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Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radiisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
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, Clif	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
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 16, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today Dr. Garcia Reyes, Head, Generality of Cataluna, President's Department, External Affairs, Relations with the United States and Canada.

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here today, sir.

Also with us today, we have 10 senior provincial 4H public speaking competitors, and they are under the direction of Mr. David Hay.

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Immigrant Investor Program Federal Government Policy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

On Friday, we learned that the federal government allegedly is going to override the provincial decision on freezing Immigrant Investor Funds in the province of Manitoba. The freeze that the government implemented arose out of a long series of investigations and inquiries dealing with the integrity of the way money is raised, the integrity of the way it is invested and the integrity of money in the fund.

Mr. Speaker, we were very concerned when we heard about this decision. We wonder, can the First Minister indicate whether that is indeed the decision of the federal government to override the provincial government in terms of the Immigrant

Investor Funds in Manitoba, and what rationale is the federal government utilizing in this decision?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to reiterate the fact that this Immigrant Investor Program is a federal government program, not a provincial program.

It was this government that initiated a review, an investigation into the activities of the Immigrant Investor Fund, and the conditions have not been met that we have put forward. In fact, we had asked that an independent representation for the investor be put in place, the court-directed solution be carried out, and that full disclosure to the investors be made available. Those are the three conditions which this government put forward, Mr. Speaker, and they still have not been met.

Immigrant Investor Program Federal Government Policy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we will recall that the Crewson report dated May 19, 1993, indicated on dealing with the proposals in question that in a report there is a cash deficiency in the escrow accounts to complete the project, based on either the projected budget or the revised budget.

Mr. Speaker, there is indeed a cash shortage in some of the projects that are now apparently getting federal government approval, according to the accountant hired by the provincial government to provide an analysis of these funds.

These projects represent investments by immigrants in our province, and it represents an issue of credibility for credible investments in the province of Manitoba.

I would ask, again, the Premier: How can the federal government override the freeze that the provincial government has put in place, when one of the funds has been documented not to have

enough money in the fund to complete the projects? It seems to me to be very unfair to investors and very, very unfair to our reputation.

* (1335)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) said, that is precisely why we have concerns. We have told the federal government very directly that we do not support the removal of the freeze because much of what was produced by the auditor who investigated on behalf of the provincial government—and I emphasize that the audit was caused by this government, that the federal government of the day, the previous federal government, did not agree with it and would not pay for the work that Mr. Crewson did in identifying the concerns with it.

Yet all of that has been overridden by the federal government today, and the only way in which I can respond to the Leader of the Opposition is to tell him that this is totally within federal jurisdiction, that this Immigrant Investor Program is totally a federal program and within their jurisdiction to remove the freeze.

We disagree with it, but they have proceeded on that basis.

Mr. Doer: I am sure we will have all-party agreement on this matter. I remember the former Finance critic of the Liberal Party, who is now a member of Parliament, indicating in 1993 that they were opposed to visas being sold for purposes of immigration, Mr. Speaker.

It quite concerns us because with the new government in late 1993, the new minister, Mr. Marchi, indicated that they would be reviewing and curtailing the Conservative Immigrant Investor Fund as part of their new federal program. So we were quite surprised to hear about the approval of these investments.

I would ask the provincial government, given that the original decision required a recommendation of the Province of Manitoba prior to the federal government getting an approval, and given the fact that we have frozen our decisions and frozen these funds given the fact that some of

these funds do not even contain the original amount of money that was indicated, will the provincial government, on top of the freeze, be required to rescind the decisions, to recommend to the federal government that these funds be approved?

Mr. Filmon: Well, Mr. Speaker, I just want to ensure that the Leader of the Opposition knows that we were not in a position, we did not have the authority to freeze those funds, but as a result of the findings of the investigation of Mr. Crewson, the auditor whom we hired to do that review, clearly there were major concerns that were identified and conditions that he was recommending that needed to be fulfilled, so the government of the day, which was the former government in Ottawa, did cause the freeze on all those funds. The new federal government, against our wishes and recommendations but totally within their jurisdiction, have now removed that freeze.

Crown Corporations Layoff Statistics

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, there is continuing evidence of the impact of the government's economic policies, which resulted in high unemployment, a combination of public sector layoffs, the continuing concerns expressed about Bill 22, continuing minimum wages.

I would like to ask the acting Minister of Labour if the government can indicate the total number of public sector jobs that will be lost in terms of Manitoba Hydro following the announcement of layoffs last year and the announcement of layoffs in the Manitoba Telephone System only a few weeks ago.

* (1340)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, if my honourable friend is referring to the recent news coverage on Friday last, that is the final working through of the corporation of some downsizing of 500 that was commenced approximately one year ago.

Mr. Ashton: I would like to ask as a follow-up question, Mr. Speaker, how the government can justify having brought in Bill 22, supposedly to preserve jobs in the public sector, having had that communicated to Manitoba Hydro workers, and now we are seeing today that upwards of 500 jobs have been cut from Manitoba Hydro following the announcement last year, and there are continuing layoffs in such areas as Manitoba Telephone System, when some of those Crown corporations are making a considerable profit?

Mr. Orchard: First of all, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend should get his facts straight before he makes such statements to the House. There are not 500 layoffs at Manitoba Hydro as my honourable friend alleges. There was a downsizing of some 500 positions commenced a year ago.

We expect by the time the most recent layoffs, which are approximately 100, filter through, with every effort being made at redeployment, there will be a significantly lesser figure of actual people who will be laid off after redeployment has taken effect.

So I do not want my honourable friend to indirectly provide incorrect information to the people, but, Mr. Speaker, maybe my honourable friend would support the president of the MGEA who preferred 500 people to be laid off, rather than the 10 days off. Maybe that is the position of my honourable friend the New Democrat: more layoffs, not less.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, we would like to see jobs maintained in the Manitoba economy. That is what we would like to see.

Reduced Workweek Impact on Service

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): My final question is to the Premier, once again in regard to the implications of Bill 22.

There is an indication today, Mr. Speaker, that the chamber of commerce is concerned that service has been affected, particularly in rural and northern communities, because of the impact of Filmon Fridays.

As we enter the latest round of Filmon Fridays, will the Premier respond to the concerns that have been expressed, not only by civil servants and by members of public but now by the chamber of commerce, and recognize that there has been reduction in services and review what is happening in terms of services because of Filmon Fridays?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the Manitoba chambers of commerce who are taking a far more sensible, common-sense approach to this, rather than the dogmatic, ideological, narrow approach of the New Democrats who would rather see 500 people laid off. We will not accept that solution.

We believe that the public does want their taxes kept down. We believe that the public does want us to continue to look for ways to make government more efficient. We are going to heed some of the advice that many people throughout the province have given us that coincides with that of the Manitoba chambers of commerce and look for ways of ensuring that it is applied in a common-sense fashion with flexibility. That flexibility will allow us to continue to maintain services while at the same time to reduce our payroll by \$20 million and maintain 500 more jobs in the public service.

Regional Economic Co-operation International Trade

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

The Premier, later this week, will be meeting with other western Premiers in Gimli at the Western Premiers' Conference. In view of that, I want to speak briefly about international trade. He has put that in the press releases as a key area of concern.

Just some time ago, we closed down our Hong Kong office, as the Premier well knows, and Mr. Walker, who had been heading up that office, was put on a contract.

My question for the Premier is, perhaps he can enlighten us, after that 19-day trip that he took last fall to the Orient, on what basis that decision was

made and whether or not he is going to be proposing to the other Premiers that perhaps this is an area that the western provinces could co-operate in.

Is there some way that we should be co-operating as a region to have a more substantial presence in the Far East?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that proposal was made two years ago at a Western Premiers' Conference. It was repeated again last year. It was, in fact, discussed on December 21 in Ottawa with all of the First Ministers of Canada. We will continue to pursue the opportunity to have joint missions as opposed to individual missions, because the member may know that during the course of the month and a half or so prior to Christmas, there were five different Premiers from Canada who were over in the Asia-Pacific region. So it makes ultimate good sense.

The move with respect to the representation in Hong Kong was one strictly of ensuring that we could operate more efficiently by hiring the same individual on a contract basis, rather than undergoing the immense cost of space that I think exceeds \$100 a square foot to maintain premises in Hong Kong, whereas the individual who is the key to the operation can be hired on a contract for less and not have to have the expenses, yet can get the same effect for our services and for assurances that we can keep in touch with and promote our business interests in that Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Walker will very happily be part of our continued effort to expand business, trade and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Regional Economic Co-operation Walker Contract

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, again for the Premier (Mr. Filmon), Mr. Walker, I understand, is currently in the process of negotiating a contract with the province for the new arrangement. I note that he has been the employee, the head of that mission in Hong Kong.

Now that he is moving to a contract basis, will there be a commission aspect of that contract? Will

Mr. Walker be paid a straight salary, as he has been, or a straight amount of money, or will there, in fact, be some relationship to what is actually secured in terms of investment in Manitoba as a part of his pay package?

* (1345)

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the detail of the contract I am prepared to get for the member. I do not believe that there is a commission part to the contract.

There is a quantity that he will be paid, but there will be an ability for him to, as well, contract his services to other individuals who may need those services when he is not, in fact, working on behalf of the government of Manitoba's interests, which we believe will broaden the interests on behalf of the people of Manitoba and enhance the opportunities to encourage business to come to this province from the Asia-Pacific area.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, no doubt. However, I do ask the minister to consider tying some remuneration to actual productivity and actually securing investment in this province from that region now that they are going to a contract as opposed to an employee basis.

Regional Economic Co-operation Procurement Policy

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my final question for the First Minister: The procurement agreement which is currently in place between the western provinces does not include the largest departments this government operates, that of Health and Education, and currently does not include the contracts under the Crown corporations.

Is that going to be a key priority for this Premier in the upcoming session? Clearly, the biggest expenditure departments and the Crown corporations are essential to making this overall western co-operative effort work, in particular in terms of procurement, seeing as we already have an agreement in place. It just excludes the major departments.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Clearly, Mr. Speaker, what we will be attempting to do from a Manitoba perspective is broaden the agreement so that it does include as much as possible the procurement initiatives of the governments of the western provinces.

We are very much aware that although we have an agreement that was, I might say, the first in Canada—the western provinces signed it in 1990; it was the first in Canada among provinces—it does not go far enough and it does not include, for instance, destructive competition for investment.

So we will be looking at broadening it and extending it to include as many areas as we possibly can for co-operation and access to each other's procurement markets.

Health Care System TQM Training Program

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I have in front of me a manual produced in the United States which deals with total quality management and is used together with a video about how to make juice and is utilized at several Winnipeg hospitals to train staff. Just quoting from it, it says one of the reasons that third-ring organizations can charge more is their customers feel they get their money's worth. They return for more and more and tell others about the quality.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister: Is it government policy that this program, which is being used at these hospitals, is approved by the government to teach and train staff at Winnipeg hospitals?

* (1350)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what it is that the honourable member has against the Seven Oaks Hospital. Repeatedly he batters the administration and the staff and employees at Seven Oaks Hospital for trying to improve patient care and service for all people who have dealings with the Seven Oaks Hospital.

First of all, he is against improving discharge service for people so that they can receive appropriate home care, and now he is against a

total quality approach to better service for the patient. I just do not understand where the honourable member is coming from.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the minister: Since it is the government's plan that has called for TQM to be introduced at all the hospitals, as related in their own reform document and their own throne speech in '91—if the minister looked to read it—since it is government policy, I am wondering is it not possible for the government at least to have a plan that is made-in-Manitoba and deals with health care sector, rather than used cars and juice-making?

Mr. McCrae: I repeat, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the honourable member has against Seven Oaks Hospital or against trying to do a better job for the patients.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the government could do well by improving the CAT scanning facilities at Seven Oaks Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the Connie Curran fiasco, will the government not introduce, because they said they would in their own health care plan, a program that is made-in-Manitoba and deals with health care and its approach to people, not this custom, assembly-line, U.S.-based kind of industrial program that is not applicable?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, our health care system is a made-in-Canada health care system. It is governed by a national Health Act which is a statute of the Parliament of Canada.

The honourable member is afraid of anything that will improve service for patients because his union boss friends will get angry.

Railway Industry Hopper Car Shortage

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the federal Minister of Agriculture is in Winnipeg today meeting with representatives from the grain industry to talk about the serious problem there is in the industry with the shortage of hopper cars. They are meeting with representatives of the industry. Unfortunately, farm groups will not be there to raise their concerns.

I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture what message he will be taking to the meeting or whether he will be meeting with the Minister of Agriculture to ensure that the issue of shortage of hopper cars is addressed. Will he be asking for additional cars to be built? Will he be suggesting that grain be shipped through the Port of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to respond to the member for Swan River. The meeting that is occurring while we speak has more to do with what can we as Canadians do to better utilize the cars that we have in the system. My understanding is that the questions range from looking at some of our own legislation. When I say "our own," I am speaking primarily of federal legislation.

There is considerable concern that the bureaucracy that runs the Western Grain Transportation program needs to be revised, looked at, indeed fundamentally altered. It is not so much a question of not having enough rolling stock in the system, it is having them here and where we need them at the appropriate time. That is what is going on at that meeting this afternoon, Sir.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, since it is the industry that is responsible for getting the hopper cars, as the minister says, will the minister raise with the Minister of Agriculture the possibility of the railway companies paying the demurrage at the port, instead of all that cost being picked up by farmers?

It is not the farmers' fault that the cars are not there. Why will he not speak up for the farmers and have the railway companies pick up the demurrage costs?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I will make a deal with the honourable member for Swan River. I will certainly suggest to the railway companies that they have a responsibility with respect to any unnecessary demurrage charges that are accrued to the farmers if she will take that same position when organized labour walks out on strike, as they did in Vancouver, and leaves the farmers with millions of

dollars in demurrage charges. These are the kinds of issues that I understand are being discussed.

As to whether or not we have to fundamentally overhaul our grain handling system, it is just not fair to the farmers of Canada that our customers should be left waiting. It is jeopardizing our position in the international trade markets.

Mr. Speaker, these are legitimate points that will be raised, I am sure, at this meeting.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, the minister should remember that that was a lockout and we would—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate. The honourable member for Swan River, with your question.

* (1355)

Grain Transportation Proposal Government Position

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister if he will also be raising the issue of the Crow benefit. Since the Crow benefit was changed under the previous Conservative government and is now carried out by the Liberal government, reducing the benefit by 15 percent, farmers' freight bills will be rising an average of 54 cents per tonne at a time when the NTA says the transportation costs for shipping grain is reducing.

Will he stand up with farmers on that, and will he support final offer selection next time there is a labour dispute?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege to stand up for the farmers of Manitoba and of Canada, and I do that whenever I can.

The question that she specifically raises, however, is far too complicated to answer in the short period allotted to me here in Question Period. I invite her to pose these questions to our officials when we deal with the departmental Estimates which will be coming up shortly. I will have the necessary staff available to provide all those answers.

This is not the meeting that has to do with internal broader agricultural policies like the Crow

benefit, although they play a role in it. I also suggest that all of us in this Chamber ought to be thinking about when those transportation subsidies come off our feed grains, what are we going to do with the feed grains?

One of the answers is, we can raise hogs. We can raise more livestock. We can raise more chickens. I want some support for that from honourable members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Minimum Wage Review

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): In December 1990, the Minister of Labour announced that the minimum wage would be increased. At the same time he claimed that he recognized the importance of reviewing the minimum wage on a regular basis.

The Minimum Wage Board has not met since 1990, and there has been no annual review of minimum wages in Manitoba which have now fallen considerably below the national average.

Will the Premier today tell the House why his government has not met its commitment to Manitobans who are earning the minimum wage? Will he explain why it has been four years since his government looked at that minimum wage?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): First and foremost, we have been working to ensure that those on minimum wage are in a much more favourable position vis-à-vis the taxes that they no longer pay as a result of the efforts of this government.

In addition to that, I would have thought that the member for Wolseley would have been complimenting the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) for striking the minimum wage review board now so that this matter can be looked at and we can review just exactly how the changes that have taken place since 1990 have affected those on minimum wage, and we can take a good position together on adjustments to the minimum wage.

Ms. Friesen: It is difficult to compliment a minister who promises one thing and does nothing.

Will the Premier give us a clear commitment today on behalf of his government of his

opposition to a two-tiered minimum wage rate in Manitoba to give some assurance to the increasing number of students who as a result of this government's policy must combine work and study?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, this government will continue to listen to all of the people of Manitoba and do what is best for them in the circumstances.

Ms. Friesen: Will the Premier then confirm that his government's labour strategy, whether it has been in the ending of FOS, in the 18-month delays on the construction wages act, in the absence of any discussion of the minimum wage act, that his policy, clear and simple, has been to create in Manitoba a low-wage, low-skilled province?

Mr. Filmon: Absolutely not. I think that the member opposite is an intelligent person who has certain knowledge of many things, but on this issue she is out to lunch. I just invite her to read things that are being said about Manitoba in the new areas of the new economy. This from the Telesolutions magazine that says, Manitoba offering a philosophy of economic development. The province of Manitoba has become a player in the call centre community the old-fashioned way—they have earned it.

It goes on to tell all about the things that Manitoba is doing to attract high-tech jobs in telecommunications, in computers, in aerospace, in all of those things, Mr. Speaker. I reject totally the absolutely foolish statement that she just made.

* (1400)

Boot Camps Programming Regulations

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

I would like to congratulate the minister for adopting Manitoba's recommendation for a more humane approach to camps for young offenders and her rejection of the military-style boot camps announced in her nine-point plan of February 17.

I also want to thank the minister for sharing with me the document entitled, Guidelines For Proposal To Operate A Youth Camp, produced by her department.

I ask the minister: Given that, according to the guideline, programming for camps may consist of activities, including school, substance abuse treatment, aboriginal culture awareness, what regulations will be put in place to ensure that privately run camps include these important elements in their programming?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the member has obviously misread the original announcement. [interjection] Yes, it says boot camp. However, I will make it very clear that I have always been clear that this will be a made-in-Manitoba solution, that it will be developed in Manitoba, and I have been clear from the very beginning about the principles that boot camps will operate within.

I have made it clear it will be made-in-Manitoba, highly structured, well-known rules, consequences that are well known, an austere environment and a high level of activity or work. In that, there has always been an assumption that this will be humane treatment. The member has not found anything new.

Mr. Kowalski: I have the news release here that talks about boot camps, military boot camps, and if she would like to read it, I could share—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Question.

Mr. Kowalski: Mr. Speaker, my question: If these camps are privately run, how can the people of Manitoba be sure that public safety and the rehabilitation of young offenders will not be compromised for the sake of profit?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, there has been absolutely no decision on privatization, so I think the member had better back up there. I would like to tell him, from the day of the announcement Manitobans strongly supported more rigorous confinement in our institutions, and that is exactly the way we are moving.

Manitobans also believe that they have opinions and they have information to offer. So, unsolicited—and let me make that clear—we received proposals and information from Manitobans. In an effort to standardize what they

sent to us, we put together the letter which said, if you have information to offer, here are the issues that we are looking at so that you can cover all of the areas of importance to us.

Mr. Kowalski: My final supplementary: Will the minister ensure that adequate staffing resources are in place to monitor and enforce these regulations if these are privately run facilities?

Mrs. Vodrey: The member, of course, is dealing with a hypothetical, the if, if. However, I would be happy to say that anything we put in place in Manitoba will certainly ensure that the treatment follows exactly what we have said.

Let me make it clear again. We are looking at, obviously, humane conditions, but we are not looking at summer camp.

Provincial Sales Tax Arrears

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance.

Almost a month ago I asked the minister to table the outstanding arrears in sales tax collection. At that time he said that he had recently received such a report.

This morning at the Public Accounts committee the minister said he had still not obtained such a list. Now, I would like to know, which is it? Does he have it, or does he not have it? When is he going to release it?

I would like to know when he is going to be able to tell the House how long ago his department was aware that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. You have put your question already, sir.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if there is a shortage of questions today from the opposition party because the honourable member did raise this issue with me this morning in Public Accounts. I did indicate to him that I would obtain the information. I have asked my deputy minister to look into it.

There are certain aspects of confidentiality whenever you are dealing with an individual taxpayer here in Manitoba, which I think we can

all appreciate in this House, or at least I hope we can. But I have undertaken to provide him with answers to his questions and will do so very shortly.

**Manitoba Securities Commission
Clancy's Ventures Group**

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): It is clear that we are not going to get any answers from this Minister of Finance.

My supplementary is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the minister responsible for the Securities Commission. Maybe we can get some answers from him.

Can the minister explain why a letter from an investor to the commission questioning 13 concerns over the way Clancy's was operated, dated last June, was not responded to by either the minister or the commission?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I can advise the House that the commission is just that, an independent commission. It is not controlled by the minister, but if the member wishes information I will inquire.

Mr. Maloway: My final supplementary to the same minister is this: Will the minister also check whether the second letter from a group of investors to the commission dated this May 3 is going to be investigated?

Will he also investigate what role the Securities Commission is playing in this business collapse?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

**VIA Rail
Layoffs**

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): My question is to the Acting Minister of Highways and Transportation. Before September of this year, CN Rail will, after 75 years, move from the VIA Union Station location. There are currently some 360 employees working for CN at the Union Station.

My question is for the acting minister: Has the minister met with CN to discuss the implications of this move? Will any CN or VIA employees be

losing their jobs as a result of CN's move from this location?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Acting Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I will take the specifics of the question as notice for the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), but I want to give an indication to the member and to the House that the minister has been meeting with CN and VIA people on an ongoing basis to try and raise the concerns that Manitobans have about what is happening.

Mr. Reid: Can the acting minister tell the House, Mr. Speaker, what the impact of CN's move will be on VIA's operation and viability in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Driedger: I will take that question as notice, as well, on behalf of the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Mr. Reid: Will the Acting Minister of Highways and Transportation tell the House or confirm to the House, Mr. Speaker, that there will indeed be job losses for the custodial and maintenance staff of the CN workforce in Manitoba?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, no, I will not confirm that.

**Personal Care Homes
Flin Flon, Manitoba**

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, while the Minister of Health busies his staff with the hospitality-plus approach to our hospital system, there are almost 30 senior citizens staying in extended-care hospital beds in the Flin Flon General Hospital, awaiting a placement in the personal care home.

Mr. Speaker, since 1988, the Flin Flon area has been awaiting the construction of a 66-bed personal care home. I would like to know whether the Minister of Health intends to place the 66 beds that are desperately needed in Flin Flon on the agenda for construction this year.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I will take the honourable member's question as a representation on behalf of his constituency and remind him that province-wide,

certainly much, much progress has been in the area of community care and long-term care as an alternative to acute care.

We do not see ourselves as being in the hospitality business, but I would like to correct the honourable member's comment that my staff are involved in programming in a particular hospital; in this case, the Seven Oaks Hospital which the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) repeatedly attacks in this House.

That is a program of Seven Oaks, but from what I know of that program, it puts the patient first, and that is the right approach, as far as I am concerned.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the minister had a previous occasion to repudiate the hospitality-plus approach to health care in the province.

My question was, after waiting now six years, will this minister indicate to the people in Flin Flon and particularly those who have relatives, mothers and fathers, in extended-care beds—will he now commit to building the personal care home which has been promised for six years? It is a simple question.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I said in my last response that I would take the honourable member's question as a representation. As he knows, there are at any given time any number of proposals in Manitoba for various kinds of capital projects. We look at the care needs of people in all the regions when we make our decisions about the long-term care requirements.

* (1410)

Mental Health Care Rural Manitoba

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, on a different subject but to the same minister, the minister will have received a letter from one of the people participating in the mental health committee respecting the improvements that this minister announced for the communities of The Pas and Flin Flon. One of the concerns is the level of human resource training.

My question to the minister is: After receiving the expression of concern from people in the Flin Flon and The Pas area about the lack of training

that is going into mental health workers and particularly in the area of developing physician capability, will the minister now undertake to make sure that the human resources are in place so this proposal that the minister has put in place will actually be effective in northern Manitoba?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): We certainly want the community-based model of mental health care delivery to be successful, Mr. Speaker. In order for that to happen we are going to need dedicated and trained individuals. That is one of the reasons that we have supported, along with the University of Manitoba, a program to train physicians, notably physicians in rural Manitoba, but physicians in psychiatric issues.

Not every community will have a psychiatrist living in it. At the present time in the first round of the program we have I believe six physicians being trained in further psychiatric knowledge. This is not to make psychiatrists out of them, but it is to attempt to make general practitioners able to deliver a wider range of services to their patients.

Social Assistance Single-Parent Families

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, last week in a question to the Minister of Family Services I quoted from a paper titled: Federal-Provincial Framework Paper—Sole Parents Pilot Project. The minister seemed unfamiliar with this paper. Perhaps it is because the federal government has not shared it with her yet.

I find this surprising in view of a press release put out by the federal and provincial governments in which the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is quoted as saying: The public and private sectors need to work together to identify solutions that will get welfare recipients back to work and enable them to become self-sufficient.

Can the minister tell us if her federal counterparts have now shared their position and their proposals on the sole parent project, and if so, could the minister inform the House?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious by that

question that my honourable friend across the way has never been in government and quite probably never will be.

The fact of the matter is that from time to time, right throughout government, in any department, at any level there are working papers and working documents that the bureaucracy prepares from time to time. Nothing moves forward from a government or a ministry unless there is ministerial approval. A working paper that the federal government produces is not necessarily something that receives approval from a provincial minister or provincial ministry.

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

Committee Changes

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: Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton); Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), for Tuesday, May 17, 10 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs).

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, 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 Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings); the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) for the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay); the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey); the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) for the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner); and the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr.

McAlpine) for the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

Motion agreed to.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Arctic Harvest Wilderness Trip

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for the Interlake have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I rise today to congratulate, Mr. Speaker, members of the Arctic Harvest team, almost all of them from Fisher Branch and area, for their recent unique and amazing 14-day trip from Churchill to the Arctic Circle. This trip has never been done before.

At this time, I would like to read off the names of the members of the trip: Cubby Barrett and his sons, Kris, Karl and Doug; Dave Bouchard; Gerald Deneau; Jules Giasson; Dr. Bass Gouweloos, who, Mr. Speaker, is a doctor from South Africa; John Rudyk; from Stonewall, Kelly Langevin, John Hrominchuk, Sergeant Wyman Sangster, Lorne Ross; from Swan River, Ivan Balenovis and from Sebastian, Florida, Dennis La Beur.

As members may be aware, the crew travelled on 14 snowmobiles over some of the most difficult terrain in this country along the Hudson Bay to Repulse Bay.

I want to particularly congratulate and commend Arctic Harvest organizer Cubby Barrett and RCMP Sergeant Wyman Sangster who came up with the idea to make this journey and make it a fundraiser for the Winnipeg Harvest food bank.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Agriculture have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the modesty that honourable members have become accustomed to has prevented myself or my colleague the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) to have drawn the House's attention to this indeed very worthwhile and exciting wilderness trip that the honourable

member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) quite appropriately puts on the record.

It was, in fact, the privilege that I had shared with the Minister of Natural Resources with the same group to explore the beauty and the wonder of the Seal River just a year ago in a similar wilderness occasion that got us out onto the rough waters of the Hudson Bay in our light canoe craft for a very worthwhile experience. A few years earlier, I and the same group travelled the historic Hayes River to its final destination up at York Factory.

So I appreciate the comments that the honourable member for Interlake put on the record. I know that my colleagues with whom we have enjoyed these wilderness trips will appreciate their public recognition in the journals of this Chamber.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion 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 St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. 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 the Department of Education and Training.

When the committee last sat it had been considering item 2.(c)(1) on page 38 of the Estimates book.

Item 2. School Programs (c) Assessment and Evaluation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$675,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$361,100—pass.

(d) Native Education Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$159,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$79,700—pass.

(e) Program Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,506,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$998,100—pass.

(f) Program Implementation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,776,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$3,495,400—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (7.5).

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just for the record, we have discussed a number of issues under all of these under education reform and therefore are passing these at this time.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 2.(g) Student Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,905,300.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): A couple of weeks ago I had asked the minister under this particular area why there was a substantial cut of 22.5 percent. In asking the question there was a great deal of concern that in fact the minister talks about a budget which is fair and appropriate and that everyone has to share the pain.

If we take a look at the Student Services and the individuals that the Student Services serves, one has to question whether or not this is in fact a reflection of sharing the pain that the government is talking about.

I guess I will just start off by asking the specific question, why was it cut 22.5 percent?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): There are a couple of reasons, not the least of which is that part of this service is now provided under a different program area, that being within the Program Implementation area, so we are

not quite comparing apples and oranges here, firstly.

To drive that point home I would like to indicate to the member that we have the same number of vision and hearing consultants that we always had. We just sort of changed the location of housing some of their staff years, so that is the main reason for the reduction.

Mr. Lamoureux: I notice even under the Program Implementation line that there was in fact a decrease. So the minister is indicating because of reshuffling that the 22.5 percent could be found under the Program Implementation line? I am wondering if the minister can then assure us that part of the objective, no doubt, is to ensure that the materials that are necessary are, in fact, there and in place. Can he give us some sort of an assurance that the level of services, then, for those within the special needs or the student services are not going to be handicapped in any way or any fashion by this particular line cut?

* (1430)

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know it is never easy when you are on the other side of the table to follow these changes that result because of a divisional reorganization, but I would indicate to him that the following positions: Statistics Specialist, Consultant Special Education, Consultant Special Education Extreme Behaviour Disordered Learning Specialist, Senior Psychologist, all of these specialists are now to be found within the provincial specialists listing.

Mr. Lamoureux: The list that the minister just read off, is there any change in terms of responsibilities that they will be incurring as a result of the transfer over?

Mr. Manness: The answer is no.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question, then, would go back to the original thought of, can the minister give assurances that those individuals who require the student services will, in fact, be receiving at least at the same level that they received last year?

Mr. Manness: Well, generally I can make that statement, but there may be some nuance of a service that maybe has impacted, if for no other

reason a person is in a new department or a new division or a branch as compared to the other, but generally across the way, there was no intent here to withdraw services.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know the other day I had asked some questions with respect to the special needs funding. The minister had indicated that it might not necessarily have been the most appropriate line. I wonder if I could ask some specific information with respect to that special needs at this time.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, whatever the member wishes. I now have the information. The question is probably more properly put in another section, but I think I have information I can deal with a specific school division if he wishes that right now.

Mr. Lamoureux: I know I had requested the minister if, in fact, he could give us some sort of actual cost. I believe the two school divisions I had given him were Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and Winnipeg Seven Oaks School Division, specifically in terms of the special needs formula funding received.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, answering that question, this now is not the special \$10-million funding I am talking about. I am talking about the general formula funding in support of Level I, II and III and the clinician services and all the special ed needs that flow under formula.

There were roughly \$90 million spent in '93-94. Winnipeg School Division's share of that was \$19 million and the other school division requested was Seven Oaks. Their allocation was \$4.6 million, again, based on the criteria that are in place.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister is referring to specials I through III. The biggest problem with that is that the special needs II and III, from what I understand, is decided upon request, where you actually have to identify the individual who would be the recipient of those funds, whereas the special needs I is something that is given via formula.

I am wondering if the minister can give us the special needs I. It is the formula that is being used to justify the amount of resources going to each school division that we are really calling into account.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the formula is this. You take the number of students within the school division—and I think there are roughly 33,000 in Winnipeg School Division No. 1—and you divide it by 180. That is the divisor, 180. Whatever you come up with, then you multiply by the allocation on a professional basis of \$43,700. That used to be \$45,000, but it too received a decrease this year to \$43,700. That is the funding that, in part, I guess would be maybe the significant portion of the \$18 million or the \$19 million to Winnipeg School Division No. 1, but not all of it.

Mr. Lamoureux: I guess that is what we were at least trying to refer to the other day when I was asking the questions. The formula that the minister just finished indicating, does it not work to the advantage, if you will—if there is an advantage to be had—to school divisions that do not necessarily have the same demographic socioeconomic impact? I know the minister had made reference to a manner in which he was supplementing that. I would ask the minister maybe if he can expand on that for me.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not know what point the member is trying to get to. If he is saying there is just not enough money put into it, come out and say that. We sense that the formula, although it is working and although it is working well, and although it is working in keeping with what the divisions want, because the divisions did not want to identify person by person by person, it just took too much administrative time, too much additional cost. They wanted to go to formula.

So we went to formula and that is what I have given you. But we realized that there is a problem with the formula. Even though it probably addressed the reality of the situation, overall it still was a little bit short. So we put in an additional \$10 million—

Mr. Lamoureux: Was that for special needs?

Mr. Manness: Well, students at risk. We put another \$10 million into that pot of which Winnipeg School Division, from memory, was around \$5.9 million. So we have recognized that.

Now if the member says, well, that still is not enough, then he is going to have to say that. I think, in principle, we have tried to reflect, firstly, a system where you do not have to build massive administrations and do all this counting.

Secondly, we tried to take into account the fact that Winnipeg School Division still under the formula is probably short, given the experience. They then command virtually 60 percent of the additional funding, again in support of students at risk.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister see any difference between students at risk, let us say, and special needs I students? Is there a difference between the two?

Mr. Manness: Well, there certainly is a difference. Special needs would deal with those who are suffering from autism, those who have some real special learning disabilities, whereas students at risk are those who have learning difficulties due to migrancy, again, social economic factors, more so than inherent learning disabilities.

I will give you some of the examples: migrancy, income, single-parent families, academic achievement and second language. There may be overlap. But still a larger number of the students at risk not called into question is their ability to learn—when I say their ability to learn, their inherent ability to learn. What is called into question is their ability to learn because of outside influences.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister quite correctly demonstrates that there is a difference between the special needs and students at risk yet does not acknowledge, through funding, the differences between school divisions and their need for funding resources.

I tried to indicate to the minister, speaking strictly with the special needs I students, which is

based on a formula in which everyone, whether you are a private school, whether you are in a school division that has a significantly smaller number of students per capita than other school divisions—and the minister refuses to really acknowledge the difference between those school divisions. I think that is a mistake.

He talks about this review that is ongoing, dealing with the special needs students. I would strongly encourage the minister that whole area of that funding formula, if you will, can be improved upon, primarily because you are penalizing a significant portion of the student base by not acknowledging where there is the greater need. Even though he talked about the additional, I believe it was, \$10 million for students at risk, the minister himself acknowledges that those are different students, those are not the same students as the special needs.

* (1440)

I want to go on to some other questions on special needs, but I know the minister would like to respond to what I just said.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot leave the comment unchallenged. This is exactly the line of questioning we reviewed last week. That is fine. We will go through it again.

The fact is, No. 1, the government has understood that. I can remember when we were on the other side of the table and we asked the very same questions of the NDP government and they put additional funding in. I want to remind the member in case he forgets that when we brought in the new formula in '91-92, we increased Level I, Level II, Level III support by 40 percent. As a matter of fact, it was one of the issues, believe it or not, that got tried into the support of independent schools. Anyway that is for another time.

The reality is, this government has again, in keeping with the arguments put forward by the member, increased funding in these areas by 40 percent. The member then would seem to try and leave an impression that all the special needs problems are in the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Lamoureux: No.

Mr. Manness: Well, he says no. Then he says he wants one or two things, and I hope he would be so honest to say so. Either he wants a shift or he wants more money yet, and if he does, say so; or secondly he wants to shift away from these divisions here, all of them, all of them who receive a portion, including Brandon which receives \$3.2 million. He wants to shift away—and I will table this, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. He wants to shift away then from Brandon. He wants to shift away from Dauphin Ochre. He wants to shift away from Morris-MacDonald into the city of Winnipeg. He wants one or two things.

Why does he not tell us which he wants, because I can tell you he cannot have it both ways in sitting idly by and just saying, well, this is inappropriate, because right now what we are doing is we have done it, not by favouritism or ad hockery where we try and guess and all that, we have done it in keeping with what the divisions have asked for, and that is a system of a divisor.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is very important the minister note that what I am referring to is the special needs I, which is based on the formula. If he is asking in terms of a very specific, well, let me give him a very specific. I do not believe it is appropriate, for example, for Ravenscourt to receive financing on special needs on the same percentage as Winnipeg School Division No. 1, using the same formula. I would ask the minister if he feels it is appropriate that that should occur.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, the member is right. There is some history there which, when we have the other people here involved in finance, this is the time to ask the questions of the independent schools. I would say this, Level I always has included gifted, high need, special needs. That is what gifted Level I always has included.

Now, if the member is saying that he wants to change the definition, then let him say so, but that has always been the meaning of Level I.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, through my example I tried to demonstrate fairly clearly in terms of the priorities. If we look at the

special needs requirements throughout the province of Manitoba, both rurally and urbanly, we will see that there is a considerable amount of difference and to see the minister at the very least acknowledge that, and I do believe that he is aware of it. I just trust that he will in fact be bringing this up. He did mention that he does have a special needs review that is going on, and I think it is imperative that that discussion take place at that particular committee.

I do have a couple of more specific questions. I hope the minister is coming back. I cannot make reference to him not being here, so if we might want to recess for a few minutes I think, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and then I can maybe resume my questioning the moment that we get back.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We will recess for just five minutes. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 2:44 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 2:49 p.m.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, fortunately, today we had tabled the May 11 Hansard in which the minister had indicated the Level II funding for special needs was at \$8,520, and for Level III it was \$18,960.

Again, fortunately, between then and now I have had opportunity to talk to a number of administrators with respect to both special needs II and III and some of the actual costs of being able to service or to at least enable those individuals to be able to participate in our public schools. I am wondering if the minister can give the committee some sort of indication on what he believes the actual cost, if there is an average cost that he might have at hand, for having a Level II and a Level III special needs student in the classroom.

* (1450)

Mr. Manness: If the member wants me to acknowledge that the government funding level does not cover all the costs, I will acknowledge that. That is a given reality.

Mr. Lamoureux: I think everyone knows that is in fact the case. What I am trying to find from the

minister is if he can give us some sort of an indication on what the department believes is the actual cost of having a special needs student, special needs II for example. Maybe that is what we will do, talk about the Level II special needs student. What does he believe the actual cost is?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, all of the questions that I am about to ask would be applied both to Level II and Level III special needs students.

Mr. Manness: What we know is that school divisions are spending roughly \$122 million in special education expenditures. What we know is that we are providing support grants of \$83.4 million—well, in the latest year, \$89 million. Those are the rough numbers.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the members say you are short, well, we are short what school divisions are spending, but then we are not in charge of how it is and what it is and on what basis that school divisions ultimately spend, what models are in place, because the cost varies dramatically from child to child—dramatically.

Some school divisions have programs which are better than others. Does that mean that one division is doing it better than others? One division has a program which is more expensive than the other divisions. Does that mean that they are doing a better job? No. So what does local autonomy mean? Local autonomy means you can sort of set the educational program you want, and secondly, you can go to the taxpayers to support it. That is a lot different than calling on the provincial government to support every dollar you spend. Those days are long gone. They are not coming back in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Lamoureux: Using the figures that the minister has just brought forward—and I thought it was interesting in terms of when he says, well, the school divisions \$122 million, but it is the school divisions that ultimately determine what sort of services that they want to provide. As a result, that has an impact on that \$122 million. I think that is an accurate statement.

That is the primary reason why it is I ask the Minister of Education in terms of what does he feel, or the department, and one would think that

the department would have some sort of an idea of what the average cost of having a special needs Level II and a Level III, because if I take the two figures that the minister gives and take the total number of students in Level II and Level III, and maybe the minister could even possibly give that. I do not know if he has that. It is not really all that important to have that actual number, but, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if I take those two, the Minister of Education would quite accurately say, well, that is not necessarily an average because some of the school divisions have different services than other school divisions. That is why I am more interested in knowing what the Minister of Education and his department feel is the actual average cost of Level II and Level III.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is a philosophical question almost. That is not a question of math. I mean obviously we feel we are covering the needs across the whole wide cross section because we are putting up roughly 75 percent of the global funding.

Now, the member does not have to stop there. I mean he could ask the Premier tomorrow. He could ask them whether or not we are putting enough in to support the social programming by the City of Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg says we are not. It says, we are not covering the needs, you are only covering X and X percent.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) is here. He knows that there are individuals from the farm communities saying your GRIP program is only covering basically 50 percent, 60 percent of the actual cost of farming. You are not covering the needs.

Well, I tell the member this is being in government. This is what governing is all about. So he can come and say, well, within the area of special needs programming, do you realize you are only covering 75 percent of what is being spent? I will say, well, no, that might be what is being spent, but of the needs, covering the needs out there, I would say the government is doing about the right amount.

I will not be drawn into this debate as to, well, what is the average per child, do you not think you

are away below? I will not be drawn into it because that is not governing; that is giving away what everybody asks. In essence, what the recipients are saying, look, we will spend it, you provide it. Sorry, that is not governing.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, some of the arguments I would buy in terms of what it is that the minister is saying. The government in fact has to make some decisions on funding, and put so much into an envelope, but there is another aspect that again I have been somewhat supportive of the minister, not only presently but at times even in the past, when he argues very eloquently that it should also be fair. I think it is.

When I look at this, you know a question could be asked of the minister, does he believe that in fact it is fair? If you look at the actual numbers, you have \$122 million. Even if one might want to go as far as to say that is excessive, whatever justification the minister might want to put on the \$122 million that the school divisions would put in, Level II and Level III, and where again the biggest demand for those programs are coming from, you find that it is another level, at the school board level, where it is being asked to pick up the additional cost. Yet it is a provincial government decision that it is important that we enable these two levels of special needs students to attend our public schools. That is what we are telling them.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, on the other hand, we are saying to them that we will provide you a level of funding. By just looking at the numbers, it is far less than what is actually required in order to facilitate what the provincial government has mandated the public schools to do. I do see a bit of contradiction there in terms of the whole question of fairness because of the amount of subsidy that school divisions had to put in.

Again I would use the argument that, depending on the area of the province, one would argue that there is a higher level of special needs in Levels II and III. It would be interesting, in order to prove that—I know when we entered into the discussion of this nature the other day, the minister says, well, the member from Inkster was jumping to conclusions, that I could not substantiate that there

was a difference in demographics to warrant what it was that I was saying. Yes, maybe I was jumping to some conclusions, but I think a vast majority of Manitobans agreed with me on that.

I would imagine—and if I am wrong, I am sure that the Minister of Education would be more than happy to demonstrate it—that there is a higher percentage of Level IIs, Level IIIs, in some school divisions over others. Those school divisions once again are being put into a position in which they have to—whether it is raising at one level or maybe cutting back on a service in order to be able to compensate—but they are trying to fulfill a mandate.

* (1500)

Again the minister emphasizes about the whole question of fairness. I am not questioning the amount of dollars. One could question the manner in which the school divisions are being treated, and should not the funding formula take into account, more so, the per capita needs of special needs II and III and possibly even have some sort of a sliding scale?

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, nothing has changed. The member is asking for more money. I mean, that is what the issue is—

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Manness: What do you mean, no? When he says put more into Level II and Level III, that means more money. More means more. More does not mean less; more means more. I mean, he can try and talk around this issue all he wants, but when he tells me at \$8,520, Level II, he wants more, that means more. When he says at Level III, \$18,960, he wants more, then he wants more. He wants more money; that is what he wants.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wonder if the minister can indicate, or give us some sort of an indication, whether it is percentage or even in terms of numbers of some sort, of where the school divisions are at in particular. Again, we can draw two school divisions. You could take a look at Charleswood versus Winnipeg School Division No. 1, base it on a number of special—

Mr. Plohman: Assiniboine South.

Mr. Lamoureux: Assiniboine South—with Winnipeg, and I thank the member from Dauphin for bringing up Winnipeg Assiniboine.

Mr. Plohman: Where was I?

Mr. Lamoureux: But where was I, as the member for Dauphin says.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the minister can actually bring the actual numbers, if you like, of Level II special needs in both of those school divisions and base it on the percentage—again, I have not necessarily had the same resources that the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) does to actually come up with the numbers, but I do, and it is somewhat speculative, believe that you will find that there is a higher per capita special needs Level II in Winnipeg 1 compared to Assiniboia, and if the minister sees that as not being a problem, or somewhat problematic in term of ability to be able to raise or to finance.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not have the breakout by school divisions, we could probably get that, for Levels I and III. I can tell you globally, a breakout from the \$89 million I was talking about, Level II, 1,928 students throughout the province, that is '93-94 number, but if you multiply that by the \$8,520, it would give you a total number of \$14 million, Level II. At Level III, 436 students at the \$18,960 comes to roughly a little over \$8 million that was spent.

So of the \$90 million we referenced earlier, roughly \$22 million across the province is being spent on Level I and Level III.

Now, the member says, ah, yes, but even by formula a greater proportion of those accruing to Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and therefore by reference, you should back that off into the Level I consideration. I think that is what he is saying whether he knows it or not, the Level I consideration, that should be built in as another factor. What the members is saying here basically is, some divisions are getting too much and that Winnipeg School Division is not getting enough, and there should be a real look at the Level I numbers and the shift occur.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would be interested in getting some of the percentages of some of the different school divisions so that the next time we go through this, possibly next spring, we will be able to continue the dialogue with respect to this particular issue, especially given that the minister this year is going to be having a study on special needs.

I wanted to move on to the whole question of learning disabilities, and you could, well, I should not say you could, namely ask the minister up front, students at risk, do individuals with learning disabilities fall under that particular category?

Mr. Manness: No.

Mr. Lamoureux: Is the minister doing anything in terms of acknowledgement or reviews or studies? Is the department doing anything with respect to individuals with learning disabilities?

Mr. Manness: That is in part the special need review. That will cover that off.

Mr. Lamoureux: I did ask the minister the question initially in terms of what it was going to be covering, the special needs review, and he did not indicate the learning disabilities. I am glad to hear that is in fact going to be incorporated into it.

That is about it in terms of questions I have for this particular line, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Plohman: Just briefly to follow on a couple of issues, the minister said that Level I includes gifted as well as high need and special needs. Will he admit that traditionally the amount of money that goes into gifted education as part of special needs is about 10 percent or less? Is that a fair figure?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not know whether that is an arbitrary number, or whether that was put into place as targets by the divisions, or ultimately, at the beginning, is the way divisions split their funding. I do not know the history of that. I guess it depends from division to division.

Sometimes the division does not have a large component of special needs children, and so over a period of a few years, I imagine, then they take their funding and shift it to other priorities, because

it is basically a per capita grant. So I do not know how it is he could probably come up with a hard number like that. I have not seen the rationale to support his number.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in a discussion I had with the former gifted consultant, she indicated to me that 10 percent was about the figure that was realistic in terms of the gifted, or actually less than that. I think she said 10 percent probably would be a real target that would increase the funding. So it is probably substantially less than 10 percent of the funding that goes into special needs. As I recall, I think the latter is the case; she had said that would be an increase. It is actually less than 10 percent.

On that basis—and I think it would be fair to assume that it is less than 10 percent, or at least no more than 10 percent would go to gifted education out of the Level I funding—then how can he rationalize some of the elite, private schools that have entrance examinations to in fact ensure that they take only students who are able to meet their entrance requirements, should get the same kind of formula funding for Level I special needs as other schools in the province who in fact take every student who comes into their doors, with no choice? Does he think that is fair, or is this just another way to provide a little slush fund to some private schools under the guise of special needs?

I would like to hear the minister's rationale for this.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member talks about a slush fund. I do not know how it is, when it is all formula-driven, you can have a slush fund for some private schools. All the independent schools, 53 percent population of which is Catholic, or at least a Catholic-based education, and all the other 47 percent that fly under the independent school banner, I do not think any of them have slush funds.

* (1510)

If the member senses that we are somehow twisting funding formula, which applies to all equally, to provide special support to some elite schools, using his term, I cannot do that. The funding formula will not allow me to do that. All

of those schools under the independent school banner are all treated the same. It is on that basis that schools all be treated the same.

You realize in today's world there is a complexity in place, that students, regardless of what school they attend, have requirements. I can indicate to you that there are some students who come from socioeconomic homes that some would say are above average, but I will tell you that schools tell me, whether they are independent or public schools, that these students also, from time to time, have complexities and problems that have to be dealt with.

As a matter of fact, nobody can make the argument that there is not a school setting where one does not necessarily have problems, but the bigger issue with respect to increased funding to the independent school system, taking into account the special needs funding base, had more to do, again, with an agreement that was reached by the provincial government years ago, supported strongly by the Liberal Party at the time, that we, taking into account a challenge that was going to be rendered against the province—that it would probably be better to work to a higher level of funding. So that is the No. 1 order of things.

Secondly, there was quite an increase made. Once that agreement was struck, it was on the basis of per-dollar-spent-in-education basis. Two years ago, as I have referenced in an answer here about half an hour ago, there was a significant change made in the formula increased to special needs—I say this to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux)—and that change in base was frozen out of the base increase to independent schools. That was in spirit, if not in the letter of the law, in violation of the every-dollar principle which we used as the base against which we placed the percent funding. Now it is 63.5 percent. It was the recognition of that shortcoming two years ago, when we made a tremendous infusion into special needs funding, that was taken into account. That is what has been done, and now students in the independent school system are receiving roughly a little under two-thirds of the per capita level of those students government funded in the public school system.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just so we can move along here, we will want to know from the minister the amount of money that is going to private schools for Level I special needs under the Support to Schools when we get to that section. Also, we will want to know, when we are dealing with the private school funding issue at that time, how many schools have entrance examinations, how many Level I kids do they actually have, considering that they are getting funded on the same formula, and how much goes to gifted education for those schools. If the department has any information on this 10 percent figure that I was using, I certainly would like to shed some light on how much funding, on average across the province in the public school system, goes towards gifted education out of the Level I funding.

So those are some of the pieces of information that we would like to have when we get to that. I just wanted to raise that with the minister for his and his staff's information at this time.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 2.(g) Student Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,905,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$818,600—pass.

2.(h) Manitoba School for the Deaf (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,651,600.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister can give us some sort of indication. Over the weekend, actually, I was talking to an individual who was talking about the School for the Deaf and had asked me specifically if I had heard anything with respect to the future of this school. I am wondering if the Minister of Education could comment. You know, it is completely—I do not have anything to indicate that there is something out there that is going to change, make a change, and that is why I just ask it straight up in terms of, is there anything that is on the agenda for the Manitoba School for the Deaf in terms of a potential sale or anything of that nature?

Mr. Manness: The reason probably for the question from somebody outside of this process wants asked, no doubt, is because we are doing a pretty in-depth study. The facility requires

significant amounts of money if it is going to be maintained in refurbishing and upgrading. So we are trying through study to provide ourselves a list of options because the age and structure of the building are not conducive to providing a high-quality program. Some decisions are going to have to be made not too far down the course, and we are trying to give ourselves options so we can make the best decision.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can the minister give the committee some sort of a time frame that he might be looking at?

Mr. Manness: We thought we might be making a decision a year ago this year, but the more we dig, the more we have to dig for more information. I would not want to put a time frame on it.

Mr. Lamoureux: I wonder if the minister then could give some sort of assurances. Are we looking at dismantling the idea of having a School for the Deaf or are we talking about relocating to another facility in which there would be an outright purchase of another building, capital dollars put in for a new building? Give us some sort of indication on that aspect.

Mr. Manness: We have absolutely no plans to dismantle the program. The issue is whether or not the present setting or a better setting would provide better programming at a much reduced cost. We could probably do better programming if we could just decrease the costs of the plant. It is costing us an arm and a leg to keep that plant running, and with the savings we could probably do even a better job of programming.

Mr. Lamoureux: Is the minister aware or does the minister see the building going up for sale shortly?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot answer that. Again, this is part of the study, and the Department of Government Services is in charge of the building. Ultimately we will be part of that decision, but I do not see anything happening too quickly.

Mr. Lamoureux: Finally, the minister made reference again to the part of the study. Is there a reporting time for the study?

Mr. Manness: We would like to have it as soon as possible. We have been studying it for more than a year, and I would expect we would have some options presented very soon.

Mr. Lamoureux: Would this be just an independent study from within the Department of Education or would it be Government Services who would be responsible for the study?

Mr. Manness: We do this jointly. It is our program, it is their building, but the way government works, it has to be done in concert or otherwise you do not have order, you have chaos. Government Services cannot sell a building out from under a department that is using it, and a department cannot start building them or moving around willy-nilly without Government Services being involved. We work together.

Mr. Lamoureux: Just in going through the Activity Identification that makes reference to the programming and the actual numbers, has that actually increased over years or is that a fairly constant number of individuals at the Manitoba School for the Deaf facility?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is fairly constant, although it represents an increase of two from a year ago.

* (1520)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I did not think we would get quite this far this afternoon. I know I had intended to bring forward some questions that were put on the Order Paper from the former member for Osborne with reference to the School for the Deaf, and I would ask if the minister is aware of those questions and maybe what current state they would be at.

Mr. Manness: I am aware there are some questions, what they are on I honestly do not remember. As the House leader, I was as close as I came to them, but the department tells me that we had responded to those questions. We will try and follow up as to the process and whether or not we have reported.

Mr. Lamoureux: The reason why I asked was actually that I was reading through the Order Paper just the other day and the questions appeared there

with Mr. Alcock's name on them. So yes, if it is possible, it would be much appreciated; otherwise, we are prepared to pass the line.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Should the item pass? The item is accordingly passed.

2.(h)(2) Other Expenditures \$332,000—pass.

Resolution 16.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$20,291,000 for Education and Training, School Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

We will move on to 3. Bureau de L'Education Française (a) Division Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$127,900.

The honourable minister, to introduce his staff.

Mr. Manness: I would like to introduce Assistant Deputy Minister Guy Roy, no stranger to anybody who has been part of education before; Roland Pantel, and he is director of official languages and administration—gee, Roland, that is quite a title.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, perhaps we could discuss some of the policy and experience surrounding the new Francophone Division in a general way under this section.

I wanted to ask the minister first of all with regard to Bill 34 that was passed last year, to give effect to the new Francophone School Division, whether in fact there have been any difficulties with the implementation of the bill as it was set out, whether there have been some changes or inadequacies recognized that have to be changed in terms of the bill and its implementation for the new Francophone Division, or are things working fairly smoothly insofar as the procedures as spelled out in the bill? I am not talking about specific situations at this point, as to whether there are some difficulties; I am talking about the administration of the bill.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I suppose I should answer that from a number of perspectives. Firstly, as the House leader and also head of our Legislative Review Committee within government, myself and the MLA for Emerson, Jack Penner, when this bill first came in we were mindful that this was going to be a difficult

process, that the bill would take great craftsmanship, to use a word, because of all of the sensitivities around the change. So I was kind of close personally to the bill at its drafting from an overall perspective, and a lot of direct questions were posed by government members before the bill was tabled.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

The bill was subsequently tabled. It gave power and authority to a process which we entrusted under the leadership of Chief Justice Monnin and which attempted to implement the process of taking the effect of the bill into the communities, providing background material and information, trying to indicate the essence of the change and then ultimately calling on individuals within the community—those in single-program and double-program schools, but particularly those parents who had students deemed to be part of a français program—to make a decision. That process, for the most part, has worked well because decisions were made, votes were taken through the formality of registration in a number of—well, all of the eligible areas.

Subsequent to that, ward boundaries—a governance model was built upon some of the decisions because you had to have a feel for what population you were talking about before you could then build ward boundaries and representation models, and it had to be done within a very, very narrow time frame. Through some very good drafting and, I sense, an awful lot of good will in the department and those outside of the department, it has worked reasonably well.

Then, of course, we hence have come to discussions between provider school divisions and receiving school divisions as to how assets, direct and indirect, and properties and programs and staffing and how all of the changes that would cause impact in those areas have occurred.

But we are still not that long from the beginning of a new school year—we are only four months away basically—and in certain divisions that process has worked extremely well. I have sensed that we are well on our way to have it in place with

certainty with respect to the fall term. That has not occurred, though, in one area, and we are still trying to find ways to make as many people happy as possible.

Now, the member asked a general question, and I gave him a general response. I would say not the least of which is an outside person by the name of Victor Goldbloom, the Commissioner of Official Languages from Canada, who has come and looked at the change. Although he has not certainly looked at the process in minute detail, certainly we have been recognized as forging forward and trying to provide what is in keeping with the spirit of federal court decisions. We have come pretty close to moving to a system to reflect that.

So, all in all, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry I have taken this much time to answer the question, but I want to put on the record that the process of this most sensitive issue, from my point of view, not being a person inherent within the Manitoba Francophone community, I sense, has gone reasonably well.

Mr. Plohman: There are so many areas that one could question or discuss here. The minister, in his overview, seemed to indicate that without addressing legislation in particular, there did not need to be any major changes to ensure that the transition goes smoothly. As a matter of fact, I guess the legislation will be obsolete, that portion of implementation, by the time any changes would be made in that case.

I would ask the minister perhaps to just comment on the issue of parallel programming, firstly. The policy decision whereby the government decided that existing divisions would be able or would be forced to, or at least able to—I am not sure if they would be forced to if there were sufficient numbers—but upon request from parents to offer français programming, not just immersion programming, but français programming in existing divisions even though the Francophone Division was there and quite capable of providing the service, in other words, parallel programming in existing divisions.

I believe Saskatchewan said, no, the Francophone Division is in charge of français education, and they are going to provide all of that. If parents want their children to receive français programming, they will belong to the Francophone Division. Otherwise, they can expect only immersion in existing divisions. This government chose not to do that. I ask the minister, in retrospect, considering some of the situations that are developing, whether he thinks that that policy decision should in fact be reviewed.

* (1530)

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is always easy to look backwards and see things in clear view. I would say to the member that bearing in mind that those of us who represent Francophone communities, and there are a number of us certainly on the government side, and bearing in mind that over all of the sensitivities within those communities and how the communities react with their neighbouring communities and taking into account the history, this government was not going to put into place a system by way of vote where winners take all. If we had, then we probably would have even been more careful and watchful of the voting procedures that went into place and, ultimately, who had a chance to vote and who did not.

I do not know whether the member represents any Francophone communities, but I have represented many for years, and I was struck that in a number of situations there was harmony within a number of communities. Some of it was hard fought, some of it was recent, but it was there, and just to allow a vote which would have then forced hard decisions was not in keeping with the history that some of us had of our communities.

So consequently, we decided then to allow for parallel programming, realizing that the people basically in number would reflect which level of governance they wanted. That has occurred in most areas.

So he asked me the question, if you had to do it all again, would you force français programming purely to occur under the auspices of the Francophone Division, newly constituted in our

case. I would say the political decision was made not to do that, and I think we made the right decision.

Mr. Plohman: It is interesting the minister is saying that, and it is not unexpected. But in terms of the cost of that, of course, there is a cost to it as well when you are offering parallel programming. There is efficiency in numbers, and there is also the impact of the new division on existing divisions' ability to offer programming because of loss of student numbers.

That is another issue I want to ask the minister about, in terms of declining enrollment phenomena. In some divisions there is rather a substantial number of students transferring. With them goes the funding, and it leaves behind a smaller student body with a shrunken ability, I guess, to offer the same range of programming. As a result, there may have to be reductions in programming and reductions in services because of the reduced dollars.

Has the government made any provision or taken any steps to alleviate the impact of the declining enrollment phenomena as a result of the establishment of the Francophone School Division on school divisions so that they will not be faced with cuts because of that to students in the existing division?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the direct answer to the questions is yes, \$480,000 roughly put into place for transition this year, to take into account that the providing divisions, in other words, those divisions who are losing a student count and who still may want to provide a program for those students who are left behind and/or to take into account that administratively and staff-wise, you just cannot adjust that quickly, that money has been put into place for one year.

The member's other argument, when he says, you know, if providing divisions still want to reach out to a smaller français base and try and provide some programming, that calls into question the efficiency, the economy and ultimately, I guess, the quality of education—a fair statement. That is the essence of free choice. That is what choice means.

As a parent, I can tell you, I have been through it. I have been through it in my own community, and it has nothing to do with language, absolutely nothing. It has to do with whether or not you are willing to make a commitment to your local school or some other school, if it is further away, to drive, and what is the value of it? I can think of a case where I committed three of my children to a two-room school that I went to that had 22 people because I could see the numbers coming and ultimately it grew to 60 people. Tough, tough decision, it did not come easy. Some would say that was foolhardy, close the school, close the small school, let your children go at an earlier age a further distance. Their quality of education will be better.

That faces us time after time in rural Manitoba, those of us who support small schools with the attendance of our children. The programming—and I say to the member, the fact that we have left choice to parents who may want to leave their children in the older division, in a français program which may not be as good as it was or move their child over to the new DSFM School Division No. 49, where there might be a larger number and theoretically greater access to programming—that is a free choice and that is what the government provided.

Mr. Plohman: The minister could very easily be on the other side of it in saying we just cannot be everything to all people, all students. We just cannot afford to do this. We have to make choices and if people want to have access to other programming, they have to be prepared to pay for it. He is arguing in this case that he is offering choice, but the question is, who is paying for it, and can he afford to do it? What I was saying to him was, if there was not parallel programming provided for—I mean, it is politically expedient, perhaps. That is why I think the minister had said it was a political decision to allow that, but he is trying to justify it on the basis of choice when he is talking about scarce resources. I find that a little bit hollow because in fact in other arguments he said, well, we cannot afford to do everything, we cannot provide all the funding to special needs kids throughout the province. The days of providing all

those services to special needs kids are gone; we cannot provide all the funding from the province.

In this case the minister has made a choice to provide additional funding to school divisions to continue to provide parallel programming, and he has made that a priority over some other services that are certainly lacking throughout the province, severely lacking in many areas where kids are really being affected.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry for interrupting, but I wanted to make two points. Firstly, the funding that we are talking about, for the most part, is just to support through the transition year; in the second year, that will not be there. So there will be no additional funding. The funding goes where the students go at the same level.

Secondly, the member ignores the fact that there was a challenge of this political decision, as the member says. There was a challenge. I do not know who took it forward. The Francophone parents took it to the Supreme Court. I do not know, and I am on thin ice out here and I am a little at sea, but the Supreme Court, in its judgment that it handed down, was silent on that issue.

This was an issue that this parallel programming could be offered. Yet, when it was taken forward certainly we were not ordered by anybody to not maintain the policy. If it has been taken to the highest court of the land and the highest court of the land is silent for the most part, then I—and again I point out, there are very few cases, if any, of provider divisions continuing to offer français programs, very few.

* (1540)

I guess there is one case in Laurier, and the other cases are all in the 50-50 programming: in St. Malo, Notre Dame, Provencher and St. Claude also.

Mr. Plohman: It was not a question of whether it would be something the Supreme Court would want to rule on. I mean, it was not that you wanted to take away the right of Francophones to govern their own education system, but whether they would be offered additional services in French in

existing divisions. This is a luxury really. It is not a matter of not providing enough services. It is providing in-addition-to services through another means. The question was, is it in fact a luxury and can it be afforded? That was my angle there.

As far as the existing act is concerned, I wanted to ask the minister a couple of questions about that, and maybe he could also table the provisions for transfer or for implementation that Justice Monnin had distributed. I would like to have a copy of the background material and so on, pursuant to the act, that went into the establishment of the division and the kinds of material that was provided to parents. That document that is being shown, we had that last year already, I think. Were there additional materials that were distributed to parents at meetings?

I wanted to ask the minister about the transfer of school divisions. It talks about a regulation in 21.20 whereby if a decision is made or after consultation with parents is made and only a Francophone program is going to be provided in the school, the school shall be transferred. So the wording in the regulation would determine whether 21.20 would be invoked: shall transfer the building.

Is that the way all regulations were, where a majority of the Francophone eligible parents voted in favour of joining the Francophone Division, that the building would be transferred automatically, or was there usually a provision for sharing programming in an existing school? Was that an option or was it always worded in such a way that the building had to be transferred if a majority of eligible voters voted in favour of joining the new Francophone Division?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the difference between 21.20 and 21.21(1), of course, is single-program schools versus shared program. The legislation was written in a fashion that the government had no discretion with respect to the school being transferred after a vote within a single-program school in which the majority of the vote was in support of transfer. There was absolutely no discretion left with the government or the minister.

Now where there were shared-program schools, in this case being a school which housed français and 50-50 program or French immersions, then there was some discretion for the minister to set up a process of arbitration and/or committee review. There is a different process in place.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that is what I wanted to get at. It talks about the regulation which is something that the government drafts. Why was it read into a decision that you had to have the building transferred if a majority voted that way if you could say, leave it open for additional programming, 50-50 programming, which would enable a sharing arrangement to be undertaken in a particular building?

I have to ask then, was it based on whether a 50-50 program was being offered prior to the vote, or could a division say, no, well, we are interested in offering one now, and we would like to have a sharing of that building, rather than having it completely transferred? Then you would invoke your arbitration process. Why is it black or white in these situations?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I know where the member is leading. There are times I wish I had more discretion, and even in this case I wish I did. But the reality is you had to set the rules. You cannot set rules, see what the results are and then change the rules.

An Honourable Member: The rules are in here.

Mr. Manness: That is right, but before you could even go through the process you had to have legislation in place. What the member is I think saying—and not to put words in his mouth—he is saying, well, there is this certain school; it, by all definitions, was a français program, it had a français program. What the member is saying is, well, once you see—you should allow freedom within the legislation or the regulations that flow therefrom so that the host division, and seeing the results, could then rush in a variation of a français program of 50-50. I think that is what the member is indicating. That is like changing the rules after you know what the results are going to be.

I dare say that if you wanted to do that, it would have been much better probably to, in my view,

from the member's perspective, allow the discretion with respect to single program schools right at the beginning.

Mr. Plohman: I am going by what I thought should have been the intent of the legislation. I am not sure about his words "rush in"—a school division to rush in. It is a question of whether maybe they are responding to a request that is longstanding and never offered it and then come in and suddenly make a decision to offer it so it looks like they are rushing in. If the act was worded in such a way that it recognized there would be sensitivities on this issue and would be disputes and there was an arbitration process set up to deal with that, specifically, did it not envisage the kind of situation that has occurred in some areas, and is that not why the arbitration process was set up? Because I cannot understand why the government would not even want to be dealt with by arbitration. I thought that was why they would have drafted the act in this way.

Mr. Manness: Remember what arbitration is. Arbitration is winner take all in a case like this, or you force two communities to share a building. Arbitration ultimately says that somebody, some small group of people are going to make a decision to deal with those sensitivities to which the member refers.

In the schools which were considered single-program schools, they have been single-program schools for years. They were pure in that sense. So why would the legislation not expect then that the purity around that school, which by the way had drawn students in from far outside of the traditional school boundaries—why would the legislation not presuppose that there was purity of an opportunity at least to express a democratic position?

I hear what the member is saying. I say to him again, the act has worked in most divisions. The only area where it has not is the Mountain School Division, and certainly we have difficulties there.

Mr. Plohman: What the minister is saying is that the kind of situation where there was only one program being offered was never envisaged to come under this arbitration process. It was just

assumed that would be a complete transfer if the majority wanted it.

Mr. Manness: Well, the legislation was drawn that way for the belief that you wanted to basically keep politics out of it. You did not want to keep political influences too closely associated with the process.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, but then the government recognized there might be situations like that and put in an arbitration process and time lines. Then, further to that, a committee, I guess, to arbitrate even further on some issues according to the act, which recognized perhaps that arbitration can be tough in terms of its impact and, therefore, perhaps there should be another process.

* (1550)

In the case where we have a major dispute now in the Mountain School Division, neither of these two applied. I was just trying to explore why that would not have been envisaged and why it was not provided for in the act.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, when you have a shared-program school, who owns it? Who owns the school when you have existing programs? Who should it be? I mean, does winner take all? When a program leaves, that is where the difficulty is. That is why the legislation said, no, in that case it is probably better to allow the safety valve of second thought, sober thought.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, but what the minister is saying is that if it is not a shared-use school prior, it cannot even be subject to this arbitration process. I am saying that might have been a good place to have the issue of sharing of the building, not the ownership of it, but the sharing of the facility dealt with by arbitration, but the minister says, no, you cannot even go to arbitration for determining how best to share this, or whether in fact sharing should take place, because we have gone past that point on the basis that the section dealing with transfer has already preempted the arbitration process.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, what happens if we had 20

arbitrations? It gets so easy then to pass on the decision to the next level or a different level. These were heady, heady decisions that individuals had to make, so I do not think the member—on what basis do you arbitrate? Let us say yours is a single-shared school—

An Honourable Member: You set it up.

Mr. Manness: No, I am asking the member, using his theory. So let us say you do have a community—single-program school, 20 percent of the parents voted against the transfer into the new division, 80 for, is that the basis of which you call into place an arbitration, or is it 30-70? I mean, on what basis would you want to do it? Do you feel it out? Do you take delegations and sense the political pressure before you turn the hot potato or the Queen of Spades over to somebody else? I do not know, ultimately, how it is you run away from these decisions. You sort of have to face up to them.

Mr. Plohman: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the government set out a process for a transfer of schools and for arbitration to deal with shared services or shared use of the building. It is all set out in the act, but it did not apply to this case in Notre Dame in the Mountain School Division. I am trying to find out why it did not, because it seemed like it would have been a natural to fall into here. When we have a difficult situation like that, you might go through some type of process.

Has the minister appointed a person, Larry Desjardins, or has this been appointed by someone else to be a conciliator then, a process that is not envisaged in this act? What process is he now undertaking?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it has been reported. Yes, I turned to Mr. Desjardins to mediate between the existing and new school divisions with the intent, of course, that there could be some give and take on both sides and we could find a solution.

Mr. Plohman: So what the minister is indicating is that he has run into a situation here with the whole thing that was not even envisaged in the act. There is no provision for that kind of person. I read in 21.24(2) that the minister could refer matters to

a committee, many matters dealing with shared use or transfer of a school, for its advice and opinion or its determination, either/or.

Is that the section the minister is using, or is this something else now that the minister has come upon because the act did not envisage this kind of situation?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, remember, three parties put this act through. I cannot remember any member of the House voting against Bill 34.

Mr. Plohman: But there were a lot of concerns raised, and you got it with your majority.

Mr. Manness: But I cannot remember anybody not supporting Bill 34 and posing a question about whether or not there was adequate discretion in the minister's office to deal with these unforeseen circumstances. The member says, well, is that the reason now you have reached out to Larry Desjardins because the bill did not anticipate the sensitivity. Well, as I said in my first remarks, the bill took a great time to draft because it did anticipate significant sensitivities.

I can say to that, the government policy in allowing for parallel programming also took into account the potential for great sensitivity. This whole bill was steeped in sensitivity, but the reality is we brought in a third party because we do not need legislation to do that. No government ever has. We just sensed that if we could find a solution and somebody could mediate and find that solution more quickly, that that person should be called forward. That is why we reached out to Mr. Desjardins.

Mr. Plohman: I think the minister made a good choice, and I hope that they will be able to find a solution that is one that everyone can live with and support. However, I find it rather odd that the minister did not use the procedure that he had outlined in his legislation. It is a simple point that I think needs at least mentioning with the minister in this particular venue, and it draws into question the legitimacy of the act if it is not being used.

I do not think the minister has adequately been able to explain why he put in place a very

definitive arbitration process involving arbitration, all involving committee. It involved discretion in terms of whether a determination would be made or whether opinion or suggestions would be made. All of these things were envisaged, and yet that process was not used. If that is not used there, then I have to ask the minister, well, why indeed did the government draft a process if it was not going to use it.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, again, I point out for the record—and the member has access to this. This is the booklet that was taken out by former Chief Justice Monnin, Francophone School Governance, page 10, table 1. It indicates all the single-program schools. There are 19, and 18 of those I understand right now there is an agreement—16, at this point between provider and accepting the division.

When the member calls into question the legislation, I guess it is a matter of degree. He is saying that legislation is faulty because at this point there is a nonagreement in one school and therefore—he will not say it, but really what he is saying is, you should have left the discretion with your office in all cases in all schools.

An Honourable Member: The process.

Mr. Manness: Well, the process is the discretion. That is the process he is pointing to. The process, I mean whether I do it in my office or I set up an arbitration, it is my power to put that into place. So the issue is the same. The issue is whether or not you maintain the power in the minister's office.

Mr. Plohman: The issue is in the hands of the arbitrator or committee and in what way they would make a decision or a recommendation.

* (1600)

I will leave that issue, because it is a difficult one. I recognize that. I thought there was a very helpful process put in place in the legislation. I asked the minister about this in Question Period. We had a little chat after, and he said it did not apply. I wanted to find out precisely why it did not apply. I am not sure that I feel comfortable with those reasons, but in any event, it did not apply in this particular situation.

The minister is now engaging in another kind of process. Perhaps that will not have the strength of law, but it is something that might end up coming up with a solution, and that is what we all want.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry for interrupting again, but obviously what the member would have done differently had he been the Minister of Education at the time is he would have brought in legislation that would have done one or two things. Firstly, as a policy he would allow no hope for a parallel. In other words, the school and the community decided once and for all whether it was going to be part of the governance model or not, in which case the Notre Dame situation, to use an example, would be no different than it is today.

Secondly, he is saying, no, if he did not have a situation winner take all, he would allow for the process where the arbitrator would dictate who the winner was, and in that case the winner take all.

Thirdly, he would put into place an arbitration process that allowed the school to share more than one program, or to have more than one program. Indeed the courts of the land might dictate, and I am sure would dictate that would not be acceptable. The member for Dauphin cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Plohman: Oh, yes I can.

Mr. Manness: Well, yes, I guess he can. But on the record he cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Plohman: The minister is assuming that arbitration means there is a winner take all. I have said right from the beginning that the recommendation or the decision that is made—and there is also room for recommendations by way of a committee to be set up. The minister should not try to simplify the process further than what is in the act. There are a few steps insofar as dealing with these disputes, and it is quite possible that a compromise decision could be rendered by an arbitrator. It does not have to be all one way or the other.

In any event, insofar as the parallel programming, I think the minister has to recognize what he is doing here in terms of giving meaning to

the Supreme Court decision. In fact, other jurisdictions have said the Francophone School Division is responsible for the delivery of Francophone services for français programming throughout the province, throughout their jurisdiction. So I do not think that would have been any more difficult than what the minister has put in place here, because he has still got a situation where some people would say they are not even having access to parallel programming because the division may not offer it.

If we look at the St. Claude situation, the people there are saying—and they have been trying to meet with the minister to have this issue dealt with. They are very concerned that the voting was changed in terms of who was eligible. They said it was at the last minute. I do not know if that is correct, but the minister has not even met with them. Why does he not meet with them to explain what has happened? Apparently, these are parents who represent the 18 percent of the students in St. Claude who voted for the Francophone Division. Could the minister agree to meet with these people, with the representatives, and discuss with them the various options that have been considered and how they fit into this? They very much want to be part of the Francophone Division. They want to have access to the program, but they do not want to have to travel to Notre Dame to get it.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, some do not want to travel to Notre Dame. I have others saying that they want to travel to Notre Dame.

An Honourable Member: They have been for six years.

Mr. Manness: Well, of course, they want to keep travelling to Notre Dame. So the member has been a minister before. He knows at times you have got to make difficult decisions when people are one side and the other. I have made no decision. My first request to meet came in at the end of March, and I have said I am not going to get involved. I have tried not to get involved actively in this process in fairness to all and the history of sensitivity around this issue. The member says, well, no you should be granting audiences. I know

exactly what the request is from the St. Claude parents. I will be meeting with them, but I am not going to do so at an instant request because I know the issue as well. I represented that area for the first nine years of my political life. It is my area. I know the issue.

An Honourable Member: Well, then, do not be sensitive.

Mr. Manness: I have to be sensitive. I have to be sensitive to the sensitivities around this issue. So the member does not have to tell me how to do my job, and expect me to just sit here and say nothing. Naturally, he can tell me how to do my job, but not to sit here and not say anything.

Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I recognize that overlap and duplication is not going to allow for a français program and a 50-50 program all the way through the Mountain School Division. That is not what we promised. As a government we promised parallel français program, and français means what it means. So we are trying to work through this way. We are trying to find some common ground.

Mr. Plohman: The parents that are wanting to meet with the minister and have not been able to get an audience with him have said that the St. Claude program is not a 50-50 program offered by Mountain School Division. It was an assortment of courses offered in the French language which do not adhere to any underlying philosophy, and if a student were to take all of the courses, they could get a maximum of 50 percent of instruction in French, but that is not what a 50-50 program is.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

They would like to join the Francophone School Division. The 37 students who have been bussed for six years did so because they had no alternative. They wanted to have français program, so they did, in fact, travel to Notre Dame to get it. Those 37 students have now issued a letter saying they want to, for the '94 year, stay with the Francophone School Division in Notre Dame and be bussed. They are silent on, if there would be a Francophone School Division jurisdiction in St. Claude and the français program would be offered there, whether they would prefer that. We can only assume that they would prefer to stay home and

have it if there was an equally good program in their own community, that they would want to have it at home, but that seems not to be available to them.

The minister has apparently told them that they can only have access to the Francophone Division if they have a program transferred as by the provisions of the Bill 34, but they say there is none to transfer in fact. They want to establish one. They want to be part of one in St. Claude.

I am also hearing that Francophone Division has said to them that, if the minister indicates that he is prepared to support that, the Francophone Division will support them getting a program in St. Claude. So really they are going back to the minister for a decision on this. Does the minister accept that he has a decision to make on this, or does he feel that this is up to somebody else to make a decision?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, these parents of 39 children, I believe, voted in the Notre Dame registration process. If they had not been there to vote, who knows then what the result would have been in Notre Dame? I know for sure that, had they voted in the St. Claude school setting and all of them had voted for governance, they would have lost.

Mr. Plohman: As far as 50 percent.

* (1610)

Mr. Manness: That is right, and that is what this legislation said. They would have lost. So what we said was, and we are well aware of St. Claude, it offered a 50-50 program. Now some would say we cannot necessarily define it; maybe it is not keeping with a program principle. That may or may not be the case, but that community set up its affairs on a 50-50 basis. That is what it did. This government was not going to rush in and overturn the balance associated with the level of français offerings that were offered in St. Claude, would not do that, and we still would not do that because that particular community had organized its affairs in its way to reach out to all comers within that school division. I guess the member is now saying, well, that is not right. You should take into account those parents, and I referred to all of us before in "parents," sometimes in the rural context of having

to make a decision that costs us more with respect to our children if indeed the programming we want is some further distance away, or whatever the circumstance around it might be. Obviously, as the member said, for six years now, the parents in St. Claude have made the decision that they wanted a program that was offered further away from their local community.

The member seems to, by extension be saying, aha, right now they should be offered that same programming within a shared context within the complex at St. Claude. That is a pretty heavy decision to make and to order onto the school community of St. Claude which has organized its affairs around a 50-50 program.

Mr. Plohman: Well, I am not really trying to tell and I certainly am not, and the minister seems a little sensitive because he says he represents this area and he does not like to be told, but there is a real problem. They are coming to us as representatives of the people of Manitoba, as critics and so on, and wanting to, in desperation, have some solution to what they see is a legitimate right and request under this act.

I am asking the minister what action he is going to take, first of all, to meet with them, and, secondly, to resolve this situation. How does he see it being resolved, or is it just going to linger for years and fester, because I do not think that is going to do anybody any good. Is it impossible to solve it then, under this act?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will not speculate, in fairness to the sensitivity we have talked about so many times, the hard, hard and fast views on either side of the issue, the unwillingness in some respects to compromise to any degree, it would be foolhardy for me to speculate at all at this point.

I know one thing. I am the minister under our democratic system, who is held accountable for everybody being in school in the best program possible, starting the school year of fall '94, and I have to take that into account.

Mr. Plohman: I hope the minister will consider the wishes of this group as well, though they seem to be fairly desperate in terms of not being able to

get an audience with the minister. I cannot support him in that, in refusing to meet I mean up to this point, I cannot support him. In fact, he has not met with them.

I wanted to ask the minister a couple of other questions about the federal dollars now that are supposed to be available. Is there any resolution in sight on the negotiations there with regard to the \$112 million, what portion Manitoba would get, what would be eligible and over what period of time? Do we have any answers to that? Are we talking five years, 10 years? Are we talking two years, or what? What would be eligible and then on the amounts.

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, almost a year ago to the day the announcement was made by Madam Landry, of the former federal government, indicating \$112 million was to be set aside to assist the provinces with implementation of schools managed by French-speaking minorities. To this point we are led to believe 70 percent, in other words, \$78.4 million was to be allocated over six years to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, meaning that the rest, I guess, was for Quebec for the implementation of English and the remainder—I stand corrected, the remainder, beyond the \$78,400,000, to be allocated to New Brunswick and Ontario where governance was already in place in support of post-secondary education.

I had a lot of meetings with the federal governments over the last year, the last meeting being held the middle of March. At that time, both governments were pretty adamant in their positions, our position being as the Province of Manitoba that given the percent of our population and the number of Francophone students that we have in the history, that we were eligible for at least as much, if not more than Saskatchewan. To this point in time, the federal government has refused to accept our argument.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister indicate, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, whether in fact there was acceptance of this proposal by the previous

government or did it not reach that stage—the previous federal government?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, you must remember when we got really hot and heavy on this, there was an election call. It was hard to talk to people, although at that time we sensed that if the present government had been returned there would have been certainly an understanding of our position and that there would have been some accommodation made, but that has not been achieved under the new administration.

Mr. Plohman: Is the minister indicating the amount being requested now is far apart for the parties, or has there been no counteroffer at all in terms of the federal government on this? Is it just a question of not accepting the Manitoba proposal? Are we talking about \$11 million or \$12 million here?

Mr. Manness: I do not know what numbers the member used and I will not—

Mr. Plohman: \$11 million or \$12 million.

Mr. Manness: That the federal government has offered? [interjection] Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member for Dauphin uses the term \$11 million or \$12 million that the federal government has offered is our share over six years. I will not confirm that, but certainly his number is not too far away. Of course, to go a number higher would have us picking up a bunch of new funding, and this government will not do that at all.

Mr. Plohman: If it is \$12 million, it would be \$2 million a year, and it would be a significant amount of money for what purpose? This is what I was trying to arrive at earlier as to what we are talking about here, the cost of building new schools or all programming dollars, per student funding? What is it?

* (1620)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it would be used to cover one-time costs with respect to the implementation of the new governance model. It would not be directed to programming. It would be directed towards all of the additional costs in starting up the new governance division.

Mr. Plohman: We are already part way through those costs. A lot of that money is being spent because this is when it is being established, so obviously a running tab is being kept. Can the minister indicate what costs have been expended by the province in the hopes that, of course, this will be split by the federal government or will come out of this money later? How much money are we talking about so far? Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what would be the budget projection for implementation?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member is asking us to reveal our negotiating position with respect to the dialogue between ourselves and the federal government, and we will not do that. But the question with respect to implementation is again a number that we need which is far beyond that which has been offered to this point.

Mr. Plohman: So what the minister says is that, if he were to reveal money actually spent, it would weaken his bargaining position.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry, the member knows that I cannot go too far out on this. This is part of the public record, and it is a very sensitive issue, one that Manitoba feels very, very strongly about, given our commitment and the recognized commitment we have made to try to make changes in keeping with the spirit of the country. This is a very sensitive issue.

Mr. Plohman: Could I ask the minister, then, whether in fact some of the costs that could be allocated could be costs incurred by existing divisions as a result of the transfer, in other words, loss of buildings and so on that may have to be replaced, that kind of one-time-only cost?

Mr. Manness: The answer is no.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister just indicate whether he has an expected timetable for resolution of this issue, any indication as to when the federal government is coming back with a proposal or anything further on this, any further discussions? The minister indicated the last meeting was the middle of March.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is not an intergovernmental dialogue that does not include some dimension of this issue. Requests have been made of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has turned this issue back to Mr. Dupuy, who, I understand, is the minister in charge, and I do not think there were any meetings set up to hammer anything out right now because right now there is just such a strong difference of opinion.

Mr. Plohman: I will just leave it then, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I take it the minister is saying that the two sides are far apart on the dollars that are being requested and the amount being offered.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Shall the item pass? The item is accordingly passed.

Item 16.3.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$27,900—pass.

3.(b) Curriculum Development and Implementation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$796,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$150,300—pass.

(c) Educational Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$219,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$69,500—pass; (3) Grants \$974,500—pass.

(d) Official Languages Programs and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$450,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$275,700—pass; (3) Assistance \$486,000—pass.

(e) Library and Materials Production (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$418,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$197,200—pass.

I am just going to revert back to one that I might have missed. It was (a)(3) Francophone School Governance. There was nothing on that line—pass.

Resolution 16.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,194,000 for Education and Training for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

16.4. Advanced Education and Skills Training
(a) Management Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$602,100.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at the beginning of the Estimates, I had indicated that the Liberal caucus does have this area, Education, broken into K-12, and I am the critic for that area. The member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) is, in fact, the critic for post-secondary. Unfortunately, because the Health Estimates are going on right now, she is not necessarily able to be here, and that is the primary reason why I had asked at the beginning of the Estimates if, in fact, we would be able to have post-secondary after we have gone through K-12.

I would ask if, in fact, there is will of the committee to deal with Education and Training 16.5 so that the member for Crescentwood would be able to be facilitated, as opposed to pulling her out of the Health Estimates.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Then I ask what the will of the committee would be.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think we were given no notice that this in fact was going to happen, that we were going to jump from one area to the other within the line-by-line consideration. We have gone through the bureau and now we are coming to post-secondary education. We want to continue with that, and we can, I think, give assurances to the member that they will not be passed tonight, and so his colleague will not have any difficulty in terms of being able to participate in that section of the Estimates at the next sitting.

Mr. Lamoureux: Just for clarification, that the Estimates for post-secondary will not pass this evening and, just to correct, I did indicate at the beginning, I believe, and I could check with Hansard, that we would have liked to have seen post-secondary follow. Earlier this afternoon, in fact, I did indicate it to the post-secondary Education critic for the NDP.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Could I advise the honourable members that post-secondary education is 16.6. Right now we are dealing with 16.4, which is Advanced Education and Skills Training. It is the same, but—[interjection]

Okay, so we will just carry on then, and we will be dealing with 4.(a) Management Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$602,100.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would like at this time to introduce the members of our staff. I will start with Mr. Paul Goyan who is the deputy minister of the training part of the department; Dominique Bloy who functioned in that capacity previously and is now a director of special projects; Bob Gorchynski who is looking after some of the specific program administration. Have I got that right, Bob? Management Services. Of course, Tom Thompson joins us again from the administration area of the whole department. Those are the staff this afternoon.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Shall the item pass?

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): I would just like to begin with some clarification about the numbers on page 77 of the 1994-95 Estimates, the Detailed Estimates, and the reduction of the eight Career Options SYs. I am looking at this in a historical perspective and notice that there was considerable reduction in SYs on that line last year—and I am actually just trying to look for it on the year before—but perhaps the minister's staff will be able to give us historical perspective on that reduction.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is the final fallout from the movement to the governance model at the colleges. When we transferred over the colleges to their own governance model from the provincial government, we indicated that there would be no layoff, and to give effect to that we had to maintain staff years without dollars against them. This year, after that ran its course, we were able then to reduce the staff years in keeping with our commitment to the transfer. I mean, the dollars—there was no reduction in dollars because that had been done two years ago.

Ms. Friesen: And the minister would confirm that a similar pattern was there last year. This is simply the same pattern as last year? The second part of the question is, I just want to confirm whether this has resulted in any loss of jobs.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, there is certainly no impact, as I said previously, to the department, and colleges do not use staff years anyway. They do not use that process.

Ms. Friesen: Then could we start to look at The Private Vocational Schools Act and regulation. I asked a number of questions in this area last year and wondered if there had been any changes in the department's approaches or procedures vis-à-vis vocational schools. Perhaps we could start by asking how many, if any, complaints have been registered with the department this year?

Mr. Manness: What kind of complaints? I ask for clarity.

Ms. Friesen: People who have issues of dispute with private vocational schools. There have been, in the past, particular sections of that industry where there have been a number of individual complaints, and I am asking the minister how many there have been this year.

Mr. Manness: Well, there were 25 complaints in the calendar year '93; 13 were withdrawn voluntarily, 11 were resolved, and one is outstanding.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister give me a comparison to the previous year? It sounds to me as though that is quite an increase.

Mr. Manness: In 1992, there were 28, so there were more in '92 than there were in '93, and of those one was withdrawn and 27 were resolved, so actually there was a decrease '93 over '92.

Ms. Friesen: Last year there was a 20 percent increase in enrollments at private vocational schools. Does the minister have the enrollment figures for this year so we can perhaps evaluate those numbers of complaints as well in that context?

Mr. Manness: We will try and provide that number, but it obviously makes the argument even stronger, the conclusion even stronger, that the percentage of complaints are decreasing even faster than the raw numbers indicate.

Enrollments in '92, 5,587, and in '93, 5,653.

Ms. Friesen: Does the minister have any ideas of why the enrollment has dropped this year in private vocational schools?

Mr. Manness: It did not decrease. It increased by 1 percent.

Ms. Friesen: My mistake. I have them listed the other way around.

One of the questions I tried to ask last year and got very little response on was the number of students in private vocational schools who are on some form of public assistance, whether it be UIC or Workers' Comp or Canada Student Loan or Manitoba Student Loan. Is there any portion of that public assistance which this department has access to in terms of numbers or statistics?

Mr. Manness: We will have to go to our student aid overview to find that information. We will provide whatever information is there flowing out of 16.40.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is here. It is going to take us a little bit to find it. Does the member want to wait or does she want to proceed?

Ms. Friesen: We can move on or rather move back, actually. I want to come back to the disputes and ask about the 11 which were resolved. Could the minister give us an idea of what kind of resolution process is in place? How are these resolved?

Mr. Manness: The short answer is no, I cannot, but I will try and find out, and again—this is the procedure.

There is a limited period of one year from the date of the commission of an alleged offence. Initial contact, at that time the potential complainant contacts the private vocational school's administration either in person or by telephone establishing (1) whether the complaint is valid, the person is or was a student at a private vocational school, and (2) the date of the occurrence of the complaint falling within a one-year period.

If there appears to be grounds to lodge a formal complaint, then I guess a person is given an official complaint summary form by their private vocational school's administration. The branch

determines whether an appointment for an interview is necessary or if the complaint will be sent in writing, and a request for documentation is determined—and there is a request for documentation—sorry, I am having trouble reading this—a copy of the enrollment contract is sought then from either the vocational school and/or the client.

That is the initial contact followed by follow-up, where a written acknowledgement or receipt of the complaint should be sent to the complainant. In other words, once a written signed complaint is received by the private vocational school's administration or a personal interview with the complainant, it results in a transcribed signed statement.

So initial contact by follow-up and then investigation. Here the vocational school's administration reviews the complaint and determines whether it falls under the act or the regulation, and then to support that, research is done. The school is contacted for their position. Any other documents or information is sought, and then fourthly, resolution occurs.

The evidence is gathered and verified by the administration, hopefully, allowing a decision to be rendered. Then administration, once the resolution has been made, informs all parties to the complaint of the decision in writing, and if necessary, requests compliance under the act and I guess has an opportunity to make regulations for change; and two, once a resolution has been made, verifies compliance and then files the copies under the school's file.

So I am sorry, although I have not maybe given all the detail, I have tried to provide fair detail.

* (1640)

Ms. Friesen: So essentially the department investigates and then checks for compliance with the act and then makes a resolution as to whether the school or the student understands and is in compliance with the act.

In the 11 cases, in this past year, which have been resolved, have any of them resulted in—I am not quite sure how to phrase this but—a recognition that there has been noncompliance

with the act? "Resolved" is a rather ambiguous term.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the one case that there might be a problem we are powerless to move on it, because the allegation comes from an outside third party and that can be put in the area of hearsay. We cannot move unless a complainant comes forward and initiates a process.

We just cannot listen to third-party hearsay. The act does not allow us to.

Ms. Friesen: Is the minister in that case referring to the one case that is still outstanding?

Mr. Manness: The answer is yes.

Ms. Friesen: I was interested in the 11 which are listed as resolved. I was asking whether that resolution, which is a very neutral and ambiguous term, were any of the resolutions based upon noncompliance with the act?

Mr. Manness: I cannot answer that. If the member wants me to try and find out whether or not there were subsequent actions to be taken because of noncompliance against, I gather, the vocational schools, we will attempt to find that out.

Ms. Friesen: The 13 which were voluntarily withdrawn, which is a much higher proportion than the year before, what was the basis of that voluntary withdrawal? Was it at the request of the department or was it at the initiation of the student? I mean, is it, for example, as a result of investigation? It seems a rather large number of people changing their minds.

Mr. Manness: I guess it falls into two main areas. Once people understand the process and it is reported to them or it is indicated to them, I gather they say for the most part, too complicated and do not want to be involved. And a subset of that is that once people realize they have to register a formal complaint, that their name has to be behind it, some also back away. Those would be the two main reasons of voluntary withdrawal from following the process as laid out.

Ms. Friesen: My concern in the past has been for the nature of the agreements which these students sign and the general educational level of students

who are entering private vocational colleges. Does the minister have this year any indication of what the average educational level is of students entering vocational colleges in Manitoba?

Mr. Manness: Yes, I do. The average student profile—this is interesting; I have not seen these numbers before myself—17 to 22: 31 percent.

This is age, first of all. Three broad categories: age, prior education and gender. Under age: 17 to 22, 31 percent; 23 to 28, 22 percent; 25 to 44, also 30 percent; and 45 and over, 13 percent.

Now under the heading, prior education: Grade 11, 10 percent; Grade 12, 48 percent; community college, 9 percent; university, 15 percent. Gender—

Ms. Friesen: I missed that last one: community college, how many percent?

Mr. Manness: Nine.

University 15. And then the final, gender: female, 71 percent; male, 29 percent.

Ms. Friesen: That is very interesting, and I am comparing it in my mind to Saskatchewan, where 60 percent of the students are in fact at the Grade 8 to 9 level, and I wonder what the difference is, at least this is in the review of the Saskatchewan private vocational schools. Has there been a—does the minister have with him or does the department have available to us an historical look at that, say, over the last 5 years? Do we have a sense of how that has changed?

Mr. Manness: I understand we have been tracking this for a few years, and we do not have that information with us, but we will endeavour to provide that and determine whether or not there is a trend that has been at work for the last few years.

Ms. Friesen: The private vocational schools—has there been a change in the number of schools in the last year?

Mr. Manness: There has been a reduction from 43 last year to 41 this year.

Ms. Friesen: Did those reductions occur in Winnipeg or outside of Winnipeg? And while the staff are looking this up, I would also be interested in which section of the, quote, industry this also

occurred. I know that there are four or five broad sectors that are often spoken of in the private vocational school area.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we will endeavour to provide that information also.

Ms. Friesen: I am also interested—that was really an introduction to asking some questions about program changes that have been obvious, over the last five years, clear reductions in the kinds of programs and courses which have been offered at our community colleges, and these are the areas where the private vocational colleges have picked up, particularly in business area. I am wondering how many of the private vocational colleges have also moved into industrial programming.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I hate to say this, but we probably cannot answer that here. When we move into the colleges section, I know that information should be available when we come at that time, but certainly, within the industrial/electronic, the private colleges offer courses in driving, career development.

I will list below the colleges that are offering study under the broad grouping "industrial/electronic." They are the Manitoba Driving School, the Career Development Institute—CDI, Computer Multimedia Technology Centre, ICS Canadian Ltd., McGraw-Hill, Mid-Ocean Recording Studio, National Institute of Broadcasting, Patal Vocational Preparation Schools, Professional Transport Driving Training, Reimer Express driving training, Right Choice Driver Training, School of Recording Arts of Manitoba.

Ms. Friesen: I think all of those were in existence last year. What I am really looking for is a sense of whether the reduction in the nonbusiness side of the community colleges is, in fact, being picked up by the private vocational schools? I do not get a sense of that particular answer addressing that issue.

* (1650)

Mr. Manness: I do not know whether to beg to differ with the member or not, but I did not sense that colleges, within their new flexibility, are really

weeding out a lot of the private or nonsocial area of programming to any significant extent. That is a general statement. There probably are some courses that—I know there were reductions. The very essence of the governance model was to give them the flexibility to take out what courses they did not sense having a demand.

Unless I am corrected over the next little while, I guess I will accept what the member says, that the private colleges are not rushing in to fill the void in any area of programming that is no longer offered by the community colleges.

Ms. Friesen: The broader point I am making, of course, is that the community colleges do rush in where there are programs to be offered that do not require much equipment, do not require much capital investment, and it is very difficult at the moment to see where the community colleges are going. My concern is the very small number of graduates from those programs and whether the private system is in fact going to pick up those opportunities for training for Manitobans.

Mr. Manness: They will if they are profitable to do so. I mean, that is a given. These are private colleges whose motive is to make a return on their investment of time and/or energy and skills, and I guess every decision is made probably on that basis as to what courses to offer. That is the marketplace at work.

Ms. Friesen: What provisions are there under Manitoba programs for students on social assistance to enter private vocational schools?

Mr. Manness: I cannot answer that at this sitting. That would be a Family Services issue where they would buy spaces from the private vocationals, I guess, if they have the budget and it is deemed as a necessary requirement in the greater public support of that individual.

Ms. Friesen: So there are places available at the private vocational schools for people who are on forms of provincial social assistance?

Mr. Manness: What we are saying is we are not certain what they do. I mean, that is hard to believe that I would make that statement, but that service is not provided in this department. So, having been a

Treasury Board minister, I know that Family Services has great powers to spend money in support of their clients, and it would not surprise me one bit if they did spend some of that resource on education within the private vocational schools. Do I know that for a certainty? I do not have the count here. Do I know that for certainty that there is some policy against them doing that? The answer is no. So, again, I would have to seek the information from a different source.

Ms. Friesen: Would the minister then undertake to gather that information from the Department of Family Services and let us know how many students in Manitoba on social assistance are attending the private vocational schools?

Mr. Manness: Again, I am not so sure they have that, and if they do, it would only be on the provincial listing. It would not be on all those who are drawing social assistance. What the City of Winnipeg offers, for instance, or municipalities, I do not know. We will attempt to see whether that global number exists. If it does, we will certainly share that with the member.

Ms. Friesen: Last year, when I asked about the relationship between students and the private vocational schools, the minister indicated that she would be including in the Manitoba Career Prospects newspaper a discussion for students of the kind of questions that they should be asking as they looked at private vocational schools. I wonder if perhaps for the record the minister might table the section of the Career Prospects that did do that.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, from memory, staff senses that one of the issues dealt with private vocational schools, setting them out as an option. We do not have that Prospects with us. As a matter of fact, the second publishing has just come out, I believe. But this is what the department puts out as a pamphlet on vocational schools, if the member would like to see a copy.

Ms. Friesen: I thank the minister for the copy of the brochure, but I would, however, also at the next sitting be interested in seeing the copy of Manitoba Prospects which did deal with this, since I raised a number of issues, very specific ones, that the minister said she would include in that.

And of course, I think, one of the reasons for perhaps being hopeful about that particular way of spreading information is that it is a newspaper which is widely distributed and which young people and those with perhaps lesser degrees of literacy would certainly look at. I do not know how the minister distributes this particular brochure that he has just tabled, but my guess would be that it would not have the same wide distribution as the Career Prospects newspaper.

Mr. Manness: Well, additional information, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we put out the latest Manitoba Prospects in January '94, and it was of course distributed to approximately 66,000 high school students and 25,000 adults in the province. As an aside, part of the government volunteer program used an individual, a Grade 11 or Grade 12 student, who volunteered their time to the government, part of the volunteer program, to assist us with writing that Prospects to make it more readable-friendly, or friendly-readable—whatever the term is—to students, Grade 11 or Grade 12.

But anyway, this year's release did include an article, one entitled "How to Choose the Best Private Vocational School." So we will still endeavour to find that, the Prospects '94, and we expect there will be a reference to choosing private vocational schools and possibly even reference to this document that we are holding in our hands right now.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have not had the chance to read this document yet, but it does seem to include many of the questions which I had suggested to the department last year, and I wonder if the minister could tell us perhaps the arrangements for distribution of this.

Mr. Manness: All private vocational schools, all high schools, and all Canada Employment Centres are the locations where this pamphlet is lodged.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour being 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings. Time for private members' hour. We will reconvene at 8 p.m.

HEALTH

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 Health. We are on item 3.(a)(1), page 83 of the Estimates manual.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, when I last left off my question for the minister, we were discussing the \$2-million expenditure for the delivery of the independent program, and I still am not clear precisely under what expenditure line that \$2 million comes out of. Perhaps the minister can enlighten us as to specifically where that \$2 million comes out of. I believe the minister indicated it comes out of the Supplies and Services, which is \$14,522,700. Is that correct?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Chair, I think it is, as I recall my discussions with staff last week, but if it is not, then it would be that other line that is entitled I believe Home Care Assistance. What page are you on?

An Honourable Member: 57.

Mr. McCrae: I am almost certain it is out of the Supplies and Services line. If I am incorrect, I will correct that later, but I believe that is what my staff advised me last week.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate how much the VON contract will be for this fiscal year '94-95, because as I understand it, that also comes out of the Supply and Services line?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, I will make a note and provide the honourable member with further information about the VON arrangements for this fiscal year later this afternoon.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister also indicate what the cost was for the

VON contract for '93-94? Can he advise whether or not the VON contract has in fact been signed?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, the financial or contractual arrangements between the government and the Victorian Order of Nurses, those arrangements have not been finalized for '93-94 or for '94-95.

* (1430)

Mr. Chomiak: Having said that, can the minister outline what the projected cost is for '93-94, since the year is literally completed? Surely the minister must have a projection for the cost of the VON contract in '94-95 as well.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, while we are working up those numbers for the honourable member, I would just by way of background point out that the Victorian Order of Nurses provide short-term home care services, and the work they do for clients or patients or customers—as the honourable member calls them—that is driven by the amount of demand there is. That demand is driven by issues like length of stay, like discharge policy of the various hospitals here in Winnipeg.

While we are working on this, Madam Chairperson, I would provide for the honourable member some response to questions previously raised. I do not want to get too far behind in supplying information that I have undertaken to supply.

The first one has to do with the epidemiology unit. I will advise honourable members that the Healthy Public Policy Programs Division is developing a collaborative epidemiology unit to improve the development, analysis and dissemination of population-based health information. The epidemiology unit will be a collaborative effort between the Department of Health, the University of Manitoba, the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, the Cadham Provincial Laboratory and other agencies. It would service health associations through vital links to medical officers of health. The epidemiology unit will involve epidemiologists and other population health scientists based within and outside government.

They will collaborate to provide the professional resources necessary to carry out the following functions: research and analysis to support the development and evaluation of provincial priorities, epidemiologic research to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public health activities, collaboration and consultation with communities to provide community health needs assessments, surveillance of communicable and chronic diseases including compiling, analyzing and interpreting data for routine use in the field, education of health professionals at the graduate and post-graduate levels in the use of population health data and principles, support the development of a vibrant epidemiology research industry in Manitoba.

In the short term, the epidemiology unit will review, organize and analyze many of the various Manitoba health data bases and registries to remove redundancies and to improve their utility for program management and planning. The epidemiology unit will also provide data support for provincial priority program initiatives.

In a longer term, the unit will more fully develop the potential of Manitoba's health information resources by providing a centre of expertise in epidemiologic research and analysis. It will provide Manitoba with a competitive advantage in competition for health research contracts and grants from national and international agencies and funding sources.

Madam Chairperson, I was asked also about the Environmental Microbiology Section of the Cadham Laboratory. This was in regard to water and food testing. An amalgamation of Provincial Environmental Laboratory Services has occurred at the former W. M. Ward Technical Services Laboratory, effective April 1, 1994. This includes the W. M. Ward Technical Services Laboratory from the Department of Environment, the Environmental Microbiology Section of the Cadham Provincial Laboratory from the Department of Health and the Analytical Chemistry Services Section of the Technical Operations branch of the Economic Innovation and Technology Council into one organization

under the control of the Economic Innovation and Technology Council.

These amalgamated laboratory sections now form the Environmental Sciences Centre. The Environmental Microbiology Section of Cadham Laboratory analyzes water, waste water and food to determine if they meet Canadian microbiological standards. Food- and water-borne illnesses are also investigated in co-operation with local public health agencies. These were charged to the federal government and a number of agencies for these services. Microbiological testing of water, waste water and food occurs at the environmental micro section at Cadham. This will be moved over to the Environmental Sciences Centre Lab this fall. Presently there is no fee for public testing. Private companies are presently assessed fees on a cost-recovery basis.

These fees are under review. The new fee schedule will be prepared in mid-June, 1994. Fees for private testing commenced April 1, 1994, and public fees are scheduled to commence April 1, 1995.

One of the honourable members asked me for a job description of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. That, of course, is Dr. John Guilfoyle. Dr. Guilfoyle works for the Community and Mental Health Services Division of the department and his office is located in Winnipeg. With respect to general accountability, the Chief Medical Officer of Health is a senior position within Manitoba Health, reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Mental Health Services Division. The Chief Medical Officer of Health acts as an advocate spokesman for public health in the province, provides advice to the minister about threats to the public health and represents the department as required within and between directorates and other departments. The Chief Medical Officer of Health insures that the relevant statutory requirements of the Public Health Act are met. The Chief Medical Officer of Health provides professional supervision, serves as a cohesive and integrative force and is accountable for the program standards and professional performance of the regional medical officers of health.

* (1440)

With respect to the nature and scope of Dr. Guilfoyle's job, Manitoba Health has restructured to facilitate population-based programming and service delivery and to facilitate efficient linkages between policy, programs, operations and finance.

The mandate of the Community and Mental Health Services Division includes provincial program development, monitoring and operations in hospitals, community health centres, personal care homes, funded agencies and in the community.

In the past, the practice of public health has necessarily been restricted to concerns about infectious diseases and sanitation. With the broadening of understanding of health, the role of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the scope of population health practice has widened to concerns about the general health of the population as a whole. In this regard, the Chief Medical Officer of Health provides direction to the epidemiology unit that reports to the position. The epidemiology unit's data system has access to the various databases within Manitoba Health and provides timely information on the health of Manitobans and makes recommendations for areas of improvement.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health provides to the minister and the department senior independent medical advice in examining options and recommending policy within the health care system. As a senior position, the Chief Medical Officer of Health represents the department, along with other departments, in those areas where physician expertise or influence is necessary. The Chief Medical Officer of Health acts as the department's public spokesperson, advocate and provides expert medical advice to the public and the media. This public profile of the department is essential in those circumstances where public anxiety is expressed about public health issues.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health is responsible for monitoring the Public Health Act, its application, and making recommendation for change. This is particularly true at the present time as profound changes are occurring within the

health care sector and, importantly, concurrently in the organization of the department. The Chief Medical Officer of Health serves as a link between the policy planning and the program delivery sector and fosters a close working relationship with other divisions to allow for input in policy development in all areas as needed.

As a team leader of the regional medical officers of health across the province, the Chief Medical Officer of Health ensures consistency in program and content and delivery between regions.

With respect to the specific accountabilities of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, he must provide expert medical advice to the minister and act as department spokesperson to the public and the media on public health issues. He must provide leadership to a team of community health physicians to ensure services have a consumer focus and meet the needs of Manitobans. He must provide expert medical input into the development of healthy public policy. He must interpret and ensure that the statutory requirements of the Public Health Act are implemented and adhered to. He must insure that the epidemiology data is used to ensure sound policy and program development. He must identify threats to the health of Manitobans and play a key role in devising strategies that improve health and well-being, and he must promote healthy lifestyles and environments so as to prevent and control the impact of communicable disease on the health and well-being of Manitobans.

You can see, Madam Chairperson, from having listened so intently to this job description how very responsible a position the position of Chief Medical Officer of Health is in the province of Manitoba. Certainly, the incumbent has been kept very busy keeping the minister advised and the department advised of health developments in Manitoba.

The honourable member has asked about the Bell-Wade Report. They asked if the contract was tendered, and the answer is yes, and obviously approved by the government. The cost breakdown is as follows: fees \$200,000, and out-of-pocket expenses \$30,000.

I have also been asked about home care hospital co-ordinators for 1994-95. Hospital home care referral nurses manage the referral to community home care services of patients discharged from hospital and the complete assessments for personal care homes or long-term beds. There are 16.75 equivalent full-time referral nurses in seven hospitals.

Hospital home care co-ordinators manage specialized, complex caseloads of persons who reside in the community and require access to hospital, for example, respiratory, children or palliative care. There are four equivalent full-time co-ordinating nurses: one each at the Health Sciences Centre, Children's centre, St. Boniface and Riverview. There are, additionally, the equivalent of 4.6 equivalent full-time positions provided for vacation and sick replacement and workload peaks.

Now back to the question the honourable member asked, now that I have caught up some on some of the undertakings I have given, with respect to the Victorian Order of Nurses, for '93-94, the projected actuals are \$7.7 million for nursing, \$.5 million for home help and \$1.2 million for co-ordination and referral. For 1994-95 it is estimated—and "estimated" is the word here; these matters, as I have pointed out, are driven by the amount of demand there is—nursing, \$7.8 million; home help, \$.8 million; and co-ordination and referral, \$1.3 million. So, for '93-94, a total of \$9.4 million; for '94-95, a total of \$9.9 million.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I wonder if the minister might just give me a brief breakdown of each of those services—the direct service, the home help, and the co-ordinating service—as to the purpose of each of those three breakdowns.

* (1450)

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, nursing services are hands-on nursing services. Home help are those services that allow a person to be home, i.e., certain cleaning chores, certain other services such as cooking that can keep a person at home. The other is that co-ordination and referral job that has to be done to facilitate discharge from hospital and placement for home care services.

Mr. Chomiak: Who is that \$1.3 million this year paid to in terms of the co-ordination? Does that go directly to VON or does that go to VON co-ordinating nurses?

Mr. McCrae: Previously these monies were paid to the hospitals, and this fiscal year it will be paid directly to the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Mr. Chomiak: The minister cited on several occasions the lack of options available at certain hospitals, Seven Oaks being the one specifically alluded to, concerning discharging of patients. We Care has now taken a contract to do some of this work. Would that work have previously been undertaken by the Victorian Order of Nurses or by some other entity or agency with respect to the nursing component?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, the We Care Home Health Services contract, I have to stress that is a pilot, that is a 12-week demonstration, or whatever you call it.

What it is doing, Seven Oaks Hospital has contracted on this pilot basis with We Care to take long-term patients who could be discharged and put them into a home care situation. The reason for that is that our government program was not perceived by Seven Oaks to be responding in a timely way to the needs of these long-term patients. So Seven Oaks, wanting to deal appropriately and put the concerns of long-term patients number one, contracted in this way with We Care Home Health Services.

Meanwhile, the We Care Home Health Services program is filling that gap. Also meanwhile, our government-run Home Care program is something that is the subject of considerable work and review. We are trying to improve that program so the government program can be more responsive. Certainly it is not a question of a lack of commitment on the part of the program, because the funds have certainly grown very, very significantly, in the last few years especially.

It is not felt appropriate that beds—this goes back to a discussion the honourable member and I have had already, but it is not felt by Seven Oaks, or I suggest to most reasonable people, that hospitals should be used in this way. There is a

significant cost to hospitals to keep patients, that is true. Therefore beds that are able to be used in hospitals ought to be used by patients who need them as opposed to long-term patients who should be at home and getting service.

What the We Care is doing is filling a gap that is created by the inability of the Manitoba Home Care program to respond quickly enough to these discharge needs. Meanwhile, as I say, we continue to attempt to improve the operations of the government-run Home Care program.

I think the honourable member knows that, even though we offer all these services, they are not guaranteed in the strict sense of the word. We offer them as we can make them available, and Seven Oaks perceived that if we could make those services available on a more timely basis, we could make space available in the hospital for those who need to be there or alternatively to save the dollars.

The Manitoba Home Care program itself could stand to learn a few things from the demonstration project. I think that we serve our patients well when we attempt to learn how better to deliver services to them. To leave things as they are is to say to the patients, well, we do not really care about you, we care more about the comfort of ourselves and our staff. I mean, we do care about our staff, but we also care about the patients. So the patients come first, and we try to treat the staff in a reasonable way. But, when we are not able to respond to the need that is there, then we need to make some adjustments, and when we do make adjustments, we are going to need support for that.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, just trying to understand this line item, \$9.9 million is going to be the VON contract out of the \$14,522,000 for Supplies and Services. The minister has indicated that approximately \$2 million will come out of this line item for the expansion of the self-managed care program, which takes us to about \$11.9 million. Can the minister indicate what the other \$2.6 million in that particular line item comes out of?

* (1500)

Mr. McCrae: Just to be a little clearer, I think, Madam Chairperson, under Supplies and Services,

I am not sure what I indicated earlier, but the self-managed care program has been budgeted in that figure, the half a million dollars, and that is the amount in there now, and \$1.5 million of the direct service appropriation is for self-managed care, and ultimately will be moved down to that \$14.5-million line that we have been talking about. That needs to be clarified. In addition, there is money in here for the Fokus, Ten Ten Sinclair people. There is money here for the district health centres, the Community Therapy Services, Luther Home, and then \$800,000 for other miscellaneous costs and expenses.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, just in regard to the Luther Home, the Fokus and the Ten Ten, I recognize obviously the Supplies and Services issue. The forwarding of the money to Ten Ten would have to be in the form of service, and probably a back service in relation to Fokus. Is most of those monies in services, or are there any supplies in there? I am just trying to get an idea as to what money is used for what.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, with respect to the number for Fokus and Ten Ten Sinclair, that number is strictly for services. Supplies are covered under some other appropriation, and direct grants are also covered somewhere else.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, just returning up to the line Direct Service Workers, do we have any figures with respect to staff years and the allocation of those dollars to specific staff years? I mean, are there a certain number of staff years allocated for home support workers? Are there a certain number of staff years allocated for attendant services? Are there a certain number allocated for other direct services? Is it broken down by staff year or some other meaningful category that we can get a handle on?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the number in the book for direct service workers covers only direct service workers. Most of these people, all but a few, are nonpermanent people. They are all casual people. That includes home care attendants, home support workers, LPNs, although there are a few in Winnipeg I understand that are on staff and are permanent. That also includes registered

nurses, overnight and daily workers. All of those people are casual employees and are called on an as-needed basis.

Mr. Chomiak: So the figure 1,264 includes all of the named individuals the minister just described?

Madam Chairperson, I have that wrong. I apologize. The minister indicated attendants, home support, some LPNs and some RNs are part time. I am trying to get a handle on the number of individuals or the way that it is designated or the number of staff years or the number of hours, if it is broken down between these various components. Does the department have those figures?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, if I could just be general for a moment, and I will try not to take too long. The Home Care program has many dimensions and facets and differing services and differing service providers. We have home support workers. We have home care attendants. We have registered nurses. We have licensed practical nurses. Then we have co-ordinators and resource co-ordinators who are also involved. We have managers and professional and technical people as well.

We provide a service. We try to make it as flexible and timely as we can, and I think that we should try to improve that. The staff mix, in direct service provision, is going to change almost, well, almost daily depending on the nature of the need that is there in Manitoba at any given time.

We might, for example, if there has been no recent upsurge of patient load because of no recent people taken from hospitals through bed closure or through the We Care home services people or whatever, if there is no surge, then you will not see a surge in the need for staff, whether it is full time or part time or casual.

If the people who have been on home care recover from whatever their need for home care was, that will show up. If we build more personal care homes, that will be one thing that will contribute to reducing pressure on the Home Care program because I recognize there are other issues as well.

* (1510)

So it is in a sense a moving target, and it is based very much on the demands that are placed on the program. We try to respond to those needs and demands, but there are times also when there are valleys, when not as much service is required for various reasons. Sometimes it is because family is available at a certain time and so home care services are not required. Sometimes there may be a vacation. I do not know, I am speculating, but there are a lot of things that can happen to cause peaks and valleys in the service provision. So that will have peaks and valleys on the number of casual people, the number of part-time people, perhaps even on the number of full-time people in the system.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I appreciate what the minister is saying. Is there any administrative means of giving us a general idea as to the level of each of—at least in a general sense of the category, be it by the way of staff years or by the way of region or by the way of hours of service delivered, et cetera, just so we can have an idea and a handle as to what is provided?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, it might be helpful if I give the honourable member a snapshot of what it was like in April of this year. Then you can compare last year with next year and do whatever you like, but it is going to have—these numbers will change depending on the need that is out there and the demand on the program.

I recited some of these numbers for the honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) I believe the other day. The honourable member must have been otherwise engaged. I am sure he was here, Madam Chairperson, I am certain he was here.

I will go by region. With respect to the Winnipeg Region, in April of '94, there were 934 home care attendants, 552 home support workers, 45 registered nurses and 27 licensed practical nurses—just the casual people. These are not the full-time permanent people.

In Westman, in April, there were 287 home care attendants, 75 home support workers, 54 registered nurses and 16 licensed practical nurses.

In Eastman, there were 251 home care attendants, nine home support workers, 29 registered nurses and two licensed practical nurses.

In Central, there were 347 home care attendants, eight home support workers, 58 registered nurses and 32 licensed practical nurses.

In Interlake, there 249 home care attendants, 41 home support workers, 46 registered nurses and four licensed practical nurses.

In Parkland, 189 home care attendants, 41 home support workers, 24 registered nurses and 13 licensed practical nurses.

In Norman, there were 81 home care attendants, there were no home support workers, 12 registered nurses and nine licensed practical nurses.

In Thompson there were 23 home care attendants, 37 home support workers, three registered nurses and six licensed practical nurses for a total, in April in Manitoba, of 2,361 home care attendants, 763 home support workers, 271 registered nurses and 109 licensed practical nurses.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for those figures. Just a clarification, those are all people who are on part time or casual, is that correct? The minister is nodding in the affirmative. All of those people would be paid out of the appropriation Direct Service Workers? Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Yes.

Mr. Chomiak: In addition, therefore, there would also be an additional 33 employees, staff years, employed in Home Care which would include the 16.75 that were home care co-ordinators, discharge co-ordinators, that are paid in the hospitals that the minister referred to. Is that correct? Actually, that is two questions, and it may not be fair.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the only thing is the hospital discharge co-ordinators are employees of the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Mr. Chomiak: Just in general, outside of these part time and outside of the VON that we have discussed in a previous contract, the only other employees of the program—what are the other

employees of the program other than the 33 that are listed on page 55?

Mr. McCrae: In addition to the direct-service, casual and part-time people that we have spoken of, there are regional home care nurses, there are case co-ordinators, there are resource coordinators, and there are program supervisors. If you hear from me that we are looking at trying to co-ordinate better the services that we deliver to people in Manitoba, it will be in these areas more than it would be in the direct-service delivery areas that I am talking about. It is in this area where we need to make sure we have proper information systems, that we keep an updated file on each and every person within the program's care and that the right disciplines are brought to bear on an individual case file. We can use automation to assist us, and we have not gone far enough, in my view, in that area of the whole co-ordination of the Home Care program. You will hear fairly soon about changes we expect to make in those areas.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, just one final question again to try to get a handle on it. The resource co-ordinators, the regional co-ordinators, et cetera, how many are those in number? Does that include all the 33 that are named in this appropriation here or do they come out of some other appropriation or area?

* (1520)

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member looks at page 55, I have it in front of me, the number 33 staff years for total Salaries and Employee Benefits in the Home Care area, those are the people who run the supply depot and the people who work at 800 Portage Avenue. That is who those 33 people are.

Mr. Chomiak: My next to final question is: Where are all the co-ordinators, et cetera? Where are they paid out of and where do they show up and what is the number? That is my question.

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member looks in the Estimates book, 21.5(b) is the appropriation dealing with the staff that the honourable member is talking about.

Mr. Chomiak: I see under 21.5(b), the sum of \$816,260 under Hospitals and Community Health Services. I presume it is in here, because they do not just deliver direct home care; they deliver a wide range of services and in terms of the appropriation.

The member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) also indicated to me she will explain it to me at some future point.

I get on to my next line of questioning, because the minister mentioned the supply depot, which deals with the whole question of the Home Care Equipment program. I am wondering if the minister could outline for me specifically what changes occurred in the program as a result of last year. What changes are occurring this year, and what are the plans for the program in general?

Mr. McCrae: There are no changes in this year's budget from the previous. This budget does not insure or deinsure any supplies or equipment.

Mr. Chomiak: As I understand it, in last year's budget, any product below the cost of \$50 required a user fee to be paid or, as the previous minister coined the phrase, I think he called it a co-payment, but, in any event, anything below \$50. However, anything above \$50 is still paid for, is still provided by the depot, and it is done on a cumulative basis. That means that if I require three services and each is under \$50, I would still have to pay the first \$50. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, low-cost equipment items are the responsibility of the client. Supplies continue to be paid for by the program with the exception of the ostomy supplies, which have been the subject of discussion and arrangements made between the Ostomy Association and the department whereby there is a contribution made in most cases. As I understand, the arrangement worked out. As far as I know, it is fairly informal at this point.

Madam Chairperson: Item 3.(a) Administration.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I was just not quite finished.

Those identified cases of hardship are identified and the government looks after that, so that it is the

issue of equipment items that is the issue where we ask the clients of the program to pay for low-cost equipment items.

* (1530)

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, am I given to understand that the depot no longer stocks low-cost items, that low-cost items have been phased out?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, items of equipment continue to be returned to the depot. We have not been buying new equipment, though. On a loan basis, we make the equipment that is returned available to people. However, we also advise clients of where low-cost items of equipment can be purchased.

Mr. Chomiak: When the minister referred to supplies still being stocked and provided by the depot, which supplies was the minister—I am sorry, I may have that incorrect, what supplies was the minister referring to? [interjection] I am sorry. So supplies are no longer—are supplies provided by the depot? What are those supplies that we are talking about?

Mr. McCrae: The kinds of supplies we are talking about, which are supplied by the program, are the usual supplies that are needed such as bandages, gauze, tubes and catheters and incontinent pads. Those kinds of items of supply are provided by the program.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, those supplies are all provided free of charge without the \$50 fee attached. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: That is correct.

Mr. Chomiak: The minister is indicating that is correct, for the record, and, therefore, the \$50 fee only applies to "equipment."

Mr. McCrae: It is not a fee, Madam Chair. We just do not supply the low-cost equipment. The low-cost equipment is something that we advise clients as to where it can be obtained, and they obtain it.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, therefore, anything over \$50 in cost of equipment the depot will still continue to supply. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Madam Chairperson, that is correct.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, there have been periodic concerns that have been brought to my attention, in terms of stocking inventory and the like. I assume that most of that has been resolved because I have not heard complaints on that front for several months, so I assume that was some kind of a supply problem or it related to perhaps the changeover.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, the problem which gave rise to those kinds of things has been resolved. I understand, though, that the ongoing issue of making sure that the demand is properly supplied, making sure that manufacturers, warehousemen and distributors have the product in place when it is needed, those are constant challenges that any program like this faces, but the problem area that the honourable member refers to has been resolved.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I am given to understand that there are going to be two committees set up. One is a home care appeal committee, and the second is a home care advisory committee. Can the minister indicate whether either of those committees have been set up and structured and who is on each of those particular bodies?

Mr. McCrae: We are, Madam Chairperson, in the process of lining up the people to be involved in the appeal process, as well as the advisory mechanism. We are being very careful to try to draw from the providers of services, as well as experts in things like gerontology. The disabled community needs to be represented in these panels, as well as those who provide services. So that process is winding down quite nicely. I do not know if we will get these Estimates done before we can announce the names of the people on the appeal panel and on the advisory committee.

I will just put a little bit on the record here about this. It is part of a continuing effort to improve operations, to maintain quality services and ensure the equitable application of program standards and policies. It is our wish, we want all that to happen, that Manitoba Health will be establishing

an appeal panel for home care services. This would enable recipients of service who had gone through an administrative appeal but were dissatisfied with the results to have their appeals heard by a panel of community independent representatives.

Although the Home Care program is not legislatively based, three important goals will be achieved by establishing a panel. One is that recipients would be assured a fair hearing. The Minister of Health would be provided with impartial advice and recommendations respecting the application of program decisions. Third, the public would be assured that services are being provided equitably through the application of uniform criteria, standards and policies.

This is very important, Madam Chairperson, because there are, and through nobody's fault, it just happens—when a program grows as fast as this one does, there is bound to be growing pains. I think part of those growing pains are that in some areas there is a different interpretation perhaps of the criteria, maybe a different treatment to people, and whom do they get to appeal to but the people who made the decision. The honourable member knows from his experience that it really does not give the customer, the client, the patient, the kind of satisfaction they need, that they are really only going back to the same place. So we need to provide something additional, and that is what the appeal panel is about.

* (1540)

With respect to the advisory committee on the program, we are establishing an advisory committee to the Continuing Care Program. The objectives would include a commitment to broad-based community consultation to increase sensitivity and awareness of the goals and the objectives of the program, to identify and advise on specific policy issues of major concern to the constituents of the program. In other words, if we keep hearing about a similar problem over and over again, the advisory committee will be able to, because of the background of the people on the committee, I think we can be assured that we will receive good quality advice from the committee.

The committee will assist the program in devising proposals and strategies to meet identified community needs, working in close collaboration with the program. The committee will assist as necessary in the development of appropriate models of service that take into account needs and cost-effectiveness.

The committee will assist in developing information and educational materials that provide appropriate information to the constituents of the program. In addition, consumers will be provided a structured opportunity for input into any changes that could be made to the Home Care program as a result of the home care work restructuring project, for example, participation in focus groups.

What I perceive as a possibility here is the honourable member or a member of his constituency who is perhaps a recipient of home care will not necessarily be on the advisory panel. But I do not want their thoughts to go unheard, so I am going to be making available opportunities for anybody who has an idea to share or a complaint or a concern for anybody to make those concerns known.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Chairperson: Order please. May I draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my right, where we have with us this afternoon the Honourable Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you, Premier Klein.

Mr. Chomiak: I join with all members of the House in welcoming the Premier of Alberta to our Legislature. I really did not believe he was a country and western singer.

I just have a comment and a couple of questions. The comment is, I think, generally that makes a lot of sense, particularly the minister's most recent comments about allowing input in terms of the Home Care program from all individuals to have an opportunity. I think that is a positive, and I look forward to seeing that.

I have basically, though, one other comment before I ask my two questions. The first is, we are

moving along quite well in Estimates, and I anticipate the way today's pattern is proceeding that we could move along quite well in Estimates this week. So I think that we may not be here forever as it turns out.

My two questions are, does the minister anticipate any legislation—I think not—changes as a result of the setting up of the appeal process? My second question is—and this is really fundamental to the whole question of the appeal process, and it is something we have been trying to get at here in the Legislature in terms of the Estimates—the criteria from which an individual will be appealing will have to be made very clear, much clearer than perhaps has been understood in the past.

The minister knows from his experience in his previous portfolio how important it is to have the criteria both public and understandable and accessible. I am wondering when and where we are going to see the creation or the publication of the guidelines. Clearly the individuals will not be appealing from the regulations. That seems to me to be too difficult to comprehend, but clearly there will be some new kinds of guidelines or something published. When can we anticipate seeing that?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, I will be more forthcoming with the honourable member when we actually make announcements about this. I would say in passing today that there is no legislative framework governing the Home Care program now. It has developed as the needs have required it to develop.

One of my problems is, you can have all the criteria in the world, but those criteria cannot explain how much it hurts, for example. How do you deal with that in legislature? I do not know, and I am not a legislative drafter, but are there degrees of pain or degrees of disability or degrees of illness? Yes, to some extent there are and the experts can describe to you someone who is more in need than someone else and maybe put it in words better than I could. I am sure they could, but the point is, I do not care what the legislation might say some day, there is always going to be somebody saying, that legislation does not work

for me. I think the honourable member would likely acknowledge that.

So that is a sticky issue, I suggest. I fully intend to talk about these things with the members of the advisory and appeal panels when the opportunity presents itself. It is an area that is troublesome. I think to anybody trying to provide relief of suffering and pain, it is troublesome to say, you know, I can put myself into that person's body and feel that person's pain. We think we are really compassionate and we really want to alleviate people's suffering, and yet how can you really tell.

The honourable member poses a very challenging question, and I will continue to work to try to answer that in the future.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Madam Chairperson, I have a few questions for the Minister of Health.

Following up on the issue about legislation, is there legislation contemplated at all for the Continuing Care Program?

Mr. McCrae: At this time, no, Madam Chairperson.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I am just conferring with my colleague the MLA for Inkster. I must make a comment that the MLA for Kildonan—we seem to work it very well in terms of switching questions. Because I am also critic for post-secondary education, they are now going into that line in the committee room, and I cannot be two places at one time. Unfortunately, my colleague from Kildonan's colleagues are not quite as generous in terms of deferring that line to the end of the Estimates, but I have no control over what goes on in that committee room.

The reason I asked about legislation was because that was a recommendation that came from the Price Waterhouse report a number of years ago. I have a number of questions about those recommendations in the Price Waterhouse report, but I will probably save those for this evening.

Getting back to the criteria of the Continuing Care Program, I am wondering if the minister could outline for us his understanding of what

events transpired last July, August or even in June in terms of what appeared to be changes in how the policy or the criteria for Continuing Care, for the Home Care program were applied in regard to who was eligible for service, whether people were eligible for cleaning services, home support work.

Would he be able to go through that? I ask that question because to this day I still have not quite sorted out exactly what all the events were and what happened. So I am wondering, perhaps as a beginning to this discussion, if the minister could follow along his understanding of what happened.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, everybody has their own version I suppose of what happened last year. Of course, we are very happy to discuss what is happening this year, because I think whatever misunderstandings or misperceptions or whatever was going on have been basically addressed. That addressing will be more complete in the next few days when I announce the home care panel and the home care advisory committee.

* (1550)

The honourable member knows and I know that last year we had a particularly difficult budget year. We were attempting to renew our health system and that work goes on, but in the process, we were facing some serious budget pressures as well. That led to the new policy on cleaning and laundry, and that I think in turn led to many, many misunderstandings, not only of what was happening, but what was not happening, too.

I was not presiding over all of that last July, I think the honourable member mentioned. When I came along, I had a large number of delegations of people come to my office here in Winnipeg. That was between trips to the 45 communities that I was visiting. Those delegations were also under certain apprehensions and conceptions, some of which were correct and some of which were not correct, some of which were driven by, well, propaganda I think is one way of putting it. So what we had was a series of half-truths leading to a misconception, is one way to put it.

In any event, what happened when I took office as Minister of Health was, I addressed issues with organizations representing elderly Manitobans,

representing disabled Manitobans and certainly Manitobans represented by the ostomates association here in Manitoba. It was felt back then, this would have been in October, that any further reassessments which would take service from people in Manitoba should stop until—and that is where the word “pause” came into popular usage or that we were putting a hold on things. Some, again, took that expression to mean that health reform and renewal was off and that we could just go back to the way we used to do things or perhaps choose the way they are doing it in other jurisdictions in this country. That was not correct either.

So I think we have satisfactorily addressed the matter for the very, very small number of ostomates in Manitoba who would have been affected by the changes in supply costs. That has been handled between the department and the ostomates association. We discontinued reassessments that took service away and offered people reassessments, a better quality reassessment. To round it out, we will offer them ultimately this appeal mechanism that they can have their disputes with the program ironed out that way.

Understandably, in individual situations, there will be people who disagree with the assessment made or their family might disagree with the assessment. We get mail from people who disagree, and that is I think understandable in matters related to our most personal and private accommodations. There are going to be disagreements, and I think that is to be expected.

Are we dealing with those differences of opinion in a sensitive and sensible manner? Well, if we were not before, we certainly will be and are now in my view.

I know that staff of the Continuing Care Program—I do not know, maybe they are getting a little bit tired of me, but I hope not. I do ask them to look at each matter that arises by way of appeal to the co-ordinators and the area supervisors, that those requests for reconsideration be handled with extreme compassion and sensitivity. I believe for the most part, other than one or two cases that

remain outstanding where there is a sort of strong difference of view between care provider and care receiver, I think for the most part we have managed to bring our Home Care program back to levels of approval on the part of recipients and their families that are more acceptable to people, and that as we move forward to the next stages, we will make it even more so.

That is my brief recitation of the history of the last year or so, as I understand it and as I recollect it from all my meetings with the various people, and department people as well.

Ms. Gray: I believe the minister has made this comment before, but just so that I am clear. He has indicated that the criteria in terms of how people are deemed to be eligible for home care, that this criteria has not changed since the guidelines were developed in the early '70s. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, I understand that in 1987 there were some adjustments to the criteria, but since then, we have been working from the same criteria. I believe in individual cases—and as I have tried to point out and will again point out, the application of guidelines or criteria are not always uniform, and uniformity is a hard thing to come by in this business at the best of times.

I think coupled with the change regarding cleaning and laundry service, it raised all manner of issues related to home care higher in the public's perception, and certainly when it came to anybody who had an axe to grind with the program or even with the government, that created or presented some opportunities for debate and discussion. I think that is what happened.

Ms. Gray: Can the minister briefly outline what those changes were in '87?

Mr. McCrae: We will check out the archives and get that information for the honourable member. It was the previous government that made those changes for better or for worse. I do not know even what those changes were. We will obtain those for the honourable member though.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, if someone requests home care, and that person is assessed, and it is decided that the only type of service that

they need in order to function in their home is some assistance with cleaning and laundry, does Home Care provide that service?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the question the honourable member puts is unlikely, but hypothetical almost in the extreme, because it is rare, I am told, that if someone could live independently except for the provision of laundry or some such thing, if without that they would have to go to a hospital, that is an unlikely scenario, I suggest. We will be able to thresh that out further when we have the services of the advisory and appeal panels as well. So there is more to it than the recitation that the honourable member put forward.

Just to go back to the previous part of the honourable member's question, currently all regions apply the February 1987 guidelines, which state that clients are eligible for service when they are unable to perform the tasks and have no family available to perform the tasks and there is no nonprofit cleaning resource in their community. Support Services to Seniors operates in, not a profit, but a small fee basis or in certain circumstances with Support Services to Seniors there is a minimal cost to the client involved.

* (1600)

So those guidelines are the ones that are applied, and they go back to February of 1987.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chair, I did not say the person would have to go to the hospital; the minister said that, but the minister refers to the February 7 guidelines. So is he saying then that if someone requires laundry services and some housekeeping services because they are unable to do that, that Home Care would provide this service unless there was a nonprofit organization available and/or there was family available?

Mr. McCrae: If none of those conditions exist, then the program would provide cleaning and laundry services. If there was no family to help, if there was no nonprofit cleaning resource in the community, and if they were not able to perform—lots of ifs—but the program would then provide the service.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chair, what is the criteria of no family? Can the minister tell us how that is applied? Does that mean that there is actually no living relatives available within the city of Winnipeg, or do they actually go into some detail in terms of if the family is willing and able? Can the minister elaborate on that?

Mr. McCrae: In these things, Madam Chair, there has to be room for some judgment to be made, and this is probably an area that whenever a judgment gets made, there is going to be somebody who is going to agree and somebody who may not agree.

Family connections are—I do not know what the honourable member's family is like, but I know what mine is like. I have family members whom I would like to have come and help me if I needed help, and family members who might be problematic for me to have them come and help me out.

We ask people who help in the making of the decisions to be mindful of all of those dynamics of family relationships. I believe that is built into their thinking as they make decisions.

It is not fair, I suggest, to insist that a relative who the home care recipient does not trust is brought into the home to provide services. That is a judgment that has to be made based on the circumstances that present to the person making the assessment, and to the extent that those judgments get questioned, that is where we need someone to arbitrate these matters.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I asked that question because I believe that families in Manitoba, that time availability has changed even in the last 15, 20 years. Does the department have statistics on how family patterns and how families spend their time, how that has changed in the last 10 to 15 years? I would think you would need that in order to determine what kind of supports might be reasonable from families, as opposed to what we were doing 15 years ago.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, such statistics might exist, but they would be of very little use in making an assessment in a particular case. If a home care recipient's family is available, that family is available. If they are at work, they are at

work. You do not need statistics to help you with that.

That is the problem with setting firm criteria. All kinds of people will not fit into that, and they will end up getting hurt as a result, and I am not interested in those kinds of criteria.

We need an appropriate kind of flexibility which safeguards the program for those who need it and safeguards it from those who do not need it who would take services away from those who do. That is not what we want to do. I think it is a case-specific sort of situation.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, when an individual is assessed for home care then and they do have family in the city, does the case co-ordinator on the initial assessment or on a following assessment sit down all the time with those family members to gather some of the information to help them in making a decision?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, a person's needs are assessed and during the process of that assessment, it becomes clear to the assessor not only what the needs are, but what the opportunities for accessing assistance are, as well.

I think the honourable member is still talking about family supports to some extent. If you take the hypothetical case of an elderly person who needs home care services, including someone to shovel the walk or someone to vacuum the house or whatever it happens to be, the assessor will ask, well, Mrs. Jones, do you have any family, do you have any sons or daughters who could help out? Mrs. Jones says: Well, I have a son Fred and I cannot stand the sight of him, I have not seen him for five years, or I have a son Fred who is too busy.

* (1610)

The assessor then should make a judgment based on what has been said. Obviously, the first son is not likely to be imposed on Mrs. Jones. If Fred is too busy trying to make a living and feed his own family, then that is not going to be an option either, in which case all those options—and if there is no nonprofit cleaning resource available in the community that is when the program kicks in, and that is when that judgment is made to use

the program as opposed to insisting that the family be prevailed upon in those circumstances. Families should play a role, but if it is not possible then they cannot. We have to recognize that and make sure our assessors do too.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I agree with the minister. The reason I am asking these questions is because I have thought that in the last number of years the program has been moving toward more reliance on families. I am wondering how appropriate that is in the 1990s, because I think when you look at families, granted we have high unemployment, but a lot of families we have, if there are two adults or a sole support person, that person is working, if there are teenage children oftentimes those children are working part-time jobs as well as involved with their school work.

I think when we think of what families provide anyway—it is oftentimes shopping for the elderly parent, transportation services, they spend time with their parent in social interaction, they may give assistance in terms of some of the financial issues, whether it is doing income tax, going to the bank, et cetera. I think families, by and large—and I am not saying the minister is not saying families are supportive. I think he is saying that. I think they are very supportive.

If a program such as Home Care can actually provide some of the cleaning services or a nonprofit organization and just provide some of those supports, ensuring that a meal is made, because families still assist in meal preparation in a lot of ways, I think that is what the program should be doing. I have been afraid that this program has been moving away from that in the last number of years. I could be wrong.

That is why I asked the question about family and what kind of support was expected of families and what was available, because I really believe that families now, in the 1990s, are much different in terms of how they spend their time and what they are busy doing than what they were 15 years ago. I think a program has to reflect families and changing society as opposed to trying to get society to revert back to some old standard.

Mr. McCrae: I agree with the honourable member. I think it is a statement about the way society has changed in the last 20 years, that 20 years ago, there was no home care program. Today it is a \$70-million program.

The issue then maybe becomes, have we not moved fast enough to replace that service that might have once been available, when everybody knows that the participation rate in the labour force, for example, has changed for women very drastically in the last 20 years. There are lots of daughters and daughters-in-law who are not available anymore because they are busy trying to raise enough money to look after their own homes and so on.

I agree wholeheartedly with what the honourable member said. So if there is an issue here, the issue is, have we moved fast enough? Have we replaced the services provided by families enough? I am willing to debate on that issue and say that there is another \$2.6 million going into the program this year, 93 percent in the last six years, and say that is pretty significant. The honourable member can say, well, maybe it is, but it is not significant enough, and the debate will kind of go that way.

I am open to that kind of a debate, but I think the fact that we have a program at all demonstrates that there is a recognition, that there have been changes in our society.

I understand full well that many, many families that are already—that is the nature of Manitoba. Maybe other provinces are like that too. Many, many families need the Home Care program, but they are willing to role up their sleeves for their loved ones, too. I think that this maybe is not said quite often enough. I recognize that, that there is all kinds of support provided by families, but there is only so much you can get out of a person too, given the realities of today.

So I do not think we are very far apart. It may be a question of degree, but I see what the honourable member is saying.

Ms. Gray: In regards to the other criteria the minister referred to, that of nonprofit organizations available to provide some home maintenance

services, I was looking at the list the minister provided on Support Services to Seniors and the funding.

I was not familiar with some of the organizations. The one organization in Winnipeg I was familiar with was the north end seniors group that provided services in that area of town. I think it has been taken over by the Gwen Sector organization. Can the minister tell me what are some of the key services, nonprofit services, available to people in other parts of the city; for instance the East Kildonan, North Kildonan area which is a major area, Transcona, St. Vital, St. Boniface.

I am very interested in my area, i.e. River Heights, Crescentwood, if there are people who call and request those kinds of services, or before they are even interested in home care, where would we be able to refer them to?

Mr. McCrae: The point raised by the honourable member points to the reason why we need further development of Support Services to Seniors organizations. We do not have very much developed in the city of Winnipeg compared with the list that I was reciting from last week which was almost totally rural Manitoba. That, too, leads us to another dimension of so-called last year's problems that developed.

Manitobans outside Winnipeg, the issue about the cleaning and laundry simply addressed the imbalance that existed between Winnipeg and the rest of the province where Support Services to Seniors organizations do exist and people can access cleaning and laundry services for a very small amount. That service did not exist then in Winnipeg, and the adjustments to cleaning and laundry services were felt perhaps more in the city of Winnipeg than elsewhere.

So we have resolved to continue to work very hard to try to encourage the development of more of these Support Services to Seniors organizations throughout Winnipeg. At this point, there are very few compared with the number in rural Manitoba, and I will look at the communities the member raised to see just how the people in those areas can access nonprofit assistance. We will make sure

that those people who are out there trying to assist in the proliferation of these organizations know the target areas where the greatest need is and concentrate on them first and then spread out.

* (1620)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is the minister saying then, in the north part of the city if an individual is assessed and it is determined by the case co-ordinator that all they require is some assistance with household maintenance, my understanding is they would be referred to the program which I think is through the Gwen Sexter retirement organization? The big issue with the former Minister of Health was that in order to have consistency across the city, we did not want people receiving home care in the south and east and west part of the city and not receiving that same kind of service in the north part of the city.

Is the minister telling me that to date we still do not have those nonprofit organizations established in those parts of the city, which would not surprise me, because it takes awhile to establish those kinds of organizations, but if that is the case then, are people still receiving home care in those parts of the city where in the north part of the city someone with the same needs would be referred to a nonprofit organization?

Mr. McCrae: It is because, Madam Chair, of an uneven or unequal delivery of some of these services that some of the difficulties arise. I want to put an end to that and make a more even system throughout the province so that all Manitobans can have equal access to the services that are available.

In the process, we have to step up, accelerate the process of developing the Support Services for Seniors organizations. Some communities are more willing to get on quickly with the development of such organizations than other communities. There is a speed imbalance here, but also, you have to work with the willingness of communities because these are basically community-based organizations. In some regions, we will continue to have less success than we will in other regions with the setting up of these volunteer or nonprofit agencies, but that does not

mean we must not continue to try to see a growth in these organizations.

We also want to have a range of services, to the extent that we can, and we want to make that range available to everyone so the people have choices in the same way as anything else. We feel that just because we are government does not mean everybody has to fit into the box that we carve out for them. I firmly believe that. If we are going to have a range of services, I would like it to be available as equally as I can make it available everywhere, taking into account geographical problems, population differences, and in some cases, some communities are not possessed of as many people who are able or prepared to take part in voluntary activities as might be seen in other communities.

Those are realities that we have to work around, but the job of making this program as effective and as fair as we can everywhere continues.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I appreciate the information the minister has given me, but my question still remains the same. I am referring to Winnipeg specifically because I understand and I agree with the minister that communities in rural Manitoba have always been ahead of Winnipeg in terms of providing support services for seniors, but in terms of the city of Winnipeg, if you have two individuals, as an example, who basically have similar medical needs and require a similar kind of service which is specifically some assistance with household maintenance and some laundry services in the north part of the city, they can get that type of service from a nonprofit organization.

What about the other parts of the city? Are those services available as yet, or is Home Care still providing that kind of a service?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, as I pointed out earlier, those '87 guidelines still apply. If a client is not able to access these services, if they are not able to do it, if they do not have family available to perform the task, and if there is no nonprofit cleaning resource in their community, that is when the program does provide the service, and that is not new, because there is a difference of availability of services in various areas. The

challenge is to try to get that equalized, and that takes some time.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is there any nonprofit services that function city wide, and I understand the city of Winnipeg has a Community Home Service Program. Is that considered a program that would function city wide that people would be referred to?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the nonprofit sector spreads its wings as widely as it can, but I do not know that there is a complete city-wide delivery system for nonprofit services available to everybody, so there are still gaps.

Ms. Gray: That clarifies some of my questions I have had over the past couple of months in this area.

I am wondering, in regard to case co-ordinators—and the minister refers to reassessments and the importance of assessments in every situation and that is certainly true—can the minister tell us, what is the average caseload per case co-ordinator? What is it currently, and does he happen to have a breakdown per region? I am mostly interested in the city of Winnipeg region.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, looking at the time, I do not think I can provide that before the end of the day, for tonight, but we can have that for the honourable member tomorrow.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, does the minister have a sense of whether the average caseloads have gone up or down over the last couple of years, because a couple of years ago they were running in some cases anywhere between 100 to 140 cases per person? Does the minister have the sense if those numbers have gone up or down?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, keeping in mind what I have said earlier about the peaks and the valleys in the service delivery over the past few years, it has been relatively stable in terms of there has not been a great growth in numbers of people making demands on the program, but I think that the longer we are able to keep people comfortably in their homes, the more demands we will see on the program. But that ratio the member is talking about, I do not think there has been a major shift.

* (1630)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the reassessments, where case co-ordinators regularly provide reassessments to clients—and I forget what the standard is; it used to be once every three months, but I cannot remember if there is—when someone is first brought on to the program because they have been discharged from hospital, is there a reassessment that is carried out within, say, the first month or so once that person has been home? What exactly is the standard? That is my first question. Also, with caseload numbers, even if they have stabilized, I know a number of years ago that standard was very seldom met because case co-ordinators just did not have an opportunity to get out and do that kind of work. I am wondering if the minister could comment as to if, in fact, that has been able to be done more regularly than it was a couple of years ago.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chair, initially on a hospital discharge in Winnipeg, the Victorian Order of Nurses sets up a plan that can last up to two weeks. After that, the government program takes over, and there is not anything engraved in stone that says there has to be a reassessment after a week or two months. We are encouraging a team approach whereby—and this takes me back to a visit I had with some home care attendants who made the point they would like to be heard from. You know, they have an opinion. They deal with the client on a regular basis, and so we encourage that in terms of a formal reassessment. I do not know how often those things happen; I do not think it is that structured. I think that if someone working, involved with the client sees a change in the client's condition, either for the better or for the worse, that is noted and reported, and change is made accordingly.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the minister earlier referred to how we needed to look at the home care system and perhaps learn from the private agencies in terms of some of the things that they were doing. One of the things that the minister has commented on is how clients will say, why is my worker driving from Transcona to St. James to provide service? Why are there three and four

home care attendants or home support workers in one building?

What kind of moves are there within the program to address those kinds of scheduling issues?

Mr. McCrae: I thank the honourable member for her question and her interest in perhaps putting aside philosophical views to acknowledge that maybe we can learn something from time to time that we might use to make life a little better for our clients. I think that if we are not doing a good enough job in the area of computer automation and information and we can learn from any sector, we should, and any opportunities that present in these areas we should investigate.

Block care is something that we have identified as a problem. The member referred to it in her question. If we have more than one client in a particular area or building, are we scheduling our service delivery people in a way that is efficient and that serves the clients best? Block care scheduling has been used already in various regions for some years now to provide effective scheduling of care and efficient use of direct service resources where a number of clients are situated in very close physical proximity such as elderly persons housing units or seniors' apartment complexes or in small remote communities. In the past 18 months, however, there has been a wider recognition of the potential of block care scheduling to reduce direct service costs, and that includes transportation costs as well, while maintaining or even enhancing the existing level of care provided to each client.

A number of new blocks have been identified and implemented already in 1993-94, and that happened particularly in the city of Winnipeg. More are under development for the present fiscal year, 1994-95. We are actively encouraging regions to continue this trend and to maximize the potential benefits of this type of care scheduling.

The honourable member has worked in an office in the past, does today too and so have I, and I know of ways that, thinking back on it now, we could have done things better than we did when I was an employee of the government. I think now

that we are to the point where we do not have much choice in these matters anymore, we better leave no stone unturned in our search to provide better services and to do it more efficiently. Here the honourable member did refer to the private sector. I do not know who all in the private sector we need to consult, but there is not a thing wrong with consulting them to find out how they do it, and if they do it better than we do, why do we not learn from them or use them in certain ways? That has nothing to do with Americanizing the system. It has to do with providing better service to our clients.

Presently we are using this block care system in 39 areas of the city of Winnipeg, and that involves 916 clients. In Eastman, we are using this block care concept in 10 areas and that involves 94 clients. In central Manitoba, there are four blocks and 49 clients. In Interlake, there are five blocks and 83 clients. In Norman, there are four blocks and 33 clients.

Now we have work to do in Westman, Parkland and Thompson, where we have not made any inroads yet, but we can make inroads in those regions as well as improve those numbers in the others as well because, as far as I am concerned, there is no excuse for some of the things I have heard about with respect to service delivery and patterns and the lack of co-ordination.

* (1640)

When I say no excuse, I am quite prepared to acknowledge that those people who have worked in the system have done their best. We have just not co-ordinated them well enough. If we can learn on our own or through consulting others how better to provide those services, we should do that and we will.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I do not disagree with the fact that we can learn from other agencies. I have had the opportunity to sit down with Sherry and Ron Hoppe from We Care, and it is interesting listening to some of their discussions.

One of the issues that they raised—and this has also come up with a number of people who have called me, not a lot, two or three, but it is more than one case—is that with some difficult cases, by

difficult I mean where we are providing overnight care and the individual is agitated, does not sleep and is up a lot and just is not an easy person to deal with, we seem to have a high turnover of our home care attendants. So because it is not a guaranteed service, the family has to end up putting in a private service, yet the private service seems to do a better job of providing care overnight.

Now, I do not know the training of the private people, whether they are RNs that they put in or LPNs, whereas we would be putting in home care attendants. I do not know if the minister can comment on if, in fact, that has been brought to his attention, either by individual clients and/or, well, mostly by individual clients, where in fact we do not seem to have the same success rate in providing continuous care for some of these difficult-to-manage clients.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, this question takes us into the realm of what it is that motivates us and into the realm of excellence and customer satisfaction and those kinds of things. Now profit to some is not a good word because it connotes all those things that are nasty about our society, and then, of course, if you throw in the word "American" at the same time, you can really get a good or bad reaction, if that is what you are looking for.

The fact is the honourable member may be right. I do not know until I have done a good job of evaluating cases, asking, finding ways to get the clients to tell us, now, is the service provided by a private provider better than government? A lot of people who have done it, who have not been satisfied with the level of quality that government can provide, will go to a private provider on their own and say, well, now I can get what I want because I call the shots.

When you are dealing with a private provider you can say, you do it the way I want it done or I will get somebody else to do it for me, and I will get it done the way I want it. That is putting the client first.

A private provider, who cannot play in that game, will not be in the game for very long. They will end up going out of business.

In the one case that has been raised here in the House with respect to the Seven Oaks project, that particular company, We Care, a private company, began 10 years ago with just two people. It employs 350 in Manitoba today; it employs 3,200 in Canada today. You do not grow like that unless you are making somebody happy, somebody who is willing to pay in all of those cases, except the pilot here in Manitoba, where the Seven Oaks Hospital is paying it. The clients are not paying for it; it is being paid for with public dollars.

Something has happened through the delivery of service by the We Care company to make a lot of people happy, because they do not just run one little shop out of Brandon where they began. They now run 31 franchises throughout the country and there are three more coming on stream soon, I understand. I have heard they are even planning to expand into Great Britain.

So what is it? How can we capture that kind of customer satisfaction that the private sector is able to do? Well, I have a few thoughts on the matter, and I do not know if—I mean, things have been going so well this afternoon I did not really want to stir up anything any more than I have to, but I guess I do have to say, what the honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) has said underlines the importance of our not putting on blinkers.

I am committed to a public system. I understand the nursing services part of our Home Care program are not cost-shared by the federal government, so the nursing part is something that, we are into this on our own here in Manitoba. It must be like the Pharmacare program where there is limited federal involvement. I do not say that to be critical of the federal government, although it sure would be nice if they would throw some money at us, but the point is, maybe if they threw a whole bunch of money at us we would go back to the way where everything has to be publicly done and we are at the mercy of whatever we public people can put together. We do not have that motive to satisfy. The motive to satisfy has sometimes also been called the motive to make profit. Well, if there is no satisfaction, it is guaranteed there is no profit. That is a

philosophical discussion. I am anxious again, as I say, to see the evaluation of the program.

I, too, know Sherry and Ron Hoppe, and I saw them the other day at the opening. The Deer Lodge Centre put on an international symposium at which there were some very renowned gerontologists and others in attendance. It was there that I last saw Ron and Sherry Hoppe, and we had a very brief discussion. The indication was that the pilot seems to be going okay. I said to them that I would look forward to the evaluation, and I do. If there is an option there where we can do a better job for people, and it is not going to cost us any more, then I am for it. I hope I will have the support of the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) in that.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I will look forward to getting into a further discussion of the pilot project and other differences between the private companies and our Home Care program when we go into Estimates this evening. I am going to turn it over to my colleague from Kildonan at this point.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I guess I am a little bit perplexed. I agree with the minister, things have been going relatively well. I do just have to mention that the minister has indicated to the member for Crescentwood that he will provide her with some information about the changes to the Home Care program that evoked so much controversy and, in the minister's words, propaganda last summer.

The minister might—I will just give a date for the minister's staff. On August 12, 1993, there was a series of memos that were circulated in the department that talked about the termination of the program, the approval of this new plan to effect the reduction expenditures in the Home Care Assistance plan and a whole time frame about approval to plan to the deputy minister, letter mailed to the home care recipients, informational meetings to be held, case co-ordinators making contact, resource co-ordinators holding contact, notice to the payroll officers to put in place this reduction of the Home Care Assistance plan. All of these documents are dated August 12. They are public documents, and some are dated August 11,

some are dated August 23. They lay out the plan to reduce the Home Care Assistance.

I am just providing this information to the minister who could forward it then to the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray). There is more information on file, there is a lot more information on file subsequent to 1987, that outlines the changes in the plan that occurred last summer.

* (1650)

Mr. McCrae: I appreciate the honourable member's historical perspective. I think, happily, that is exactly what it is. It is history. We are into positive changes to Home Care and other programs. We are into very positive funding mechanisms and, I think, a fairer way of providing services. So I am not going to get too much into a historical, what would you call it, post mortem of what happened a year ago. This is now, and we believe we have resolved a number of difficulties that characterized relationships last year between the honourable member and my predecessor, and the honourable member's former colleague Judy Wasylycia-Leis. A lot of information, false information, correct information—who really knew what was reliable information this time last year and last summer? So I am frankly glad that is behind us. I think we have all learned something from just a good discussion of health care issues and home care issues.

Certainly, if I go back to the mid-seventies when there was no program, we have come a long way, as the expression goes, with respect to delivery of home care services, and an appropriate time to shift from all of that reliance on acute care.

My friend and colleague from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) often talks about how important acute care is, and he is right, it is very important, but it is not to the exclusion of everything else. You have to have a good mix of all the range of health care services because not everybody is in the same kind of condition, so we have to provide better service in the community.

You know, in a way, we are coming full circle. We are going back in a sense to a time when we looked to the community for more support and assisting the community in building those supports

that used to be there to a greater extent than today. I say all this with full acknowledgement of what the honourable member for Crescentwood had to say about changing patterns of employment and family employment, two family members both in the workplace or single-parent families where the mom or the dad has to be out working and not able to give of the time they once could to the elderly, needy relatives.

Those are all things that we take into account as we design our Home Care program. I think as much reason for a Home Care program as the diminishing reliance on acute care was changing patterns in society. We needed to have better supports in our communities than families, for all our good intentions and effort were not able to provide in a way that we once were able to. It is easy—here I am agreeing with the member for Crescentwood—to say, let us go back to the way things were, but you know the way things were, the whole family was engaged in the endeavour of keeping the family afloat, keeping the family fed.

Our history in Manitoba is very agricultural in nature, and that is a proud tradition. My own personal family history is like that, and there was a time when there were not two nickels to rub together, but there was a family, there was food on the table, there was livestock in the farmyard, there was wheat and food growing on the land—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): I think the phrase was “Brother, can you spare a dime?” You talk about nickels.

Mr. McCrae: My colleague the Minister of Agriculture is not as old as some people make him out to be because he is into dimes. You see, I was thinking of the generation previous where a couple of nickels together really could go a long way. The honourable member, the Minister of Agriculture, is a lot younger man than sometimes we take him to be. It is his wisdom that makes me think that he is a little bit older; it is his very profound wisdom that makes me think that he is a little older than he really is.

It is so nice to have his sage counsel and advice from time to time on these historical issues.
[interjection]

Mr. McCrae: I got a question like that earlier from the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

So I do not know if the honourable member has anything further, but I will listen to his next question.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, we had talked about—got some details about the Home Care Equipment program, and I note on page 54 of the subappropriation they make reference to the home oxygen concentrator program as well as the ostomate program and the manual wheelchair service. Is it possible just to get a little written description of what the entry level is for each of those programs, that is the home oxygen concentrator, the ostomate program, and the wheelchair services, just for general information?

Mr. McCrae: I think I could pull that information together for the honourable member for after supper, and we can talk about that at eight if that is okay with the honourable member.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I was also going to move into another line of questioning, probably early on, with respect to personal care homes, Long Term Care. My initial question in this area would be: Do we have a breakdown as to how many individuals are now paying the maximum cost in terms of the personal care homes and the various levels of what individuals are paying in the personal care homes as a result of the new system that was put into place, I think, effective September 1 of last year?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, we have made note of the question of the honourable member, which, I think, seeks a kind of analysis of where are we now, and we will give it as much detail as we can.

I have to say, though, that when I first took office I had a good hard look at that issue because certainly some people were expressing concern, and what we needed to do was assure the public that there was an appropriate level of appeal. If you do not have that, then the sense is that you are not going to be treated fairly, and that we do have through the auspices of the Manitoba Health Board.

In my work I get the opportunity to review the minutes of the health board's deliberations on the appeals that come forward, and it makes interesting reading, but it is also instructive, because it demonstrates to me that the whole system seems to work. Those who have to pay more will not be comforted by those words, but those who have to pay more are paying more because they are deemed, after a fair hearing, that that is something that is doable or achievable and does not create undue hardship because of the safety valves that are built in.

A number of appeals have been successful, either in terms of reducing from the top level of contribution to a lower level, or from a contribution somewhere in the mid-range, all the way back down to the \$26.50, I think it is. The honourable member being from the legal profession knows that our legal system is said to work because the appeal system overturns judges from time to time and makes changes in sentences or in verdicts. That is demonstration that the system is working. Well, if that is a fair comment for the judicial system, then I suggest that it is a fair comment for this one. A large number of people are unsuccessful as well, which means that what they have complained of may, indeed, be an inconvenience or a nuisance to them, but it does seem to show that they end up paying an amount that is seen by an independent observer, the Health Board, to be fair and to be achievable.

Those things being said, I think that gives me hope that an appeal panel for the Home Care program can be useful and helpful as well, because it will not be the honourable member's word against mine then. I think that is important, because if you like the honourable member better than you like me, then you are going to believe him. And if, God forbid, you might like me better than the honourable member, then you might listen to me. So that is hardly a fair, proper way to make a judgment, based on something that makes no sense like that. So some independent tribunal is seen to be fair and, I suggest, will be fair, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, I

am leaving the chair with the understanding that we will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening in Committee of Supply.

IN SESSION

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Private Members' Business, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon Mr. Jake Hoepfner, the M.P. for Lisgar-Marquette. On behalf of all members, I would like to welcome you here this afternoon, sir.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 8—War on Drugs

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that

WHEREAS during the 1990 election campaign, Premier Gary Filmon said, "Drugs are taking an increasing toll on our youth" and that an immediate attack on the drug problem was required; and

WHEREAS at that time, the government announced that a public consultation process would be established; and

WHEREAS on December 11, 1990, the Minister of Health announced province-wide public hearings to fight a War on Drugs, with a report to be completed by February 1991; and

WHEREAS 26 hearings were held across Manitoba at significant cost to and effort by Manitobans, attracting 350 oral presentations and approximately 400 discussion papers; and

WHEREAS no War on Drugs Report was ever presented to the public; and

WHEREAS as the Minister of Health said about drugs in December 1990, "The cost, in terms of lives lost or ruined, of broken families and of damage to the youth of Manitoba, are incalculable. In addition there is the excessive pressure the

abuse of drugs places on the legal system, the strain on the health care dollar we see on a daily basis in hospital emergency rooms.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba censure the provincial government for refusing to deliver the War on Drugs Report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Premier to fulfill his election promise and table the War on Drugs Report immediately.

Motion presented.

Mr. Mackintosh: It was almost four years ago, Mr. Speaker, during the last provincial election campaign, the general election of 1990, that the Premier (Mr. Filmon), with much fanfare, made an announcement that the government was to get serious on the problem of drugs and deal with the human tragedy that comes from its use and which often leads to its use.

On August 16, 1990, the First Minister launched what he called a War on Drugs. Apparently, from the press release, it was not to be simply a war on the supply side, that is, a law enforcement approach, but it was to be also a war on the demand side, in other words, dealing with the often human tragedy that leads to drug use.

Part of the four-point platform of the War on Drugs announced by the First Minister was what he called community-based consultation. He promised at that time a public consultation process to be established in partnership with parent groups, community organizations, service groups and others involved in drug education to build on the common-sense ideas these groups have already successfully established.

Then following the election and of course the election of the majority government, on December 11, 1990, the then Health minister announced a province-wide consultation process as part of the government's War on Drugs announced by the Premier in August. He announced the appointment of the now Justice minister as well as three other members of the government caucus.

In the announcement of the province-wide hearings, the then-Health minister announced that we cannot successfully overcome the problem of addiction by simply increasing treatment capacity. There is growing recognition that addictions go beyond personal behaviour and are linked to social and economic factors such as unemployment, lack of social supports, geographic isolation and a sense of hopelessness.

The minister went on to say a new approach is needed which recognizes the role of Healthy Public Policy, the role of prevention and the importance of empowering and supporting individuals and communities at the time they are battling addiction. I think those are good words, Mr. Speaker, and I think all Manitobans and certainly members on this side of the House supported that kind of action announcement and those hearings, and I think Manitobans had their expectations certainly raised.

Then in January of 1991, the 15th, hearings began throughout Manitoba. They began in Brandon and continued to have 26 of these hearings. It is my understanding that there were approximately 350 oral presentations and about 400 papers, and as the former Minister of Health later explained, the hearings certainly went beyond the expectations of the government. As he said, the receipt of the replies exceeded everyone's expectations.

Of course, what happened—a tremendous amount of work by Manitobans and everyone who was involved in community efforts to deal with substance abuse garnered their best ideas and came out and made presentations to the hearings. The raising of expectations is notable. Then by June of 1991, the War on Drugs task force or the hearings still had not reported to Manitobans. At that time, the then-member for St. Johns asked the then-Health minister: Could the minister give us an update on his War on Drugs consultation? When can we expect a final report?

The minister said, a final report later on this summer. They are attempting to finalize the hearing presentations by the end of this month, and

they are on a very stringent time schedule, as I think my honourable friend can appreciate.

He then went on to say that they are working on it, but certainly for the next budget cycle we would have a report. That was on June 24, 1991.

Of course, we have from time to time again raised this issue in the House, again on May 31, 1993. It was my first question coming into this Chamber on election, Mr. Speaker, to ask the head of that task force on War on Drugs and the now Minister of Justice where the report was. There was of course a refusal to table the report. Where is it? Often you hear about reports being released by governments and then tabled and gathering dust. Unfortunately, this government is more efficient; they put this report right to dust. There is a question on the minds of Manitobans as to what is in this report then. Certainly, Manitobans must know what they paid for, they must know what their expectations were raised for.

I know what the Attorney General said in answer to my question on the first day of the sitting. She said this government is committed to action, and look at the action. Well, we will find out all about whatever action she is talking about, and I will deal with that a little later in my speech, but what Manitobans need is to consider what Manitobans told the government at the hearings and measure that against whatever alleged action this government has been taking. There must be a testing of the government's action against what it was told during the task force hearings.

* (1710)

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I am very suspicious. I suspect that what has happened is that the government is entirely embarrassed by what Manitobans told them. Manitobans told the government that they have to change entirely their course of action, they have to change the way they deal with people and human services in this province, and the government does not want to let that be known. They do not want to be embarrassed in that way.

Now it is interesting to note that in the document Quality Health for Manitobans - The Action Plan, which is now two years old, the government used a

lot of the same words that it was using when it struck the task force, or the War on Drugs. It said: "Manitoba will launch a major initiative to combat substance abuse in the province - an initiative that involves the educational, law enforcement, health and social services capabilities of government along with a broad coalition of at risk populations - youth, aboriginal people, women, various community groups - in a cooperative effort to curb substance abuse."

Well, that sure sounds good, Mr. Speaker. I do not know what they are talking about there. I would sure like to know whatever happened to that initiative, because if that initiative can be seen in the cut of 10 percent last year to the Main Street Project, I think Manitobans should know that. We hear often about the need, the demand for treatment workers in communities, the unmet demand, and I wonder if that was what that initiative meant.

We know of concerns out there about the antisniff bill brought in by this government. I am reminded of that problem when I see these headlines from the Winnipeg Sun, May of 1993, Anti-sniff bill fails, says Mountie.

I know of the problems in Point Douglas, Mr. Speaker, and we have some serious concerns about that bill. We would like to see the record of its enforcement and of any charges or court dispositions.

We know, we hear out there that there is a need for school programs such as the kind of program entitled the Employee Assistance Program To Deal With Abuse in Schools. We know that inpatient treatment facilities in this province have had their operations suspended on a rotating basis due to cuts by this government.

We on this side have been raising, on a continual basis, the need for a solvent abuse centre in northern Manitoba, but we have not gotten anywhere with that, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if that is part of the initiative.

What we see more than anything—and this is a sad comment on the words of the government when it talked about how we have to deal with the sense of hopelessness by Manitobans and the lack

of educational employment opportunities when we see how the government is attacking vulnerable people. That is the focus of this government's budgets and their programs.

It has to understand and put into force what it said on paper was the cause of much of the drug and substance abuse in Manitoba, a new approach to dealing with communities and individuals so that people are indeed empowered, so there are the necessary treatment programs, there are the preventative programs, there are employment and educational opportunities in this province.

You cannot do that, Mr. Speaker, by cutting support for Street Kids and Youth. You cannot do that by cutting the ACCESS education program, New Careers. You cannot do that by cutting youth corrections.

I note some interesting statistics from the City of Winnipeg police report from this year. Since 1991, when this War on Drugs allegedly took place, there has been a 374 percent increase in the total street value of drugs seized in Winnipeg. That may indicate that law enforcement activity has become more effective. It does not alone indicate what the drug use in Winnipeg is, but when you look over the years and you see the horrendous increase in the amount and the total value of drugs seized, it is cause for concern.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it certainly indicates that there is an increase in drug trafficking in the city of Winnipeg. You look at the total street value of heroin alone, between 1992 and 1993 having increased by 561 percent. Generally, there is a thinking that across Canada as a whole there has not been a rise in drug or alcohol use, but there has been, nonetheless, an increase in the use by individuals. So there has to be a new concentration on harm reduction. There are, as well, pockets of heavy use. So there must be targeted programs.

I might say to the government, if it will table this report so that we can weigh the need in Manitoba, the need for government programs, the need that must be addressed in its budgets, its throne speeches and its everyday legislative activity, the government will have support from this side if it puts in place the kind of programs that the First

Minister talked about in the 1990 election and that the former Minister of Health talked about in 1990 and 1991.

I will say in summary, Mr. Speaker, I think that the failure of this government, the refusal of this government to table the War on Drugs has to be one of the biggest fiascos that has ever taken place in this province. You can imagine all the work, all the expectations for this trumpeted War on Drugs, never presenting a report to the public. Manitobans are saying that is exactly the kind of action that puts politicians and governments in disrepute. It is a breach of an election promise, and it lets Manitobans know all about this government. It speaks volumes about this government's lack of commitment to what is a very serious social tragedy. Thank you.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the resolution put down by the honourable member for St. Johns is more noteworthy for what it does not say than for what it does say. The resolution says nothing about the triplicate prescription program. It says nothing about the Medication Information Line for the Elderly known as MILE. It says nothing about the support of Manitoba Health for the Street Station program at Mount Carmel Clinic which deals directly with injection drug users at the street level. It says nothing about the rural northern youth intervention program, that the AFM reallocated nine staff positions to work in 18 high schools in rural and northern Manitoba.

The resolution before us says nothing about the development of school policies, intervention and support programs forming a major part of the initiatives of this government. It says nothing about school curriculum. The Department of Education, the AFM and school personnel have developed a curriculum for Grades K to 12. This was piloted in 1993-94 and implemented in 1994-95 in the health curriculum across the province. The honourable member says nothing about the peer counselling program. The AFM has worked with teachers across the province to deliver peer counselling training.

The resolution says nothing about the regional workshops which were held, the trained 62 teachers and community representatives, says nothing about the community alcohol self-assessment booklet. That is a partnership of the AFM and the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission and the Association of Canadian Distillers. They have developed a self-assessment booklet for Manitobans. The booklet will be promoted through a flyer included in the June 1994 Manitoba Telephone System billings. Approximately 480,000 mailers will be sent out, Mr. Speaker.

So because the honourable member's resolution says so precious little, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that Resolution 8 be amended by deleting all words following the first WHEREAS and replacing them with the following:

WHEREAS Manitoba Education and Training continually reviews new drug education programs and drug education continues as a unit of the health education curriculum;

WHEREAS the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba works with education in development of drug awareness curriculum and prevention programs;

WHEREAS the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba continues to make progress with interdepartmental initiatives with the departments of Justice, Family Services and Health;

WHEREAS the government has made a commitment to the Drug Program Information Network which will immediately assist in the identification of drug misuse and drug abuse;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the provincial government in its efforts to combat drug abuse and misuse in Manitoba.

* (1720)

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member's amendment is in order.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to join this debate partly because of comments made by the former Minister of Health from his seat about arrogance. Certainly the former Minister of Health knows of where he speaks. He would be, by some people's account, an expert on the question of arrogance.

I want to just quote for the Minister of Health information, I guess. Part of the preamble to this particular resolution, which says: WHEREAS on December 11, 1990, the Minister of Health announced province-wide public hearings to fight a War on Drugs, with a report to be complete by February 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize why the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) would be a little sensitive about the resolution introduced by my colleague from St. Johns. This is an area where the Minister of Health spent some time, certainly made a number of public pronouncements about the government's intentions when it comes to the question of drugs and their impact on society.

The minister again in 1990 spoke quite eloquently about the cost of drugs to our society, particularly referencing the cost of drug use on young people, on young families and on our students across the province, but it is very instructive to look at the government's records once again on issues like the War on Drugs compared to their record. It is difficult sometimes to mesh those two particular aspects of the process, the words on the part of the government with its actions.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Minister of Health, who just spoke, can identify a number of activities in the main generated by agencies not directly related to the government, many of them related to nonprofit agencies, which in and of themselves are commendable. Unlike the Minister of Health, what we are talking about here is integrity.

Mr. Speaker, the government indicated in 1990 it was going to do something, and it did not do anything. In fact, it did not do anything at all. Of course, we have not yet seen, some three years later, the War on Drugs Report, which the Minister

of Health promised. He is getting exercised, and I can understand that, because it is one of a long list of promises that we have heard from this member when he was Minister of Health which have never come to fruition.

But I am not going to be sidetracked in any more derogatory or impugning kinds of comments directed towards the former Minister of Health. This is a very important resolution. I think that one of the things that have been highlighted by the member for St. Johns' (Mr. Mackintosh) resolution is the fact that this was a rather extensive public review of the issue of drug use in Manitoba, that literally dozens and dozens of people made thoughtful, considered, well-researched presentations to this committee, expecting I think in all conscience that something would come of all of this information.

For the Minister of Health and for the government to continually talk about consultation, for the government to continually say that we want input from the user groups and those affected by the making of government policy and then to have those reports, that review sit on the shelf and collect dust is what leads to cynicism generally about government action.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly understand that the next time a government, and it certainly will not be this government, because they will not be here that long, but the next government, and I expect perhaps the member for St. Johns may in fact be in that very next government, when a government some time from now announces that it intends to study this issue, we will all have lost a little credibility because the Minister of Health did not keep his word that he committed to the public in 1990.

Mr. Speaker, that in itself is lamentable, but I want to talk for a minute about the whole question of the impact of drug use in Manitoba and, perhaps more particularly, in northern Manitoba. Some few months ago, I introduced an amendment to The Manitoba Liquor Control Act which would have required applying warning labels on all liquor bottles in the province of Manitoba.

Certainly one of the drugs which continues, to quote the minister, to ruin lives in Manitoba, is alcohol. Certainly in many of the communities that I represent alcoholism is having an impact on individuals, and alcohol is having an impact on the children and the unborn children of individuals throughout the constituency.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, fetal alcohol syndrome or fetal alcohol effect is a devastating, debilitating, costly affliction that we can do something about. I regret that the War on Drugs Report and the recommendations contained in that report have not been tabled in this House, and there is no public record of what those recommendations actually were. Certainly there is little evidence that the government is moving on any of the recommendations which are likely to be contained in the report. The government has had many, many opportunities to act in a direct way on recommendations that have come, by and large, from members of the New Democratic Party.

I think back to recommendations that came from the former member for St. Johns on the control of substances that were being abused, another form of drug-induced problems into our communities. The Minister of Health and the Minister of Justice of the day had an opportunity to act swiftly and decisively to make sure that some of those products were controlled in a more direct way.

* (1730)

Mr. Acting Speaker, there have been moves. There has been some progress, but it is just another area where the government could have shown good faith in terms of the War on Drugs generally and chose not to in many situations.

The problems that are being created daily by drug use across the province are costing the province, every department, literally millions and millions of dollars. The Department of Family Services, the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, all of those departments are bearing the cost of a lack of action on this so-called War on Drugs. There is much to be done.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the final resolve of this resolution asks "that this Assembly urge the

Premier to fulfill his election promise and table the War on Drugs Report immediately.”

One would think that, given the length of time that this report has been in the hands of government, simply asking the government to table the report would be a simple first step. You would like to think that the fact that the government has had its hands on, has been in possession of this report supposedly, if it was completed in February 1991, for more than three years that you would not simply have the tabling of the report, but you would have the tabling of a set of actions that the government is prepared to take to deal with some of the problems that we face when it comes to drug use and drug abuse in our community.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the resolution asks for the very least the government can do to show some good faith in this area, and we are anxious to see that that happens.

If the government is not prepared to outline in some sort of candid way what it expects to be able to do to combat the many forms of drug abuse that exist, then perhaps it is an indication that the government is tired and perhaps should just resign rather than attempt to cling so desperately to power. Perhaps it is the time to let someone else take the reins who is prepared to act.

The member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) was accused by the Minister of Health, Mr. Acting Speaker, of being arrogant. I do not think having ideas is a display of arrogance. I think that is what the people of Manitoba expect from their elected officials. I think they expect us to come here with ideas. I think they expect us to come here with ideas that we care about and that we feel passionately about, and I think that is what we have seen by way of this resolution.

The members of the government's front bench may not all come from constituencies where drug abuse is a significant problem. The member for St. Johns comes from an area where it is a problem. The member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) comes from an area where it is a problem. In my particular area, it is a problem. The member for

Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) says it is a problem in his area.

Then, Mr. Acting Speaker, if that is the case, I would expect the new Minister of Health to be tabling the report that apparently the government has so that we can share with the government, I guess, our view on what needs to be done, what recommendations should be implemented and how they should be implemented.

If this were an isolated incident of the government establishing a task force, giving a group a mandate to do something and to present recommendations for the government and the government not acting on them, then this would be a small matter. But we know that, for example, in the Department of Health, there are literally dozens of government-sponsored reports, task force reports, task group recommendations, working group recommendations that have not seen the light of day.

Mr. Acting Speaker, you talk about a way of eliminating, you talk about a way of desensitizing people to the actions of government. This government has pretty well set a record when it comes to asking people to get involved, share their opinions, share their recommendations for solutions and then not doing anything. I certainly share some of that frustration because in my role as an MLA I have taken the opportunity, on many occasions, to share my views with government task forces, including, and I use this as an example—it is a digression. Forgive me. I made a presentation to the Northern Economic Development Commission. The Northern Economic Development Commission was in my community in Lynn Lake many years ago, and I made a presentation.

I made another presentation particularly referencing educational services back in November 1992. Again, in this case, we saw the tabling of the Northern Economic Development Commission Report, but the government has failed to act on any of the recommendations. I had anticipated, in fact, I had said to people in my constituency that the government was likely to take some of the recommendations out of the

Northern Economic Development Commission and roll them into this budget as sort of a pre-election ploy. We have certainly seen some of that pre-election material in the budget but certainly nothing of substance that came out of the Northern Economic Development Commission.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are literally hundreds and hundreds of hours, thousands of hours of time that Manitobans have contributed, specifically when it comes to the War on Drugs Report, that have really been wasted. These people, some 400 discussion papers were presented, 350 oral presentations, these Manitobans wasted their time. The government was not listening. The government was presenting this as a politically popular public relations exercise, and genuinely one can question whether they had any intention of acting on the recommendations, to following up on the recommendations.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Health is shuddering. He cannot believe that I am accusing the government of bad faith. If the Minister of Health wants me to believe that the government acted in good faith, that really the government was prepared or genuinely interested in acting to solve some of these problems, then let the minister live up to what this resolution says. Let the minister table the report of the War on Drugs. Let the minister share with the Legislature and all members of the Legislature what these people recommended, what they saw as the government's role in this particular war.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is no longer good enough for the government to stand up and use the same old, tired recycled rhetoric on drugs. They have had the opportunity. They have been the government. They should know what the problems are. They should have listened to what some people were proposing as solution. If they are not prepared to do that again, they are tired and they should step aside.

I can tell the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), who has certainly been recycled, Mr. Acting Speaker, he has the opportunity to do the right thing and table the War on Drugs Report. I certainly will support the member for St. Johns

(Mr. Mackintosh) in calling on the government to live up to its obligations.

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today and to speak on the amendment to the resolution. I congratulate the minister on putting forward a resolution that has some meaning and an amendment.

I think it is unfortunate that there are some people in this House who maybe do not appreciate the concern and the effort and the passion that this side of the House displays, and I would just like to at this time congratulate the previous Health minister for this initiative back in 1990 and 1991 when we started this War on Drugs consultative process.

I had the privilege of serving on that committee as a member, one of four members: the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), who is now the Minister of Justice, my colleague the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) and the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinsson).

* (1740)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think that the members across the way, they talk about the expense that this committee and this government took in initiating these hearings and the amount of work that was done at the expense of the taxpayer. Well, I can assure you that this committee did everything else but incur a lot of expense.

I think that there were a lot of things that we did achieve. One of the things that was the important aspect of this committee was to go out to hear from the people in Manitoba, and that we certainly did. One of the things that was really prevalent from talking and listening to these people was the responsibility of drug, alcohol and substance abuse. It is not something that we found in listening to the people that they suggested that government should be taking the lead and doing all things for all people. Quite the contrary. The message that was coming from these people was one of suggestion that the communities themselves should take the responsibility.

I guess you can compare the analogy of the alcoholic. If the alcoholic does not wish to respond to treatment—we have heard this time and time again—the alcoholic is the one and only person who can help himself.

It is no different when you are dealing with communities. It is no different when you are dealing with individuals. It is no different when you are dealing with organizations. If those people do not want to take responsibility for that problem, then that thing is not going to be solved. Certainly government throwing money into a situation, which the members opposite would have us do in terms of government, is not the answer. As a matter of fact, it weakens the responsibility of the individuals who are going to be able to take that responsibility for themselves.

Certainly the scope and the responsibility of this committee was to identify the scope and the nature of the problem. We certainly did recognize that there was a problem out there with drugs, alcohol and substance abuse. It did not matter what community—they talk about the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) or the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) or the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes). It is no different. You can go into Tuxedo or any other constituency, the members for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) or Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), they all have their own problems. In order for them to deal with that particular problem the communities themselves have to be able to deal with them.

I think that was one of the things that this consulting did, it brought some awareness to the community that otherwise was not there. I think that the opportunity—it was self-assessment of the individuals in that community that enabled them to understand how they would maybe have to be able to deal with that, and it brought the community together.

I think there are several things that have to happen when you are dealing with a situation like this. One of the first things is to identify the fact that you have a problem. It is just like the alcoholic if he does not accept the fact that he has a problem, or he does not realize that he has a problem. He has

to identify that first off before he can actually seek treatment. Once he accepts the fact that he has the problem and wants to do something about it, then the process will work and it will have some impact on that individual. Otherwise, if he does not do that, then you are not going to achieve anything.

Certainly throwing more money into it is not going to solve anything. I think that is what the opposition members are suggesting when they bring in this resolution. Or a report—really what is a report going to do? I know the amount of time that was put into this certainly, and I think there was a report suggested by the end of February 1991. We had not even finished that as a committee, putting all the material together. By the time we had finished the compiling of the information, some of the initiatives that were suggested to the committee were passed on and shared with the government and the minister of the day, and initiatives were already implemented and being implemented. There are lots of things here. The honourable Minister of Health put some of the initiatives that are on the record, and there was no mention of those in the report or the resolution that was presented by the honourable member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh).

I think these certainly were worth mentioning. I think as far as the public is concerned, it is not the public that are asking or demanding this report. It is the people across the way. If they do get the report, what are they going to do? They are going to pick holes in it, and they are going to find difficulty with it and criticize the government for all the things that they did and they did not do.

I do not put a lot of emphasis on compiling a report for the opposition members, because I think we have better things to do with our time and getting on with the real things that the report is—the people in Manitoba suggested that and the real experts, and they vary. These suggestions varied from community to community. We have to allow the communities to find out what their problems are, how they are going to deal with them themselves, not what we are going to say they should do but what they can do themselves with this.

One of the interesting aspects of this whole process, the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, every time we went to a major centre I do not think there was one time that the addictions, which was—the AFM were involved; they attended every hearing. They had representation at every hearing that we had, and they had many suggestions. They made presentations. They made presentations from the different communities that they had people working in and gave to us the benefit of their knowledge and how they were most affected.

I think a lot of the things that the Addictions Foundation, which they are now called, had a lot to offer in terms of our task force was concerned—one of the things that I see, and there are many of the initiatives that had been presented and being carried out and evaluation component is part of the project of—and each community had their own evaluations and how they saw the problem and they reacted to it.

The Addictions Foundation of Manitoba reallocated nine staff positions to work in 18 high schools in rural and northern Manitoba: Thompson, The Pas, Cranberry Portage, Dauphin, Ste. Rose, Alonsa, Brandon, Portage, Carman, Morden, Beausejour, Steinbach, Gimli, Arborg and Riverton. So you can see that all areas of the province were represented. There was no particular area that had any more degree of problems when it came to alcohol or substance or drug abuse. That was very prevalent.

* (1750)

The Department of Education—another interesting aspect was through this whole process the number of departments that were impacted as a result of this consultation process was the fact that there were something like five different departments. It was not only the Health department that was impacted because of the comments or the suggestions that were made to this committee. There were something like five different departments: the Health department, the Department of Education, the Consumer and Corporate Affairs with the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, and the Justice department. I

think that the members across the way have been underestimating the work and what we were able to do with this.

In 1993, regional workshops were held in Cranberry Portage, Brandon, Gimli, Portage and Eastman. As a result of the Western Peer Helpers, the Winnipeg Peer Network was formed. I think that this is something where you have young people helping young people and serving the problem where young abusers are faced with whatever their problem might be, whether it is alcohol or cigarettes or sniff. It was the young people that were helping one another, and I think that that was one of the things that was really important. It was gratifying to see.

The Manitoba government, in co-operation with the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, published notices on the fetal alcohol syndrome, which the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) suggested that there was a very serious problem. I agree that there is a very serious problem with regard to fetal alcohol syndrome, and I think that this government reacted and got that information out with the co-operation of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, and I think that there was some impact. But we cannot bring in legislation, and that was not the suggestion that was coming to us, that is going to be imposed on people to do things that were going to cost more money in terms of administration or it is going to cost more money in terms of bringing in legislation. That is not the answer either.

One of the things that we found in terms of our committee was the importance of education. Education was high on the list in terms of what people were required to present and provide that information. I think that this government has been able to do that through the initiatives and consulting with the communities. If people were self-educated, and they found out about this and realized they had a problem, then they were going to go out and learn how to deal with it.

I see my time is up, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this resolution.

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Acting Speaker, I am now speaking to an amendment to the motion moved by the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), and it appears that the amendment has very little relevance to the original motion, and so I am going to raise some issues which I wish to put on the record.

Anyway, what I want to talk about here is where, in fact, this initiative wound up. We are very clear in a press release by the government that there was to be a report released in February of 1991. It seems to be one more indication of a useless public relations exercise created to give an illusion of concern. Compounding the tragedy that there has been no release of the report is that there has been an expectation created that the collective wisdom of Manitobans would be considered.

In saying this, I note the words of the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), who said what good is a report going to do? I think if that was the prevailing sentiment in December of 1990, then there should not have been a great foofaraw about the producing of a consultation and a report. So what we are dealing with, then, is another failed war.

It becomes apparent, in speaking specifically to the resolution, that we are dealing with a growing problem and that any initiative that has been mounted by this government, in accordance with the words of the member for Sturgeon Creek, who said that the reason there was no need for a report was that it was useless to pull all the material together because the initiatives which the report would have recommended had already been implemented.

So what we are now doing is forcing the debate from whether or not a report was necessary to the point of determining whether or not these initiatives which were mounted by the government were, in fact, successful. So if there is a way of determining whether or not there is a need for a War on Drugs or whether this government's initiatives have been successful, one of the things we might look to is the amount of street drugs that are available in our communities. This might be one measure whereby we might determine whether

there should be a War on Drugs and, similarly, we might be able to determine whether or not the war, mounted according to the member for Sturgeon Creek, has been successful.

If we look at the 1990 value of street drugs seized in 1990 when the Minister of Health led the charge, the street value of drugs seized in our city in 1990 was \$4,991,516. That amount grew by \$3 million. The street value of the drugs seized in 1991 was \$7,331,442. Carrying forward to 1992, the street value of drugs seized by Winnipeg city police in that year was \$11,342,608.

Now we come to 1993. This is the year in which we are going to determine whether, in fact, there is a need to either act on this resolution of 1990 or whether we ought to just abandon it. In 1993, the value of street drugs that were seized by the Winnipeg city police was \$27,451,860. This means that the value of street drugs in our community has increased from under \$5 million to \$27 million. I think that I can see the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) smiling because the \$27 million is the number I use in another context, but here we have it. We now have much more drug activity going on in our streets, and it is apparent that the initiatives, any initiatives, such as they were, have not had any kind of meaningful success.

I also want to pick up on some points that were made by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). He spoke of one aspect of substance abuse which concerns me greatly. This is the whole aspect of the lifelong consequence that children pay when they are born to substance-abusing parents. Children born with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effect are being identified in greater number. There is an estimate that over the lifetime of a child or of an individual born to a parent who has had a sufficient substance abuse problem that these children will cost the taxpayer \$1.25 million. Many of these children are destined to be apprehended from their parents and placed in foster homes. These are children who have neurological impairments which prevent them from controlling their behaviour and from understanding the connection between action and outcome. So we must not merely put words on

paper, but we must begin to act in such a way as to change some of these things.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I see my time is lapsing, but as I finish off, I want to quote: We cannot successfully overcome the problem of addiction by simply increasing treatment capacity. There is a growing recognition that addictions go beyond personal behaviour and are linked to social and economic factors such as employment, lack of social supports, geographic isolation and a sense of hopelessness.

A new approach is needed which recognizes the role of healthy public policy, the role of prevention and the importance of empowering and supporting individuals and communities at a time when they are battling addictions.

The member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) in his remarks says: but communities are to find out what are the problems themselves and how they are going to deal with them.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it appears that this was just one more costly and useless exercise which amounted to no benefit to the taxpayers of Manitoba. In doing so, I would support the original—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) will have seven minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 16, 1994

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