at hospital budgets and then make intelligent comment based on that information. I think it is something we need to have at our finger tips in order to be effective as critics, and I will certainly try to pursue other avenues to get that information.

With respect to the increases that the minister talked about, or with respect to my earlier question about what is included in the increases, the minister said part of that negotiated increase with a facility—there may be variation depending on different capital expansion or new programs being added to a facility. As one example, can I ask the question: Does that mean that the operating dollars required for the new psych services building will be included in the negotiated increase with the Health Sciences Centre, or is that separate?

**Mr. Orchard:** Those operating costs that we negotiate and agree to will be part of the '92-93 budget, since we expect the psych health building to open later on this year.

**Ms. Wasylcia-Lels:** Yes, and we are dealing with the '92-93 budget. My question was: In terms of the increases that are now being negotiated and as part of the overall increase to hospitals, is the psych services operating budget included in the increase being negotiated with the Health Sciences Centre, or is it separate and apart from that increase for that facility and in some other category?

**Mr. Orchard:** It is being negotiated with the Health Sciences Centre and is part of the \$53 million of increased funding provided this year over last year to hospitals in the province of Manitoba.

**Ms. Wasylcia-Lels:** I appreciate that. I am wondering specifically since the minister said some hospitals may get more than 6 percent because they

have a new program that needs funding or capital expansion. Would the case of the psych services building be such an example and therefore be negotiated as part of the Health Sciences overall budget and therefore be an indication, maybe a factor accounting for a higher than average increase for that particular facility?

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, naturally, when you bring on stream a major capital investment as part of the—bear in mind that what is happening with the psych health building is a consolidation of several roles—teaching in the old psych building, acute psychiatric beds in other parts of the Health Sciences Centre complex, and those are being consolidated into the psych health building new construction, and that means a closure and in some cases an iron balling, I guess, of some of the current facilities that are being used.

My honourable friend will recall that for probably 15 years, the capital redevelopment of the old psychiatric hospital has been before government in the past and has only recently been acceded to because that building was approaching a century in age.

As part of the program costs, yes, there are additional costs for a new facility because you have a capital cost which you are retiring. Principal and interest become part of the current year's funding mandate. Also bear in mind that the staffing and the operating costs to run the acute care beds side are part of the existing Health Sciences Centre budget. That is why the budget reflects, yes, an increase no doubt in terms of Health Sciences budget to operate the new psych health building, driven by capital debt incurred in the construction.

That is why I have often said that any Minister of Health can become a significant hero at the time of tabling capital estimates because if you acceded to every construction request for which there is approximately \$200 million worth at every single year that we present capital estimates, if you say yes and proceed with them, you are a hero as you are doing it, but all of those costs do raise the operating costs to the system because the capital costs have to be retired over a period of time. That, in addition to any changes in operating costs, is incorporated into the budget of facilities when



additions or new construction is being commissioned.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Just before I lose sight of this reference to the life support supply fund, I do not know about that program. I am just wondering if the minister could indicate where it is located, if there is a description anywhere in the Estimates book, under what line it might fall, or what it is.

**Mr. Orchard:** My honourable friend might—no, maybe my honourable friend would not recall because the life support fund was brought in, I guess, three or four budgets ago. Let me give you the background.

\* (1620)

Budgeting in the past has been undertaken where supply costs, including pharmaceuticals, were budgeted at a given figure, be it 3 percent, 4 percent, 5 percent, so that on the supply line of budget that was the increase that was conferred.

That left facilities in a somewhat compromised position potentially in that—let us take an example of a smaller hospital and that smaller hospital could be in rural Manitoba or indeed in the city of Winnipeg. The complexity of their operation would not be as great as some of the larger hospital facilities, and with greater complexity often follows more sophisticated supply costs on the pharmaceutical side. By providing a 3, or a 4, or a 5 percent across-the-board increase to all facilities, there was no recognition of the unique demands that may be placed upon the operating regime of a given hospital when they undertook more complex care delivery.

As a result, we established the life support supplies fund, \$2 million. Institutions could make application for unusual supply costs unique to their operation, and a small subcommittee of the board and commissioned staff, I believe, would review the applications and make allocations from the life supply support funds so that on the basis of extraordinary cost incurment—or incurred by the facilities, they had their regular supply budget to offset them, and when that was insufficient, because of enhanced costs because of the complexity of their service-delivery patterns, they had an option to access a specific fund worth \$2 million.

It has worked reasonably well. I think my honourable friend can see the logic behind it, because if we would have taken the \$2 million and simply spread it across all hospitals, some hospitals may not have had the same need and may have built

that into other areas of operation leaving some of our more sophisticated care delivery hospitals constantly coming back to government saying our base-line budget needs to be increased.

So by focussing a fund for access for special needs, we eliminated the potential of overfunding some and underfunding others. It has worked reasonably well, and it is a \$2-million commitment.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, based on the information that the minister now has, can he give us an indication of how many hospitals will be running deficits or expecting deficits for this fiscal year?

**Mr. Orchard:** Bear in mind that this is a changing target. It would appear as if approximately one-half of our Urban Hospital Council member hospitals will be incurring deficits this year, and then the other hospitals outside of the Urban Hospital Council membership, which are the larger facilities, the figure may approach two-thirds of them incurring deficits of varying sizes.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Could the minister give us a summary in terms of the reasons for the deficits on an across-the-board basis?

**Mr. Orchard:** I guess the simple reason is they spent more than they were budgeted. But I cannot—you know what I mean—I am trying to—my honourable friend, I know, is going to—if I can be so blunt as to kind of comment on where this discussion is going to go—[interjection]

No, no—there is, because I have listened to the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) who, when he deals with the hospital at Brandon, says that we should simply provide more base-line budget, and that is not in the cards. We established base-line budgets, and some of the institutions were not able to operate within those base-line budgets. It varies from institution to institution.

Some have taken earlier management initiatives, some have taken recent management initiatives to achieve balanced budgets, so there is no one single, compelling reason across the board. It varies from institution to institution.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** If anything, I am trying to ascertain to what extent deficits are tied to these so-called restructuring targets that the minister appears to have applied to each hospital. I know in the past when I have raised this, I have gotten nowhere. However, I am certainly hearing a different story from people in facilities, where it is

their understanding that they have been given very explicit, direct targets for restructuring purposes. This is separate and apart from overall funding increases and operating year-over-year situations but has to do with targets that are separate and apart pertaining to reductions to budgets and reductions in beds.

I am wondering if the minister can give us a breakdown of what this restructuring exercise has meant, at least starting with urban hospitals, for this past fiscal year, the one we have just ended and the fiscal year we are just in.

**Mr. Orchard:** Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in general terms, last year when the budget exercise was undertaken, our hospitals, and let us just deal specifically with the Urban Hospital Council membership, indicated that they needed X number of dollars to operate. We provided a lesser figure and I think the lesser figure was \$18 million. Well, it was \$18 million, a reduction to the member hospitals of the Urban Hospital Council. Bear in mind that, because they indicated they needed the total amount to operate, they came back with operating plans which would allow them to operate within the global budgets that were approved last year. Some did and some did not, and that is where we have roughly half of our Urban Hospital Council members now looking as if with reconciliation for year-end March 31 that they will be incurring deficits.

\* (1630)

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Ms. Wasylcia-Lels:** Without repeating myself in terms of an earlier question with respect to individual or grants going to each facility, I am wondering how a hospital which has a deficit, regardless of whatever origin, handles the situation where they may be given by this minister—he certainly has not denied this and it appears to be well documented out in the field—slightly over a 5 percent increase, which is to reflect roughly a 3 percent negotiated settlement but of which a part, 1.2 percent, is going to meet the pay equity requirements as established by Judge Krindle and where another 1 percent must go to meet regular increments that cannot be avoided, which leaves about a 0.8 percent on the salary side, and then roughly a 2 percent on the supply side, which appears to be below cost of living.

How does a facility handle a situation where it is starting negotiations, certainly expecting more than a zero percent negotiated increase but given funds that barely meet, that barely go beyond a zero percent increase for negotiated wages, that do not see an increase on the supply side commensurate with the cost of living and is told to find and achieve, meet deficit amounts in that overall negotiated or that overall arrangement with the government?

What guidelines is the minister giving a facility to handle what would appear to be an impossible situation and in reality helps us understand why some facilities have said publicly that they are expecting only a zero percent increase?

**Mr. Orchard:** That is exactly what most of the facilities are developing in terms of management plans and action plans to present to government, to indicate how they are going to operate in the next fiscal year with the budgetary commitments that have been communicated to them.

I want to indicate to my honourable friend that I have never at any time indicated that our budgetary allocations will meet the demands of the hospital side, because we have continued with the no-deficit policy that was put in place circa 1986, 1987. I will not revisit that issue, but the first recommendation of the deputy minister in May of '88, when I came into the office, Mr. Edwards asked very pointedly if we intended to carry on the no-deficit policy, because it was the only way to have some degree of management control over hospital budgets.

The answer was yes and continues to be yes, that we will maintain the no-deficit budget. There are significant decisions that are required within our hospital system, because the nature of funding to hospitals says that you must continue to provide globally more than 6.1 percent year over year. When the inflation rate is something less than 2 percent, I think that challenges one's thinking about where a continuation of funding the needs as identified by the hospitals under the current configuration is an exercise in impossible financial management.

I simply indicate to you that the latest figures I have seen and our deficits—I will just give my honourable friend some idea what it looks like in terms of the operating budgets—across the hospitals in Manitoba, we are probably going to have deficits in the neighbourhood of \$6 million by reconciliation right now.

Now, in addition to that, that is first call, if you will, on any increase in the budget this year. Recent figures that I had a chance to look at—just to put things in context, because I am not in any way, shape or form indicating that our approach to financing is completely trouble-free as far as our managers of the hospitals are concerned. I certainly would never indicate that.

I simply want to put it in context. Nearly every province in Canada right now has brought down budgets where the increases are very modest. I believe Nova Scotia's most recent budget projects flat funding for the next two years, and we believe that applies to the hospital side. That is no increase.

We know that Ontario's budget is a 1 percent increase, and we also know that there is no funding commitment from the Ontario government for—[interjection] well, okay, I will not argue with my honourable friend, 2 percent compared to our 6 percent on our line, and I know there is no commitment. No, I should not say that. The last information I had is that there was no financial commitment to pay equity in the projected increases to Ontario hospitals.

Saskatchewan, for instance, and their budget comes up later on this week, but preliminary indications are somewhere in the neighbourhood of 2.5 to 3 percent less funding this year over last year, so an actual decrease in the amount of monies available.

One might pose the question there. How are they coping? Well, they are coping by having to manage better and make some decisions around management of patient care. I simply assure my honourable friend that to the best of my knowledge, all of those hospitals in those respective provinces went in with deficits incurred that they have to pick up out of the funding increase from this year. I think the last figure I saw somewhere just recently on deficits in the Ontario hospitals was indicating something in the neighbourhood of \$178 million across-the-board deficits in the Ontario hospitals that they were projecting to date. They are dealing with the same kind of problem.

I will give you an example of St. Michael's Hospital just recently came to grips with a \$60-plus million deficit that they had incurred. They have just recently signed a management agreement with government that lasts, I believe, six years in which they are going to reduce that deficit over a six-year

period of time within their budgeted increases in funding. They have made a contractual arrangement to stay on target.

We, likewise, are looking at the initiation of contractual arrangements with some of our major hospitals to retire deficit, et cetera, in anticipation of their concerns that the amount of money that we are providing, the \$53 million more in hospital funding that we are budgeting to provide, will not meet their requests of increased budget. We are in the process right now with at least a couple of hospitals of developing contractual arrangements for budgetary management.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** If average negotiated salaries are expected to be this year across the board—I am not just singling out the health care field—3 percent, yet, with the requirements for hospitals to cover pay equity and to make pay equity adjustments and to meet regular increments, reclassifications and any other benefits which leaves close to zero percent really to meet a 3 percent average negotiated salary increase, what advice will the minister be giving to hospitals? Is it to increase tensions between management and labour and be prepared for strike action because there are no resources to fund much beyond a zero percent, or is it to dig deep into the operations of the facility and start making serious reductions in that area?

If it is the latter, is the government then providing a framework for helping to make those decisions and advice and criteria about what is acceptable or not acceptable?

**Mr. Orchard:** First of all, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we are providing a funding mandate for negotiation of contracts this year, a funding mandate which is not insignificant and approaches \$15 million for negotiations of contracts to expire. That funding mandate, we believe certainly is not as much as what was requested.

\* (1640)

What we are saying is, this is what we believe we can reasonably project to fund on behalf of the taxpayers. We are saying the same message that we put out in December of 1990 and all during the month of January 1991, that government only represents the taxpayers. Taxpayers do not have bottomless pockets to pay government taxes to negotiate settlements beyond what is reasonable.

We think we have given a reasonable funding mandate. We are hoping that moderation will prevail and that those individuals at the bargaining table, both from a management perspective as well as from a union perspective, will take a look at the financial circumstances of this province, of this nation, will take a look at the inflation rate, will take a look at the issue of having a job today, and will negotiate the most reasonable agreement they can given very difficult circumstances. I want to tell my honourable friend that we do not see the taxpaying private sector side of the Manitoba economy being able to afford any of the kind of taxation increases that have been proposed in other provinces.

I will give you a simple analogy, and I will use the figure of a \$40,000 paid position in government or a government-funded agency. That \$40,000 position requires probably the taxes paid by eight individual Manitobans working elsewhere in the private sector. That is why, from time to time, we have, within the Civil Service of the Province of Manitoba, initiated some layoffs but, more importantly, through streamlining and negotiations with the union, reduced the number of these kinds of funded positions throughout government.

We have not approached the issue with glee, but for every position worth \$40,000 in the public sector that we can eliminate and still continue to deliver reasonable services probably protects a minimum of eight jobs in the private sector, because the taxation paid for by the private sector of eight employees is going to be transferred directly to that one position in the bureaucracy.

That same argument can be made throughout the funded institutions of hospitals and health care, because all of the dollars that go there are transferred dollars from the private sector workers and businesses. Anyone in the public sector, be it a funded agency, who believes that they have an unlimited right and opportunity to demand more and more from the productive side of the taxpayer without consequences of further layoffs in the private sector, is not realistically thinking around the issue.

So when we provide a \$14.7 million increase for all of those workers who are currently going to negotiation in the health care system, I simply say to you that there are literally tens of thousands of people in the private sector who would like to have a similar funding mandate from their employers who

are paying the taxes to give us the additional \$14.7 million.

That is why I am saying that certainly that is not as much as, no doubt, some would demand in terms of the funding and bargaining mandate, but let me assure my honourable friend that, given the realistic circumstances government faces and the private sector faces today, we think it is a reasonable mandate provided by the taxpayers of the private sector to achieve a settlement that can have built within it a number of agendas that are desirous of negotiation, negotiation within the taxpayers' ability to pay.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Now, in addition to the \$14.7 million, the current year of Estimates includes a funding commitment of over \$17 million to pay for the nurses contract that was agreed to last year. When you start talking a \$53-million increase in funding, and immediately you have some \$32 million of that consumed by soon to be negotiated agreements and past negotiated agreements.

I think you can see how the funding of salaries for those bargaining in the public sector becomes a really dominant issue in global funding of institutions.

I simply reiterate to you that last year, when Ontario reached their significant settlement with long-term nurses, I do not believe they provided funding in the base to undertake that. All of that increase to the nurses' union in Ontario last year had to be found from within existing budgets.

We did not do that. We provided a significant increase last year to cover the nurses' salaries, and we have something in excess of \$17 million to cover nursing salary increases as negotiated January of 1991 for both hospital and personal care home side.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** The minister fails to mention that he is under some obligation, as a result of the court decision, to move in this way. The government chose not to appeal Judge Ruth Krindle's decision and clearly has decided to live with the judgment, and that has required a certain amount of dollar expenditure additional to the base.

I would like to just clarify this whole area since the minister made a commitment earlier to tell us the amount that would be required to meet the pay equity adjustments, if the \$17 million that he refers

to is, in fact, that number. Does it refer to all 23 facilities or the extension beyond?

**Mr. Orchard:** All facilities and in part a portion of that meets pay equity.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Now I am a little confused. Let me just seek clarification. The minister indicated that about \$14.7 million was on the table as part of negotiations for new contracts. The minister said, in addition to that, \$17 million was on the table to meet pay equity requirements. Did I misunderstand the minister?

**Mr. Orchard:** Yes, you did.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** This is painfully slow. It is like pulling teeth, but could the minister be a little more forthcoming and just tell us how I might have misunderstood him, and what the \$17 million exactly is for?

**Mr. Orchard:** The \$17.5 million is the dollar commitment required to achieve the second year funding for nine months in fiscal year '92-93, as negotiated with the MNU. That funding figure is one which applies across the system, all facilities included, not just the 23, and inclusive in that \$17.5 million figure is, if you will, the extension dollars to bring unincorporated facilities up to incorporated facilities status. So it is a combination of all facilities, some of which have a higher rate of increase, because the negotiated settlement in January of '91 extended the concept.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Is the \$14.5 million totally devoted to new contracts to be negotiated or is part of that also to cover the ongoing increments, reclassifications and so on that must be covered at any rate?

**Mr. Orchard:** The \$14.7 million is an all-inclusive figure for the entire demands across the system for which bargaining mandates are being sought in this fiscal year.

\* (1650)

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Once one eliminates the automatic payout for increments, reclassifications and other mandatory benefits, what is left of the \$14.5 million for negotiated salaries?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, our role here is to—as we attempted to do with the MNU negotiations, we have given to the bargaining representative of the hospitals and the personal care homes a funding mandate. That funding mandate is a three-year funding mandate,

\$14.7-million commitment for year one and a total commitment by the time we reach year three, approaching 52 some million dollars.

Naturally, without the legislative—we are unable to firmly commit. We have no mechanism to guarantee the last two years of the funding, but we have indicated to them, that here is the funding mandate over a three-year period of time with which you can craft an agreement which will meet your most pressing priorities in terms of salary increases, pay equity and any other issues that may be brought before the bargaining table.

Our commitment to the institutions is \$14.7 million this year, and the second and third years we have given figures—I stand corrected, that gets us up to the 50 plus; \$45.4 million is the commitment and then benefits is on top of that to arrive at a three-year bargaining mandate approaching \$52 million.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Looking at this year alone, if one takes away the 14.5 for contracts to be settled this year, and the 17.5 for the second year of the nursing contract, that leaves \$32 million for everything else. Am I correct?

**Mr. Orchard:** I think you would be a little generous. I think it should leave something closer to \$21 million. The \$53-million increase is hospitals only, but the \$17.5-million commitment for the MNU contract is both hospital and personal care home, and the \$14.7 million is similar. Do we have a straight hospital break out or an approximation of what the hospital commitment of both those two funding mandates would be? We will try to get a breakdown that might take us—the commitment to existing contract and new contract is \$32.2 million between hospitals and personal care homes for nurses and support staff. Of that \$32.2 million we will attempt to give you, this evening, a break out as to whether it is \$10 million of personal care and \$22 million for hospitals with the full knowledge that we are going to develop a quick figure that may be subject to a little bit of variation.

Staff have indicated to me that of the \$32.2 million, \$24.2 million would represent the allocation towards the hospital budget. So that would leave, out of \$53 million global, \$29 million for all other purposes in the hospital system outside of salary.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Could the minister tell us of the \$18-million reduction to urban hospitals last year, that I understood to be for restructuring purposes and the minister says it is the difference

between hospitals requests and what the government was able to provide, of that \$18 million how much was unachieved in this past fiscal year?

**Mr. Orchard:** We can provide that this evening.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Was the \$18-million figure divided between hospitals according to the unfulfilled expectations? In other words, the difference between—in each case, was the hospital assigned a portion of that \$18 million based on the difference between their own submitted budget and what the government was able to pay or was the \$18 million spread in a certain way across the board?

**Mr. Orchard:** The \$18 million was amongst the Urban Hospital Council members. Each hospital of course had a varying commitment to that \$18 million, naturally because there are varying sizes of operations within the Urban Hospital Council, and clearly the target of \$18 million was not achieved last year.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** When the minister provides us with the information about the unachieved level of the \$18 million, I would like to know how that is being dealt with in this fiscal year.

If, for example, the figure, as I understand it, might very well be \$12 million, how is that then disbursed among urban hospitals? Further to that question, if, in fact, this new figure of \$27 million for restructuring purposes over this fiscal year and next fiscal year, is tied to what budgets are submitted by hospitals and what the government is able to fund, how is it that these figures are arrived at before the budgeting process is completed and that in fact hospitals were told to expect a restructuring target of roughly the \$12 million unachieved last year and roughly \$15 million for this coming fiscal year perhaps covered over two fiscal years?

How do those figures get thrown out, and why are hospitals working around those figures if in fact they are, as the minister says, the end product of a budgeting process?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in establishing the budgets for April 1, 1991, targets were established in each of the hospital budgets, targets which, within their operations, they had to achieve, because the province indicated we would be providing a finite allocation of resource, and within those resources to each hospital the mandate existed that they carry out their operation and manage their budgets to achieve a no-deficit position at the end of the year. That was not

achieved, and that is causing some carried forward problems. If you do not achieve management and global budget targets and agendas that are communicated in a previous fiscal year, naturally you carry those forward into the next fiscal year. That is how deficits are incurred.

If my honourable friend is saying, how does the process work, the process works just exactly as we have said. We set out very finite budgetary targets for the hospitals in the expectations that they would work towards achieving those targeted budgets. When they do not, we approach the funding of this year's Estimates from the basis that those carried over unachievable targets, i.e., deficits, must be cared for first as first call on budget increase.

It is no secret and no easy solution. Those unachieved targets from last year represent management problems to the hospitals this year. There is no question about it. That is why we are developing deliverable action plans and management plans with some of the hospitals who have been unable to achieve goals as outlined last year. We think that process might work, because it does come from Ontario where they have had some significant budgetary problems, where a 2 percent increase versus a 6 percent increase that we are providing this year simply has not left their institutions with the flexibility to carry forward deficits and operate their facilities.

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, just with the indulgence of the Chair, if I could just have 15 seconds before calling it five o'clock to ask for some information from the minister for this evening.

Just to clarify that the minister will be providing us with the unachieved target for the past fiscal year, how that breaks down facility by facility. I would also indicate—

\* (1700)

**Mr. Orchard:** We indicate facility by facility. We will give you a—

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** Oh, a breakdown is okay, as much information as he can; if he could give us the 1993 target and as much breakdown as possible. I would also ask him if he could, this evening, provide us with the previous information to a previous request, and that is the operating budget for the Health Sciences Centre psych services building, and detailed information on the tendering process and actual expenditures pertaining to the capital

construction of the psych services building which I had raised before.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. McAlpine):** The time now being 5 p.m., and time for private members' hour, I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee. The Committee of Supply will resume consideration at 8 p.m.

Committee rise.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay):** Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training.

We are on page 39, 2. Financial Support - Schools (a) School Grants and Other Assistance \$573,918,300. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Madam Chairperson, the minister indicated she would table some documents for us the next time. I wonder if we might have—she is nodding in the affirmative, so perhaps I will just wait till those documents are tabled.

\* (1550)

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training):** I do have some documents to table, the first is the document of eligible enrollment, the second is the document of supplementary support. Thirdly, I did promise the honourable members that I would also provide them with a booklet of funding of schools for the school year '92-93.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am wondering also if the minister could table for our use a copy of the grants to institutional programs, that is programs like Marymount, and those other sections. Last year, I attempted to get that information under child support, under 4.(e), and I was advised that I should obtain it under 2.(a). So I am wondering if the minister would be prepared to table those programs.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I would just like to clarify. Would the honourable member just like the total amount of funding for each program?

**Mr. Chomiak:** And each institution, if that is not too difficult.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, yes, we will table that at the next session.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I just wanted to clarify from the minister some comments that she made during the last session of which we met and that was discussing the total grants to school divisions and the proportion that is assumed by the provincial government versus the proportion assumed by the local taxpayer via the special levy.

The minister indicated that the operating expenditures for school divisions was \$1.7 billion and that constituted 83 percent of support from the provincial government to school divisions. I still have some difficulty with that figure, and I am wondering if the minister might clarify for me what she was referencing. I find it on page 2834 of Hansard from April 30.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am wondering if this would clarify. Operating support for 1992-93 is 83 percent of net operating expenditures, and the operating support includes, first of all, direct funding provided through categorical, base, supplementary and phase-in support and, secondly, equalizational provided through deducting the 7.9 mill uniform levy from recognized expenditures.

**Mr. Chomiak:** One of the concerns expressed previously by us in the Estimates process is the fact that there is no line item in the Estimates for recognition of the support to independent or private schools. I am wondering if consideration is being given by the department to provide such a line item in the Estimates?

\* (1600)

**Mrs. Vodrey:** The title is called School Grants, and the title is intended to indicate the funds made available for grants to schools in this province. So at this time we are not looking at a separate line.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I recently tabled in the House copies of the agreement entered into between the previous minister and the government of a document between the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools and the government of Manitoba, a document dated June 12, 1990. Can the minister outline for me what the status is of that particular document which, in effect, is a form of agreement?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** The status of the letter of comfort which, as my honourable friend has stated, is a document signed between the government of Manitoba and the MFIS, or the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools. It is in its fourth year at the moment of a phase-in, and presently the funding is at 63.5 percent of recognized pupil support. Again,

I underline that the support to the independent schools is in operating only, it does not include capital.

On the other side of that agreement, the independent schools have been required to increase their accountability, and they have been living up to that part of the agreement.

**Mr. Chomlak:** Is the document legally binding on the government?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I would like to start answering the question by saying that this is also now in regulation, which I think is important. Certainly, in our view, the document is legally binding. The document is an agreement, and it is our belief that it is binding.

**Mr. Chomlak:** Sorry, I missed the first part of the minister's comments. Did she say the document is now in regulation?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am happy to answer that clarification. The document is not in regulation, but the amount of funding required each year is now in regulation.

**Mr. Chomlak:** In fact, the minister is correct. The component parts of this document are now passed by Order-in-Council retroactively having not been in effect since 1990. In fact, payments were made under this agreement, I would say technically illegally, for the past two years because the documents only were put into regulation—it crossed my desk approximately this past week. The minister is correct that they are now in regulations, and to the extent that the regulations have passed Order-in-Council, and I am not sure if they have been gazetted yet. To that extent the minister is correct. They are of a form of legal empowerment. I do not know if the minister wants to comment or I should go on to my next question.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Yes, I appreciate the statement that it is now legal and empowering.

**Mr. Chomlak:** Would the minister give any consideration to our initial suggestion, which we made before, of at least limiting the increases to private schools to the same percentage rate that is given to public schools, if nothing else to demonstrate the government's commitment to public schools?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I would like to start, in answer to the question, to say that the funding which is provided to the public school system is part of the driving aspect of the amount of funding provided to the

independent schools through the letter of comfort—that being the first portion.

The second part is simply the historical part, which I would like to remind my honourable friend of as well, in that, at this point, the letter of comfort was a mechanism to assist the province and assist the Federation of Independent Schools in coming to terms with an agreement, which avoided a court case and which, we have been led to believe, at that point would require 100 percent funding of independent schools. This agreement was reached in order to avoid that immediate 100 percent funding and to provide a phase-in up to a maximum of 80 percent on the operating side, and does not include capital.

I am not sure if the honourable member is trying to make a point that a government ought to go back on its word. It is our opinion at this point that we would not want to go back on our word, but that we are making every effort to provide funding certainly to the public school system also, the amount of money the people of Manitoba are able to afford and also to provide a funding, with the new funding formula, to best allow the public schools system to meet its needs.

**Mr. Chomlak:** Can the minister indicate who led the government to believe that 100 percent funding would be required and can the minister table the infamous longstanding legal opinion that somehow provided that information, because we have totally and completely diametrically opposed opinions on that situation?

\* (1610)

**Mrs. Vodrey:** A legal precedent, which I know the honourable member would understand, in Canada was set and that entitled the Catholic schools to 100 percent funding of capital and operating.

We as a government had to make a choice in the process of discussion. Our choice would have been to pay that 100 percent immediately, both capital and operating, or to negotiate, and this government negotiated. We negotiated the letter of comfort which the member is familiar with. It was to be implemented over a period of eight years, and that negotiation would bring the independent schools up to 80 percent of the public school funding.

Again, I remind him that is only on the operating side. The benefits also allowed the province and the people of Manitoba to avoid some costly



litigation where an agreement could be reached and also the capital funding as well.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I have heard about the capital side on many, many occasions. I am quite aware that the agreement and letter of comfort does not provide for the capital side.

The minister also made the point in that citation that the court decision dealt only with the Catholic schools, which is what I think is part of the misguided policy of this government in terms of dealing only with the Catholic sector and/or what was formally termed the parochial schools and the government's capitulation to all levels of schools based on this decision.

The minister might want to comment, but I am going to move on to another line of questioning.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I would like to just remind the honourable member that this government has the belief that Manitobans should have the opportunity for choice and that the independent school system, Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools, is a group of schools in which Manitobans have made a point that they wish to choose and they wish to be free to choose a type of education for their child.

Those choices are made for a number of reasons some of which are well known, some of those reasons are religious and some of those reasons have to do with custom and with family beliefs as well. Those schools are not only the Catholic parochial schools which the member has referenced. This government had the belief that choice should be an alternative.

In addition, in negotiating the letter of comfort, I will remind him again it did avoid a costly litigation, it did avoid some of the divisiveness which can come as a result of a costly litigation. I would also remind him that it certainly would cost the public school system more if all of the young people currently registered in the independent system were suddenly to enter the public school system if that choice was eliminated.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I am glad the minister raised the issue of choice because it is fundamental. Since they have accounting practices in place with specific schools, can the minister outline what the tuition fees are for specifically St. John's-Ravenscourt and Balmoral Hall and what the entrance requirements are for those schools that the people of Manitoba and Winnipeg have the choice to send their children to?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am informed that we do not have that particular information today with us, but we will attempt to get that for him and table it.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I am wondering if the minister could also obtain for us the information about how many special needs kids are in attendance at St. John's-Ravenscourt and Balmoral Hall?

The reason I ask that question is because the information provided previously in terms of grants for these schools indicates no grants for special needs, and I just want to confirm that there are no special needs students at either of those institutions where parents have the choice of sending their kids.

\* (1620)

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I think my critic may have answered his own question in that we have removed the opportunity for any double funding, and that if there are not numbers on the sheets which I tabled for him regarding special needs, that indicates that those particular schools are not claiming funding in those areas.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I was contacted by an individual, not a constituent of mine, who inquired of me why she could not obtain the letter of comfort entered into between the government. Obviously this is hearsay, but she was informed, she told me, by the minister's office when she phoned and asked for a copy of the letter, that she could obtain it via freedom of information. I am wondering why this is the case, if in fact that is the case.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, I am advised that because this document was seen as an agreement between two parties and that some aspects of it may have been seen to be particular to those two parties, that release to a third party, the request was made that an application be made through freedom of information. I will have a look at that decision if there seems to be a difficulty with that, to see that the rules have been applied fairly, but at this point that was the basis of the decision.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I thank the minister for those comments. The situation is no longer as acute now that regulations are published which specify specifically to members of the public if they want to find out specifically what the rate is. It was a difficulty in the past, and it was a grave concern of members on this side of the House that we are expending considerable sums of money without regulation and without this letter of comfort, this agreement being made public. I think that is,

frankly, poor public policy and generates poor discussion of the issues surrounding funding of schools if documents of this kind are not made available to the public. I think revision or a look at that policy in terms of the department review and release of this document is in order, and I appreciate the minister's comments. I do not know if she wants to comment further.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Again, I have listened to my honourable friend's comment, and I have said that I will look at that decision again. As he has commented also, sometimes situations are acute and then the circumstances change. However, I will look at that, and I would also like to provide a little further information on the regulations to say that the regulations on accountability were filed on June 29, 1990.

**Mr. Chomlak:** The minister is correct, but they only covered up to 46 percent, and I have it here. It did not cover the last two increases to the regulations that were filed in June of 1990. So, last year and this year's increases were not covered in those regulations. The minister is correct. There were regulations that took it up to, I believe, the 54 percent but not the subsequent 59 and subsequent 63.5.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I just wanted to clarify for the sake of the record that regulations had been filed, and then what is filed are amendments.

**Mr. Chomlak:** Does the minister or the department have any kind of an inventory province-wide of programs that have been dropped by school divisions this year versus last year?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am informed that individual school divisions when they file their budgets do not give to the department that kind of specific information. That kind of information could only be obtained through very extensive work with the school divisions through questionnaires and other kinds of fact-finding mechanisms.

**Mr. Chomlak:** I am wondering if the minister has any idea of what has happened to the Red River vocational area program, one that was funded by four school divisions and developed vocational programs for four school divisions in that area. It had about \$55,000 slashed. There was some concern whether the program could continue. I am wondering if the minister can, not necessarily today but at a later date, outline for me whether that program has been reinstated or is it continuing.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** For my colleague's information, the detailed discussion for that particular issue will fall under 16-3 in the PDSS section and discussion of the Estimates. Also for his information, I have had departmental staff meeting with those four representative groups, and then I have also met with them personally to discuss their particular issue.

At the moment, my information is that the program is continuing and that we are working with that particular group to work out some of the difficulties which they had identified.

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** I will try not to repeat questions unless I need it for clarity here. I got one sheet today called Eligible Enrollment which lists 180,000 students. I think that is what it lists. That seems to be a significant drop. The 1991 figures show 197,586 students. Could I have an explanation for that?

\* (1630)

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, I think there may be some confusion between the numbers called eligible enrollment and actual enrollment. Actual enrollment counts the actual number of students presently attending, but some of those students may be Kindergarten students who attend for a half a day and some also may be part-time students in the secondary portion in Seniors 1 through 4.

So those students would be counted in the actual enrollment but the figures would alter somewhat in terms of the eligible enrollment. The information that I have received estimates that for the '92-93 school year the estimate of actual students attending would be a about 195,394.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** If I am not incorrect, I think that is not a significant change from the actual enrollment for the fiscal year '91-92.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, yes, I am informed that the member is correct there.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** In the documents that the minister supplied us, she included one which is entitled Categorical Basis and Supplementary Support including phase-in for '92-93. She also gave us a form called Supplementary Support. Is Supplementary Support above and beyond the Categorical sheet?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Just to clarify. I believe the last time we met we tabled a sheet of information which was

titled Categorical Basis and Supplementary Support, which was a total of those three areas of funding, and then today we have been asked to supply a sheet which identified strictly the supplementary funding. So the amount is not the total of those two but instead the first page; Categorical Basis and Supplementary is the total amount. What was tabled today was specifically the amount of supplementary funding.

Just to clarify too what the supplementary funding is. Under the model the supplementary funding will be provided to those divisions that have unavoidably high costs and/or low assessment per pupil resulting in a high level of local property taxation. The supplementary funding is only provided in the support of four areas: special needs, transportation, vocational education, and operations and maintenance. In this way available supplementary funding can be provided to those divisions that need it most and in support of those expenditures that are crucial and considered significant.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** I guess for further clarification, because I want to make sure that when I go into my next we are talking the same kinds of oranges here, the \$115,958,064 to Winnipeg No. 1 includes the \$5,711,605 in supplementary support.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, yes, it does.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** When we get into a page which is No. 63, total special needs support as a percentage of allowable expenditures includes Level I support. When we talk about Winnipeg-St. James getting 36.8 percent of its allowable expenditures, then we are including that supplementary amount of money, the section of the supplementary money that goes for special needs.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Can I just ask the honourable member, for clarity, to please just repeat the question for us. Thank you.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** There is a sheet entitled Total Special Needs Support as a Percentage of Allowable Expenditures. For Winnipeg 1, that comes out to 36.8 percent. I want to make sure that that 36.8 percent includes the funding in the supplementary support for Winnipeg 1.

\* (1640)

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I would like to clarify with the two sheets that I think the member is referring to. On the sheet that is titled Total Special Needs Support as a Percentage of Allowable Expenditures, that

does not include the supplementary funding, that is, the funding available through Categorical for Special Needs. However, on the sheet titled Categorical Basis and Supplementary Support, that does include the supplementary.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Then of the \$5.7 million coming from the supplementary support which is divided into four factors, how much of that goes to Winnipeg 1 for special needs, and what would be the new percentage of funding that Winnipeg 1 then gets for allowable expenditures?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Of the total available for Winnipeg No. 1, which is \$5,711,605, the portion of that which is available for special needs in Level I funding is \$3,201,279, and we have calculated that to be 45.8 percent.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** One presumes then, it would be even higher for Frontier School Division, which on the regular total special needs support ends up with only a 23.6 percent of their allowable expenditures.

What does their special needs, because they—sorry I am looking at the wrong sheet—their supplementary support is \$6.8 million. What would their percentage now be if one includes supplementary support?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** For Frontier School Division, the total supplementary support, as the member said, is \$6,858,632. Of that amount, special needs level and Level I funding is \$2,039,758, and we have calculated that to be about 72 percent.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** When we asked the minister last year why Winnipeg support was relatively low in comparison to some of the other school divisions—although if he had given me the figures that the minister just gave me it would have been higher than he seemed to know—but they are still considerably lower than many of the others. I mean, you have got 100 percent, I think, for Boundary School Division—maybe it is Hanover School Division—96 percent for, I think it is Lakeshore School Division.

Why is Winnipeg 1 still less than 50 percent? With all of the increases through supplementary funding and whatever, why is it still getting less than 50 percent for its special needs children?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** In the Winnipeg School Division No. 1, they did receive overall this year a 2.9 percent increase for the division, and then I would add to that, that overall spending for special needs in the new educational finance formula did go up

approximately 40 percent and that for Winnipeg No. 1 equalization is also a factor. Then, just to underscore that, Winnipeg No. 1 does attract many students with special needs, and as a result of that Winnipeg No. 1 also provides greater clinician services to that population.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Well, all that data is very interesting but it does not answer the question. The question was, why is Winnipeg School Division No. 1 getting less than 50 percent of its support for special needs students?

The government has had in place for a number of years a policy that, quite frankly, I disagree with. They went to a policy some years back of saying that they would eliminate individual grants for Level I students, that they would determine somehow by a magical percentage that this is what everybody should have in the way of a special needs child within a particular school division. In the case of Frontier School Division, and more particularly in the case of Winnipeg School Division, it is not that simple.

\* (1650)

It is very clear that if one lives in certain parts of this province and in certain school divisions the incidence of Level I is going to be much higher. That incidence of Level I is much higher because often of nutritional experiences of mothers, of family experiences particularly within fetal alcohol syndrome family relationships. Is there any evaluation going on in this province with respect to Level I funding?

The decision has been made in Alberta, I understand, that doing this kind of block funding for Level I is not working and they are now changing it. Are we looking towards the same kind of policy initiative in the province of Manitoba?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am informed of some of the historical reasons in which there was a movement into block funding and I certainly remember it very well because I was working in the schools in the system with young people from K through to the end of Grade 12 at that time. Funding was obtained in terms of special needs at that time on a case-by-case basis.

Some of the difficulties identified in that particular method were that it did take a huge amount of time. There was a great amount of money, taxpayer money expended in the negotiation process. So there was the belief at that time that a movement

into the block funding would be of assistance in terms of providing the money where it was needed.

However, the honourable member does raise some, I think, important points when we are looking at the issues of special needs young people across the system K to 12. I will tell her that I am prepared to look at the process of special needs funding and to enter into some exploration of that with my department and the school divisions.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** I thank the minister for that answer and that is really all I wanted her to do was to examine the issue yet once again in terms of the inequities that do exist within the funding support for special needs. I would like to turn now to the issue of independent schools for a short period of time.

The formula when it was envisaged was a formula that would go to 80 percent funding in 1998 and with that concept of a formula I am in full agreement. I think it was, quite frankly, less costly and less damaging to the people of the province of Manitoba to negotiate a settlement rather than to have a Supreme Court case. So I do not really want to debate that.

However, I think that the figures chosen at the time of the agreement were chosen on the basis that that appeared to be the way in which funding to public schools was going. So that, if there was an increase of 5 percent in the formula, there would probably also be an increase of about 5 percent to the public school system.

Has the minister had any discussions with the Federation of Independent Schools with regard to revising the formula, not the target date, but revising the formula in recognition of the recession that we are all experiencing at the present time?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Chairperson, I have met with the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools, and my deputy and department do meet with that federation on a regular basis. Many issues are raised. At this point, however, because of our belief that the agreement is an agreement, we have not asked for any alteration in the phase-in schedule or amounts.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Madam Chairperson, but I wonder why? I agree that it is not in the government's best interest to rip up an agreement, nor am I suggesting that they do that, but I also know there is a sensitivity among the member organizations of the federation, that they are perceived as the equivalent of the big, bad bogeyman out there, while I think that, in fact,

funding children by Lotteries was a far worse scenario, one which was entered into by the NDP, than ensuring that we have adequate funding for children, whether they go to school in independent schools or whether they go to school in public schools.

But there is a sensitivity there. In light of that sensitivity, I wonder why the minister has not asked them for at least a discussion of whether they would be willing during this recessionary period of time to accept a reduced increase with the understanding that as economic times got better the formula would increase proportionately and recognize that we are still trying to work towards that 1998 accomplishment of 80 percent?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am informed that certainly at the time the agreement was reached there was a concern that this be seen as a firm commitment and a deal, because there was a recognition that times do change and governments do change. There was a concern at that time by the MFIS that this would not be seen as something which they could count on.

The next part of the answer is also that, if we attempt to make a change, there are also changes which perhaps the MFIS would like to make, and that this was an agreement when it was reached, but that certainly both sides felt that they had, I suppose, given up points which they would like to have had included. So, at this time, we are viewing the agreement as an agreement and to be counted on as the MFIS had expected.

**Madam Chairperson:** Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., and time for private members' hour, I am interrupting the proceedings. This committee will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening.

Call in the Speaker.

\* (1700)

## IN SESSION

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

### PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

#### Res. 18—Constitutional Referendum for Canada

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry),

WHEREAS Canada is currently bogged down in a far-reaching constitutional reform process that must provide a clear vision of Canadian democracy; and

WHEREAS the Constitution must belong to the people of Canada in order for it to perform its crucial democratic function of defining and limiting the powers of elected officials, as well as enshrining the rights and freedoms of individual Canadians; and

WHEREAS reforms produced in a closed process, dominated by government leaders, and exclusive of participation by citizens will not be and never have been acceptable; and

WHEREAS a ratifying referendum to approve or reject amendment proposals would give Canadian citizens the final word on their Constitution; and

WHEREAS a constitutional referendum would still allow for and require leadership from elected representatives and compromise in negotiations that would produce proposals to be offered to voters; and

WHEREAS Canada's regional and federal characteristics could be reflected in a referendum that required a national majority as well as certain regional majorities; and

WHEREAS a referendum would give focus and purpose to currently chaotic constitutional process, and replace as the guiding principle in this process the weekly exigencies of electoral politics with the democratic principle of sovereignty of the Canadian people over their Constitution.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the First Minister to seek an amendment to the amending formula of the Constitution of Canada, requiring a national ratifying referendum for constitutional change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Assembly urge the provincial government to consider in the event that a changed amending formula is not adopted, enacting a requirement that a ratifying referendum be held in Manitoba before any proposed constitutional amendments be considered to have the approval of this province.

**Motion presented.**

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise in the House to address the issue of a national referendum, and in the event that a national referendum is not possible, at least a provincial

referendum, as has now become the policy in the province of British Columbia and will in all likelihood take place in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, any of us who were in this Legislature in June of 1990, and more particularly those of us who were in Ottawa, and I include not only the three leaders but the member for Brandon West, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), know what a horrible process it was. Not only were we given frequently misinformation, but we were also targeted by the Prime Minister on occasion for not approving certain documents that, in fact, we had not even seen.

I want to relate to this House today some examples of the kind of experiences that we had, so they will have an idea that as elected representatives we felt extremely betrayed by a system that we thought was totally democratic.

I remember, for example, arriving in the plane along with the now Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), and my cellular phone, which became an extension of my arm for the remaining part of the week, was ringing. I was asked by Eddie Goldenberg to go to Mr. Chrétien's law office. When I arrived there, I was presented with a document, a document that I thought had been presented to the Premiers that morning, and the reason I thought it had been presented to the Premiers that morning was because I was told by Mr. Goldenberg that it had been presented to the Premiers that morning. It outlined a series of proposals for debate for the next few days.

When I met with our Premier (Mr. Filmon) about two hours later, I was reading from this document, to have him ask the question: What are you reading from? I announced that I was reading from the document which he had been given that morning. He said, I was not given a document this morning.

So I am sitting there with a document which supposedly has been given to all of the Premiers that morning, but which has not been given to the Premiers. The Prime Minister has decided to hold it in abeyance. I, of course, immediately shared my copy with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of the province, because the idea was that we were not there to play partisan politics with this issue, we were to play the national positive game of putting a Constitution before the electorate.

Well, that is not the only story I can tell about that week. Perhaps the one that angered me the most was the night that the Leader of the Opposition and I were accused of torpedoing a deal.

Well, we were invited to a meeting at four o'clock. That is quite true. At that meeting there were officials from across the country who were going to give us advice about the constitutional discussions taking place. We were presented with a variety of scenarios. We had Roger Tassé taking one position; we had Greg Yost taking another position. We had other officials taking a third position. We participated in this debate thinking that we were being briefed on all of the variety of constitutional positions and options available.

Well, you can imagine my consternation when Joy Mallon, then a local CKY reporter, walked up to me at about quarter-to-twelve to demand from me, why I, along with the now Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), had torpedoed this deal. My reaction to her was, what deal? We were never presented with a deal. We were never told this was the last offer on the table. We were never even asked for our acceptance. We were just presented with a series of options.

I remember that night specifically, because Mr. Wells assured me that if we would move a little bit on Charter he could absolutely get this letter of comfort. I will remind the Leader of the Opposition of that. He was convinced he was going to get this letter of comfort with regard to the Charter. Now, if we had been presented with a deal that evening, presumably he would not have then informed us that he was going back into the negotiation room in order to get this letter of comfort.

When of course I met with Premier Wells the next morning, he informed me that there had not been a deal on the table and that this was just more of the negotiation tactics of what the federal officials were doing. That is why Norman Spector and the then-public relations person for the Prime Minister had held this press conference at about 11:15 and denounced the Leaders of the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party in the province of Manitoba.

I think that gives you just an inkling of the kinds of real games that were being played and perpetrated in Ottawa during that particular period leading up to Meech Lake. It is why the process that is engaged upon has little credibility with the people of this nation. They refuse to believe that politicians are

telling them the whole truth when it comes to the constitutional negotiations, and I think, Mr. Speaker, they are very wise to think that we are not telling them the whole truth.

What also transpired and which I found distressing, and which our own local media found very distressing, was that they were trying to tell their local story and they were fighting with their national media about their attempts to get their story before the people of this country. Often their version, meaning what they saw the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Doer) and myself saying was not acceptable to the national media. The fact that we were saying those things could not be right. We could not really be saying them. So, not only were the politicians fighting, but the members of the media were fighting in trying to get the true story out to the people of this nation.

\* (1710)

That is why, although I have never been a great fan of referendum politics, I have succumbed to the belief that there is no other process available to the Canadian people for them to be able to restore their faith in our political system.

The Constitution is the most fundamental document of our land. It says what we are as Canadians. If we are not allowed to vote on our own Constitution, then how can we possibly refer to this nation as a democracy? I mean, more and more people are becoming exceedingly frustrated at the fact that they go to the polls, they elect a government, the government of whatever political stripe does whatever that government wants to do, and they can say "I did not like what you did" four and a half to five years later.

They feel totally unempowered by that process. Well, if they feel unempowered by changes to the Canada Assistance Plan or changes about the implementation of the GST, think how much more unempowered they feel when a group of 10 men along with the Prime Minister sit down in a room and hammer out a Constitution, go back to the provinces, tell their caucuses to support it, and that becomes the Constitution for however long it exists until somebody wants to amend it. It is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, for us to continue on a process that says no to the Canadian people.

One of the difficulties that people raise with regard to a referendum and one that I think needs to be legitimately raised is, how do you count the votes?

That is why when I appeared before the Dobbie-Beaudoin committee I suggested a referendum process similar to the amending process that we presently have.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, to amend our Canadian Constitution you have to have the approval at the moment for most changes of seven provinces representing 50 percent of the population. What I suggested was a two-stage process of ratifying our Constitution. The first would be ensuring a resolution that had passed seven out of 10 provinces representing 50 percent of the population. It would then be referred to a referendum nation-wide. That that referendum would also require seven out of 10 representing at least 50 percent, but the seven would not necessarily have to have been the same seven that passed it at the first stage.

The reason that I considered that as a option was because if one looks at the poll results in 1982 in the province of Quebec where 74 of their 75 members of Parliament supported the constitutional reform, but their MNAs did not, the question was never taken to the Quebec people.

It might have been interesting to have presented it to the Quebec people in 1982 to have found out whether they would or would not have supported it. We know their provincial politicians did not support it, but we also know their federal politicians did support it. Unfortunately, the one people that, I think, should have had the final say was the people of the province of Quebec, but they were never asked.

We might have some very interesting scenarios today if we had a situation in which the province of Quebec was not one of the seven that approved it in their legislature or in their National Assembly, as they call their legislature, but, in turn, the Quebec people said, yes, we like this particular agreement.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that the concept of a national referendum for a Constitution is a very positive one. There are those who would say, well, the Canadian people will not know exactly what to vote on. Others said to me, but they cannot break it down. Well, quite frankly, we cannot either as politicians.

When we are presented with the format of the constitutional resolution, that is it. We cannot change it. We can reject it or we can accept it, but

we cannot change it because to change it would start the process all over again.

So we have a choice of doing one or the other. The Canadian people, although they probably would prefer to be able to say yes to Section 1 and no to Section 2 and maybe to section 3, are going to be forced to do the same thing that we are, that this is the package, and that you have to decide whether you like it more than you dislike it, and you have to make a decision.

But what more important and critical issue should they make than the future of what their Constitution is going to say? Have we lost faith in the Canadian people to the point where those would say, oh, well, they will not find out enough about it, they will not be mature enough about their decision?

Let me remind everybody in this Chamber that we do live in a democracy, and my experience has been that those who do not want to vote do not vote. That is why we see low-voter turnout in terms of civic elections, sometimes provincial elections. We see much higher voter turnout than we do certainly south of the border, but there are some who will always choose not to vote, unless, of course, we go to the Australian model and we fine them for not voting.

**An Honourable Member:** And they still do not. They pay the fine.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** They pay the fine. I mean there will always be those in our community who will choose not to vote. But the vast majority of Canadians, I believe, when they know it is their Constitution that is going to be imposed on them for many years into the future, will make the decision that they should find out what they say.

I was on a recent talk program and someone used the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement, and they said, but we had a referendum on that and the Tories won.

I was quick to point out that they won the election, but they did not win the vote on the Free Trade Agreement, that 60-percent-plus of the Canadian people chose to vote against the Free Trade Agreement by casting their votes either for the New Democratic Party or for the Liberal Party.

The majority of people in that 1988 election campaign, which was fought on free trade, did not vote for the Conservatives, so I have great faith in the Canadian people. I think they will make the best decision. I know that there has been a certain concern expressed by the aboriginal leadership

about having the Canadian people vote on their future. Well, as I have said to Chief Fontaine and Chief Mercredi, I think they have their faith placed far better in the hands of Canadian people than they do in Canadian politicians.

It has been Canadian politicians who have betrayed them over and over—again, of all political stripes. It has not been the Canadian people. If they are concerned about a national referendum on their particular right to inherent self-government, I think they should not fear nearly so much the Canadian people as they should fear quite realistically the government and those that make it up as elected officials.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to participate in this debate.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs):** I was going to say I am pleased to be involved in this discussion today, but it seems like that is all I have been doing for the last several weeks is discussing matters relating to the Constitution.

If it was not attending three of the five conferences organized in Canada to discuss the Constitution, it has been the process involving federal and provincial ministers and aboriginal leaders over the last number of weeks. We have found ourselves learning what the insides of airports are like close-up for the last little while. I am getting away each and every week it seems.

\* (1720)

Mr. Speaker, I think I should preface my comments by thanking the honourable member, the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), for bringing this issue forward. I am thanking her also for her comments on Friday last, when I reported to the House on the latest meetings we had in Edmonton.

There was a concern last week, and it remains a concern in my mind, about the possibility that some people might lose sight of the fact that we are engaged in a Canada round this time around in our discussions of the Constitution. The honourable Leader of the Liberal Party in response to my statement last week made it clear that indeed we are engaged in a Canada round. She is asking that I persevere in my representations on behalf of all of us.

I am now quoting the Leader of the Liberal Party on behalf of all of us to ensure that this continues to



be a Canada round and not a round which is oriented towards one particular province. That is the end of the quotation, and that is precisely what we are doing.

It is well known that the province of Quebec has certain items on its list and other regions of this province have items on their list, too. We know that Quebec would like to see certain guarantees in a future Constitution referring to its representation in the Supreme Court. We know that Quebec wants to have a more effective say in matters relating to immigration. We know that Quebec is a distinct society and wants to be recognized as such in the Constitution. We know that Quebec would like to see changes with respect to the spending power and with respect to the province of Quebec having a veto in any future constitutional change.

Well, those are five areas of concern for the province of Quebec, and there are a number of areas of concern for other parts of this country, too. While we all value the rich diversity of this country and the richness that the province of Quebec brings to our union, we also think that we have something to offer as a province in this country, and we would like very much to be a full player in this confederation of ours.

When we think how wonderful it is to live in Manitoba and what a wonderful province Manitoba is, just think how wonderful it would be if we were considered an equal province in this country. I think that is a goal that we should be striving for. In that regard, we are working towards the Triple-E model of Senate reform so that Manitoba can be seen, as other provinces, as an equal partner in this confederation. We think that Triple-E Senate ought also to be effective so that we do not just have a weak Senate to counterbalance the fact that we are equal.

So I really cannot buy into a weak Senate, because if all I wanted was a weak Senate I might as well go along with some other people who suggested maybe we should not have one at all. I do not agree with that, so I am going to offer an effective Senate. Of course, there is little disagreement about the fact that senators should be elected so that they can have the kind of legitimacy they need to speak effectively for the areas they represent.

I think that as part of this Canada round there should be recognition in the Canada clause that

there is an equality amongst the provinces. I believe that to give meaning to the expression "Canada round" that there should be a Canada clause and in that Canada clause there should be a recognition of the fundamental characteristics of our country, one of which is the aboriginal contribution to the development of our country, the fact that we have minority French and English languages in this country, the fact that Quebec as a province has and will continue to play a vital role in the everyday life of our country, that we have a unique and very special multicultural dimension to our country, and that those things ought to be included in the Canada clause.

I think also that the position taken by the Manitoba task force respecting the entry into our country of new provinces should be a matter for those territories wishing such status to take up with the federal government and become provinces some day just like every other province did, including the province of Manitoba, and that was a bilateral arrangement between the province to be and the federal government.

Now the honourable member's resolution discusses a number of things, one of which of course is, I suppose, the focus for this resolution: the idea of a referendum process for making constitutional decisions. Well, just a little background for our honourable members. Here in Manitoba, we have I suppose the most extensive mechanism in the country for consulting people of Manitoba with respect to constitutional change and that mechanism has a history of its own, which there is no need for me to go into at this particular time. But in Manitoba we do have a requirement in our rules here at this Legislature that changes in the Constitution before ratification at the provincial level must be the subject of public hearings.

Well, even outside that process, which is part of our rules here in Manitoba, in the last few years there have been conducted two task forces, all-party task forces, both of them headed up by the independent chair, Professor Wally Fox-Decent. Those task forces have very successfully, I suggest, grasped the feeling of Manitobans and very successfully too put in recommendation form the feelings of Manitobans. Those task force recommendations have held us in good stead in our discussions with our colleagues in Ottawa and the other provinces, the territories and our aboriginal leadership.

However, I have certain feelings about all of this, and there are two members in this House, the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), with whom I disagree from time to time about one thing or another, but I feel a certain closeness to both those people because we had a very long dinner one time in June of 1990. We spent a lot of time together and lived through a trauma together. It seems to me people who have the same identification with a traumatic kind of situation find that to be, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, a bonding experience. For all the times I do disagree with those two honourable members, I will have, I suppose, the rest of my life, a recollection of working closely with them for at least a week of my life.

**An Honourable Member:** At least I gave you a week's notice about Len Evans.

**Mr. McCrae:** Stay away from that stuff.

In 1991, the task force issued its latest report. That was in October. There were some concerns about referenda referenced in the task force report. I am going to read from page 61 of the latest task force report and accept what I read here as the position I am putting forward today. When I am finished doing that, I propose to put forward an amendment to the resolution before us.

Page 61 of the latest task force report says the following: Like a constituent assembly, a referendum is a mechanism which has the potential to involve people directly in a process of constitutional reform. At the outset, we must recognize that the present amendment procedure contains no provision for holding a referendum. Therefore, if a referendum is organized under the present amendment procedure, it can only be consultative. The final decision on an amendment must be made by Parliament and the provincial Legislatures.

There are some concerns related to the use of a referendum, even as a vehicle for consulting the Canadian public on constitutional reform. First, it can be very difficult to frame a workable and an unbiased referendum question, which could adequately summarize anything but the simplest of constitutional reforms. Secondly, organizing a referendum is not a simple task; and finally, as the referendum on conscription in 1942 demonstrated, a referendum can exacerbate national divisions.

Referenda remain an interesting option, however, and we are open to the possibility that it may be made a part of the amending process. Thus, the task force recommends that further consideration be given this option.

Now that is the end of the quotation I propose to make from the task force, Mr. Speaker, but needless to say, all three parties were represented on that task force, and all three parties lent their signatures to the passage I just read. I believe that the consideration of the referendum option is not something that has come to fruition to this point and not something we are in a position today to make a determination about. I dare say, it need not be stricken from the list of things that ought to be considered in future constitutional reform in our country.

\* (1730)

I would like to wind up my comments by moving, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render),

THAT the resolution be amended by deleting all the words following the first "WHEREAS" and replacing them with the following:

WHEREAS the Manitoba government believes that public input into public decision making is important and has been an established part of the decision-making process in Manitoba through the public hearings of legislative committees; and

WHEREAS the province of Manitoba is the only province in Canada to guarantee public hearings on any constitutional amendment; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba government initiated and established two all-party constitutional task forces to listen first-hand to the ideas, views and concerns of Manitobans, and in this way ensured that the citizens of Manitoba were heard in regard to matters affecting their constitutional rights and freedoms; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Constitutional Task Force in its report of October 1991 made reference to the use of referenda in constitutional reform, specifically the difficulty of drafting a referenda question so as to be workable and unbiased, and the difficulty in organizing such a process and the potential for further exacerbation of national divisions amongst Canadians.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba continue to hear

the views and concerns of its citizens in regard to the proposed constitutional amendments through the public hearing process established under Manitoba law and follow the recommendation of the all-party Manitoba Constitutional Task Force, and consider the use of referenda in the process of constitutional amendment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in keeping with the recommendation of the all-party Manitoba Constitutional Task Force, encourage all jurisdictions in Canada, including that of the federal government, to consult the public on constitutional amendments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the amended resolution, although I note that there is not much left of the original resolution, but obviously the amendment and the original resolution are germane to each other in dealing with the whole issue of referenda.

Often Canadians and even members of this Chamber use two different terms interchangeably. One is a plebiscite, which is seeking public opinion and nonbinding, and the other term is referendum.

Interestingly enough, if you look at the existing Canadian Constitution and the proposed changes to the existing Constitution, a lot of people are talking about really plebiscites, because to change the existing Constitution you need to amend it by unanimous consent first before you can even contemplate having a referendum that in fact is therefore binding on the constitutional process.

Mr. Speaker, we do support the all-party task force report. The all-party task force report made no recommendations to make any changes to article 5 of the Constitution, part 5 of the Constitution. That is because of the fact that most Manitobans believe the amending formula in the Constitution, the 7-50 formula, is an excellent formula for the people of Manitoba and this province. I want to talk a little bit about the Liberal resolution and what problems I would see for the province of Manitoba.

The Liberal resolution, the first RESOLVED says that this Legislative Assembly urged the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to seek an amendment to the amending formula of the Constitution of Canada requiring a national ratifying referendum for

constitutional change. Now, Mr. Speaker, let us take a couple of examples of constitutional change and let us put it through their model of a national referendum.

What about the whole issue of division of powers? The division of powers being requested by the province of Quebec to have whole scale changes of powers going from the federal government, a strong federal government, over to the provinces. Mr. Speaker, who agrees with those proposals?

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

The people of Quebec have supported those recommendations. The people of Ontario, obviously in a strong national position and a strong position and to some degree, Mr. Acting Speaker, well—the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) should think these things through before you just put them on the table.

The people of British Columbia are also very strong on their own economic and their own power in terms of the province of British Columbia and their own ability to sustain very strong institutions in their province. They have wealth, they have growing populations and, in the case of the province of Quebec, they have the kind of sovereign disposition to proceed with a greater decentralization of powers.

The Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon) and the Liberals and the New Democratic Party have been opposed to the weakening of the strong federal government, a strong central government with the ability to distribute wealth to the less populated provinces and the least populated provinces and the less affluent provinces in Canada.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would suggest, let us take the Liberal model of a national referendum dealing with division of powers to provinces and the decentralization of a strong federal government to provincial powers. We have a situation where the province of Quebec has 25 percent of the population. We have a situation where the province of Ontario has a 35 percent population. We have a situation where British Columbia is growing, what, is it 15 percent now the population in Canada? You have close to 75 percent of the population in three provinces.

Now let us take the model of the Liberal Leader's referendum solution to have a national ratifying referendum for constitutional change, and let us look at that in terms of Manitoba's vision and the task

force vision of a strong, central federal government with the ability to redistribute wealth to regions in Canada.

\* (1740)

If you look at this Prime Minister, Prime Minister Mulroney, having one question on a referendum ballot: Do you support the federal government's position to decentralize all these powers to these provinces?—you may get a situation where Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and P.E.I., the people of those provinces—[interjection] With the greatest respect, I just look at the wording of the resolution. The wording of the resolution says, requiring a national ratifying referendum, okay?

Asking the Prime Minister to amend the amending formula which is contrary to the all-party task force, amend the all-party task force report that the former member for Crescentwood signed, and I would assume the Liberal caucus agreed to—and to have an amending formula that requires a national ratifying referendum for constitutional change.

While a national referendum gives every citizen of this country a vote, a national referendum that gave every citizen a vote on the issue of decentralization of powers could go against the province of Manitoba, could go against the minority of people living in the majority of provinces in terms of the actual result of that referendum.

That would go against the history of this province for 50 years, where we have been the bridge between Ontario and Alberta in the Dirty Thirties when Ontario was saying, do not redistribute wealth in this country, and Aberhart in Alberta was asking for help. Manitoba, in the late '30s, the Bracken input, was the bridge between the have- and have-not provinces. That would go against the tradition of Roblin, Schreyer, Pawley, Lyon in terms of the distribution of powers and the strength of smaller provinces in a strong federal government. So I would say to the members opposite: Look at your model on some of the issues that are important to Manitoba.

Let us take another example. The members opposite are apparently interested in Senate reform and apparently interested in the Triple-E Senate. Are you going to give a national referendum on that issue? We already know the province of Quebec and the province of Ontario are opposed—[interjection] Look at the Liberal leader, the former

premier of Ontario was opposed to the Triple-E as well. Any premier of Ontario or any premier of Quebec is going to have trouble with it, obviously. You do not have to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out.

Look at the population of Quebec and Ontario, with 60 percent of the population. Even what you say you were in favour of last Friday may be in jeopardy of what you are saying you are in favour of today on Monday. I think the members opposite should be quite concerned about a good populist idea. We all believe in democracy. We are all elected through the ultimate referendum called an election, and we are all defeated through the ultimate referendum called an election.

I would ask the members opposite to look at their first resolve. It is absolutely contrary to the task force report first of all, absolutely opposite to what they signed, and absolutely opposite to maybe some of the issues that are of interest to smaller provinces with less population that are dealing with bigger provinces that may be trying to amass more powers and trying to, in fact, weaken a strong federal government, which was one of the major recommendations from all members of the public in presentations.

Another recommendation, Mr. Acting Speaker, on the Manitoba task force report—there was Senate reform, there was a strong central government—was, indeed, aboriginal self-government. This could be a very emotional debate on something that is basically restoring the treaties of this province back to our original people, our First Nations, in terms of aboriginal self-government.

These are not easy issues. Aboriginal people represent a minority of the population in Canada, even though they were first peoples. Referendums dealing with minorities have not always been successful. I would harken back members to a referendum that took place, in fact, the plebiscite that took place in this province dealing with French language services in municipalities in the 1980s. That was not a referendum, but it was a plebiscite. It was not an overwhelming success. Are the Liberals saying that we should put French language governance of education forward in a referendum in this province before we proceed? Is that their policy now on these very important issues? Seems to be contrary to what they said in the House, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we support the all-party task force report. It did leave open the option of having a referendum—in fact, the plebiscite really, if we were to be accurate in our wording—in this province. I think we should have that option.

We do have, as the Attorney General or the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) said, the most open democratic process in terms of constitutional amendments of any province in Canada. We talked about that famous Meech Lake week in June. Let us remind each other of that famous Meech Lake week that followed that week in June in terms of what happened in this Chamber, in terms of the democratic process, when 4,000 people signed up to present briefs in this province—many of which I suspect would have been opposed to the proposal that was before the House—4,000 people signed up to present briefs. Especially after the Prime Minister said he was going to roll the dice, the public of Manitoba said, we are going to take those dice away.

Perhaps we have a pretty good system in this province. Who is going to write the question? Do the Liberals trust this Prime Minister to write the question? I want to remind the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) of the manipulation that the Leader went through and I went through and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) went through in the week in June.

We could get it times-10 in the question we get proposed by this Prime Minister. We could lose all kinds of powers with the federal government, because believe me, the province of Quebec wants lots of power moved over to its province. We could have a package of proposals that the minority of this country is opposed to that the majority passes in those other provinces that do not have nearly as much at stake as the people in this province.

So it is not as simple as, oh, this is a good idea because it is a populist idea. You know, this is hardball. We are dealing with a Prime Minister, down the road, whether we like it or not that could ask a hardball question.

It could have very major ramifications for the people of this province. Our people could be opposed to it. The people of Quebec and Ontario and British Columbia could be in favor of it. The wording in this referendum proposal does not say that this province will have any say whatsoever. It

says, requiring a national ratifying referendum for constitutional change in Canada.

So I am opposed to the first RESOLVED of the Liberal Party. I would remind members opposite here. Look at the referendum that took place in the United States on changes to the environmental protection in the state of California. We had a situation there where the referendum was defeated, and corporations spent \$13 million to \$15 million defeating the referendum, and environmental groups had a few hundred thousand dollars.

I mean, referenda on school funding in the state of Oregon have been a very difficult kind of job to fulfill. Now, we could go on. The Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) says in 1981, we could have had a referendum in the province of Quebec, and maybe we would have had different results of the Parti Quebecois.

I agree. Why did Pierre Elliott Trudeau not have a referendum, as he threatened, in 1981 and '82 on the original constitutional proposal which included the original amending formula? Because I agree with the members of the Liberal Party.

Perhaps a referendum would have succeeded all across Canada, and then we would not have this morass that we have about whether Québec is in or out even though the Constitution fully applies to the province of Quebec, just like it applies to the province of Manitoba today.

I mean, who used the notwithstanding clause in December of 1988? It was the province of Quebec. How could they use a notwithstanding clause if they were not part of the Constitution? They were part of the Constitution, because the notwithstanding clause was put in the Constitution in 1981, and 1982, and they used it. So therefore, I would argue, they are part of it.

This is not a simple issue. We may well, in fact, have to look at this issue of a referendum in this province. We may have a situation where there are referenda in B.C., in Newfoundland, and Alberta, in Quebec, and it may make sense if we trust the question. If we trust the question, it may make sense for us to have that kind of referendum here. I think it makes sense to have that issue open to this province.

I would warn the Liberal Party, and it was their party that signed the Allaire report in the province of Quebec calling on whole scale changes to the division of powers in Canada. It was the Liberal

Party of Quebec that passed the Allaire report in the province of Quebec. It was the Liberal Party of Quebec that called for a massive shift of powers in the province of Quebec over to the provinces at a massive change on the federal government.

I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, with the greatest of respect, that the No. 1 priority of Manitobans in the task force report in Meech Lake and the task force report that was prepared before this round of constitutional debate, it was our vision of a strong and united Canada, our vision of a strong federal government with the ability to redistribute wealth to regions and to less wealthy individuals in our country.

\* (1750)

I suggest to the Liberals that the wording in their resolution providing a national referendum may work against the No. 1 priority of Manitobans. We as a province with minority of population, if you amended the amending formula of Canada to provide for a question of a national ratifying referendum, we have lost way more, way more than the 7-50 amending formula which is now part of the national constitution. We support the 7-50 amending formula, and we will oppose any change to the amending formula as we presently have it in this country and as it affects Manitoba.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Acting Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) never ceases to amaze me. Some of the comments, 95 percent of the comments that he has put on the record I would question.

We have to realize, Mr. Acting Speaker, what the Leader of the New Democratic Party is basing the essence of his argument on. The essence of his argument is that he does not trust the public in Canada to settle and resolve the constitutional crisis that we are in.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the reason why we are in that constitutional crisis is because of the current Prime Minister that we have. In 1984, there was the election commitment that was made by the then Leader of the official opposition in Ottawa, who eventually became the Prime Minister, that if he was elected he was going to bring Quebec into the constitution.

Mr. Acting Speaker, Quebec was never out of the Constitution. Quebec was never out of the Constitution. In fact, the crisis that we are in right now is as a direct result of the incompetence of our Prime Minister and the political gamesmanship that he has chosen to play in an attempt to try to woo votes from certain areas of our country.

I take exception to some of the remarks, as I say, that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) has put on the record. He makes reference to the resolution and says that the resolution weakens the province of Manitoba, our Atlantic provinces, the province of Saskatchewan. He says that because in the resolution where it points out that we are in favour of a referendum. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, as it stands right now, seven provinces say yes, excluding the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland. It is going to pass. Changes to our Constitution can pass—[interjection] six.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, as it stands right now, in order to change the Constitution it takes seven in 50 percent.

**An Honourable Member:** Unanimous consent for the amending formula.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** For the amending formula, it is unanimous consent. [interjection] Well, we are talking about the Constitution as a whole including the Charter of Rights. We are talking about putting a question to the people, because we believe, we have faith in the people in determining what is good and what is bad.

Mr. Acting Speaker, throughout his remarks that is what he made reference to, that Quebec says this, Ontario is going to say this, and B.C. is going to say this and the weaker provinces or the have-not provinces are not going to be able to get anything. I would argue the opposite.

The reason why we had failure in the province of Quebec was because of the politicians. It had nothing to do with the people of Quebec. Mr. Acting Speaker, I would suggest to you that in fact it is not the—that it is the public that is going to prevent any type of constitutional agreement being achieved. It is going to be the politicians, the elected officials that are going to be making a mess of things. I am referring to the—[interjection] the Leader says, Mr. Acting Speaker, you have Ontario, you have Quebec, you have B.C. that are going to say no to

an elected Senate, that they will never agree to a Triple-E Senate, right?

For example—[interjection] well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would argue that, yes, there might be some politicians of that mind set, politicians that might want to have more powers or levers, but I believe that the average citizen in those provinces would be very supportive of what is in the best interest of the Canadian population as a whole, that the premises of the Leader of the New Democrats argument are in fact wrong. All we need to look at is in fact what has happened in Quebec and the referendum that was held in Quebec.

Mr. Acting Speaker, he keeps on going back to the resolution and the exact wording of the resolution. He was here when the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) explained the resolution and the intent of the resolution. Unfortunately, Mr. Acting Speaker, I guess we did not have a five-page resolution that would have explained all of the details, but I would encourage the Leader of the New Democratic Party to read in fact what the Leader of the Liberal Party had to say at the Beaudoin report. You will find that all the detailed information, the answers that he is looking for that maybe he did not catch when the Leader gave her remarks regarding the resolution, encouraged the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) to do likewise. Maybe then he will understand what their actual position is. Mr. Acting Speaker, we find it far too often.

**Mr. Doer:** . . . this resolution is terrible.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, I am not too sure what it is the Leader of the New Democratic Party is saying.

**Mr. Doer:** The task force report, do not change the part 5. We signed it.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the task force did not rule out a referendum. The task force report did not rule out a referendum—

**Mr. Doer:** It said we should be open to, not amend the amending formula—

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, he says we should be open to. The task force report did not rule out a referendum. The resolution, Mr. Acting Speaker, does not violate the task force report, because in

fact it is fairly clear that what the resolution is proposing is not in violation of the task force report, because the task force report did not rule out a referendum.

**Mr. Doer:** It says amend the amending formula. The task force report never said amend the amending formula—

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Speaker, we are going to agree to disagree on that particular point. The Leader also makes reference to the question. Who is going to write the question on a ballot? Who is the group of individuals who are elected to represent the national interest?

**Mr. Doer:** The federal government.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The federal government. You are right. The Leader of the New Democratic Party is right.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if the Prime Minister and the official opposition and other opposition parties disagree with the wording of the question or disagree with the referendum, they have a right to—

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** To pick up their bat and ball and go home.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The member for Dauphin does not understand. They too have a right to go to the public and say vote no. They made mention in terms of the cost. You can have cost caps as we do during federal elections. They are being very nit-picky in terms of how they feel the referendum should go.

It is because they do not support it, much like they do not support many other functions or proposals from the Manitoba task force report. I would suggest to you that the amendment that has been introduced from the government House—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will have six minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in the Committee of Supply.

# Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, May 4, 1992

## CONTENTS

### Presenting Petitions

Dutch Elm Disease Funding Friesen	2868
Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign Barrett	2868
Brandon General Hospital Funding L. Evans	2868

Norway House Fisherman's Co-op Lathlin; Downey	2877
Ashern, Manitoba C. Evans; Cummings	2877
North American Free Trade Agreement Alcock; Stefanson	2877
Impaired Driving Chomiak; McCrae	2878

### Reading and Receiving Petitions

Independent Children's Advocate Office Carstairs	2868
Selkirk Human Resources Opportunity Centre Moratorium Dewar	2868
Brandon General Hospital Funding L. Evans	2869

Judicial System Chomiak; McCrae	2879
Residential Tenancies Act Martindale; McIntosh	2879
Rent Regulation Bureau Martindale; McIntosh	2879

### Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports

Estimates: Urban Affairs; Housing Ernst	2869
National Forest Week Enns	2869
C. Evans	2870
Edwards	2870
Estimates, Alcoholism Foundation of MB Orchard	2871
Northern Flood Agreement Negotiations Downey	2871
Ashton	2871
Edwards	2872

Suche Report Barrett; Gilleshammer	2880
Children's Advocate Barrett; Gilleshammer	2880
St. John's Ambulance Wasylcyia-Leis; Orchard	2881

### Speaker's Ruling

Matter of Urgent Public Importance, April 24, 1992 Rocan	2882
--	------

### Matter of Urgent Public Importance

Decline in Province's Gross Domestic Product L. Evans	2882
Manness	2883
Alcock	2884

### Oral Questions

Economic Growth Doer; Filmon	2873
CareerStart Program L. Evans; Gilleshammer	2874
Youth Employment Programs L. Evans; Gilleshammer	2875
Student Aid Carstairs; Vodrey	2875
Dept. of Highways and Transportation Lathlin; Downey	2876
The Pas, Manitoba Lathlin; Downey	2876

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### Committee of Supply

Health	2885
Education and Training	2896

### Private Members' Business

#### Proposed Resolutions

Res. 18, Constitutional Referendum for Canada Carstairs	2902
Amendment McCrae	2905
Doer	2908
Lamoureux	2911