



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

37 Elizabeth II

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



VOL. XXXVII No. 25A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 1988.

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, August 29, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 20, The Water Rights Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les droits d'utilisation de l'eau.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 21, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Before proceeding to oral questions, I would like to draw all Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's gallery where we have with us this afternoon Reverend Vasyi Romaniuk, accompanied by the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, Metropolitan Wasyl.

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Foster Care Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we are now only three days away from what will be the most socially disruptive situations the foster parents and children will have experienced in the Province of Manitoba.

The Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) reassured us on Friday that negotiations were ongoing, but meantime the foster parents were subjected to one of the worst examples of manipulation that I have encountered in my years in this House, this weekend. It became obvious to us all that not only did she lack an understanding of the problems, but she lacked the ability and willingness to even look at the solutions. She chose instead to use intimidation and coercion into turning a group for which 50 years has been voicing the concerns of foster parents.

My question to the Minister of Community Services—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I invite you to consider whether the terms "intimidation" and "coercion" do not tend to impute

unworthy motives on the Honourable Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson).

I wonder if you might consider asking the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) to withdraw and to apologize.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the Honourable Member knows the rules on parliamentary words in Beauséjour. I am sure the Honourable Member would like to comply.

Mrs. Carstairs: Yes, I will comply.

I will ask the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), is it now her intention—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I will withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is it now her intention to negotiate solutions with the foster parents on an individual basis, or is she prepared to negotiate through the Foster Parents Association?

Mrs. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): For the information of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), the negotiations are still going on with the Foster Parents Association. I am meeting with them at five o'clock this afternoon. The questionnaire which she alludes to was for information.

Foster Care Telephone Survey

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My supplementary question to the same Minister.

Why did she undermine this organization through a letter and telephone campaign if it is her intention that she still intends to work with the Foster Parents Association?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): It should be quite obvious that I still intend to work with the Foster Parents Association. I am meeting with them this afternoon at five o'clock.

Mrs. Carstairs: It is not clear to this side of the House.

Will the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) state in the clearest possible terms that she believes the Foster Parents Association of Manitoba to be the legitimate voice of the foster parents of this province?

Mrs. Oleson: By the very fact that I am meeting with them at five o'clock this afternoon, have met with them on many occasions—my staff has met with them on many occasions—that should indicate clearly that they are the voice of the foster parents, and that is who I am dealing with.

Foster Care Telephone Survey

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

There is indeed to be a meeting this afternoon, which we believe that chances of success have been seriously undermined.

Will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) tell this House if he knew that the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) was conducting this survey, and did he endorse it?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): To begin with, what the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is suggesting is absolutely silly.

The fact that the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) would ensure that, firstly, she had adequate information and proper information as to the needs and concerns and attitudes of the individual foster parents, and to ensure that they had adequate information about the issues involved in the dispute, that that was undermining the Foster Parents Association is like saying that the Foster Parents Association are undermining their relationship with Government because they are talking with the Members of the Opposition. That is nonsense, and we do not accept it. This is a free country and a free world in which we can have dialogue and discussion about issues of mutual concerns between people who have the same concerns.

Our concern is for the parents and the children, and to ensure that we do not place the children in jeopardy, and we are doing everything possible to avoid a confrontation and a moratorium, unlike the Leader of the Opposition and her Party who are trying to promote it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to withdraw any imputing motives.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw anything imputing motives.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable First Minister.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs. Carstairs: A supplementary question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

If these negotiations are legitimate, then why did his Government go outside of that group that they were negotiating with, and go directly to the foster parents of this province, thereby negating the importance of their association?

Mr. Filmon: We have a very serious issue facing us. That is the potential for a moratorium on the provision

of foster care to children who need foster care in this province. We, as a Government, have an obligation to take every step possible to minimize the impact of that potential and to have in place assurance that we can deal with and cope with that situation.

Among the issues involved were to obtain knowledge as to whether or not homes would be available for the children; should the foster parents carry on with their threat for a moratorium. We have to take a responsible attitude. I regret that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is not taking a responsible attitude.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a final supplementary to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

If these negotiations, or if this surveying had really been concerned with the foster parents' needs, it would have been through consultation with the Manitoba Foster Parents Association.

Will the First Minister now remove the Community Services Minister (Mrs. Oleson) from these negotiations this afternoon and replace her with another Member of the Cabinet who has perhaps a better relationship with the Manitoba Foster Parents Association, because the Minister does not have that?

Mr. Filmon: The suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is absolutely silly. The fact of the matter is that our Government and my Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) are committed to try and find a resolution to this difficulty and this impasse. We want to ensure that we are doing everything possible to demonstrate that we care for the foster parents and the children who have to be cared for, but we are concerned about the well-being of the children and we want to treat fairly and reasonably the foster parents of Manitoba.

But first and foremost, we are being threatened with a moratorium and a withdrawal of homes to provide for care for the foster children in this province. We have to make sure that we know where there are homes available and whether or not we have alternative means available to us to ensure that the children are looked after. We are taking that responsibility seriously, and we are carrying it out as any good Government should.

* (1345)

Child Welfare Agencies Amalgamation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Like all Manitobans, I was absolutely appalled with the measures that were used that I think will hurt negotiations with the Foster Parents Association, not help it, that was revealed over the weekend.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing in the short-term existence of this Government a rather big brother attitude towards community-based groups, which I think is going to be very serious in the long run in this province, whether it is the Foster Parents Association,

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whether it is the Labour Education Centre, whether it is the community-based Wife Abuse Centre; and now we also see that the community-based Children's Aid Societies are potentially on the block.

My question to the First Minister is, in light of the revelations of the Minister this weekend, is it the Government's policy to again amalgamate the community-based child welfare agencies in the City of Winnipeg, the some 1,500 members from the community that are involved in those agencies and the some hundreds of volunteers that are involved in those agencies on the community basis?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): No, Mr. Speaker.

Social Agencies Funding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my second question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), in his capacity as Minister responsible for Treasury Board.

In light of the fact that the Main Street Project and the Anti-Poverty Association have not yet heard from this Government and this Minister on their funding and budget for this year, could the First Minister tell this House, and indeed Manitobans, whether these agencies are potentially on the block, like some other community-based organizations have fallen, or is it just in terms of the incompetence of the Government in not letting them know where they are in terms of their budget?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): No, Mr. Speaker, and I regret that the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) seems to fill all of the Question Period with imputed fears and fear mongering for agencies of this nature that are providing a good service to the people of Manitoba. They are not on the block and I am not aware of why they have not been notified of their funding; but I can assure the Member for Concordia, they are not on the block.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, would the First Minister, again in his capacity as head of Treasury Board, in light of the fact that it is some two weeks after the Budget has been tabled and months after the Government took over, instruct his Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) to immediately let these important community-based agencies know what their level of funding is so they can plan for the remainder of this fiscal year?

Mr. Filmon: The Member is well aware that those decisions are made with the approval of the Estimates. That process is ongoing and he and his Members are dealing with it, and they are spending hours and hours and hours churning through all sorts of issues such as free trade and everything else in the debate of the Estimates of the Minister of the Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). They are not getting down to the issues that include the funding for particular agencies and social service groups in this province, and those social service groups are being obviously put in a position of waiting because of the way in which his Party is choosing to deal with the Estimates. We will go through it in due course and they will be notified when those Estimates are approved by this House.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, while the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) claps, the Anti-Poverty Association and the Main Street Project were in our last Estimates.

My question to the First Minister is why has not the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) let these agencies know what their budget is? Two weeks ago he said wait until the Budget is tabled. Now these agencies have waited two weeks for the Budget to be tabled and they still do not know where they are going for this fiscal year.

Mr. Filmon: When the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) and his colleagues start acting responsibly, we will make sure that everybody knows what their funding is.

* (1350)

Day Care Workers Training

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

There are specific provincial regulations that must be met regarding standards of practice for day care workers. There is a known shortfall of around 200 trained child care workers in Manitoba that will prevent many of the day care settings from complying with the legislation. Courses in the community colleges are ready to begin next week.

What initiatives has the Minister used to address this shortfall of day care workers?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): We are very well aware of the fact that there is a shortage of qualified day care workers in this province at the present time, especially in some of the urban areas, I would say, of the province here; but I would tell the Honourable Member that the school year is going to start here in the next week when many of the registrations will be taken in and many of the people will be starting their courses.

If there is a requirement for more spaces or more programs required in the province, we will take a very careful look at it. At the present time, we are examining the entire program of day care and the way it is being offered, and it might be noteworthy for the Member that at the present time there is no correlation between the programs that are being taken at Red River or Assiniboine and programs being offered at the university, so we have to do some melding of programs and enhancement of programs.

Mrs. Yeo: School begins next week.

Can the Minister describe what criteria has been utilized to establish existing numbers of spaces available in the programs that are offered at the community colleges?

An Honourable Member: Red River.

Mrs. Yeo: Red River Community College.

Mr. Derkach: All I can say about that is that it takes a little while longer than three short months to be able

to establish a program and to implement a new program. We are going to continue the program as it was spelled out last year, and changes will be made to that program for the next year, but we cannot change everything overnight. If there are some specific concerns with people not being able to get into the program or waiting lists, I would be happy to address that with the Member.

Mrs. Yeo: I think they have been in for four short months.

Being that the rural areas are neglected, what does the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) plan to do for northern residents who are unable to enroll in a full-time child care program or access a related distance education component from Keewatin Community College?

Mr. Derkach: Again the day care program is all under review. The day care training program, as it is in this province, certainly has some inadequacies in terms of the way it has been offered in the past. We recognize that, but those changes in programming, the availability of programs across the province cannot be addressed overnight. We know that the shortages are there in terms of programming.

We also know that there are communities out there who are waiting for qualified day care workers, but you cannot address this in a short period of time. We intend to do that, Mr. Speaker, and it will take us a little bit of time to do that.

In terms of the northern residents of this province, again, if those needs are there, they have not been specified in a specific way. We know there are some people out there who require those programs and those programs will be provided as the needs exist and with Red River Community College here.

AIDS Education

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

The Department of Education last year released an AIDS curriculum to be taught in all secondary schools in this year.

Can the Minister tell this House what in-service programs are to be provided in the next few weeks for teachers who will be expected to teach this curriculum?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I will take the specifics of that question as notice, but I have to tell you that the in-servicing for the AIDS program went on last year. Many of the school divisions and staff were in-serviced with regard to the AIDS curriculum and that kind of process will be ongoing this year as well, but school is just beginning.

* (1355)

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary to the same Minister, and, of course, we are prepared to take it as notice if necessary.

Has the Minister accepted the program as written, or does he anticipate revisions and some rewriting?

Mr. Derkach: Everyone knows that there is always new information coming to the Department of Health with regard to AIDS. The program is not one that is going to be stagnant and will remain in its present form forever and a day. There will be changes made to the program as new information is received, and we want to ensure that the latest possible information is out there so that it can be provided for the students of this province.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary to the Minister of Education.

We are now only three days away from the opening of classes. Will students in Manitoba, in junior high and in senior high school, be given compulsory AIDS education during the academic year 1988-89?

Mr. Derkach: As the Member well knows, the format of the AIDS program and the number of hours that it is to be offered in this particular school year were announced last year. No changes have been made to that particular program in the way it has been outlined to date.

I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that before the prescribed number of hours of a particular program are given to a student body, we will ensure that staff are in-serviced for one thing, and we will ensure that program is available to all schools in this province. It is a very important program.

Foster Care Telephone Survey

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (St. Johns): My question is for the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson).

On Friday, we heard from the Minister of Community Services about plans to continue with negotiations, even though fairly late in terms of the prices, and about a meeting for later today. You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, how disappointed all of us were when we learned that despite that promise here in this House, the Minister had proceeded with the directive to have a telephone survey of all foster parents in the province.

Given the seriousness that situation has created, could the Minister please indicate in the House today who did the survey, how much it cost, and what the questions actually were?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): Mr. Speaker, the information is not all accumulated, so I cannot give her that answer at the moment.

Ms. Wasylcia-Leis: We are getting a little frustrated on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker: The question.

Ms. Wasylcia-Leis: I asked a very specific question that I am sure the Minister must have the information for because she gave the directive.

Could the Minister please tell us whether the department did the survey or whether she hired a private firm to do the survey, how much it cost; and if she does not have the questions before her, then could she table the questionnaire or the list of the questions before the end of today's sitting?

Mrs. Oleson: I will take the question as notice, and I would indicate to the Member that everything is not complete yet, so I cannot give her a cost.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I have asked for some very specific information that must be at the Minister's fingertips. We would like to know, all of us on this side of the House, who was directed to do the telephone survey.

Who did it? Could the Minister please give us that answer?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's question is repeating in substance a question which was previously asked and therefore out of order.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Thank you. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are being stonewalled about some very critical information.

On an additional—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

I believe the Honourable Member was recognized to ask a supplementary question. We do tend to get into speech making in Question Period quite often in this place. I think the Honourable Member should be reminded that Question Period is a time for questions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns, with a final supplementary question.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a very simple question. Who did the survey? Was it done by staff of her department?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's question is repeating in substance a question which was previously asked and, therefore, out of order.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: At the start of today's Question Period, in response to another question, the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) said that the survey was being done so that they could get some information.

Could the Minister of Community Services tell the House here and now what information she was seeking, and why she felt it was necessary to go over the heads of the Manitoba Foster Parents Association?

Mrs. Oleson: As the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) indicated, when answering questions by the other Opposition Party, the questionnaire was done so that we would have a clear picture of where we stood if the unfortunate event occurred that we have a moratorium. Our main interest in this whole thing, our main concern is that children be looked after. That is why we needed information with regard to contingency plans for a moratorium.

* (1400)

Medical Records Privacy

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is for the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

Last week in this House, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) raised some very serious concerns with respect to the agreement entered into by this province with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service on June 15 of this year. She pointed out some quite serious defects in that agreement. Recently, various interested and knowledgeable groups in this province, including three hospitals in this city, have echoed these very serious concerns.

The Attorney-General was quoted on the weekend as well, as stating that requests for medical data must get specific clearance from the Attorney-General or his Deputy.

My question is very simple. It is, simply: Where in this agreement is that protection afforded to Manitobans?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): The Honourable Member made reference to the fact that certain hospitals—he did not mention it, but I think the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties are now echoing the comments of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) from last week. It is exactly what I said was so dangerous about the questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition. The irresponsible nature of the questions has now got people—she has accomplished her goal. People are frightened, they are scared to death as to this issue. She has basically scared the daylight out of these people.

The specific question asks: What protection? I ask the Honourable Member to look at Clause 2 of the agreement which his Leader has so freely circulated throughout Manitoba, I assume. It states: "The provision of any information or assistance referred to in this memorandum are subject to all applicable laws, including The Freedom of Information Act to be proclaimed on September 30, and to such terms and conditions as may, in the opinion of the party asked to provide the same, be required or imposed by that party."

Mr. Speaker, maybe the Honourable Member would like us to go back to where we were prior to June 15. At that time, we had an informal process whereby CSIS, in order to fulfill their mandate, contacted whomever, whenever. There was no protocol as to what information could be released or from whom it could be released.

The Memorandum of Understanding now formalizes that process and sets out guidelines as to who may release or what can be released. We now have protection that we did not have before.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I am happy that the Honourable Attorney-General likes this agreement publicized. It was, I point out, the Leader of the Opposition who did publicize it. In fact, going on from the first question, Section 2 clearly does not protect the rights of Manitobans. If it is an internal directive, that is one thing. It is not in this agreement; it is not in black and white.

Further, by way of supplementary question: Is the Honourable Attorney-General aware that, in addition to the Department of Health being on the fast track of release of information to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Department of Labour, the Department of Education are also on the Schedule A? Is the Attorney-General aware that this will allow the names of those who sign union cards, those who have public education records be available to CSIS on the fast track?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is being quite offensive when he refers to fast-tracking the flow of information. In fact, he is being quite ridiculous, just as his Leader was last week.

The agreement provides Manitobans with protection they did not have before the signing of the agreement. The Honourable Member refers to labour information and education information. How many other things—he can list off every single piece of information that might be available, but the fact is the information is not available unless certain conditions are met which do not invade the privacy of Manitobans according to Section 41 of The Freedom of Information Act. If the Honourable Member could get it through his head that no requests other than requests regarding locator information shall be responded to without my office having looked into it, if he could get that through his head, he would understand and he and his Leader would stop trying to frighten the daylight out of Manitobans.

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

Mr. Edwards: I welcome that being put into this agreement. I welcome that, and I wish the Honourable Attorney-General would read The Freedom of Information Act. There is an override for Governments. There is an override. It is your piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Edwards: My final question, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ask if the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) is aware that paragraph 7 of this agreement allows an amendment to be made where the parties mutually agree. Paragraph 8 of this agreement allows the agreement to be terminated on six months' notice.

Will the Attorney-General, given the very serious defects that have been shown in this agreement by not

just the Opposition but by many of the most knowledgeable people in this community, will he go to CSIS and renegotiate this agreement to protect Manitobans?

Mr. McCrae: It is precisely, Mr. Speaker, because I am concerned about protecting the privacy of individuals in this province that I will not reopen negotiations with CSIS on this agreement. Section 7 and Section 8 require just precisely the kind of protection that we need in an agreement of this kind. The Honourable Member, like his Leader, is way off the track.

Social Assistance Special Needs Allowance

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister responsible for Economic Security in the province (Mrs. Oleson).

Last week, the Minister advised the House that she would not continue with the special payment to Social Allowance families for school supplies and clothing for their children. This was a very experimental grant but it was very useful and very productive and, I would suggest, very compassionate.

Can the Minister inform the House as to how many parents have contacted her office and her department, asking how they can buy school supplies for their children without this special grant?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Employment Services and Economic Development): Mr. Speaker, I have not got the number at my fingertips but I could provide that.

I should indicate that there was some confusion, as the Member alluded to, on why the one-time grant—he did not refer to that just now, but that is what it was. It was a one-time grant last year.

I would also indicate to the Member that we feel that doing it this way, by special memorandum to the staff and the giving of special needs grants, we are able to target the people who need it most on the social assistance rolls, and we are hoping that we can provide them with what they need.

Mr. Evans: I thank the Minister for that answer. I want to assure her that it was our intention to go and continue with this grant, and we would not have given up \$5 million for the CPR in the process either.

Can the Minister assure this House, because she referred—and I was not clear with her answer—can she assure the House that she has categorically and clearly advised her staff that families should not be denied the use of the special allowances, and that the families should not be required to use their regular food money for this purpose?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, I can assure the Member that. The directive was sent out, once more, to the department on Friday morning indicating that the people could access the special needs and not have to use their grocery money.

Mr. Evans: Will the Minister also undertake to have her department advise the 10,000 families in this province who are on Social Allowances that they are entitled to draw on some of this special needs money, and to encourage them to do so, and to ensure that this be a priority effort of her department so that the children, that all the families will know and that the children will be able to get their school supplies in time for the opening of school next week?

Mrs. Oleson: A directive was sent to the staff. The workers are to notify the people who are asking for help. It is being done. It is unfortunate there was some confusion at first, but I hope that has been rectified.

PCBs Safety and Storage Inspection

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): My question is for the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery).

Last Friday, he informed this House and this Chamber that PCBs were also located in the Weston Yards.

My question to the Minister is: As an MLA representing the riding in which the PCB inspection occurred, why was I not allowed to accompany the Minister to see this boxcar?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): I informed the Member that he was quite welcome to conduct a tour on his own.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, in fact, the Honourable Member did invite me to take it upon myself and go and visit it. I had asked him why, and he had said to me that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) would not allow any of the MLAs to accompany the Minister.

I was shocked to read in the newspaper on Saturday that the Minister requested from Mr. Norm Burke, a spokesman for CP Rail, to consolidate the two boxcars.

My question is: Which one of the two yards will the PCBs be located in?

* (1410)

Mr. Connery: Our concern for these PCBs are, as you know, very real and very sincere, and the reason we invited the press to come on the tour was to ensure that the people of Manitoba would know what was going on, and it was well reported.

Our staff and Environment Canada staff are discussing with CP Rail as to if they would consolidate and which would be the safest location, and Environment Canada people are investigating that now.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question is to the same Minister.

Does this Government have any alternatives, other than consolidating into the Weston Yards or the CP Yards in Transcona?

Mr. Connery: The Member is quite aware that there is no way of destroying the high-density PCBs anywhere

in Canada at this point. Alberta is looking at it. We are also looking for a way to get rid of these high-density PCBs because we are very concerned about their hazards to health. We are trying to find a way. The Waste Management Corporation, as the Member knows, is in place and has a budget of some \$4.5 million to look for a site, plus what other facilities we will have in place for disposing of it. It is a high priority with this Government.

PCBs Disposal

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): My question is to the Minister responsible for Environment (Mr. Connery).

Given the fact that the National Research Council is saying that they will be in a position soon to license out to industry a process for the effective treatment of PCBs, and given also the concern stated by the current high-temperature PCBs treatment plant, relative to receiving out-of-province PC contaminants, is the Minister familiar with the National Research Council's licence process and are any Manitoba firms being considered by the National Research Council as possible licensees? If so, what steps will be taken to ensure such a licensed plant here in Manitoba will be licensed under Manitoba's environmental protection law?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): I think the Honourable Member is aware that the process that is available is a very, very expensive one. The information that I have been given by our department is that it is not likely to be used because of the high cost.

Mr. Harapiak: My second supplementary is to the same Minister.

Seeing that it is not likely that there will be a firm in Manitoba that is licensed to deal with these PCBs and the only role that Manitoba will have is the PCBs will be transported through the province to a processing plant probably in Alberta, can the Minister assure this House that he does have or will have in place the necessary procedure and regulations to cover the increased movements through our province that the National Research licensing initiative will create?

Mr. Connery: I guess we are jumping the gun, because, as you know, Alberta has closed its borders to waste going into it. Before anything like that would happen, we would have to have a location. We do not know if the Waste Management Corporation in Winnipeg might do it themselves. It is possible we could be treating these in Manitoba. That decision has not been made. When the time comes, we will make the appropriate decisions.

PCBs Transport Safety

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): The Alberta Minister of Environment has said that they would process the PCBs from Quebec if they were requested to. Therefore, they would have to move the PCBs through Manitoba if they are going to deal with it, so the borders are not closed very firmly.

My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon): Will the First Minister, in his capacity as responsible for the federal-provincial relations, ensure that he will ask all federal Ministers and the provincial Ministers who are dealing with this issue that they put this issue on the table and deal with it before there are any PCBs transported through the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am quite happy to let my Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) answer the question, as he has done so well in the past. I think that -(Interjection)- I am sure that the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) enjoys reading editorials such as in the Saturday Free Press that talked about his knowledge and his contribution to environment in Manitoba.

The fact of the matter is that this issue has been around now for almost a decade. Every jurisdiction is concerned about finding a way to properly treat PCBs. Every jurisdiction is concerned about transporting them because, back in the early Eighties, we were transporting PCBs to Alberta until they closed the border, until we had the spill near Kenora that made all of us concerned about it.

Trying to inflame this issue and create concerns in the public is not going to help. The reality of the situation is that we are taking a responsible attitude here in Manitoba; that is to identify all of the sources of PCBs, all of the locations at which they are to ensure that they are properly protected in storage until we can find a way to treat them. That is what we want to do.

With respect to the situation of the potential of transporting them from other provinces through our province, we will ensure that we are made aware of everything that is being proposed so that we can protect Manitoba's interest.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

PCBs Safety and Storage

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley has time for one question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Last Friday on national radio, Mr. McMillan, the Canadian Environment Minister, stated that incomplete inventories of PCBs exist across Canada. He also said it was up to the provinces to rigorously enforce federal guidelines if populations are not to be endangered by PCB incidents.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is what is the Minister of Environment and Labour (Mr. Connery) going to do to improve the now inadequate information sharing between the federal and provincial Governments so that safety can be assured?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): I can assure the Member that safety has been assured at all times. We are working with the federal Government, with Environment Canada. As you know, we are doing an investigation of every storage site to ensure safety. We will be addressing the concern. It is a concern. If there

are PCB sites that we are not aware of, we want to make sure that we have 100 percent knowledge of all PCBs stored in Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, I would request leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks have leave? (Agreed)

The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with yourself this afternoon to welcome to the Manitoba Legislature, Reverend Romaniuk and Metropolitan Wasyly. Reverend Romaniuk, by way of introduction, was born in 1925 and first was arrested in 1944, when he was 19 years old, in the Ukraine. He was arrested for national religious activities and sentenced to 10 years.

Upon his return to the Ukraine from Siberia, he studied Theology, and in 1964 became a priest in the Ukrainian Orthodox faith. In November 1970, he wrote a letter in the defense of the Ukrainian dissident historian, Valentyn Moroz. A short time later, in January of 1972, Reverend Romaniuk was arrested and sentenced to seven years imprisonment and three years exile. From 1982, when he was released, to 1988, he was partially under house arrest and continued to serve as a priest in the Orthodox faith. He was allowed to come to Canada earlier this year, in July of 1988, and has chosen to live in Winnipeg.

During his period of imprisonment, many people spoke out on his behalf. Andrei Sakharov wrote, and I quote: "The fate of Father Romaniuk is a true reflection of the position of religious life in the Soviet Union." In October 1975, several other dissidents wrote to the West, and these included Orlov, Rodinov, Borodin and Ivanov. They wrote and advised the world that Reverend Romaniuk had requested that he be provided with a Bible during his second imprisonment. This request was refused over some period of time. Reverend Romaniuk felt so strongly about this request for a Bible that he suffered through several months of a hunger strike.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite all Members of the Manitoba Legislature to welcome Reverend Vasyl Romaniuk and his son to Manitoba, who have joined us, as well as all other Manitobans, to celebrate not only the Millennium of Christianity in the Ukraine, but also those freedoms which we all take for granted. Thank you.

* (1420)

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): I wonder if I may also be permitted to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Lakeside have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Enns: I welcome the opportunity of welcoming our visitors on this occasion. It reminds me of a similar occasion some nine years ago when a fellow dissident in the same country of origin, Mr. Valentyn Moroz, was under similar circumstances and was welcomed here in this Chamber at that time by myself as a Minister, and I had the privilege of introducing him to the then Premier.

Mr. Speaker, it is inconceivable to all of us, certainly in this Chamber, and to all of Manitobans, Canadians, that people suffer imprisonment, harassment for such basic things as a request for reading a Bible, a Talmud, Koran. We hope, and I must say this, that it is seldom, I suppose, that a leader of a totalitarian state, such as the one that Mr. Gorbachev leads, has the good wishes and the good will and the prayers of so many of the people that have the privilege of living in open and free societies, that glasnost is indeed not just another slick Madison Avenue term for "new form of propaganda," but that indeed winds of freedom and of liberty will blow across that country.

We, as a Government and as a people, correctly and constantly express our outrage at human rights violations wherever they occur, in South Africa, in Chile, in Nicaragua. Our visitors today remind us of the constant and ongoing human rights violations that had been occurring for these many decades in that part of the world that many Manitobans, indeed a significant number of the Members of this Chamber, are only one generation removed. Thank you.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): I would like to have leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for The Pas have leave? (Agreed)

The Honourable Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House would also like to welcome Reverend Romaniuk to the Legislature and to Manitoba and to Canada. We admire the fight that Reverend Romaniuk led in fighting for seeking spiritual freedom for the citizens of the Ukraine, and I am sure that the prayers of Christians right around the world, along with the petition of Pope John Paul and along with the World Council of Churches, are responsible for the fact that Reverend Romaniuk was able to be freed and be here in Canada. I am sure that the Reverend Romaniuk now has that Bible, that he was willing to risk his health for, to make sure that he was able to practice his spiritual beliefs. He undertook a hunger strike of three months, as you mentioned before, in order to fight for that spiritual freedom.

I believe it is appropriate that Reverend Romaniuk would be here on the day that we are speaking on a private member's resolution dealing with the Millennium, celebrating the Christianity in the Ukraine. We wish him a long, healthy life where he can practice his spiritual beliefs.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): I would ask leave of this house to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet have leave? (Agreed).

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, in our gallery today are many of the organizers and volunteers of Manitoba's Four "P" Festival. The festival, which begins its seventh season this week in the communities of St. George, Powerview and Pine Falls, celebrates the importance of paper, power, peas and pickerel to the economy and lifestyle of northeastern Manitoba. This year's festival, which involves hundreds of volunteers from the communities, will include a host of activities such as cultural events, sports, a market, tours of the Abitibi-Price paper mill and Manitoba Hydro's Pine Falls generating station, as well as lots of traditional French-Canadian and Native Canadian cuisine.

I believe that all Members will join with me in wishing the Four "P" Festival organizers and volunteers all of the best for this year's celebration.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

INTERIM SUPPLY

Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko: I now call this committee to order to continue consideration of the following resolution:

RESOLVED that towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenditures of the Public Service, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1989, the sum of \$2,626,074,640, being 70 percent of the total amount voted as set out in The Appropriate Act (1987), be granted out of the Consolidated Fund.

The Member for Churchill.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Again not wanting to let an opportunity go by when we have the chance to discuss what has transpired with respect to the shipping season for the Port of Churchill this year, I have a few short questions for the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger).

My first question to him is with respect to a request by the committee to meet with the Prime Minister, the Minister responsible for grains and oilseeds, Mr. Charlie

Mayer, to meet with a number of other federal Ministers in order to impress upon them the very serious concerns that we have, respecting a lack of any movement towards a shipping season out of the Port of Churchill this year, and to lobby intensively with them with regard to having some action taken that will ensure that shipping season.

I would ask the Minister, and, in doing so, acknowledge that we will have a meeting of the committee tomorrow, but ask the Minister today if he has had any response back from the federal Government with regard to his request for a meeting?

(Mr. Deputy Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer, in the Chair.)

* (1430)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Chairman, I would like to indicate at this time that as the Members of the committee are aware, we forwarded a letter of thanks to the senior Minister of the province at the federal level, the Honourable Jake Epp.

Initially, the committee had decided that we would try and get the various Ministers to come and attend the meeting. We pondered how to really effectively try and coordinate that and tried to make contact with each individual Minister. We felt that it would be maybe a long process until we finally got some response, a coordinated response, to the approach we took. We wrote a letter asking the Honourable new Minister from Manitoba, federal Minister, to see whether he would coordinate that. That letter was passed down toward the end of the week and staff has been phoning today to see whether we can have any further response. Unfortunately, I cannot indicate specifically whether we are on a "go" green light system for tomorrow or not, but I felt it was advisable that the committee would meet tomorrow and hopefully by that time I will pursue it together with my staff extensively, the fact that the request has been made. We want some indication as to when we can expect to have that kind of meeting.

Mr. Cowan: As the Minister is aware, the resolution which was passed by this House called for a delegation to meet with the federal Ministers, including the Prime Minister, if in fact our discussions as a legislative committee fail to result in immediate shipment of grain through the Port of Churchill.

The other day—late last week, actually—I forwarded to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) a list of a dozen-or-so organizations which I thought should be invited to that meeting to lobby on behalf of the Port of Churchill, along with representatives from the three Parties in this Legislature. I also copied that letter to the Liberal Members of the committee.

My question to the Minister then is: Has he sought agreement from any of those organizations with respect to their attending such an all-Party delegation lobbying effort on behalf of the Port of Churchill with the federal Government?

Mr. Albert Driedger: I have the list from the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), and I also had a list that my Director of Transportation submitted. We have not made specific contact. I suppose I should apologize to the Member for Churchill that we have not made a contact at this stage of the game, but we felt that we wanted to see whether we had a date before we got everybody involved, and possibly I will be looking at that later on today to see whether we can make initial contact indicating what we are doing and then we will see what the response is to that once we have a date. That is the uncertainty that we are trying to establish and we will try and have that established by tomorrow.

The other thing I would like to indicate that when the committee meets tomorrow, we can probably go through the list that I have, plus the list that the Member has presented, to see how large a group we really want to have meeting with the federal Ministers. I do not know whether it makes a big difference in terms of the results we will get if we have 20 or 25 people there. This is one of the reasons why I felt that the committee should maybe meet tomorrow at eleven o'clock to just pursue that and look at exactly what approach we will take. I hope to have further information and some kind of response from the federal Government by that time.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Chairperson, knowing that there are other Members who wish to speak on this issue, I will close off my remarks, but I just want to, in doing so, encourage and urge the Minister to make that preliminary contact with those groups as soon as possible.

I have had discussions with representatives of a number of those groups and indicated to them that it was my understanding that a request for their involvement in helping to support the Port of Churchill to obtain a reasonable shipping season this year would be forthcoming. They are awaiting that call, and even if the Minister just addresses his remarks from a very general sense, in order to determine if they would attend such a meeting, I think that would be helpful for the work of the committee.

I also want to note, with a great deal of regret, that here it is August 29 and we have yet to see any shipments being contemplated for the Port of Churchill this year. As each day goes by, the situation becomes more and more regrettable and so I can only, once again, use this opportunity to urge as much as possible that the Minister impress upon his federal counterparts, his colleagues in Ottawa, that this is a very serious situation, that each day they do not address the issue means that we are less likely to have any shipping season out of the Port of Churchill this year, and that is totally unacceptable, I believe, to all Members of this House, but I know, for certain, totally unacceptable to Members on this side of the House.

We need action, we need something done now. Time is passing by much too quickly at this juncture. So I would encourage him to contact those other groups to make our voice even more unified and even stronger, and to do so at his earliest opportunity. We can leave the setting of the details with those groups to a later date.

Mr. Albert Driedger: I most certainly agree very strongly with the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that time is of the essence and that we are running out of time. I have the commitment, I have been in touch with the various people, with the port manager. I have been making contact quite regularly with various people in terms of whatever more positive information is coming forward and, obviously, that is not the case.

The time element is a matter of grave concern. If something does not happen within the next couple of weeks, if we start looking at the middle of September, Mr. Chairman, and we have no commitment, and that is just a short time away, by the time we get the rolling stock going and the whole process in motion, it will take another two weeks. Then we are looking at the month of October possibly for a shipment or movement of grain through there. The elements of concern that I have, for example, is that if something does not happen in the next two weeks, then we are in a position where, to get all the rolling stock going for a short period of time, the costs are then escalated to some degree and the Wheat Board could turn around and say it is not economically feasible to do it this way.

There are many factors involved and I just wish there was something more positive that could be done at this stage of the game. I think there is genuine concern by everybody involved, and aside from doing the lobby with the federal Ministers and hoping to get some kind of assurance that if there is late shipment of grain through the Port of Churchill, that we could have some assurance of safety factors in terms of icebreakers, whatever the case may be.

A few other things. The time is so short, I do not know what is going to happen. My understanding is, from my staff that have been in touch with the Wheat Board again, is that they have been very actively pursuing the possibility of a sale which would involve movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. I still hope that something will happen, but the time element is something that is a real problem.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): My questions are to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery).

Being the Member for Selkirk, I am very concerned about pollution of the Red River. I think, from studies that have been conducted on the Red River, it is quite obvious now that Winnipeg, indeed, does pollute the Red River. Of course, this was brought to major attention this week with the incident with the gas in the sewer lines where sewage was pumped raw into the river along with the unknown substance at that time.

My question is to the Minister. I would like to know whether he feels that The Environment Act now that is in place overrides the jurisdiction of the environment for the City of Winnipeg, and does the province have precedence to set the standards and quality for sewage disposal in the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): I am informed that the Act is strong enough to do that. We are very

concerned with the Red River and the Assiniboine River. Both of these rivers running through the City of Winnipeg are what I would call filthy rivers and our staff has been working with the City of Winnipeg for some time.

The Member should know that we are not looking at a small simple resolve to the problem that we have. It is one of a major, major magnitude. We would be looking at well over \$100 million to correct the sewage problem in the City of Winnipeg.

While 2 million gallons went into the Red River—and I still defend the decision to do that, because had the gasoline got into the sewage treatment plant and then had an explosion, we could have lost the sewage treatment plant, plus some workers that are in there—so while 2 million gallons is a lot, it can only be just a small drop in the bucket had we lost the sewage treatment plant. So I think that decision was right.

There is no question that the river is badly polluted. It is not drinkable; in fact, you are not even supposed to swim in it. It is not a safe river to swim in.

So while we are addressing these, the Member needs to recognize that it is not something we can change overnight. It is something that has been there for a long time; it is going to take some time to correct. As you know, there are not storm sewers and regular sewer pipes. So when there is a big rain, the Member should recognize that often, if we have a cloudburst, the sewers fill up, they do not go through the treatment plant—it goes right into the river now. That is not a very, very good situation.

To put in storm sewers and all of the other infrastructure that it would need to correct it, we are looking at a few years and many millions of dollars to do it.

Mrs. Charles: I thank the Minister for that response and I am glad that he is aware of the pollution of the Red River.

I would like to add to some information of that, and that studies have shown that there are viruses within the Red River that are resistant to antibiotics and that they can transfer their resistance to other viruses, so we do not know what we are growing in that river. Also, the fact that according to some studies, there have been traces of the polio vaccine found in the Selkirk drinking water when it is on the river water.

So I urge urgency in this matter of finding the funds for the City of Winnipeg. Certainly, I realize the costs involved, and contrary to many reports in the election, I did not put a dollar figure on that, but that we have to work towards some goal in creating a usable river and a safe river.

* (1440)

I would ask the Minister, in lieu of this incident that has happened this week, whereas—and I understand the reason for pumping it directly into the river. I am not, in essence, disputing that decision. It was sort of the better of two evils; I understand that. But the question is with the amount that I have heard that was probably dumped of gasoline into the sewer system,

should there not be some controllable sewage disposal within the city, hopefully, that tanker trucks do not pull up to these lone sewage areas outside, or sewer disposal sites outside the city, or within the city, and just dump whatever they may in there? Can we not have some controls on that, realizing that it is difficult to do, but I would hope there is some study being done into that?

I guess my fear is that this time it was gasoline, but what if it had been something else? We are certainly discussing PCBs here. What if we had to pump those out into the river? We did not know, as I understand, at the time we pumped it out, what we were pumping into the river, and we are fortunate that, as bad as it was, it was only gasoline and that we can live and the environment can live because of that. But looking at the worse scenario, what are we going to do to hopefully present a worse scenario possibly happening in the future?

Mr. Connery: I am appreciative of the Member because we are seeing some sensible and realistic concerns being raised for once, and I appreciate the sensible comment.

We think the unmanned holes, or whatever you call them, the manholes that are there, they are unmanned. They are unstaffed and open 24 hours a day. So I agree there is a concern and our department is talking with the City of Winnipeg right now. My deputy was meeting with high officials at noon, for lunch, to discuss some of these problems. So we are on top of it. She says emergency or urgency; I agree, but realistically it is not going to happen overnight.

The Member for Wolsley (Mr. Taylor) was on City Council, part of your own team, and did nothing about these unmanned holes.—(Interjection)—Oh! He is a little sensitive today about it, because what did he do for all those times on City Council? He did not address the environment issues that were there. That is an issue that should have been addressed.

Your own Member did nothing to resolve the water problems in the Red River and with the city—just put sewage into it. So he is partly responsible for the problem we have. I hope now that he is in this provincial Legislature, he will turn and become part of the resolve to address it.

Our officials are working with the City of Winnipeg. We have got to find a lot of money. I guess we have to come up with some imaginative mind or idea to get the federal Government to do an experiment. As the Member knows, they are putting \$200 million into Halifax to clean up the sewage there and it is called “petro poop”—is what one of the Ministers calls it. I am going to try to get something out of—this is what the Minister, Mr. McMillan, calls it.

We know there is a resolve, but it is going to cost an awful lot of money. So I appreciate the Member's concerns. At any time she wants to be briefed more on it, with what our staff is doing, I would be pleased to do so.

Mrs. Charles: One final question, and I will give leave to the floor.

I just want to make an overview in that I am bringing it up here and I appreciate this discussion that we can have in this House. I welcome the Minister's first comments on that this is a nice way of discussing things, but unfortunately he had to bring politics into it and I regret that. I think cheap shots go on both sides.

I would like to ask the Minister, because, as the Member for Selkirk, having been on Town Council in the past and having been a concerned environmentalist for the river, in particular, because of the need in our district both for recreation, tourism and for the water needs, I would ask this Minister if he could bring back to the House a report on what type of testing they do of the river; what qualities they look for in these testings as to minerals, viruses or any contents that they test; how regular those testings occur; and what perhaps we can look forward to as an improvement of testing from the river?

Mr. Connery: There are three levels of testing. The federal Government does testing basically at the border. The provincial Government does their own set of testing and so does the City of Winnipeg. The exact detail of what all they are testing for and what are their findings and results, I would have to get that information from our department.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would like to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) a few questions arising out of Question Period today. I am sure he has got the information.

What will be the funding level for the Main Street Project Inc. that has been funded by the provincial Government in the Department of Community Services and as yet not been informed of their budget levels for the '88-89 fiscal year?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I cannot provide that information because I do not have it with me, and that information will be provided by the Minister during the course of her Estimates.

* (1450)

Mr. Doer: I find that, quite frankly, a disappointing answer. The purpose of this Interim Estimates is to determine the support of this House for the expending expenditures in the '88-89 Budget in terms of a prorated amount of money to deal with the various priorities of Manitobans; and to get, on one hand, an answer to a question, Mr. Chairperson, saying a couple of weeks ago that you would have to wait till the Budget was tabled, and now, two weeks later, getting an answer that you would have to wait during Estimates.

Quite frankly, it is our job as legislators, and indeed you have pointed this out in previous years, and I can even remember the words that you have used in this House. Chapter and verse, I do not have in my hand, but I know that the Member for Morris in Opposition, indeed, spoke long and hard about the responsibility of Members of this Legislature to ensure that the numbers were there absolutely before this House should be asked to pass resolutions requiring money for groups.

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So I would ask the Minister of Finance to tell this House, and indeed let the public of Manitoba know, are we voting for zero amount of dollars for this Main Street Project? Is it \$10 or is it the same level as last year, which is \$882,000, or is it an incremental increase in terms of that project, because we all know that there is merit and quality in the program it delivers.

So I would ask the Minister of Finance to undertake to provide that information to this House and I would hope he could provide it during this afternoon's discussion of this very important financial matter, consistent with his past words in this House about MLAs being accountable.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, the power of the Leader of the NDP's argument is just overpowering.

We will undertake to find out those numbers and present them as an open, honest Government should, and will. Whether it can be done today or not is somewhat in doubt at this point in time. I do not have those numbers in the back of my mind. I would imagine that the Leader of the NDP would fully understand why, and I will attempt to find them and provide them to the Member.

Mr. Doer: I would thank the Minister of Finance for that undertaking.

Mr. Chairperson, I would ask, in light of this open, honest position of the Minister of Finance—and I thank him for that—could the Minister of Finance, as a Member I would imagine of Treasury Board, please tell this House how much the survey is costing that is being conducted with the Foster Parents Association? Was it tendered, and how much will it cost the taxpayers of Manitoba in terms of its cost to us and; fourthly, what firm has been given that assignment?

I should point out to the chairman of this committee that when I was asked a similar question by, again, the Member for Morris on telephone surveys, I gave him the number, the tendering process, the criteria and the cost that same day.

Mr. Manness: All of those answers will be provided in due course by the Minister. As one understands, because of the events that took place in fast order toward the end of last week, that decisions were made very quickly, they have not, in totality, been recorded, but they will be and they will be provided. All the detail that the Member seeks will be provided in due course to the House.

The Member should realize, when he provided some of the answers with respect to the Manitoba Telephone System, it was not on the first request that he did so. He looks at me with his eyes wide open, Mr. Chairman, but that was not quite the situation as I recall. So we will provide that information. At this point in time it is nowhere in a presentable form because of the quickness in which it developed just within the last 48 hours.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Chairman, I would challenge the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to check Hansard, and he will find the first occasion I was asked to on that survey

that I did reveal the information that was requested. I should say that I had a very vigilant examination process with that former Crown corporation, for obvious reasons.

My question is a very simple question to the Minister of Finance: Was this survey conducted inside the department in terms of costs that would be contained within the department's budget already, or was it, the expenditures for the survey, was it external to the Government? I can expect the Minister would not have all the answers, but was it an inside Government department or was it contracted outside?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, let me say this about the survey. Its magnitude in size was so limited that certainly there were sufficient resources within the Department of Community Services to provide for the survey.

Mr. Doer: Does that mean that the survey was conducted by staff of the department or was it conducted by people hired on contract outside of what is considered to be employees hired pursuant to The Civil Service Act?

Mr. Manness: I cannot, in all honesty, give a full response to that question. I am not certain as to the details. I can say this, though, that it was headed by somebody outside of Government. Who did all the work? I cannot provide that information because, in all honesty, I do not know.

Mr. Doer: Is the Minister of Finance not—if it goes outside of Government, is it not required by this Government to go to Treasury Board prior to contracting out of those monies pursuant to the Treasury Board guidelines?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, I remind the Leader of the NDP that there is a grave issue at hand here that required expeditious and quick action on behalf of the Government. The No. 1 issue here, and let me recite it on behalf of the Government, was the care and to have in place contingency plans in support of foster children if required, if moratorium action. That is the No. 1 consideration, indeed the mandate of this Government, to have in place.

The dealing with the Foster Parents Association, unfortunately, but in all honestly, became secondary and is secondary to the care of the children. The care of children always was and always will remain No. 1.

No. 2, when the Member seems to be talking about a large cost of survey, that was not, in any sense, required to do a survey. So the requirement—we followed the proper accounting positions. It was outside led. To what degree it was supported by staff internally, maybe some political staff, I cannot say at this point in time, but it was done very quickly for the sake, again, of the foster children of Manitoba, and what set of circumstances we may find ourselves in in the latter portion of this week.

Mr. Doer: I assume from the answer of the Minister of Finance that it did not go to Treasury Board and

we will have to await the other answers to our questions that we raised here today.

One last question to the Minister of Finance—and I will not go into the discussion of Treasury Board and the ability of Treasury Board to walk around an item within half an hour, Mr. Chairman. We all know that goes on with urgent matters of Government, but it obviously didn't go to Treasury Board consistent with the Minister's answers.

A last question to the Minister: I asked the question about the Anti-Poverty Group and its funding today in Question Period. It is another group that is sitting on tender hooks in terms of its funding level. I think there are other Community Services groups, quite frankly, that are sitting on tender hooks. All of them were told that after the day the Budget was tabled, they would know what their funding level was. Now the rules seem to be sliding.

I would ask the Minister: Could he tell us, given the statement before by the First Minister that we would know the day the Budget was tabled, what is the funding level for the Anti-Poverty Association and can that organization please be informed so they can conduct their affairs, as we would expect to conduct our affairs, with as much information that is in the budget on the table so they know what their funding level is?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, we took the earlier question, and I forget from whom it came—it may have been the Leader—yes, it was the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer). We took those questions seriously during Question Period and I have talked to the Minister in charge. I can say this in general, and it will echo the statement and the answer given by the Premier, is that none of these organizations that have been mentioned have been put on the chopping block.

As a matter of fact, since the Budget has been passed, through the last two occasions that we have sat on Treasury Board, a number of requests for grants for the rest of the fiscal year have come forward to Treasury Board and they have all been passed in due process. So I make as a general statement this commitment: These organizations from the best of my memory have not in any way had their support reduced; and the general statement that was made earlier by the Premier, I echo again: All outside groups, to the best of my knowledge, none of them have had reductions made, other than that announced last week by the Minister in charge of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), dealing with the Committee on Wife Abuse.

* (1500)

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Chairman, I just have to clarify something the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said.

I believe he indicated that he was prepared to see that that information was brought into the House today, the grants lists for the various departments.

Mr. Manness: No, I am not undertaking to bring in the grants list today. I am undertaking to bring in

information dealing with the Main Street group and the Anti-Poverty group. Those are the specific questions.

The grants list of Government, as Members will know, is that thick, that thick and eight-and-one-half by 14-size page. I do not think it is our role today to present all that grants information. That is part of the detail that is associated with the Supplementary Estimates.—(Interjection)—No, it is not in the Supplementary Estimates in totality. I accept that, but it is there in part, and certainly is available to be discussed through the various departments of Government.

Mr. Alcock: I will endeavour then to narrow the Minister's search and requirement to bring forth information. Perhaps if he would be prepared to discuss the grants that are indicated in their rolled up form, not broken out in terms of the individual grants, but on Page 66 of the Community Services Supplementary Estimates, if we could get a sense of the grants, agency by agency on that page, I think you will find it is one page of information, not many. If he could be prepared to discuss that in this House, Members on this side would certainly appreciate it.

The second thing is on Page 55 of the same Supplement, there is a list of Grants to External Agencies that we would also like the '88-89 levels for. The two that the Leader of the third Party (Mr. Doer) referenced are in that.

While I am on my feet, and I give that for information, if I could just ask: Is the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) able to and prepared to discuss the expenditures related to Capital?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, I am not, only because if we began to do that, we would be circumventing the very purpose of the Estimates themselves. As the Members are aware, capital draws its own vote within the Estimates process and at that time is when that detail should be provided, or prior to, shortly prior to, and that there should be a full and open discourse at that time on those capital items. That is the tradition of this House; it has been this way for years and it should continue that way. The Member should realize that he and all of Members of Opposition are afforded an opportunity to even pose these questions because of the set of circumstances that we find ourselves in with respect to Interim Supply.

I could say that if this Government had not wanted to bring Interim Supply before the House before seeking the support of the House before the end of August, we probably could have taken special warrants out for another month into September. That was some of the advice that we were given by some political foes, as a matter of fact. We chose not to. We are not seeking final authority for the appropriations. As listed, we are seeking authority for 70 percent. Traditionally, Interim Supply has been used as a basis to discuss policy area through all the various departments where the details, very minute details by department, have not been provided.

I think, though, that there are some very specific requests that we will attempt to provide. The Member

for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) asks about page 66. Is that the page in the Estimates, or is that the Supplementary? - (Interjection)- That is the Supplementary. Okay.

I am only troubled in the sense that I do not know how far that is into the Estimates of the Community Services; but if it were, for instance, being dealt with tomorrow, that list I am sure would be provided whenever it is that we approach that vote in those Estimates. So I will attempt to see what we can do in that area, bearing in mind that the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) is very much in preparation for a very important meeting at five o'clock today.

Mr. Alcock: I must confess—I am a little confused. The Minister of Finance, when we discussed bringing forward Interim Supply, said that the process allowed for the asking of questions. They are asking to expend money and should be prepared to answer questions on those expenditures. And now we are told, as we have been told everytime we ask the questions, specific questions, about the expenditures of funds, to wait for some other process. I do not think that is necessary. It may seem that there is little purpose for us to stand here and do this if answers are not going to be forthcoming. I appreciate the dilemma of the Minister of Finance, that he is outlining, and perhaps I could narrow his search in terms of capital.

I am specifically concerned about the expenditures related to capital in the Department of Health and I would like some specific answers as to the breakout of the \$41 million that is referenced there, and I certainly realize he does not have it on him and I am prepared to wait until perhaps after adjournment tonight, between 8 and 10. We could discuss this then if he could prepare himself in that period of that time.

Mr. Manness: I will attempt to reach the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Never before have I seen capital expenditures come forward in Interim Supply in any department. What I suppose makes the circumstances a little bit different this year is that we have a case where the budget is so late and therefore Interim Supply is so late. But Capital Expenditures in almost every department—certainly Highways, all the way through—are always presented, provided to the Members by the Minister, either just coming into that vote or the day previous to it. Without exception, that has been the order of business in this House for basically six or seven years.

Therefore, I am going to leave it up to the Ministers to ultimately make that decision with respect to capital, in all fairness to them, and to the proper manner in which it is disclosed to Members opposite and therefore to the public of Manitoba.

Mr. Alcock: My question is to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery).

In his tour last Friday, I am wondering if the locations he visited included the Fort Rouge Yards—the CNR?

Mr. Connery: No. We just toured the Weston plant and Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Alcock: Can the Minister assure me then that there are no PCBs being stored in the Fort Rouge Yards?

Mr. Connery: There is a list being put together so we will know where all the sites are. They are pulling it out of the computer and it is a rather complex and quite lengthy document that is being put together now.

Mr. Alcock: Would the Minister be prepared to share that list with the House when it is prepared?

Mr. Connery: I am not sure what Environment Canada officials will want to do. I personally do not seem to have a concern, but we also do not want to be getting a lot of people worried for nothing. There has been a lot of fear raised in this House in the last while that people are very concerned. We are concerned about the PCBs ourselves; we are very concerned. We are trying to do whatever we can as a department to ensure that there are no accidents. But at the same time we do not want people being out there with great fear. Fear of the unknown is probably the greatest thing that they have.

Mr. Alcock: Perhaps, if the Minister would allow other Members to accompany him, we could be part of the process of quieting fears.

I would just like to ask the Minister a question about the new Environment Act and whether or not this Act makes it necessary for the City of Winnipeg to obtain permits from the department before they dump snow and other material removed from the roads into the river.

Mr. Connery: As he knows, the Act is very new, and of course our staff are working with the City of Winnipeg staff. There was nothing totally put into place before the Act came in, so there is a lot of work which has to be done over the next period of time and our department is working with it.

But I would hope that Members opposite, when they are made aware of what could be hazardous situations, like the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Driedger), knew about the rail car in Transcona on April 7 or April 8, 1987, and there was nothing brought to the department at all that there was a concern. So, Mr. Chairman, you can see the concerns.

I read with some amusement Bob Beaton's article on CJOB Friday afternoon. In case some of the Members missed it, I will not read the whole thing, but it says: "It appears there is more danger to the Manitoba environment from Opposition politicians than there is from their supposedly great discoveries and attempts to embarrass Environment Minister Ed Connery. The danger is air pollution in the form of misleading information which may be creating unnecessary fears among some people." So it is quite interesting. The information does start to come out accurately.

* (1510)

Mr. Alcock: I am sorry that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) finds this so humorous. I

do have a specific concern, though, and I would like to give the Minister time—maybe he would prefer to take this on notice—but I would like to know about the relationship between his department and the City of Winnipeg's ability to—(Interjection)—May I proceed?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Do proceed, please.

Mr. Alcock: Thank you. I would like to draw to the Minister's attention a situation that exists along the banks of the Red River in a number of locations where the City of Winnipeg currently practises in the wintertime the dumping of large quantities of snow, which is removed from the city streets, down the river bank. This creates a number of problems in that it brings together a large amount of salt and other chemicals that are then dumped on the riverbank, killing the vegetation and increasing the erosion of the banks. Past practice has been that the City of Winnipeg has gone the route of applying to the province for these permits. Now other provinces have decided to not grant them any longer.

Given the strength of the new Environment Act, I am wondering what the recommendation of the Minister will be this fall as we approach this winter season.

Mr. Connery: It is an emission and, of course, The Environment Act really deals with emissions primarily. It is a major function. That does not mean we cannot deal with other issues but it is mostly on the emissions side. The sewage going into the Red River would be more along that line rather than what is going into the sewer, but we are concerned because what goes into the sewer eventually comes out at the other end and the Town of Selkirk gets it and they are not very pleased about it, and I agree with them. We will be taking a look at this. We are concerned and it has been brought to my attention; we have discussed it. They are discussing these things with the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that answer and I appreciate the Minister looking into that.

Can he assure me then that they will not be granting permits for the city to dump the snow on riverbanks this year?

Mr. Connery: When we are prepared to make a statement to that fact, you will be the first to know.

Mr. Alcock: First to know?

Mr. Connery: Sure, I will get right to you.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery).

Last Wednesday during the explosion, one of my constituents, Mrs. Bishop, was severely injured, and she sustained first and second-degree burns to her face and upper part of the body.

I am just asking the Honourable Minister: Has he made any contact with this person and what kind of compensation will be available for this individual?

Mr. Connery: What the Member should know is that the responsibility—and of course it was the Winnipeg sewage system—so the responsibility would be to the City of Winnipeg. If there is litigation it will be to the City of Winnipeg rather than the department or the Provincial Government.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I would like to ask some questions of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger)—first of all, one dealing with the Port of Churchill. My colleague, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), raised this issue again insofar as the work of the committee is concerned. I did have another question, another aspect of Churchill that has not been discussed in any great detail, although it has been raised occasionally in the House, and that deals with the Churchill Development Board.

I believe the actions that were taken by Saskatchewan and Alberta to discontinue their sponsorship of the board sent a very negative message to Ottawa at the time this occurred and was a serious blow to our efforts—and when I say “our,” I mean all of Manitoba's efforts—to have Churchill expanded in its role insofar as the transportation, at least, of grain and potentially other commodities. I think it was a serious blow.

I would ask the Minister whether he has had any success—first of all, what efforts he has made with Saskatchewan and Alberta to have them restore that sponsorship of the Churchill Development Board in whatever form they may choose to do that?

I recognize that this question was asked of the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). He indicated that there was some preliminary discussion at the First Ministers Conference with Saskatchewan and Alberta, but those discussions did not really get anywhere because of other circumstances that intervened. I do not think that is a suitable excuse for them not getting anywhere. I think if they would have had the proper priority they would have received more attention by the First Ministers in Saskatoon at the First Ministers Conference.

I would ask whether the Minister himself has undertaken any initiatives with the other Ministers, what the results of those initiatives are, if any, and what he sees happening with regard to the Churchill Development Board?

Mr. Albert Driedger: I would like to indicate to the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that was one of the first things that I was confronted with, the lack of support that was not forthcoming from Saskatchewan and Alberta. In my discussions with the various Ministers from the other provinces, from Alberta and Saskatchewan, over the period of time they have indicated that they are very supportive of the Port of Churchill.

I think what happened is that in the Saskatchewan case—probably the Member knows, as well as I do, that I think the Government out there discontinued all third party grants and that is what this category came under. Unfortunately, through that confusion, there was no grant forthcoming two years ago. Then last year the Government of Alberta, feeling Saskatchewan was

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not supporting it, withdrew theirs. As I indicated in my discussion with the various Ministers, they seem to be supportive of the Port of Churchill Development Board.

The Member asked what I have done? Aside from those discussions, I had slated a trip to meet with Ministers in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Unfortunately, it was at the same time that the First Ministers meeting was taking place. Due to scheduling, we had to abandon that, but with the undertaking that our Premier will be raising the issue with the other two Premiers, which he has done.

I would like to indicate a much more favourable response than the Member has indicated. We have indications that there will be support forthcoming and, hopefully, we are waiting for submitted correspondence that will confirm the fact that both provinces will again be supporting the Port of Churchill Development Board because I feel they have a major role to play. I am hopeful that among maybe some other positive things, along with the negatives, we can probably be coming forward with a statement of some kind very shortly.

Mr. Plohman: I thank the Minister for that response. I just want to emphasize to the Minister that the kind of support we get from Saskatchewan and Alberta for the Port of Churchill is like parenthood. For not wanting to use a sexist term, "motherhood and apple pie," I will say, "parenthood and apple pie." I want to make sure that I cover both sexes, so parenthood will do that.

The fact is that over the last number of years, we have always seen this kind of support by these provinces in words but never in actions, and then finally, not even in limited funding. A minor grant of some \$37,000 in their efforts to reduce the deficits, as they said, certainly did not make a great difference to their overall efforts.

I want the Minister to be aware that no sooner had they indicated to the Churchill Development Board in a preliminary way that they intended to eliminate that funding in Saskatchewan, I phoned the Minister of the Day at that time, Grant Hodgins, for the Government of Saskatchewan, the Minister of Transportation there. I also wrote a letter that was faxed to the Premier and to the Minister following up from my phone conversation, telling him the impact that this would have on our efforts to expand the use of the Port of Churchill and emphasizing the dire consequences for Churchill that I felt would take place as a result of their discontinuing that funding. As a matter of fact, that was borne out. The mushrooming effect did in fact take place when Alberta simply discontinued funding because Saskatchewan had discontinued funding, that kind of an excuse.

I want the Minister to be aware that he should not be—and I do not believe he is, but I want to make the point—naïve insofar as the support of Saskatchewan and Alberta. They do not have their heart in it. Frankly they are not strongly committed. They provide lip service only and I think he should very strongly make his case. The evidence shows that they are very ambivalent towards the future of the Port of Churchill and I think we have to be very concerned and watch that very

carefully and make very strong representation, concerted representation, to reverse those decisions.

As a matter of fact, the department advised me that initially the sponsorship of the Western Transportation Advisory Council by Manitoba was tied to Alberta's support for the Port of Churchill Development Board, and that is another issue that the Minister might want to remind the Government of Alberta about, that indeed they risk Manitoba—and, of course, the Minister would have to make that decision—but they risk Manitoba, perhaps discontinuing their funding for that B.C. based organization, WESTAC, when they discontinue funding for the Port of Churchill Development Board. I think that sometimes you have to apply that kind of pressure and I think that the Minister should consider that.

I want to raise it with him and ask him whether he has been made aware of the connection between the sponsorship of WESTAC and the Port of Churchill Development Board.

I also want to ask the Minister whether he has received any indication from Saskatchewan and Alberta as to their position with regard to the Hudson Bay Route Association which has been traditionally sponsored by the three provinces as well as, of course, by many, many municipalities primarily in Saskatchewan but also in Manitoba and Alberta.

Has he received confirmation that indeed Alberta will continue to sponsor the Hudson Bay Route Association or is it indeed a fact that they have served notice that they intend to withdraw their funding after this year?

* (1520)

Mr. Albert Driedger: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to indicate to the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) that one of the things that I inherited with the ministerial position that I have is that I believe I am chairman of WESTAC and will have the privilege of acting as chairman on the 13th and 14th of September this year. I might have to go and get some advice and coaching from the previous Minister who has played a role in that as well, so when he talks of horse trading, I hope it does not have to come to that. I still feel positive that something is going to develop in terms of the Port of Churchill Development Board with the two other provinces in a very positive sense, but I will pursue that a little further.

I would like to at this time indicate to Members here that Don Fegurski is the acting chairman of the Port of Churchill Development Board at this time and I am in conversation with him almost on a daily basis to get updated as to what is happening. I think he has got the concerns of the Port of Churchill Development Board sincerely at heart as well the whole Port of Churchill because having been the manager there for a long time.

The one thing I would like to see and I would like to look at the positive aspect of it is that if the funding comes forward from the other two provinces that the Development Board, as well, may broaden their scope to include more than just the movement of grain through the Port of Churchill. That seems to have been the

concentration more, on the grain aspect of it, that we look at all other avenues.

I would like to indicate that I have instructed staff to try and synchronize with the various departments so we do not work in isolation towards all potential uses for the community and for the port, and to see whether we can synchronize some of these concerns. There are meetings scheduled in the near future where we will be looking at various aspects of things that could possibly enhance the situation for the Port of Churchill.

The one thing, Mr. Chairman, that I would like to indicate as well is that in my discussions with the federal Minister, Charlie Mayer, at one stage of the game, I indicated what I thought was a positive, not for this year necessarily, but a very positive thing for the future where he felt that as the world situation changes, especially when it comes to grain shipment, that possibly the Port of Churchill will be a very, very needed commodity within five years.

That does very little to allay our concerns for this year, but to myself, at least, it indicated that there would not be a closing of the Port of Churchill, which is one of the fears that I had in my mind when we talked of not having grain moving through there this year. So the continued commitment of the federal Government in terms of doing the best proofing in there, the conversion of steam heat to electric heat, part of the subagreements which were set since '84, these were good subagreements, not all the monies have been expended.

We will be looking at trying to get an extension for one year under the agreement so that we can tie in a few of the other things because the monies have not all been expended. I believe, Mr. Chairman, the Member can maybe correct me, but I think that the conversion from steam heat to electric in the Port of Churchill was a new development that was not under the subagreement. But one aspect of it, which is the air terminal in there, which is part of the agreement, the air terminal is something that has not been dealt with and we are trying to pursue and push at that to see whether that commitment could be met as well under the sub-agreement.

Large amounts of monies have been expended for the Port of Churchill in the various agreements and they are good agreements. I would like to see all the monies expended in that direction because I still feel positive that there is a tremendous economic spinoff for the province. I think that it is not motherhood, but parenthood and apple pie, so to speak, for our province. I think all Manitobans would want to see this thing go.

I had the privilege, Mr. Chairman, of being up there just a week ago last Sunday when the first cruise ship arrived. The Minister of Tourism (Mr. Ernst) and myself were supposed to be there at that time, welcoming the captain. We tried to land at Dauphin and, because of a thunderstorm there, we had to, after a few attempts, abort that and the Minister could not come along with me, so I had the -(Interjection)- Well, we could not land in Dauphin. So I had the privilege of being out there, meeting with the captain and the crew and doing a

few little presentations which were very well-received, and received the assurance from the captain that this is the first cruise ship that had arrived at the Port of Churchill and that this would be an ongoing thing. We hope that we can enhance that. There are many other things that we are working on that are in the earlier stages but that are positive for the Churchill area. I think that, with joint efforts, we can make some good things happen in Churchill.

We are in an awkward position by the fact that no grain is moving through the Port of Churchill, and I do not know whether it will happen this year. That is, to me, a very serious thing but I think the fact that so far nothing has developed in terms of movement through there has raised our awareness of the Port of Churchill. This has never happened in the history of the port that there has been no grain movement through there, and it is a very concerning thing for myself. I think everybody is starting to pay more attention to what the potential is in all aspects of it, so I think positive things are going to develop out of this.

Mr. Plohan: I did not want to get into a long wide-ranging debate, although it looks like that is what is happening, and I will confine my remarks to the questions that I had raised with the Minister and he got lost insofar as the answers.

One was dealing with the Hudson Bay Route Association, again which would be a very strong, negative message if it is true that Saskatchewan and Alberta, particularly Alberta, intends to pull out of their support for the Hudson Bay Route Association.

I would urge the Minister to respond, if he can, to that, and also to indicate to him, if that is the case, that he make very strong and immediate representation to Alberta that they should reverse any thought that they might have of pulling out of support for Hudson Bay Route Association.

I just want to indicate as well that I have very strong support for the work of the WESTAC. I do not indicate in my question that I thought we should pull out of sponsorship of WESTAC, but I did indicate to him that, initially, my former staff had indicated to me that there was a tie between the sponsorship of WESTAC by Manitoba and Alberta's sponsorship of the Port of Churchill Development Board.

I would indicate to the Minister, as well, that if he is exploring broadening the mandate of the Churchill Development Board, by all means, if that will give an excuse for Saskatchewan and Alberta to restore their funding, repackaging it and saying, okay, the mandate is different, now it better serves Saskatchewan's interest or Alberta's interest, fine, if that will lead to restoring the funding, that is fine with me, although there was nothing preventing them from undertaking many of those expanded initiatives previously. I will not get into the funding of the agreement. Of course, it was a good agreement and there were a lot of projects undertaken there, but I would like the Minister to address those issues please. Thank you.

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Mr. Albert Driedger: Mr. Chairman, I did not mean to ignore the Hudson Bay Route Association in my answer. I guess I did get carried away a little bit in my general observations about Churchill itself.

But I met with some of the directors of the Hudson Bay Route Association a week ago last Sunday when I was in Churchill. I was not aware that there was hesitation about further participation in there. I thought the members who I talked to were very positive. But I will assure the Member that I am going to acquaint myself, I will check to see whether there is any hesitation on participation in that direction. If there is, I will follow his advice and I will make contact. I will do everything I can to keep the Hudson Bay Route Association going. If need be, I will bring the matter back before our committee that was struck, all-Party committee, to see what course of action has been taken, if that is the case that they are hesitating. I want to assure the Member I was not trying to evade the question. I just overlooked it here. I appreciate any comments and suggestions that he can make.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Chairman, with my final question—it deals with a slightly different area in transportation that deals with the communique that was put out by the First Ministers in Saskatoon as a result of the meetings there. There was a section on transportation that dealt with, among other things, the issue of a national highways policy, a requirement that the federal Government has, I believe, in Canada to fund, in an equitable fashion across Canada, interprovincial highways. We had indicated when in Government, on many occasions, that this was required and had actually led the initiative to have this raised in terms of profile by all provinces, to have an equitable federal policy and funding mechanism for highways.

I just want to ask the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) what progress has been made, other than the fact that it was discussed and included in the communique by the First Ministers, which is a substantial step forward, I believe, a very significant step. What indication does he have that there may be some action forthcoming in the very near future for highways in Manitoba and right across this country through a national highways policy? Is it actively being developed at the present time? Can we expect some funding for Manitoba's interprovincial highways?

Mr. Albert Driedger: First of all, I want to indicate to the Member that I felt very encouraged by the fact that there was that communique sent by all Premiers at the Premiers Conference, indicating that there should be a national highways program. I am sure my predecessors, both of them, have always looked at the aspect or the possibility of getting cost sharing from the federal Government in terms of our highway system.

Incidentally, I might add that I think Canada is the only developed country that does not have a federal highways program or a national highways program. So I think that, with the encouragement that the Premiers have forwarded, there are many factors entering into this situation at the present time. I had a meeting with

TIDAC today. I have asked for their support in terms—that is a committee that advises the provincial Minister as well as the federal Minister—and I have asked them to relay that message on.

I had the occasion, when I met with the federal Minister of Transportation, Benoit Bouchard—I have had two meetings with him now; I feel I have a good relationship with him—on each occasion, I have asked him about the participation in terms of national programs. For fear of being long winded, Mr. Chairman, but I think it is important to indicate that, over the period of years, we have had sort of a knee—no, I should not call it a knee-jerk reaction, but a sporadic reaction in terms of cost sharing on some of the programs.

In the Sixties, we had the Trans-Canada Highway which was cost-shared in stages. We have had a few other ones, ad hoc, so to speak. We have had the program on the Yellowhead, which is cost-shared between the four different provinces in the West. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta each get a portion of the money, and British Columbia gets the biggest portion of it.

When we consider the fact that our Maritime Provinces have been able to garner a lot more support in that direction, when you consider that Quebec has uniquely managed to make some very beneficial arrangements for them, then I think it is very important that we get, in view of the fact that we have established national transportation routes within the various provinces now across Canada, to get uniform regulations. We have established them in Manitoba, and invariably, the routes that we have established, we will have to spend excessive money in terms of just strengthening our highway program and our structures.

I would like to indicate that we have a structure at the west end of Portage here, at the Perimeter and Portage, that my staff tells me the structure is not strong enough to carry the kind of expanded load limits that we have allowed on our national transportation routes. If somebody is interested, I can indicate, they can come to my office and I will show them which routes are designated, but in the particular case of the one at the west end of Portage, the cloverleaf over there, we have to do a detour around that because it is structurally not sound to carry those kinds of weights, and it is a scary thing.

But when we have this kind of a national onus coming down in terms of—and you know, we want to improve our transportation systems. Especially, I think it is pertinent for Manitobans to have that because we are the major transportation city in the country, so to speak, or the western provinces maybe. So I feel encouraged by the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) position. I feel encouraged by the federal Minister's position, by the support that I am trying to garner in terms of getting cost-sharing on some of the major routes that take place because the costs are phenomenal. When you consider the amount of money that it would cost—I use as an example, to finish twinning Highway 75, it would be close to 100 million—it is virtually impossible for a province like ours, with the kind of budget we have in Highways, to undertake these programs. That is one project.

When we talk of the project, the cloverleaf at the west end and Perimeter that I referred to, the cost of replacement would be \$3.5 million when you start looking at all the work that has to be done.

The north Perimeter has not been finished. I mean, there is an area there that is going to cost a phenomenal amount of money to do it now. Unfortunately, some of these things could have been a lot cheaper if they had been done earlier. But we are looking at such a wide-ranging program of projects, you know—the No. 9 to Selkirk. I could go on and on of projects that are just phenomenal in terms of costs and there has to be more money. So I will do everything I possibly can to get participation from the federal Government in terms of cost-sharing on some of these programs.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I have several questions for the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery).

By way of prefatory remarks to introduce the subject of my question, I just wish to draw his attention once again to the comment he made about my being aware of the PCB car at the North Transcona Yards a year ago. I have to say I was. I got my information from the Manitoba Environmental Council, the minutes of which are routinely passed on to his department. So I was under the impression that he, too, knew about these particular PCBs. That was the only location that I was familiar with, and when you have a situation where you do not know how to proceed, sometimes it requires an incentive from another part of the country to actually draw your attention to the situation. We find that the fire in Montreal, which created the dangers of the dioxin cloud, the pollution that way, that actually precipitated action at this point where we can now say we can do something about it.

But what we have here is a case where different regulations and different departments end up having some rules which govern their behaviour, or govern some regulations which they, in their way of thinking, are perfectly safe and perfectly correct, and probably in most cases are, but we have in this province a new environment Act and part of the reason for this Act coming into place is the fact that we no longer have a situation where environment is only emissions through smokestacks or through sewers, but rather there is also a case where the environment now has to be looked at as whether or not it can sustain the population or sustain the use to which we want to put that particular environment. We have to work with it, not against it; and in that respect, I wish to ask the Environment Minister whether or not the new Act should not be expanded a little bit in the Class 2 section which involves the modification of drainage of ditches to either drain water off fields, or off bogs, and into rivers for final discharge into lakes, whether the actual area that is impacted by these small projects should not be increased.

Right now, apparently, anything less than 50 acres becomes something that is not included as a Class 2 development and everything, unfortunately, that involves water drainage ends up becoming a case of environmental impact.

Mr. Connery: I think you will find that basically where the detail comes in is regulation. The Act gives you the

broader sense of it, but it is in the detail of the regulation where you get down to the nitty-gritty of a lot of these things.

I have read the Act, I have gone through it two or three times to familiarize myself with it, and I am comfortable with the way it is set up at the moment; but we find out as time goes by—and it is only a new Act, it has only been in place since March 31. We have not had time to see some of the pitfalls that are in it and there is no question that we are going to find, anytime you have new legislation, new regulation, it takes a little time to find out where the pitfalls are and where the problems are that people cannot live with or find it excessive or maybe not even severe enough. So it is going to take a little bit of time before we really know how it works.

* (1540)

Mr. Herold Driedger: With that in mind, the fact that the Act will grow as we find out whether or not the new uses that we put to it, or the regulations are either correct or not correct, or could be expanded, have you, in your reading of the Environment Act, done any thinking with respect to the problem of jurisdiction?

The municipalities and municipal councils have jurisdiction over certain aspects with small-scale projects and sometimes these particular projects, which they can engage in, end up conflicting with provincial—not necessarily guidelines—but regulations which, if they had had to make some sort of clearance through by the provincial guidelines, might end up in preventing them from creating a potentially dangerous situation.

Mr. Connery: Once again, I think it is too early to tell and, as you know, regulations and legislation are interpreted also. I guess it depends on who is administering it, how severe you administer regulation or legislation and how much common sense you use. Unfortunately, I have never found a piece of legislation that ever had the words “common sense” in it. Governments do not seem to function too well with that in mind.

It is too early for me to think that we need to make any changes. It has got to have a little bit of lifetime. These concerns have not been brought to me. If there are concerns, the R.M.s would be quite happy to discuss them with them. As you know, legislation does grow and build as you mentioned. This one will grow or go backwards if we find that we have done some excesses. This Act, coming into place on March 31, has created some problems with golf courses that were already started under the old Clean Environment Commission and then all of a sudden a new Act comes into place and they are being forced to go by the new Act. It has created some concerns for me and for some developer. I think we are working around those also.

Mr. Herold Driedger: On that very same thought then, I suppose this is a problem that essentially developed over the past little while with respect to a specific drainage ditch. I do not really wish to go into details because I know it crosses over the different parts of the Act and different regulations.

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We have a situation now where essentially rectification may cause subsequent problems downstream. I am thinking specifically—you probably are familiar with this because these people will have been in contact with you no doubt as well. It is the Dallas-Red Rose area, a drainage ditch which, by virtue of the fact that it has drained certain farm lands, ends up flooding the land of a particular family. This family is actually quite upset about the fact that their land is now flooded. However, if we decide to rectify this either by cleaning out the ditches to sort of allow more water to flow past, drain more quickly, we end up just having problems with discharge into, say, the Fisher River. The discharge into the Fisher River is downstream of the Peguis Reserve. When this discharge ends up moving into this river, it actually creates a ponding effect which will back up waters onto the reserve. We have had a situation several years in a row where Chief Stevenson has complained about flooding and they even had to evacuate people to Gimli because of this.

The only reason I bring this up is to emphasize the fact that we have here a small-scale project which is not supposed to cause any problem creating quite the severe environmental impact. It just might require some either corrective action or might require some corrective investigation.

Mr. Connery: Of course, what this really is saying is that we need to do better environmental impact studies before we start to proceed. All over the province, we have some of these very same concerns where a band-aid approach, just fix a little problem here and a problem there, in the long run created a much more severe problem.

You are quite familiar with the Whitemud River and the fact farmers went and sued the Government because of the water being drained down through and drowning them out. So often when we band aid, we start at the top end of the scale rather than the bottom end and working up. Obviously, the impact studies that need to be done are very in-depth ones. We have got to watch out that we are not impacting on somebody downstream. There is a whole lot of these. This is not the only one, there are quite a few. There are some major problems that have to be corrected. Our department is addressing them. If this one is brought to my attention or if they want to, I would address it with our department.

Mr. Cheema: My question is for the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

My Leader and our Party were shocked by this story on CSIS and their ability to access confidential and very personal medical records. Over the weekend, I had contact with a lot of patients and a lot of professionals and they are shocked why this decision was made. What precaution has the Minister taken to guarantee that this information is not abused?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): I appreciate what causes the Honourable Member to rise in his place and ask this question today, and I appreciate the importance of the issue and seeing to it that all the

myths with regard to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Manitoba and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, that all those myths are dispelled and that people in Manitoba are assured in the most precise terms and in the most effective possible way that under no circumstances, as a result of the agreement signed on June 15, are the medical records or any other records of Manitobans in any way under any easier scrutiny by CSIS than that scrutiny that was available prior to June 15. In fact, I would like to assure the Honourable Member that, as a result of the agreement, there is put in place a process whereby the matters of information requests are dealt with.

* (1550)

Previous to June 15, as I said earlier today, there was an informal process followed whereby CSIS could contact whomever or whenever. I resisted the temptation to use the expression "loosey-goosey" but I think, in this forum this afternoon, it is probably a proper term to use to describe the way that CSIS could access Manitoban's records. The fact is, if you read through the agreement, you will see that there is a process now in place that was not there before. The agreement provides for more control over the activities of CSIS in Manitoba, rather than less, and I would sincerely ask Honourable Members to satisfy themselves of that. I appreciate the Honourable Member is trying to do that through asking me this question. The fact is that, under our Freedom of Information Act which is coming soon, it will not allow this type of use to be put to the records of Manitobans, and it is only to provide for a reasonable protection against invasion of privacy. That is what The Freedom of Information Act does.

In addition, according to Section 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding, any other terms or conditions that the Government of Manitoba might wish to place on the access to such information, that is open to us. The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) earlier in his question today referred to Clauses 7 and 8 in the agreement. Well, let us have a look at what Clause 7 says.

It says that the Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time by mutual written arrangements between the service and the Province of Manitoba so that if I should be wrong, which I deny—I believe I am absolutely right when I suggest Manitobans are better protected—but if I should be wrong and an amendment some time down the road is required, that is possible under this agreement by mutual written arrangements. If we find that CSIS is going to be so difficult to get along with which we do not think will happen but, if that should happen, then we can rely on Clause 8, which allows for the termination of the agreement on six months' notice. I would ask the Honourable Member to assure those who have been frightened by his Leader by raising this question, to assure them that they have more protection now, and not less.

Mr. Cheema: My supplementary question again to the Honourable Minister. Would the Minister tell us what consultations were conducted, if any, with the

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professional and the patient advocates before making such an important decision, and if any information so far has been released about patients to CSIS?

Mr. McCrae: I agree with the Honourable Member that the signing of this agreement was an important thing to do. I think it is always important to move to protect and to see that people's private information concerning them is properly protected, and not made unduly readily accessible to an intelligence-gathering agency. I remind the Honourable Member the history of the agreement that was before the previous Government for some months prior to the swearing-in of the new Government. For one reason or another, the previous Government saw fit to delay the signing of this agreement, to delay protecting further the rights of Manitobans to privacy in terms of their records.

It is an interesting thing. We talk about freedom of information, making information available and yet on the other hand, through freedom of information, information is made available to Manitobans about themselves and about other things. But at the same time, The Freedom of Information Act safeguards Manitobans through Section 41, safeguards certain personal matters.

Honourable Members have concentrated on health matters, but there are various departments and agencies listed in the schedule to the agreement. I just think that, when we are moving towards providing better protection for Manitobans, it does not really do them very much favour to attempt to frighten them, in terms of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) who said that under this agreement information was freely available.

The fact is, locater information, information like where such-and-such a person is, is what is available through the designated people in the various departments. Any information required that goes beyond that type of locater information is something that—that type of request has to be channelled through my office. The point is, since the signing of the agreement as I understand it, there have been 12 requests for information, all of them strictly locater-type information. So that so far the Honourable Member need not have any concern, and it is only if he has concerns about my commitment toward the freedom of people to have their personal information kept secret, then he should be concerned.

But the fact is I am a Progressive Conservative, and Progressive Conservatives are known for their attachment to matters relating to personal rights and liberties. The Honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has been here for a long time making many, many speeches about the individual rights and freedoms of Manitobans and I have listened carefully to those speeches. I have listened carefully to the late Right Honourable John George Diefenbaker, who was a champion of individual rights and liberties. Mr. Chairman, I hope if I can play some small part to walk proudly in the shadow of those two gentlemen, I will be going a good job indeed.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have some questions for the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), and I also

have some questions for the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson).

I would like to begin by addressing some questions to the Minister of Housing. As the Minister is aware, there has been some concern in Thompson by residents of Burntwood Trailer Court over a situation that has arisen, following notice they received from the City of Thompson last December that the current site of the Burntwood Trailer Court will be terminated over the next five years and that residents of the trailer court will be required to move to a new site.

The concern of the residents—and it is a concern I have expressed both to the city and to the provincial Government—is basically the criteria on which the decision is being made, and also whether any assistance might be available to the residents, either in terms of establishing a trailer co-op which might act as one option either at the existing site or the new site, and also whether there is any other assistance that might be available to the trailer court residents, either directly or through the City of Thompson.

I expressed my concern about that. In fact I have expressed it on a number of occasions. I most recently wrote to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on June 3, 1988, and received a response on August 5, 1988, which indicated that the Ministers of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), Housing (Mr. Ducharme), and Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) had discussed this issue with the council of the City of Thompson and that, subsequently, officials from the City of Thompson met with the Minister of Housing. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) indicated at that time that he was unable to indicate what role the province might be able to play in being of assistance to the residents of Burntwood Trailer Court.

My question to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) is: What was discussed at that particular meeting and what response, if any, does the Minister have now several weeks later either for the city itself or, more particularly, for the Burntwood Trailer Court residents who were anxiously looking to the Minister and to the provincial Government to see if there is any assistance that might be available?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): First of all, to the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), I first met with the council back in—it was late May when we first heard, so did the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings) when we were up in Thompson. We did review the Thompson trailer court. As the Member is aware, it is in-ground services that are the problems of why this particular trailer court has to be moved. However, as he probably appreciates, the City of Thompson does own the trailer court. They have an agreement with an individual to handle the rental of the site. As he is probably also aware, the sites are very close together. So if you were to start redoing the water lines and the sewer lines in that particular area, you do have a problem.

* (1600)

He is also aware that there is another trailer park that has many vacancies just out of town. He is also

aware that a lot of people do not want to move from the present site. He also is aware that there can be an immediate solution right now if the City of Thompson decides that they repair under local improvement. They could do that, that is a choice. That is their trailer park. It could be done that way. We did look at whether Housing, other than their trailer package or mobile package now for loaning money to specific trailers, as you know, it was raised under our administration, just recently was raised, that we do expand the amount up to \$40,000 for the purchase to guarantee loans for trailers. We do have a lot of those trailers in the Thompson area.

The trailer site over a long period of time is a problem, a problem that the sites are not good at the present time. However, the people in the area seem to want to be talking about relocation costs to the other site or some type of relocation. They do sit right now at a very reasonable cost for their trailers.

We looked under the Housing and went through to people who maybe could benefit under different programs under Housing. There are no programs under Housing now for relocation. I think maybe one or two might have qualified. We met again recently with the Municipal Affairs and there is not anything under Municipal Affairs that would qualify. You have to remember the precedent setting that would happen if, all of a sudden, the City of Winnipeg had a trailer site that, all of a sudden, decided that they were going to move, what would happen to the costs? There must be some formula. Our Housing is looking at some way that maybe we, under the Housing, might help out. However, there is nothing at the present under the Housing or the Municipal Affairs to handle that. You would have to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings) where they are at in their stage of trying to help the people out.

You have to remember though that the key is it has become a very political type of thing in that particular area. It can be handled over the long range of a 20-year program like other people with local improvement that is done in the city water lines and sewer lines. One particular problem is you would have to move them all out. Also, the engineering report has not stipulated how long. They have just said it is not in good condition, they have suggested, in giving you the conditions that are there right now.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate the response from the Minister of the department in taking a look into the issue. I would just like to correct him. The site that is being proposed is not actually in existence as a trailer site but is part of a new development, and that would involve various costs of development. I would also like to update him on the fact that the individual had previously had an agreement with the city to develop that site and has since backed out and indicated that he wishes the city would put that up for tenders.

I am wondering if the Minister could undertake to meet with the Minister of Cooperative Development (Mr. McCrae). Just for example, one option has been discussed in the establishment of a co-op, either on the existing trailer site or the new trailer site. I am

wondering if he could further pursue what he just mentioned, which is the possibility of something, either in the Department of Housing or some other department, because the real problem there for the owners is that there are many pensioners, for example, who just cannot afford to move. There are many young families who just cannot afford to move, and they are looking for any type of assistance that is available at all. I should indicate that their position is that they do not want to move but they are hopeful that, if they do have to be moved, there is something that could bridge the expense that they are faced with. I would appreciate it if the Minister could follow up in regard to those particular concerns.

Mr. Ducharme: First of all, and I am glad the Member has remarked on it, now they are looking for replacement costs and I do not know of anything under Municipal Affairs that will do that. So that is where the problem is. Also, I can pursue the suggestion made by the Member because I can honestly say we spent a lot of time talking to these people up in the area and you are aware of that. Every time we carry on, we seem to come into some blank wall, so any suggestions, we will pursue them, and I am glad he has made that suggestion and I will pursue that with the Honourable Minister.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): I have a question for the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). Statistics Canada has shown that in the City of Winnipeg the cost of caring for a child in a family living at the poverty level is somewhere between \$2,500 a year to \$4,900 a year. That variation depends on the number of children in the household. We know that foster parents receive as little as \$2,500 a year. If then a childless couple takes a foster child into their home, we know that they are really not receiving enough dollars to even pay for the care of those children. Could the Minister perhaps tell us how she and the Government can justify giving the foster parents an increase which even at 12.5 percent is still certainly below the poverty line?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): Mr. Chairman, the whole problem of fees to foster parents has been a very vexatious one, as you can well imagine, which landed on my desk. I think the problem had been ignored to some extent for many years and, all of a sudden, I come into the office and the whole anger and the whole problem has culminated and is there on my desk and, all of a sudden, our Government had to deal with it.

I do not think that I have ever indicated that 12.5 percent was the be-all and end-all of fees for foster parents. I am looking at the report that was done by a committee between the department and foster parents and I am aware that there are discrepancies. We felt that this year we could not possibly play catch-up and this was what we could offer this year. I really wonder if it is a great idea to be this afternoon negotiating, if that is the tack the Member is going to take, when I have a meeting with these people tonight to discuss the very subject of fees.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, the Minister has indicated that this problem landed on her desk. With all due

respect to the Minister, might I suggest that the problem has been exacerbated by this particular Government. The first meeting that the Foster Parents Association had with the new Minister, the response that they got regarding their concerns regarding rates and the other issues was, in fact, "I am sorry, I cannot tell you anything, the Budget has not been tabled." Not an indication of the concern that we will be looking into these issues, but, "I cannot tell you anything, the Budget has not been tabled."

Then we proceed further on down in negotiations, if I can use that term loosely, to a letter on August 23 sent to the foster parents where the intent of the letter, as I read it and as some of the foster parents have read it, is one of trying to malign the foster parents against the Foster Parents Association.

Point No. 3, and our latest episode is a cloak-and-dagger survey conducted on the weekend where someone anonymously calls up the people, say they are representing the Manitoba Government, and will not say who they are. If the care of children are this Government's main concern, then why not be honest with the foster parents in asking questions of the survey and give the purpose and say who you are? Why this cloak and dagger?

Given these three examples of many, I am asking the Minister how can she believe that she is entering into negotiations in good faith with the Foster Parents Association when a number of these issues have occurred which, to me, do not indicate good faith at all. In fact, it exacerbated the very difficult situation that we now face.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, to begin with, her remarks about the first meeting, I might remind the Member that she was not at that meeting so what she is getting is information second hand. I was at that meeting. The Foster Parents Association asked me to meet with them, I did. They came to my office and we had quite a good meeting. I did indicate to them my recognition of the role that foster parents play in the care of children in the province. I did indicate to them at the first meeting when they asked me about their funding, which is I think the standard question—I know it is a standard question that pretty well all the groups that come to my office are concerned about their funding. I indicated to them that I could not give them a direct accurate answer at that time because we were in Budget preparations.

If the Member has ever been in Government, she would realize that is one of the constraints you are under. You cannot discuss Budget secrets before the Budget is released. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would have been somewhat upset with me if I had gone to each group and said that you are getting this funding in the Budget. In fact, I would have likely been turfed out of Cabinet; that is the sort of thing that happens. I imagine the Member remembers the incident in Ottawa a few years ago when some zealous cameraman got a glimpse of one page and the whole Budget had to be changed. That is the sort of thing that happens when Budget secrets are leaked.

But at that meeting I did indicate to them, when they asked me about the funding, that I was extremely sorry

but that I knew within that Budget we could not come to the \$20 and \$30-a-day range that they were discussing. I was able to share that much information with them but, under the constraint of Budget secrecy, I was not able to tell them exactly what they would be getting.

* (1610)

When I was able to share that information with them the day after the Budget was tabled, I asked them to a meeting and indicated to them what our position was. As the Member well knows, this has been discussed back and forth with meetings with staff, and letters back and forth from me to the association since that time. But I did attempt at the earliest possible moment to apprise them of where we would be in the state of fees and tell them what was in the Budget for their fees for this year.

I take umbrage with the statement that my letter tried to malign the foster parents against the association. That is patently untrue. The letter undertook to give them some information about what we were offering them and that was what the letter was for. As far as the survey, I think the Member does a disservice to call it a "cloak-and-dagger" survey. That is totally, totally ridiculous.

If the Member can stop playing politics with the subject long enough to think about it, I am sure she will realize that, when a Government is responsible for an area such as this or any area, they have to have information. I am faced, as the Minister, with the threat of a moratorium on child care this week . . .

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): On a point of order, I would just ask that the Minister withdraw that imputation of motive -(Interjection)- She said she was playing politics. The Member is raising a very serious point, a very serious concern about foster care in this province. I think that it is wrong for a Minister to say.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): To the same point of order, Mr. Chairman, we are very much in a political forum. We are all representatives of political Parties. We all bring various views to this Chamber and this forum for political gain for the most part.

Mr. Chairman, we are debating a very, very important issue without doubt but, for the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Alcock) to get up and say that we are imputing motives, we are not calling into question the Member for Ellice's (Ms. Gray) intentions. We are not calling into question her sincere regard for the foster children and indeed her close affinity for the Foster Parents Association. We have not and we will not do that, and I think there is no point of order.

Mr. Chairman: The Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) to the point of order?

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): No.

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Honourable Members for their advice on this. I will review Hansard and take this

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matter under advisement and report to the committee as soon as possible.- (Interjection)- I am taking that matter under advisement.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, as I was saying when the interruption began, I was saying that, as Minister responsible for this area, I need information. If we are to have a moratorium take place this week, I need to know what we are up against, whether we have parents really who are saying they are not going to take any more children or whether there are in fact some foster parents who are willing to. I need information; I am responsible. The agencies are responsible for placing these children. The agencies become responsible for them and, ultimately, the responsibility for those children rests with me. I am the Minister, and I take that responsibility very seriously. It is a great responsibility to be in charge and in care of so many children who are vulnerable in society, and I do take that responsibility very seriously.

It is interesting that, in the Question Period and right now, there do not seem to be any questions about the safety and care of the children. The questions are all centred around letters and surveys. There was no question about are you making sure that the children will be safe, which is what we are working on, to make sure that the children are safe, because that is the ultimate responsibility, the safety of the children.

An Honourable Member: You are not asking about the children.

An Honourable Member: You are doing surveys. You are sending out threatening letters

Mrs. Oleson: Rubbish!

Mr. Manness: I feel like I have to make some remarks with respect to the issue before us, Mr. Chairman. First of all, we were challenged for making—somebody said, I believe it was the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), that we were, through the survey, questioning, intimidating the Manitoba Foster Parents Association.

Let me say firstly that, unlike most surveys that are done, this one clearly indicated that it was being done on behalf of the Government of Manitoba. How many of us have answered a phone call and had some survey company give us a list of questions and, when we ask the question, on whose behalf are you doing the survey, received no response?

This was open. We declared that this was being done on behalf of the Government of Manitoba. I look at Members opposite and some shrug their shoulders. I know there were many questions done with respect to Hydro and other areas, and it was never known on whose basis it was being done. Ultimately there were political Parties that had add-on questions and everything, and you never knew who was the sponsor of the survey. This one was done by the Government of Manitoba.

The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says who did it and all that, and I have indicated to his Leader that all that information will be presented in due course. It

will all be presented in due course once it is properly compiled and ready in a fashion to present to the Members of this House.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, could you bring the House to order, please?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Finance Minister.

Mr. Manness: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Government was very open in what it did with respect to seeking information. We take the threat of the moratorium very, very seriously. It is a very serious threat to those children who may have no place to go, and a Government that is acting responsibly has to have in place its course of action, should that event occur.

Before it can do that, it cannot plan that in the space of 24 hours, it has to have it planned some time in advance. Part of that planning is knowing who in our community, and the community is fully defined, will be prepared to take foster children under a different set of circumstances than now may exist.

Our request: Who would Government approach in the community at large to see whether or not they will be prepared to receive foster children, given that the association, speaking supposedly on behalf of all the parents, firstly to see whether or not there would be a home for children? Does it not make eminently good sense that the Government would approach the foster parents? -(Interjection)- What is it? The Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) called it a sleazy trick. From his chair, he calls it a sleazy trick when the Government of Manitoba, taking seriously a threat from an association that there is going to be a moratorium in place, approaches directly the foster parents to try and find out whether or not they are going to be prepared to receive foster children after a certain date, and that is called sleazy. Mr. Chairman, the Government of Manitoba

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

* (1620)

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst).

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): On a point of order, I am having difficulty in hearing the questions and answers of the respective people here. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you could exercise a modicum of control to allow me to be able to hear those answers.

Mr. Chairman: The Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), on the point of order?

Mr. Alcock: I am standing to speak in response to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Mr. Chairman: The Minister does not have a point of order. The Honourable Finance Minister (Mr. Manness).

Mr. Manness: We recognize the close contact, and let us put it this way, the open lines of communication between the Foster Parents Association and certain Members of the Liberal Party. There is no problem with that. Indeed this is an open, free society and those types of events, those types of lines of communication are certainly there. But what Government has to attempt to find out is whether or not the Parents Association speaks for all of its members, because that is a critical question that has to be answered, and Government is not doing its job unless they can have that information. It is absolutely critical to the process.

So the Government did a very open thing. It said, through the survey—and again, the preamble to the survey indicated it was the Government of Manitoba that was doing it, that the answers would be received and compiled by the Government and that action ultimately forthcoming from that information would be put into place to meet the moratorium, if necessary.

The Government of Manitoba is hoping that there is no need for any contingency plan. The Government of Manitoba is hoping an accommodation can be reached with the Foster Parents Association to be entered into in again the next phase of discussion at five o'clock this evening. That is open Government. That is an attempt to try and remove to the extent possible all the politics from this very, very important issue. I congratulate the Minister for Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). I do not think anybody else could do any better of a job. As a matter of fact, I know it, and I congratulate her for her efforts.

Mr. Alcock: I would like perhaps just to comment on a few of the things that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has raised.

It strikes me and I, having been a foster parent since I was very young, know all too well the problems that the foster parents face. I know all too well the pressures of the agencies and the families and everybody else who is involved in this situation face. It was part of the reason why we are as amazed on this side of the House that it took this Minister this long to begin to take this issue seriously.

Now when I hear the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) stand up and make the kinds of comments he has just made defending what they did this weekend, it astonishes me. It astonishes me that they took that action, in part because they have agencies in place. The questioning did not go through the agencies. The agencies are prepared to take care of their children. They are making contingency plans to take care of the children who come into their agencies. The questions were not solely about will you take children. The questions were, you know, do you realize that we gave a grant of \$200,000, and we could give that to you. The questions were about the rate increases. The questions were about the natures of the negotiation.

Now, if the Government's intention was as honourable as they say it is, if they truly cared about the kids and finding alternative placements for those kids, we would not be raising this question in this House, but that was not what the foster parents understood that survey to

be about and it is not what we understood it to be about.

I would like to ask a question of the Minister. I would like to know, now that she is in the House and we do not have to go to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who it is that was contracted with to do that survey.

Mrs. Oleson: When the department contracted for service—it has not been completed, the whole work—I do not think it is necessary. It is a reputable company that does surveys. It is not really something that has to be shared with the Opposition.

Ms. Judy Wasylcyia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Chairperson, I would like to follow along the line of questioning pertaining to the Foster Parents Association. I want to begin my remarks by saying we are asking these questions out of concern for the welfare of children. We have seen, over the last few days, a polarization in the situation and we know that children will be jeopardized by the ultimate unfortunate potential situation of a moratorium.

My first question relates to the Minister of Community Services' (Mrs. Oleson) last comment and the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Manness) comment in response to a question earlier by the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). The Minister of Community Services has just said that the very unfortunate survey of this weekend was done by a company. The Minister of Finance, in a previous answer not too long ago, said that he thought it might have been done by political staff. Now we are getting some different messages here.

Mr. Chairman: The Honourable Finance Minister.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: Is this a point of order?

Mr. Manness: To correct the record, on a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I said in answer to the Leader of the SOP (Mr. Doer) that it was my understanding and my belief that the lead for the survey was taken outside of Government. That concurs with the statement made by the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson).

Mr. Chairman: A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: Meanwhile every time the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) jumps in, the confusion gets greater and it is very hard to figure out what the actual facts of this matter are. Let me try to get some answers at this point as we are a few days away from the moratorium.

Given what this survey has done in terms of potentially jeopardizing some serious negotiations to resolve the conflict and to ensure some resolution of the matter before Thursday, September 1, the date scheduled for the moratorium, could the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) please—I assume she has had some time now to do some looking into the matter since Question Period—now come forward with some straight answers, some honest answers to the questions we have been raising now for the last few hours, and

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that is who exactly—she said a company did the survey. What company did the survey? Approximately how much did the survey cost and what were the questions, either if she could table the questionnaire or give us an idea of the questions that were asked? I think that information would be most helpful to us in trying to comprehend why this survey was so necessary and so vital to the information gathering being done by the Minister.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, the Member still wants to belabour the question and call this an unfortunate survey and it polarized and all these things. I fail to understand what she is so exercised about when a Government wants to get some information, and to stand up and ask me to give honest answers is absolutely unacceptable. I always give honest answers.

* (1630)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Chairperson, we are just trying to get answers, period. We have yet to receive an answer on who did the survey. We have yet to receive an answer on the question, how much did the survey cost. We have yet to receive an answer on why the survey was necessary. We have yet to receive any specifics around the survey.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: So, Mr. Chairperson—

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: —just a few moments ago, the Minister of Cultural Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) commented in response to a previous question, I believe by the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the Minister knows who did the survey. So it has been stated that the Minister knows who did the survey, but the Minister for Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) has not provided any information. When the question was asked earlier, she did not say she knew who did the survey, but could not provide the information.

So we are left with a situation of either she does not know, which is shocking and makes us wonder who is actually making decisions on that side of the House, or that she does know and has something to hide. We would very much like to have some straight answers this afternoon. Time is drawing to a close. She has a meeting scheduled for five o'clock. This survey has put a real ringer into good-faith bargaining, into serious negotiations, into all of our hopes that today there will be some positive steps taken to end this conflict and ensure that, by Thursday, there will be no possibility that a moratorium is needed.

Could the Minister give us some answers to the questions I have already raised? Could she further indicate to us, if she cannot table the questionnaire or give us an idea what the questions were, and given the fact that she has said the information is so necessary

to deal with the post-moratorium situation, could she indicate if it is true that one of the questions did include: "Did you know the Manitoba Foster Parents Association gets \$100,000 or so in grants, and do you not think that the money should go to the parents instead?" Could she indicate to this House whether or not that question was actually asked and, if so, why it was asked, how it was helpful in terms of getting information for a post-moratorium situation and if it does anything more than attempt to divide and conquer parents and the association around this critical issue?

Mrs. Oleson: The Member is quoting from I do not know what with regard to the question. I have not got them in front of me so I cannot answer that question whether that was worded exactly that way. The people were phoned on behalf of the Government, questions were asked, questions that the Government wanted to know in order to help this matter along because we are the last people who want a moratorium on foster children. I do not think the Member does any service by getting up and asking me to table things that I cannot table at this time, and especially on a day when I am supposed to be meeting with these people to negotiate with them.

All this information will be available in due course. There is no way that I can table a cost of this at the moment. The tabulations on that are not complete. I think it is just a little ridiculous. It is also ridiculous to say that this was a completely unnecessary exercise, because we needed information. We are concerned that the days are going past and that there is an impending moratorium. The Opposition seems to assume that there will automatically be one. We are hoping, by our meetings and our discussions with the group, that there will not be a moratorium. In the unfortunate event that there is one, we want to be prepared, be able to assess how many foster homes we will have available and incorporate that into the contingency plans which have been in the mill for some time.

The Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) seems to indicate that we have not been doing anything. I have been doing a great deal on this subject and it has taken a considerable amount of time. I do not begrudge the time because it is a very, very important issue. To get up and say that all these things are unnecessary, that somehow I am being dishonest, is totally ridiculous and I will not accept that sort of thing.

Mr. Chairman: The Honourable Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

An Honourable Member: Chairman.

Ms. Gray: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

An Honourable Member: What is wrong with it? What is wrong with it?

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson—

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Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Ms. Gray: —the Members on the opposite side of the House have tried, in my opinion, to suggest that we on this side of the House are far more interested in playing politics than we are in resolving a very serious issue. I would like to set the record straight and indicate that in fact—and I think the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) knows this very well—we on this side of the House would far rather have had a resolution to this very serious problem than to be standing here today and asking questions.

An Honourable Member: What were your recommendations for a resolution?

An Honourable Member: \$30 a day.

Ms. Gray: Why do you not ask the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) that? I would also like to say, having worked in the community services field for a number of years, to suggest that to play politics is more important than the needs of our children is absolutely ludicrous.

The Members on the opposite side of the House this afternoon are chirping about the fact that we do not care about children because we have not asked about what is going to happen to these children. Two weeks ago, we repeatedly asked questions about what alternative measures the Government was considering should a moratorium take place on September 1. Well, September 1 is a few days away.

I would now ask the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), because I am assuming that there are measures in place, what alternatives is the Minister considering for placement of children? Where are the placements and what is the cost of these placements per day of foster children?

Mrs. Oleson: The Member seems to belabour the point that she asked me two weeks ago. I am sure it was longer ago than that, that I directed the department to look into contingency plans. Those are well under way. I cannot be specific about which address and which home and which whatever is going to be called upon, but there are many, many options.

The agencies are meeting with my department. In fact, they are meeting on that very subject this afternoon. A greater part of their afternoon has been taken up with working on this, and the department getting a report from each agency as to exactly what they have in place. So for the Member to stand there and say that there is nothing being done is totally ridiculous. But because I am not going to be giving the information about exactly what home and exactly what place and how many dollars it is going to cost and so forth, I can not give her that information today.

Ms. Gray: Why?

Mrs. Oleson: Why!

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Chairman —(Interjection)—Remember? Open, cooperative Government?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Alcock: I will give the Honourable Leader of the —(Interjection)— if I may, Mr. Chairperson, the Minister is demonstrating somewhat of a lack of knowledge about how her department functions. Services and the mandate to protect children are delegated to the agencies that deliver services in about 80 percent of the province. Now the department or somebody acting on behalf of the Minister has undertaken to conduct a survey of those foster parents. I am wondering, did she do this at the request of the agencies who have the responsibility for our recruiting those homes, licensing them and placing those children in them? Did the agencies ask her to do this?

* (1640)

Mrs. Oleson: The agencies have been working on this for a great deal of time and I have had some feedback but the ultimate responsibility, the Member must recall, is with this Minister and with this Government. We want to know what we are up against and what we are going to find in the community of foster parents. We have no intention—and the Members are trying to paint it that we somewhat are against foster parents. We are not. We know that those people are deeply involved with children. They work with them day after day. We respect and we honour them for that work.

But what we wanted to know is if they were going to honour the moratorium or not and we wanted to know exactly where we were. Then we can take that sort of information back to the agencies and further help them in finding places for these children. The Member is right, they are mandated to place children, but ultimately the Government is responsible and we have to take that responsibility seriously and make sure that things are happening.

Mr. Alcock: The agency did not request the Government to undertake this survey and the Government has chosen to act and not perhaps demonstrate any faith in the agencies that they fund and mandate to deliver these services. I wonder then, if I might just draw the Minister's attention to page 66 in the Manitoba Community Services Supplementary Information where there is a line there called Child and Family Service Agencies and an amount against that line of \$16.915 million. There is no concurrent figure for the year '88-89. There is just simply a larger figure that covers all of the grants under that. I am wondering if she might tell us how that line breaks out.

Mrs. Oleson: I am sorry I do not have my book with me and those specific numbers are—when we are in the Estimates process in this department, I think the Member could get that information in Estimates.

Mr. Alcock: Again, I would like to register my dissatisfaction with this process. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicated that the debate in

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Supplementary Estimates was wide ranging. We could ask any information that was contained within the spending policy of the Government. And yet, each time we try to ask a question, we are not getting any kind of answer.

If the Minister is not able to give us specific answers on the Estimates, perhaps coming back to the foster parent moratorium, should such an unfortunate event occur, can she confirm that her department has had conversations with Knowles Centre about the possible use of their summer camp as an alternative for children coming into care?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, I will inquire about status if they have discussed that. I have not discussed that personally with Knowles Centre, but the staff may have. I will discuss it with them.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, and Native Affairs): Mr. Chairman, I just rise for a minute because I think it is important to bring to the attention of the committee and the public, I think it is extremely important that we are now doing the Interim Supply which gives Members an opportunity to discuss all matters.

We are dealing with 70 percent of a \$4.5 billion Budget, and it is a large amount of money. We went through Question Period today on a major issue of the foster parents and the funding for the children, but not one question, not one bit of concern came from either the Opposition Parties dealing with the children. I say, Mr. Chairman, as Minister responsible for Native Affairs, and many of these children are Native, I feel extremely upset that there was not a concern put forward. I think it would be a golden opportunity for us to have worked together as three Parties to try to resolve this issue—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Downey: —in a very positive way, not negotiating in public as my colleague has very aptly said. It is probably not in anyone's best interest. She is meeting at five o'clock, a very important meeting which she is certainly not able to be prepared for in this setting, but I say to her, I feel that she has been very responsibly dealing with the issue. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why one question has not come from either Opposition Parties dealing with the care and maintenance of the children. That is what it is all about. You are more interested in who did a survey, as to find out if there were homes for those children. I mean, come on, let us get real with this issue. Let us find out really and truly, is there going to be care and attention for the children in Manitoba, as is being responsibly held by my colleague who is doing an excellent job. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Doer: In case the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has not noticed, the child welfare agencies that we asked as our first question includes thousands of children across this province. Indeed, the concerns being raised on behalf of foster children also are being

involved in terms of the child welfare agencies in Portage, in Brandon, in Winnipeg, and many of which have all gone on record as being totally opposed to the divide-and-conquer strategy that they perceive that is going on with the provincial Government.

We asked questions on the Main Street Project. Again, this has many, many children today. I am pleased we finally got the answer on that. I hope that expedites the agency being aware of where their status is in their budget. We asked questions on the Anti-Poverty Association. We are glad we finally got answers potentially on those issues, so that agency will know where they are going. All of these agencies deal with children. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is factually and totally incorrect.

Mr. Alcock: I am growing a little tired of being lectured by the Government about the care of children. If this Government had spent any time when it was in Opposition briefing itself and making itself aware of this very serious issue that has been building in this province for three years, perhaps when they came into office they would have known what they were going to do about it. Perhaps when they came into office, they would not have waited two months before even having a meeting with the association after having been made aware of the problem. They were told within two weeks of becoming the Government that a moratorium was in the offing and that the foster parents in this province were extremely concerned. It took them two months to get around to having a meeting.

I can tell you real quick that makes it hard for the Opposition to believe that they are very concerned when it takes them that long to even begin to meet on the issue. When they do meet on the issue and when they start attacking the Foster Parents Association, their very first action is to suggest that the Foster Parents Association, which has been built over the last few years to support and assist foster parents in caring for children and to protect foster parents in their roles and to help produce more foster parents, their very first action is to suggest that Foster Parents Association be shut down and the resources in that organization go to the foster parents.

I am sorry if we do not have a lot of faith in your belief or your concern for children. You just have not demonstrated it. Your Minister said that in a letter to all of the foster parents, she said it in a meeting with the association. She has been told several times just how angry that makes everybody who has had anything to do with this service feel.

Back at the time that the Lyon Government was defeated, there was not much for Foster Parents. Almost nothing existed. There were all sorts of problems with people who were prepared to volunteer their time and put forward their homes as places for kids to come and stay. A few foster parents came together after have all sorts of really difficult experiences. One farmer had his entire hay crop burned down. Another machinist had all his tools stolen. They had no recourse. People were volunteering their time to care for children and, yet, things happened that would cause tremendous impact on them and they had no ability to recover that.

We had a great deal of difficulty back in those years getting people to foster, people would not do it. Slowly, a group of foster parents came together. They got together a little insurance program that provided some support to foster parents. The sexual abuse issues came up and they went to work on that, trying to help foster parents understand what was happening with this tremendous change in our understanding of what was happening to children, and they provided training and support to foster parents. They provided a tremendous amount of time and energy helping foster parents deal with abused kids. The kind of money that these people ask for and they get is very, very limited and they put it to very, very good use supporting foster parents, recruiting foster parents and advocating on behalf of foster parents.

One of the things that happened a long time ago—not last month, a long time ago—was the inadequacy of the rate just stood out. The current foster parent rate is about one-half the poverty level for raising a child in this country. The amount that the Minister has offered only raises that to about 54 percent of the poverty rate. We cannot even get them up to live in poverty. So what we force people who are prepared to volunteer their time to do is we force them to subsidize the Government, and they are saying they are tired of that. They are saying they do not want to do that, they cannot continue to do that. They just financially cannot continue to do that, but they care about the kids and they want to continue to provide for these children. The costs have escalated to the point where they cannot. That association has worked very hard to help them be responsible in this negotiation. That is the association that you want to destroy. That is the association that you are attacking every time you meet with them, every time you talk to the foster parents.

* (1650)

Yes, I agree with the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) it is irresponsible. I think it is incredibly irresponsible that you would go out and, in conversations with this organization, make that recommendation that you would put it in a letter to all the foster parents of the province, and then you would follow up with this survey. I find that deeply disturbing and I think it belies everything you say when you puff up your chest and talk about caring for kids because your actions are not caring actions. Your actions have not been to engage with this association on this very important issue and negotiate with them.

If there is one thing the foster parents are, it is caring people and reasonable people and they are not getting a reasoned response from this Government. They are getting attacked from the day they walked in. I am sorry, it is just not acceptable. It is not acceptable to this side of the House. It is not acceptable to the foster parents. It is not acceptable to the children, and I do not believe it is acceptable to the people of Manitoba. Frankly, I do not believe it is acceptable to Members of your Party, and I do not know why your Executive Council and your Premier are continuing to proceed in this dogmatic and very disturbing manner.

Mrs. Oleson: The Member goes on at some length about his perception of foster parents and I am not

arguing with that in the slightest. I know the sacrifices they make in the care and nurturing of children. That is not what is in debate here. I am not saying what they are asking for in increasing the foster care rates, I am not saying that is exorbitant, I never have. But in trying to come to grips with this, when they met with them to tell them of their funding, which is the largest increase they have had for years and years and, all of a sudden, this Government is the bad guy, I get really annoyed.

Last year, we had a Government that responded to an outcry by the foster parents by giving them a bill of rights and suddenly they were the good guys. Here we are as a Government, after a short time in office, giving them a 12.4 percent increase and promising to negotiate further into the future for better rates which really had never been promised to them before and all of a sudden we are the bad guys. I kind of take exception to that.

With regard to the association, it was never my intention, stated or otherwise, that I was about to destroy the association. In discussions with them in the first meeting I had or the second meeting, I guess it was, that I had with them, I indicated to them that we were strapped for money but, if there was this possibility that if they would forego some of their fees or the grants they get from the Government, perhaps some of that could go to beef up the daily rates for the children. I gave them that as a suggestion. I said now it is up to you. You make up your mind. If you feel that you can do that, then agree with me. If you do not feel that, come back and say that you do not agree, fine. That is how that stands and I am not about to destroy the association. If they do not agree to that, and they have not, then they will still get their grant. I have never said that they would not get it.

I think it is just leading the wrong way in the discussion, if you get up and start saying I am destroying the association. There was never any intent to destroy the association. I am talking with the association tonight, negotiating with them and talking to them about the future.

We never said this was the last increase they would ever get, or it would be the same next year, or anything like that. We have said we want to work it for the future. It may not be adequate, and they are telling me it is not adequate this year. I am recognizing that it may not be, but what I have to recognize is the reality of a budget, and reality of all the other demands that are placed on the Government. If this were the only one, it would be easy. It is very easy to say yes and I think if the Member, when some time in the far-distant future he gets into Government, he will understand the reality of having to sit at a Cabinet table, at a Treasury Board table, and decide how you are going to allocate hard-earned taxpayers' dollars.

There is not just one agency asking for money. There are many, many people needing money, and we all know that and it is not easy to say no. It is not easy to say that is all we can get for you this year, but sometimes those things have to be said. We have to be responsible, and we have to look at the whole picture.

The Members now are focusing their attention on one picture, but there is a broad range. This Community

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Services Department has endless requests and needs and concerns for money, and I would love to be able to sit down with every one of those agencies that come to my office and say, yes, look, here we are, we can give you all kinds of money. But reality is what I have to live with and I think the Members opposite better start thinking about reality too.

Mr. Manness: I rise in reaction to a comment made by the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Alcock).

When our Minister was talking about the decisions that must be made around the executive table and the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) said CPR, CPR—he said it twice and of course he is starting to take up the rallying cry of the Leader of the N.D. Party (Mr. Doer). I question which Leader he would rather follow at times and I do not say that in jest, because I hear him use more of the material coming from the Leader of the NDP than I do from his own Leader.

Mr. Chairman, let us be mindful of where we are. If the Members opposite truly want to help us, they will tell us in the next few minutes what they feel Government should be offering the Foster Parents Association. We will not be talking about surveys. We will not be implying about the honesty of the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). We will not talk about how it is we want to destroy supposedly, using the words of the MLA for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), the Foster Parents Association.

If the Members who are opposite had wanted to cooperate, they would tell us what they feel their bottom line would be in our position. Right today, all we have from the Liberal Party, their bottom line is \$30.00. That is all we have heard said, and then of course it goes to a doubling, a full granting of the requests of the Foster Parents Association.

We have heard through the mouth of the MLA for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), and she has put forward a position I think that her Party feels is an honest one and is one that of course we will give some due consideration to. But why are we not having those discussions right now if the Members are serious about wanting to help us resolve this dispute, not references to the CPR? I do not know really how that adds to the debate. I just do not know how that really adds to the debate one bit.

I would like to, and I will after supper, get into the CP yard issue because I have been holding back. Well, in a sense it has been bothering me. It has been bothering me and I will tell you why, Mr. Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer), but we will have to do that because there is a more pressing issue before us right today.

* (1700)

I have indicated to the Leader of the NDP that we will provide the information with respect to the survey. This Government will do that. It has no problem in doing that. I have indicated that it has been led from the outside. I have indicated that there has been sufficient authority granted by the Government of the people of Manitoba. This Government does not do anything without proper authority, and that is in place. Those details will be provided.

But if the Members are serious and sincere in wanting to help us to resolve this problem, I say to us, they will tell us what Government should do if they were in our positions with respect to how much they would grant in support of the requests of the Foster Parents Association. Until I hear Members opposite providing that detail, I have difficulty taking serious their commitment to the welfare of the children of Manitoba.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): It is a question. Earlier in response to a question—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: To the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), earlier in response to a question from the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the Minister of Finance indicated that he did not anticipate any further cuts to any non-profit community-based organizations. The Minister of Finance said that it was general policy of the Conservative Government not to cut to groups outside of, I believe he said, the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse.

My question to the Minister who is standing up in that, given those comments, why then has this Government put a proposal on the table in response to the crisis around foster parent rates, a proposal that calls for a reduction, a cut in the grant to the Manitoba Foster Parents Association and a redirection of the money saved to the rate structure for foster parents? Why is that cut being proposed? How does that fit with his earlier remarks? What does that show in terms of the faith that this Government has in the Foster Parents Association?

Mr. Manness: My answer to the question, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said earlier today, there are no associations on the block. As a matter of fact, the response to the Leader of the NDP's (Mr. Doer) question with respect to two agencies, in particular, the Main Street Project, I think he said, and also the Anti-Poverty Agency, I am sure I saw the figures here, and there was a 3 percent increase in the grant that is going to go to those two organizations.

In specific to the question asked by the Member, if we are going to be pushed so hard to look for additional dollars and support, then Government feels that outside groups also should tell us where it is those dollars should come from, because they just are not there. So is it fair to ask as one of the choices—and we have not in a hard fashion—whether or not that one area of funding should be reduced in support of something which is deemed to be the most important? That is not hard policy. That is not policy of the Government but, when Government is looking around for additional dollars, it cannot be blamed for saying, well, would this be something that should be considered. It was done so in a most very general, general sense in respect to the survey in question.

Mr. Chairman: The hour is now 5 p.m. I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. The committee will return at 8 p.m. this evening. Call in the Speaker.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**RES. NO. 4—MILLENNIUM
OF CHRISTIANITY IN UKRAINE**

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business. On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), Millennium Celebration of Christianity in Ukraine.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, it is moved by myself, as Member for Lac du Bonnet, and seconded by the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski):

WHEREAS 1988 marks the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Ukraine; and

WHEREAS Ukrainians throughout the world will be celebrating this Millennium with pride; and

WHEREAS the celebration is of special significance to the over 100,000 Ukrainian Canadians living in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches have played a central role in the preservation and development of the Ukrainian language, culture and identity in Manitoba and in Canada; and

WHEREAS the Ukrainian community of Manitoba is marking this Millennium with religious celebrations, cultural productions and educational programs; and

WHEREAS the Ukrainian community has been a strong and vibrant component of our provincial and national mosaic; and

WHEREAS this Millennium is a time for all Manitobans to honour and celebrate the contribution of Ukrainian Canadians to the building of our province.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba hereby join with Ukrainian Canadians in Manitoba and Canada in commemorating and celebrating the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride and honour that I have moved this motion asking our Legislative Assembly to join with Canadians of Ukrainian heritage in commemorating and celebrating the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine. I at this time would like to extend my deepest appreciation to my friend and colleague, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski), for seconding this particular resolution. The Member has been a strong member of the Ukrainian community and very active in Ukrainian cultural and educational activities over the years. His seconding of this motion certainly makes me feel very good, and I am very happy to have him joining with me at this time.

I would also like to pay tribute to the former Member for Burrows, Dr. Conrad Santos, who moved a similar motion in the previous Legislature. Regrettably, that

motion was not passed but died on the Order Paper. Dr. Santos was a friend of mine from my days in law school and I know that he represented many Ukrainian Canadians in his constituency, represented them well. It was certainly a great honour for him to have moved that resolution and he did so with much pride, and I would commend him for putting forward that resolution in the previous Legislature.

It is with some regret, however, today that I rise on this debate because I was hoping that this particular resolution could have been dealt with by the Legislature in a very non-partisan fashion. I think it is one that should be well above the politics that go on in this Assembly.

The day following the opening of the Legislature, my colleague, the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), approached me to second this particular resolution and I was quite willing for him to do that. I indicated that I would take that matter back to my caucus. The same day that he asked me a letter was sent to the newspapers in my constituency that referred to this as Praznik's NDP resolution.

* (1710)

It is with regret that the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) had to move to politicize what was to be a non-political, non-partisan expression of our congratulations to the Ukrainian community. Perhaps the Member owes the Ukrainian community of Manitoba an apology for doing that, but that is left to his conscience.

For Christians of Ukrainian heritage, this year marks the 1,000th Anniversary of the baptism of Kievians in the River Dnieper by Grand Duke Volodymyr and the beginnings of Christianity in the Ukraine. Grand Duke Volodymyr, believing his nation required spiritual unity to prosper, sent emissaries to investigate the religions of neighbouring states. In Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, the emissaries found a religion which mesmerized them. Upon returning to Ukraine, they reported to Volodymyr: "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth, for on earth there is no such splendour or such beauty and we are at a loss how to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations." Volodymyr was intrigued by this report but did not convert until several years later when he threatened to capture Constantinople unless its emperors let him marry their sister. They agreed, on the condition that he accept Christianity.

Volodymyr was christened in the Church of St. Basil in the Byzantium City of Kherson. Temporarily blinded by an eye disease, he regained his vision immediately after his baptism.

In 988 A.D., on his return to Ukraine, Volodymyr ordered all pagan idols destroyed and then summoned his subjects to a mass baptism in the waters of the Dnieper River near Kiev.

The conversion of Ukraine was quickly followed by the founding churches and cities and towns, and rapid cultural development in art, architecture, literature and

philosophy, all modelled on the Byzantium style. Volodymyr was canonized shortly after his death.

The church in the Ukraine, both Catholic and Orthodox, have continued to endure to this day, despite the persecution of Communist Governments for the greater part of this century. In fact, the importance of freedom of religion is brought home to this Assembly today by the visit of Reverend Romaniuk to our Chamber during Question Period. As we meet a man who has suffered for the right just to have a Bible, suffered for the right just to practise religion and to worship God, we are reminded how grateful we are as Canadians to live in a country where freedom of religion is a daily part of our life and often taken for granted by so many.

Mr. Speaker, the role of the church in the Ukraine, for Ukrainians in Canada, is indeed an important and a pivotal one. With the arrival of the first Ukrainians in Canada in September of 1891, so began a wave of immigration that would bring to our nation well over half a million people of Ukrainian origin.

Prior to World War I, over 170,000 people of Ukrainian background and provinces in the Austro-Hungarian and the Russian Empires came to Canada, mostly to western Canada. I am proud to say that my great grandparents were among them. I know that there are other Members of this Assembly who trace the arrival of their families in Canada to this great immigration prior to the First World War.

Between the wars, Mr. Speaker, an additional 68,000 people of Ukrainian origin immigrated to Canada. Following the Second World War, an additional 33,000 arrived on our shores. Today, the over half-million Canadians of Ukrainian background live throughout this country with some 300,000 of them living in western Canada.

Shortly after the arrival of those first immigrants at the turn of the century, the church was soon to follow, fulfilling the spiritual needs of the people. The first Catholic Bishop Buhdka arrived on December 19, 1912. He was later sent back to Ukraine and died in prison during the Stalinist regime. Mr. Speaker, in those early days, our pioneers, when the church in Canada was in its infancy, it played a major, major role in the spiritual and the cultural and the educational lives of Ukrainian people in our country. In my own family, Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Gonor was our home parish. Those pioneers who arrived here, often with a suitcase, children, very little money, built their homes and their farms, and then they built their church, because they loved their faith, they loved their God, and they wanted a place to worship their God and be brought together.

Across Manitoba and across the Prairies, we see those churches that sprouted up, built by those pioneers so that their religion would flourish in this country, and that they could pass their heritage on to their children and their grandchildren. And as the great-grandson of one of those immigrants, I take that opportunity today to say thank you to those pioneers for the heritage that they gave to me and to my fellow Manitobans.

Over the course of this year, the Ukrainian community across Manitoba, across Canada, indeed across the

world has been celebrating this Millennium. They have been holding masses, religious ceremonies, they have been holding dinners to commemorate this event. As the year continues, more events will be held. I think this is an excellent opportunity for our Legislature to join with the Ukrainian Canadian, Ukrainian Manitoban community to celebrate not only the Millennium of Christianity in the Ukraine but also to celebrate our own freedom that we hold so dear in this country, and to celebrate the contribution of Ukrainian Canadians to our province and to our country.

It is with great pride that I move this resolution before this House today, and I thank Mr. Speaker and my fellow Members for giving me the opportunity to speak on this matter. Thank you.

Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows): I want to thank my honourable friend and Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for those complimentary words he said about me. I do not know what he meant when he says the oldest but, since there are only six or seven Ukrainians in this Chamber out of 57, I will accept that as a compliment, too.

I am also honoured and very pleased to have been asked to be the Seconder of this proposed resolution, which marks the 1,000th anniversary of our Christianity in the Ukraine.

Those of us who live in the free world are very fortunate to be able to celebrate this very important event. As we all know, as many others have said here this afternoon, as a matter of fact, there are people in this world of ours who have never experienced freedom, whether they be Ukrainian or others. They have not known freedom for generations as we know it in our beloved Canada.

And with those few brief remarks, I just want to ask all Members of this Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to join the Ukrainian Canadians in celebrating the Millennium of Christianity in the Ukraine. Thank you very much.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): I am pleased to stand and support the proposed resolution dealing with the Millennium celebration of Christianity in the Ukraine. The Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) has mentioned that this same resolution was brought to the House last year by Dr. Santos, the Member for Burrows, and Clarence Baker, the former Member for Lac du Bonnet, who also represents a large Ukrainian community, worked to help develop this resolution. It was unfortunate that we were unable to proceed with it last year, so we could have dealt with it prior to the celebration, or during the year prior to a lot of the celebration that was going on in the Ukrainian community.

I am proud to say that I am a member of this Ukrainian population. I am a practising Ukrainian Catholic and my son, Mark, has attended the Ukrainian Catholic school at St. Vladimir's College in Roblin for a three-year period, where he was able to learn about some of the historical contribution the Ukrainians have made in the development of Canada as a country, Manitoba as a province.

He was able to come to a better understanding of what the heritage of the Ukrainian people means to him and to us as Ukrainian people. He was able to learn what social, spiritual and historical contributions they have made. He attended the minor seminary and we had the hopes that some day he would become a Ukrainian Catholic priest, but I guess it was not meant to be and he has not become a member.

Some of the skills that he has learned while he was at the college: he has become a practising member of the Ukrainian Catholic church; he is very active in that area; he has danced with the Rusalka Dancers and also the Hoosli Dance Ensemble; and he also danced with a professional group from Toronto called the Bulava Group. With that group he performed at Dauphin this year during their Twenty-third Annual Celebration, where the theme of that festival was the Millennium of Christianity.

I was pleased that he was able to learn about his heritage while he attended St. Vladimir's in Roblin and I would hope that he will continue to participate in some capacity as a Ukrainian Canadian as he goes on through life.

* (1720)

During this year when we, as a people in the free world, are able to look back and see what contribution the Ukrainian Canadians have made in the development of not only Canada, but Ukrainians have made a great contribution to the development of the United States of America, as well, and throughout the world, there is a large Ukrainian population in Hawaii and Australia.

While we are looking back and celebrating 1,000 years of Christianity in the Ukraine, our brothers and sisters in the Ukraine do not have that same privilege. Unfortunately, they are still being suppressed to a great degree in the Ukraine, where we see they do not have the freedom to practise their spirituality as we have been in Canada. I guess the Reverend Romaniuk who is with us in this House today is an example of people who are very committed to bringing Christianity to the Ukraine. We have heard and read about some of the difficulties they have faced in their efforts to bring Christianity to the Ukraine at this time.

There were many celebrations that took place during the year on the Ukrainian Millennium. Metropolitan Maxim Hermeniuk, as a spiritual leader of the Ukrainian community in Canada at this time, has shared the preparation for the celebrations that have been going on since 1978.

There was a big celebration in Winnipeg. At the Centennial Concert Hall, there was a large performance there, where it was filled to capacity. Rainbow Stage had a singing group of over 120 people which was made up of people from right across the world, of Ukrainian people who came to Canada and Winnipeg to participate in that big event.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church just had their big worldwide celebration in Hamilton on August 14, where there were Ukrainians from all parts of the world who ventured to Hamilton to take part in that celebration there as well.

The Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) took us through some of the history of how the Ukraine did become Christian. I guess, in the early 8th Century, the Prince at that time was—I guess the Ukrainian people had a reputation of being conquerors and the military was a very big part of the history at that time and there was continuous war going on. They were continuously being raided as well because the Ukraine was noted as the most fertile piece of land in Europe.

So it was little wonder that neighbouring countries or villages were continuously pondering at this part of the world because they wanted to have this very rich fertile land as their part of their holdings. I guess the one that we should pay great tribute to is Olha, who was a grandmother to Prince Volodymyr, who eventually turned a large number of Ukrainians, baptized them in the Dnieper River. But Olha was a practising Christian for many, many years under very difficult circumstances when her husband and her sons were part of the warriors who were taking part in the wars at that time. Under her example, I guess, St. Volodymyr had sort of that Christian background to him of where he saw the idols that they were worshipping at that time were not serving their people well. He sent out a group of people to look at the different religions that were present in the world at that time. He went out to see the three different religions that were present at that time. He came back from visiting the Greek people and they said that it was so outstanding, the feeling they got there, that they said they did not know if they were in heaven while they were visiting that Greek country.

So they came back and made this report to St. Volodymyr and he was taken up with this report and he was thinking about turning the country of his into Christianity, but he felt that he needed a leverage in order to conquer the people who advised him to become Christian. He went on one more crusade and captured the country, and he asked some of the people he conquered at that time that he wanted their sister's hand in marriage. They told him that he could do it on one condition, that he would become a Christian.

While he was contemplating becoming a Christian, he lost the sight of his eye and, when his bride-to-be came to see him, she advised him to become a Christian as soon as possible and he may be healed. As it turned out, he became baptized and immediately there was a miraculous healing and he recovered the sight of his eye. So he very quickly made the decision that all of his communities would become Christian. He went out and told everybody at that time that everybody had to be baptized. They all came down to the Dnieper River and there was a mass baptism and there were many healings that took place during that baptism. So that was how the early Ukrainians' Christian community became Christian.

In Canada, the Ukrainian community had a large growth in 1891, the first year. They first faced great difficulties because, when these deeply spiritual people came to Canada, there were no spiritual leaders in the Ukrainian rite. So they were unable to understand the Roman mass. There were a great many people who came over as members of the Greek Catholic community who were converted to the Greek Orthodox

because they understood the language. It was shortly after that period that the Ukrainian Catholic priest came into the country and got permission, exactly as the French Catholic priests received permission, to give the Ukrainian Catholics service in their own tongue. So it was from that early growth they have continued to dwell, to multiply.

I think that the Ukrainian Catholic, the Ukrainian Orthodox, and the people have made a great contribution to the history of Manitoba, and I guess I was touched when Reverend Romaniuk came in and shared some of the difficulties that he is faced with in the Ukraine. I think it is dependent on us as members of a free world, not only the Ukrainian Catholics but all Christian people who are living in this country, that we would pray that the people in the Ukrainian part of the world, all the Communist part of the world, would some day have the freedom to worship as we have in this country, a freedom that we quite often take for granted. I would hope that all Members of this Legislature would speak in favour of this resolution, because I think it is a very important resolution. It is important to the people who do not have the opportunity to worship as we do. Thank you.

* (1730)

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Although I am not Ukrainian myself, I still take great pleasure in rising to speak on the resolution. My riding has a great diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and the Ukrainians are certainly an important and major portion of that background.

But to reflect a little bit on what the purpose of the resolution is—Mr. Speaker, I notice my light is flashing. Is there any reason for that? There, it is fixed. As I was saying, let us go back to the reason for introducing such a resolution. We are celebrating the 1,000th year of Christianity in the Ukrainian community. I think that, from a perspective of a non-Ukrainian, one has to look at the reasoning for celebrating such a thing. I think it bears to mind, brings back to us the very purpose, the very groundwork of all of our society here. Although it is Christianity we are celebrating, I think we have to go beyond Christianity and look at fundamental beliefs of all people, be they Muslims, be they Buddhists, be they whatsoever, Hindus, like my colleague from La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) has said, Sikhs. The fact is that most of society does believe in a supreme being. The fact remains that all of today's laws, rules and regulations at one point emanated from Judaeo-Christian or other religious beliefs.

As the previous Members have said, this is a resolution worthy of support of all Members because it brings back, especially in this day and age when there is so much turmoil in the world, so much concern in our society with ethical, moral, social and other values which seem to be deteriorating, there is a need to get back to the basics, to get back to the fundamentals as to why we are here. It comes at a very opportune time in the history of the world, that Millennium, the Ukrainian Christian Millennium that is before us. I think that, given the contribution that the Ukrainian community has made to society, given the contribution

the Ukrainian churches have made to society, given the contribution that many other religions and ethnic minorities and groups have given to society, this is one in which we can all take pride in.

I was in Cooks Creek, Manitoba yesterday, along with my colleague from Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), celebrating their annual Heritage Day. This particular event is sponsored by the Polish National Catholic Church. There was also a very strong contingent from the Ukrainian Catholic Church which participates because of the very fact that they are residents.

Yesterday, being their 16th annual event, it was more of a multicultural type of event where they had many other different groups represented. It reflects what is happening currently in Manitoba's society. It reflects what is happening generally in North America. It reflects an understanding and cooperation amongst people.

It was also heartening to me, earlier this year, in the same community of Cooks Creek, the Ukrainian Catholic Church was dedicated a historical monument. It had particular significance, and my colleague from Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) was there at the time too. It had particular significance because it demonstrated two things.

It commemorated the symbolic significance and beauty of the architecture of the building, as well as the religious significance. That is one thing which we too often let go by the wayside in this day and age. We forget moral values, as opposed to humanistic values. I think once in a while we have to stop and reflect upon whence we came. As I said earlier, it does not really matter what your religious or ethnic background is. The bottom line is that there is a master plan out there greater than any one of us here in this Chamber or other Chambers has put together.

J'aimerais dire aussi, M. le président, qu'une des raisons pour lesquelles nous sommes ici aujourd'hui—oui, c'est vrai qu'il y a un certain élément de travail qui rentre dans un élection; il y a certainement beaucoup de sacrifices pour être ici, mais je pense qu'il y a un peu plus que la chance aussi. Il y a aussi une certaine raison pour laquelle certaines personnes sont ici, et d'autres ne le sont pas. On aime ça penser que c'est tout à cause de nos efforts, c'est tout à cause des efforts des autres personnes, mais peut-être que ça va plus haut que ça, parce qu'il y a un certain plan.

(Translation)

I would like also to say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons that we are here today—yes, it is true that there is a certain element of work to be done in elections, and certainly there are a great many sacrifices made in order to arrive here, but I think that more than luck is involved. There is also a reason why certain people are here and why certain other people are not here. We like to think it is all because of our own efforts and those of other people, but perhaps it goes beyond that, because there is a certain plan.

This is why we have this celebration of the Millennium of Christianity, despite the fact there are certain forces in society today which would like to tear away at the

religious significance of some institutions. The fact that it has lasted through all these centuries, in this day and age and over the centuries, the Bible still is, has been, and I suspect always will be the world's best-selling book is significant in itself. It has been translated in so many different countries. No matter how oppressive the regime, it will not stop.

I would like to join the previous speakers and urge other Members of this House to give speedy and unanimous passage to this very worthwhile resolution. Thank you.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): It is indeed a pleasure for me to rise this afternoon to speak on this resolution and, to a certain degree perhaps, mirror my own comments of August 12, as well as earlier this afternoon.

The cultural significance of this event has been mentioned by some of my previous colleagues. Many of them have reflected upon the history, the significance and the selection process. That is based very much on the chronicles of Nestor, a monk in Kiev in the 11th Century who prepared an early history of Ukraine up to that time. He in his chronicles goes into much detail setting out the travels and the tribulations of Kiev and Russ. As also I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, the cultural significance of the event in 1988 remains today as visible, not only in Ukraine but throughout the world, with the adoption of frescoes, mosaics and other art forms.

Over the last number of decades, the effect of the Soviet regime on many of these historical treasures has been the subject of comments by many individuals, both within and outside the Soviet Union. Not too long ago a church parish in Ukraine in the City of Zytomyr wrote a letter to the United Nations sending out its concerns with respect to what the present regime was planning to do with that particular church. With our visitor earlier this afternoon, he again was prepared to highlight some of these particular events in the offices of the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), his concerns with respect to these freedoms, his concerns with respect to the way religion is treated in the Soviet Union.

The significance of this year's celebrations is highlighted by some of the other Members in the House and which, I may add, are continuing throughout the year, is perhaps greater than to highlight the cultural aspects of Christianity. I think this year has certainly been for not only Ukrainians but, as my colleague and Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) has mentioned, a time perhaps to re-examine, reconsider and review one's own beliefs, faith and religion. I think this event is significant for that where it is serving as a catalyst for the future.

* (1740)

I know, in the Ukrainian community, it is serving as a catalyst for young people throughout the world, not just in Manitoba or Canada but throughout the world to assist in the preparation of displays. Going along

with that of course is their study of the effect of Christianity on Ukraine. It has also provided a catalyst for many of our communities that have perhaps, since the early days of the pioneers through various factors and forces, tended to diminish in size.

As mentioned again in my maiden speech, I reflected upon my visits with my father serving various parishes throughout Manitoba. Although some of these parishes are relatively small, they are still, I can assure Members of this House, as vibrant as they were many years ago when there were many more people in our communities outside of Winnipeg and other large centres throughout Manitoba. Again, it has been a catalyst for many of these communities and parishes to review their own histories, their own traditions in that particular area and to once again commemorate the significance of this event for not only themselves, their families, but also their nation.

Religion for people throughout Manitoba, not just Ukrainians, is a significant event. People throughout the world are being persecuted for their particular faith. Again, perhaps these Millennium celebrations offer all legislators around the world and representatives around the world to reflect once again on that particular aspect within either their own country or their own nation.

Our guest this afternoon, Reverend Romaniuk, is but just another example, is but one individual who has persevered, who has suffered for what he truly believed in. There are tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people who can serve just as equally as an example to us as Father Romaniuk did.

Again, I would like continually to stress the importance of this Millennium. Yes it is a commemoration, a review of the past, a review of history, a presentation of history, a preparation of displays, but I think more importantly and its more significant aspect, it is truly a time to re-examine one's own faith and its status. Religion serves as a catalyst for many people in many ways. It is important for us all to remember that in our deliberations and considerations and, as well, an important aspect to consider for all legislators about the world.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mirror the comments of my colleagues on both sides of this House and to congratulate the many thousands of volunteers who have spent many hundreds and thousands of hours preparing for this particular event, many thousands of hours preparing for trips of choirs overseas or throughout Canada, thousands of hours in preparing the displays so that not only Canadians and Manitobans of Ukrainian background but all Canadians and all people of the world can enjoy this Millennium celebration. I would also like to finally join in and request that the Legislature pass this resolution in as timely a fashion as possible, to indicate the importance of this event to us all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I want to join with the Members of the House who have indicated their support for this resolution. I know that it marks a very significant event for our Ukrainian community here in Manitoba, certainly here in Canada and throughout the world.

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I have had some particular opportunity to see just how important it is since, in Thompson, I attend the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church as my wife is Greek Orthodox. But we have the rather unique experience in Thompson of having an orthodox church that provides a home for all the different branches of the orthodox churches, whether they be Rumanian or Yugoslavian Orthodox churches, whether it be the Greek Orthodox or the Ukrainian Orthodox. I have seen from that church and the congregation in Thompson just how important this event is.

There has been some reference, I know, to exactly what it represents. It represents 1,000 years since the establishment of Christianity in the Ukraine. It is interesting when one looks at the history of the Ukraine, seeing the importance of that particular event, both in terms of the spiritual aspect and in terms of the people of the Ukraine, that one thing that has been, I think, perhaps the most obvious to me in looking at the background of the Millennium is the fact that this represents both a spiritual and a national celebration for the many Ukrainians throughout the world, and particularly here in Canada.

It is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on the important contribution of the Ukrainian community. In fact, I think it is also important to look ahead to the next anniversary that the Ukrainian community will be celebrating, and that is the 100th anniversary of the first recorded Ukrainian settler in Canada, and that will be in 1991. I think a lot of times we forget just what a history that has been.

I know I recently had the opportunity at the Manitoba Intercultural Council to talk to a number of people in the Ukrainian community. Many of us were aware, for example, of the terrible situation that occurred in the Second World War when Japanese-Canadians were interned, were disenfranchised. Many people forget that the Ukrainian community suffered the same fate in the First World War. In fact, many Ukrainians were interned, the Ukrainian language was banned. It was deemed an enemy language, and Ukrainians were disenfranchised. That is still a bitter memory in the community. When we are discussing such matters as rectifying the injustice that was done to Japanese-Canadians in the Second World War, which I certainly

feel should be done, I think it is also important to rectify historically what happened to Ukrainian-Canadians in the First World War.

If one looks at the history of the Ukrainian community in Canada, I think the most striking thing that I have noticed, and particularly in recent years and particularly as I said from my own contact with the Ukrainian community in Thompson, is the fact that Ukrainian nationalism, the appreciation of the Ukrainian language has been undergoing a significant revival throughout the world, but particularly based here in Canada. It was not that long ago that there were no Ukrainian language programs, for example, in our schools. But in the last number of years we have seen, since 1969, Ukrainian offered as a subject, and since 1979 a bilingual program which offers direct education in Ukrainian right here in Manitoba.

So as I said, it is an opportunity to reflect on an important date in terms of the spiritual history of the Ukraine, also an important date in terms of the history of the nation of the Ukraine. Also it is an opportunity for all of us to take this opportunity to once again all join in the celebration and commend the Ukrainian community here in Manitoba and throughout Canada for its tremendous contribution to Canadian society. So with that, I certainly support the motion and would certainly hope that we would be able to pass it to indicate our unanimous support for it.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

* (1750)

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, as is sometimes customary when a resolution is passed in Private Members' Hour, I might suggest that there might be agreement for a motion that the House adjourns until eight o'clock.

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

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 Ways and Means.