

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, January 23, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Neil Gaudry (Acting Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable—the Honourable Minister of Labour.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): I rise on a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker. This is my first opportunity to do so—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will grant the Honourable Minister the opportunity. We will just do the Introduction of Guests prior to Oral Questions, and I will allow the Honourable Minister that opportunity.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us this afternoon His Excellency Brian Fall, High Commissioner of Great Britain, and Mr. Peter Johnstone, Consul General of Great Britain.

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

Also with us this afternoon, we have from the Ste. Theresa Point and the St. Eustache School, forty-eight Grade 6 students and they are under the direction of Monique Allard. These schools are located in the constituencies of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns).

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

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. This is my

first opportunity to do so, and I will follow with a substantive motion.

Yesterday, the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) put on the record, in his matter of privilege, false information. In June of 1988 our Government reinstated the position of gas inspector, cut by the former NDP Government. This Government has not cut any gas inspection positions.

Therefore I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) withdraw his motion of privilege and apologize to the House.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Before ruling I will permit limited and strictly relevant debate whether or not the matter has been raised at the earliest opportunity and that a prima facie case does exist. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you that while it may have been raised at the earliest opportunity, I do not believe there is any hint of a prima facie case of breach of privilege. What we have seen from this Government is an attempt one day later to bring in some damage control. It is interesting to note that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) did not dispute the very clear evidence of the fact that she gave a misleading answer to the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) when the Member for The Pas earlier this year asked a very serious question about the intent of this Government in terms of regulations. This matter does not deal with that whatsoever.

The statement by the Minister does not deal with the fact that they have been cutting inspection positions. That was raised once again in Question Period yesterday. Once again it does not deal with that fact. In fact, what we are seeing from the Minister and this Government is a rather poor attempt, one day after the Member for The Pas raised his matter of privilege, to try and deflect from the fact that misleading answers were given to the Member for The Pas.

* (1335)

In terms of the appropriateness of this, Mr. Speaker, I would say that it is absolutely out of order. I do not think that I have seen a more frivolous point, matter of privilege, than has occurred if the Government cannot, as yesterday it proved that it could not, if it could not dispute the prima facie evidence that was put forward by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), which they have not done today, that there was a matter of privilege. They have not dealt with the fact that misleading answers were given to the Member for The Pas. They should not waste the time of this House with one day later bringing in a damage control attempt which is not a prima facie case of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. This is a very serious matter. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a very serious matter and one which it is our recommendation to you, as with the one previously yesterday, that you take it under advisement and that you look at all of the facts in the particular case before you as to the matter of privilege raised by both Members, and report back at your earliest convenience, because it is incumbent upon each and every one of us to take matters of privilege only in the most serious of veins.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I certainly would not quarrel with the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) who suggests that you may wish to take this matter under advisement. I leave that to your Honour. The point that concerns me a little bit is the cavalier attitude taken by Members of the New Democratic Party about bringing forward false information in this House, false information that may well indeed reflect badly on the integrity of a very fine Member of this House, the Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond), in the person of the Minister of Labour.

The Honourable Members of the New Democratic Party have gotten into a habit, maybe it is not on purpose, but they got into a dangerous habit of bringing forward information into this House that is patently false and do that on a day in and day in basis. Then today the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) stands up and trivializes and makes light of the seriousness of bringing forward incorrect information.

This is a public place, Mr. Speaker. The people of Manitoba, many of them I should say, watch what goes on here. I do not think it bodes well for any of us in this Chamber when any Member brings forward information that is false. I think the Honourable Members of the New Democratic Party ought to take their responsibilities a little more seriously than they are (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the matter of privilege raised by the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), I would like to thank all Honourable Members for their advice. The Chair will take this matter under advisement and report back to the House.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Place Promenade Mortgage Auction

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the continuing saga of Place Promenade in Portage Place unfolds each day with a new development. Yesterday the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) stated that he would proceed with the mortgage sale, because he was required to follow the

rules and conditions set down by CMHC. Today we learned that CMHC does not want the property to go to auction but rather wants to take control of it.

* (1340)

Can the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation (Mr. Ducharme) tell this House when he first learned that it was CMHC's intention to continue to operate this particular vehicle and not allow it to go to auction?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, to the Member across the way, for CMHC to proceed is strictly speculation.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the Minister of Housing tell the House what discussions he has had with CMHC with regard to the future, evolution, control of Place Promenade?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I have information dated no later than January 16 instructing MHRC to proceed under the conditions set by the previous agreement drawn by the previous Government. We will follow those conditions, and we will proceed with that.

We will abide by the rules of the court set yesterday. However, we are scheduled, unless otherwise instructed by CMHC—we rescheduled our process to mortgage sale on Monday, February 5 at 10 a.m.

First Mortgage Value

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): The CMHC seems to be saying very clearly they believe that the glut in the rental market will soon ease and that this particular building will be of more value in the future than it is now. Indeed, the Minister's own lawyers argued yesterday in court that the value was not such to even protect the first mortgage at the present time. Can the Minister of Housing tell this House what his department believes to be the value of their first mortgage in real terms of this particular property?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, to get across to the Member from across the way, we have conditions that are from an agreement that was signed by the previous administration. I have instructed my staff to follow all conditions. We have been following all conditions set aside by CMHC. If the Member from across the way wants to use some newspaper headlines to speculate that CMHC is taking it over, that is her business. However, I will continue and my staff will continue to protect the \$18.5 million that was set in our laps by the previous administration.

Mrs. Carstairs: It is not newspaper speculation that an affidavit was filed yesterday by MHRC through their lawyer. That affidavit said the value was substantially less than the first mortgage. What is MHRC now valuing this property at?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, if we do go to mortgage sale and we proceed, we can put a reserve bid on this

particular property. All I can say to the Member, because the courts have now set a date of February 2, it would be irresponsible to probably negotiate any further and discuss any values on this floor. I will continue and this Government will continue to follow those conditions set aside by their insurer that were set in our lap by the previous Government. We will continue to safeguard that \$18.5 million of Manitoba's money.

Future Value

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): The affidavit from MHRC seems to be quite different from what the Minister is saying in this House today. Can the Minister tell this House what studies have been conducted by his department to indicate that this rental property will not continue to be a glut on the market in Winnipeg?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, first of all, CMHC determines those guidelines, does the research. What we are concerned about right now is regardless of what the building is worth today, we are insured for the \$18.5 million. If it goes to mortgage sale, then CMHC takes the building back and we get our money for \$18.5 million. I will continue and my staff will continue to be subject to those conditions set aside by CMHC to protect those monies. That is the first responsibility of this Minister, by this Government and my staff at MHRC.

* (1345)

North Portage Development Corp. Accountability

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Each day more and more of this puzzle becomes unveiled to the public. Unfortunately none of the answers are provided. When will this Minister commit this Government to the open accountability that he hinted at last week and instruct his representatives on the North Portage Development Corporation to appear with the co-operation before this legislative body and answer questions on this development?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, this Government has answered every question put to us by the Opposition. They keep spinning their wheels and trying to maybe jeopardize a position that we were put in by the previous Government. We cannot do anything about the position we have been put in. However, we can do something about the position of looking after the \$18.5 million insured by CMHC, and we will continue to follow those guidelines set by them.

Day Care Underspending

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I made a mistake and I want to apologize.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Yesterday in Estimates I asked the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) how much of the \$4.4 million underspending in Family Services last year was from the Child Day Care program. I thought the Minister said \$2.2 million, but after consulting Hansard, the figure is actually \$3.2 million. I was shocked by \$2.2 million; \$3.2 million is absolutely incredible. It has stunned and disappointed the child care community.

My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Given the fact that he has boasted about a 45 percent increase in day care, which is absolutely not correct now, will the Premier agree to reallocate, to reassign \$3.2 million that was not spent in the day care program last year to this year's budget so that we can meet the crisis in child care funding this year?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I too was shocked at the admission that was put forth by the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) when she said we were always in trouble for overspending when she referred to the actions of the NDP Government. She said, it is quite a reversal in approach. I thought that for the first time in many months she saw the light, she understood that this administration has been attempting to manage the affairs of the Government very well.

Rather than take the approach that the NDP apparently preferred, which was to continuously overspend and get in trouble, as she referred, and run up the highest deficits of any administration in the history of this province, consistently running up deficits in excess of half a billion dollars year after year after year, because they took the approach that every single nickel that had been budgeted for, even when there were no people to take up the subsidies in day care, that money should be just dumped out on the street and let people spend it. We thought that the reversal in approach that she recognized was something that Manitobans had been asking for for a long, long time, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: We were always criticized by the Conservative Opposition for responding to the needs of families. Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has made light of the fact that \$3.2 million went unspent in day care when this Premier said that they had made a 45 percent increase and misled the public once again.

I am simply asking the Premier if he would ensure that monies authorized are actually spent and allocated. Will the Premier make the assurance that \$3.2 million will be added to this year's budget? Will he also keep his commitment to the Manitoba Child Care Association to ensure that any unspent monies at the end of this—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1350)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I begin by saying that I made absolutely no such commitment to the Manitoba Child Care Association nor anyone else. There are many

reasons why budgeted funds are not expended. First, there was lower than expected utilization of day care subsidies by families. That meant that fewer families were eligible or requested subsidies in day care.

Mr. Speaker, that is not a bad thing, that is a good thing. Even New Democrats should be happy when fewer people require subsidies, and therefore we do not have to pay them. It is absolutely ludicrous that New Democrats should be advocating that we spend, spend, spend every dollar regardless of whether there is a need there.

The fact of the matter is, that is like the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) suggesting that families, if they do not spend as much money this week as they had budgeted for in groceries, should go and throw that money into something else. Families normally use that money perhaps to pay down loans or mortgages or other things. They do not just simply go and spend the money because they budgeted for it. Where they have an opportunity to save they do. That is responsible management.

Funding Allocations

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): What the Premier (Mr. Filmon) fails to mention is that hundreds of day care workers are leaving the system because this Government refuses to spend more than 24 cents an hour on an increase while they let \$3.2 million go down the tubes against the deficit. Where are the priorities of this Government? Is it fighting the deficit on the backs of families or is it trying to ensure that we have a quality affordable day care system?

I would ask the Premier if he will not ensure that money, unspent, be reassigned to this year's budget and that he gives us assurances that that money go to the necessary increases in salaries for day care workers and in maintenance grants for day care centres?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The fact of the matter is that we are working co-operatively with the day care workers of this province. We have put together a working group that involves representation from MCCA, from other elements of the child care community and from the Government. Together they have come up with a plan and a proposal that they unanimously accepted and presented, Mr. Speaker, to the Human Services Committee of Cabinet.

The Human Services Committee of Cabinet has told them that they will respond to that in a positive sense and give them the answers they are looking for in regard to the requests that have been laid out for this Government for future funding, because we have always acknowledged that we want to treat child care workers fairly and we want to expand the system.

That is why over a course of two budgets we increased expenditures and budgeting for child care expenses in this province by 45 percent, in two budgets. That is why we made a commitment to expand spaces in this province. That is why we made a commitment to better quality day care in this province. We are keeping all

of those commitments by working co-operatively with the child care community, not being irresponsible like the Member—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Day Care Working Group Representation

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Yes, I am glad the Premier mentioned the question of consultation, because I want to ask him precisely about that.

Yesterday, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and his caucus had the time to meet with a group who want to dismantle our day care system. Today, a group of parents representing users of our day care system had to hold a press conference, because they cannot have any input into the working group dealing with funding issues in our day care system.

I want to ask the Premier if he will simply give his assurances today that a representative from the Concerned Parents for Child Day Care, representing the parents who use and need day care, will be able to send a representative to the working group and include it in all consultations dealing with funding in the child care system.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Member makes the point precisely and that is that there are many groups of parents out there who have an interest and a concern about day care. The fact of the matter is that there are people with differing opinions and differing views.

* (1355)

You cannot have people from all different elements involved in the working group. The working group was specifically set up to come up with a plan and a proposal having representation from the various elements of the day care community. It does have a parent representative on it, and it does have representation from the Manitoba Child Care Association, many of whom are also parents. The fact of the matter is, they have worked together co-operatively, and they are working out a solution to the problem rather than trying to fester up differences, create irritations and animosities and not solve the problem but make a political issue of it like the Member for St. Johns is.—(interjection)—

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

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The working group dealing with funding issues does not have a representative from the parents' groups. It has a representative from the Child Care Association, the Family Day Care Association and private day cares.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Private Schools Sexual Abuse Charges

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The Liberal Party is gravely concerned with the lack of accountability of independent schools. Unlike the NDP, that is only shouting about funding concerns, we are even more fearful that this lack of stringent protective guidelines is harmful for these children who may attend some of these schools.

Last year we heard of charges of 14 counts of common assault against students at St. John's Cathedral Boys' School and, even more serious, that charges have been laid against a man who for the past 20 years has been appearing at this school to give inspirational talks to the students. Charges of sexual abuse have been laid on behalf of six boys ages 10 to 14 years. Can the Minister inform the House today when he was informed of these further charges involving this school?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the accountability of independent schools, I have indicated on several occasions that over the last year staff from my department have been working very diligently and working very hard toward an approach which would indeed make independent schools more accountable.

Under the previous administration, Mr. Speaker, there has not been the kind of accountability that we need for independent schools. Indeed, there was a mixed up approach, if you like, in terms of the way that independent schools were handled. It is time that independent schools became accountable to the public for the programs, for the financing. For that reason we have been working very hard with them to arrive at a solution and at a formula and at an approach which is indeed going to make them accountable for the funds and for the programs that they have in these schools. That approach will be announced very shortly.

Mrs. Yeo: They are certainly waiting and waiting and waiting for these regulations, Mr. Speaker. The main concern to be addressed is that this man travels across the country, travels across Canada, speaking at boys' schools and there is no formal procedure of informing other school districts in this country.

Will this Minister notify other school divisions across Canada with respect to these charges to protect all the children in this country?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, when we came into Government there was an Act in place with regard to reporting child abuse. Indeed, there was a loophole found in that Act where third-party child abuse did not necessarily have to be reported. We moved on that issue very promptly and that loophole was closed to ensure that children who were in need of protection were indeed given that protection.

Mr. Speaker, our approach has not changed one iota from that. We will continue to ensure that the protection of children is a top priority, not only for this department but also for this Government. Anything that we can do to ensure that protection of children, we will do.

Mrs. Yeo: What actual action has this Minister had to notify school divisions from coast to coast, because this man travels across the country?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that the Member brings this issue before the House today, because in her address to the Bill that is before the House, she criticized me as Minister for suspending teachers' certificates when indeed there was an accusation and a charge. This was not cancelling certificates. This was suspending certificates so that those individuals would not be in contact with children.

Mr. Speaker, is the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) now changing her position from what she was advocating in her address?

Manitoba ECO Network Core Funding

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): In Estimates I questioned the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) on a number of current environmental issues, such as the environmental review process, intervenor status, environmental rights, but not surprisingly the Minister, as the chief lip-service environmentalist on yonder benches, was neither positive nor well-informed. I was most surprised when he suggested that he was not at all favourable to any core funding for any environmental group whatsoever.

* (1400)

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain his nay saying to the umbrella environmental group, the Manitoba Environmental Network, for a much needed and justified partial core funding when his own Deputy Minister has given numerous verbal assurances that funding will be forthcoming very shortly?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I observed two things from yonder benches, Mr. Speaker. No. 1, he has read the rushes from yesterday's Question Period. That issue was raised by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak). Secondly, he has read the printed reports of our Estimates.

As I stated yesterday, I am still actively prepared to deal with the ECO Network and their request, but I can also indicate that core funding is not the manner in which I believe that we can best serve this community. We are quite prepared to work with them to make sure that they are able to continue with their operations.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, the Minister's sarcasm and snarkiness will not carry him too far in the next election. As early as mid-September, his Deputy Minister did give funding assurances to the Manitoba Environmental Network, and this was followed up by correspondence by the network November 16, referencing these assurances. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table this.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Taylor: Where is the truth? Who are we to believe: the Deputy Minister and the Manitoba Environmental Network, or the Minister?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, the answer is here.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, this Legislature operates on the basis of ministerial responsibility. This matter is not hearsay. It has been brought forward in all seriousness.

The question is this: when is this Minister going to take full responsibility for his department and start saying the same as his Deputy Minister, or is he going to rein in his Deputy Minister, or is the real problem he cannot get the grant through Cabinet? Three strikes, you are out, Glen.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of the Environment.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem, as I indicated a minute ago, for accepting ministerial responsibility. I indicated I am prepared to work with the ECO Network. That offer still stands despite the activities of the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor).

Manitoba Medical Association Health Minister's Speech

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, on December 5, 1989, we raised concern about the unilateral announcement by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) of a cap on Medicare billings in this province, and we specifically asked the Premier (Mr. Filmon), I asked the Premier directly if he was willing to table the speech given by the Minister of Health to the MMA. The Premier refused.

I have filed a freedom of information request. I now have that speech which I would like to table for the Members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, the speaking notes of the Honourable Minister of Health. It is one of the most duplicitous speeches I have ever read. The Minister talked about trust and partnership, and my favourite quote is the line where he says: My purpose is to ensure that Manitobans see that the physicians and the Government of Manitoba are dealing together like adults, with honesty, openness and mutual respect.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Is there a question here? Is there a question?

Mr. Ashton: I would like to ask the Premier how he can justify having his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) make statements like this, whether it be in a secret speech or not, when within a couple of days of making this statement the same Minister of Health went and called doctors liars, seriously jeopardizing negotiations with doctors in this province.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that my honourable friend, the New Democratic Health Critic, is now an advocate for the executive of the MMA. The issue of the Government's offer to the MMA was made, I would presume, absolutely public in a December letter to each and every physician in the Province of Manitoba,

wherein the premises outlined to the board of the MMA on a Tuesday, late in November, were expanded in great detail to each and every physician in the province.

Mr. Speaker, that offer, as I have said to this House and to the public of Manitoba and indeed to the physicians, is both a reasonable offer to the physicians, it is responsible to the taxpayers of this province, and it does something that has not happened in previous negotiations: it allows us to guarantee quality health care services through the Guaranteed Services Fund.

Health Care Quick Response Team

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Well, Mr. Speaker, my concern is with the patients and the state of our health care system. My follow-up question is once again to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), because I think the Premier has to answer for the actions of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). In this document as well the Minister outlines what he calls a "quick response team," essentially a crisis management team.

Will the First Minister now acknowledge, as his Minister of Health has done with the Manitoba Medical Association, that there is indeed a crisis in the health system and also take action to assure the Minister himself deals with it, not some shadowy quick response crisis management team that the Minister of Health outlines in his secret speech to the MMA?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, you know, the premise of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is so foolish that I am surprised he raises the fact that he should even think we as a Government would not want to respond as quickly as possible to any eventuality in the health care system.

What is health care system other than emergency issues? What does every hospital have in this province but an emergency department? What does that imply? Quick response to critical situations, that is what health care is all about. This is supposedly the Critic for Health in the—we can understand why the New Democrats are in such difficulty in this province.

Health Care Quick Response Team

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Well, Mr. Speaker, 85 empty beds in the Deer Lodge Hospital, people lined up in the Concordia Hospital hallways, the continuing increases of waiting lists—some crisis management on the part of the Government.

I would like to ask the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) once again. Will he now acknowledge what the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) acknowledges by the appointment of this so-called quick response committee, that is, the fact that the Government itself is not responding? We do have a crisis. The Government is completely failing the area of health care in this province.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the New Democratic Health Critic, really his Leader ought to apologize for his lack of depth and understanding in the health care field.

When you are in negotiations with a professional group like the MMA you from time to time run into circumstances as happened in Ontario, where negotiations there have been fraught with a great deal of public poster campaigns, with all sorts of allegations made against the Liberal Government about Government cost cutting—one poster by the OMA, she is in no shape to travel. This is the sort of alarmist information that comes out from time to time when a professional association wants to achieve more money from Government.

If an issue comes up as a result of these negotiations the quick response team, which will be used when there is a need to use it in terms of the negotiations with the MMA, will be there to respond as to whether this in fact is a new issue, whether it is as solvable, whether the Government has taken action, all of which will prove positive to the management of the health care system in the province.

Credit Unions Loan Loss Reserves

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): My question to the Minister responsible for The Credit Unions Act (Mr. Connery) is this: the Provincial Auditor has warned, Mr. Speaker, that several credit unions will not meet the minimum reserve levels set out by provincial regulation. He has reminded this Government of its duty to protect depositors and taxpayers. What is the Minister doing to ensure that loan loss reserves meet legal requirements?

* (1410)

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I appreciate the question from the Member opposite. We have, since we have been in power, been very concerned with the health of the credit union system. We are very appreciative of the work that the credit union system in Manitoba does for a lot of communities. In many communities they are the only financial institution that those committees have.

As a Government, we are prepared to work with them to keep them there, to ensure they are healthy and they do not put at jeopardy any of the Government's money that they have guaranteed on their loan. I am meeting with Leslie Callum, who is the head of the Stabilization Fund, at 2:30 this afternoon.

Mr. Kozak: I certainly appreciate the Minister's words of concern but the Provincial Auditor tells us, he told us in December, that the Government is financially exposed to credit union loan losses. He pointed out that this Government has for two years not had a regulatory action plan in place. We need such a plan. Will the Minister comply with the Auditor's report and

make a commitment to firm target dates for adequate loan loss reserves?

Mr. Connery: Let me put it very clearly to the Member opposite that the credit unions, while we want to ensure they are healthy, have been making progress over the last couple of years. Their progress has been steady, it has not been large, but it has been steady. They are working to raise their equity up into the regions we think are healthy. That is part of the reason that I am meeting with the Stabilization Fund this afternoon, not that there is any risk to the depositors. There is absolutely no risk to the depositors of the credit unions of Manitoba. It is to look at the concerns raised by the Auditor in his report, and to go over them with the chairman to ensure that the programs they are conducting are in the best interests of the credit union and the peoples of Manitoba.

Government Financial Liability

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Once again, I appreciate the Minister's concern, but after two years in Government the Provincial Auditor still felt obliged to raise this as a major matter in December of last year, despite my advice to this Minister of September 30, 1988, which he ignored until the Provincial Auditor raised it again. Will the Minister detail the public's financial exposure under provincial guarantees to credit unions? What are the limits to the province's financial liability?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in 1982 the Government gave an interest-free loan to the credit unions of \$25 million. In 1987 they gave them a loan guarantee of \$25 million to help the credit unions with those smaller credit unions that were having difficulties. The credit unions are working well. They are working with our department. They are very co-operative, and we will continue to work with them.

Crow Benefit Payment Plan Costs

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). The recent report by Deloitte Haskins & Sells, commissioned by this Government, on the method of payment of the Crow benefit, is obviously intended to soft sell the Government's position that the payment should go to the producers as opposed to the railways as it has historically done. It consistently downplays and underestimates the negative impacts, and exaggerates the benefits of this change but it does not fool us on this issue.

I ask the Minister: does he agree with the premise in the report, even though it downplays the negative impacts, that there will be a \$75 million cost to compensate producers as a result of the dilution effect of the payment to all arable acres, to all farmers in this province? Is he prepared to offer that amount to producers in order to offset that impact?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, what I am in favour of is the process we have

ongoing in the Province of Manitoba, to give producers all the information they need to understand the impacts of a no-change position and various scenarios of potential change. The mention of dilution—certainly the Province of Alberta has gone on the record as promoting a \$100 million additional provincial subsidy, which will be detrimental to agriculture in Manitoba.

The Member mentions \$75 million potential in Manitoba. The range put out by the advisory council is \$30 million to \$70 million, so he has got the wrong facts again. Mr. Speaker, we are in favour of a process of giving farmers all the information they need so we can collectively come to the proper decision on a very delicate question that is important for the future of agriculture in the Province of Manitoba.

Agriculture Minister's Position

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, clearly this Minister is attempting to mislead the people of Manitoba insofar as the Government's position. I ask this Minister to come clean on his position. It is a fact that he is supporting the change of payment. I ask him: will he still continue to support that even if the federal Government, as it has up to this point in time, refuses to pay compensation for the increased road costs as a result of this, and even though there will be a tremendous impact in terms of abandonment of rail lines such as the Cowan subdivision, the Winnipegosis subdivision, in the Parkland area of this province?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear on the record that my position is to consult with the producers of the Province of Manitoba and the agribusiness sector of the Province of Manitoba. I do not take a pure political position, to heck with the facts, to heck with the reality of working for the producers of this province. That is where the NDP were, that is where they are, that is why they have fallen in the polls where they are at. They do not listen to the producers who could help to lead this industry into the 1990s and beyond.

Technical Advice

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, if the Minister takes that position, why did he not put any of his own technical people from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Agriculture on this advisory group to prepare these studies? Why did he ignore the advice from his own technical people on these issues?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister is on the advisory council. I think that is about the highest position in the department one can get. The consulting firm that the advisory council handle is drawing information from about 100 different sources in the Province of Manitoba including my department, including the transport institute, and including a whole variety of business interests in this province.

The Member has no facts. He has no understanding of the issue. He is just trying to politicize it and destroy an opportunity potentially for the Province of Manitoba.

Health Care Acute Care Beds

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, as of October 1, 1989, there are about 583 people waiting for long-term facilities, and 25 percent of them are occupying acute care beds, costing \$250 per day. This Minister is wasting taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, for the nine months he has not given us the report. Can he tell us what his other long-term plan is to meet the needs for these seniors who are very vulnerable?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I would have thought, since my honourable friend this year debated the Manitoba Health Services Commission for more than the half hour they took last year, that my honourable friend would have some semblance of that.

First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, when we came into office on May 9 of 1988, the capital budget for construction of personal care homes was frozen. We released that freeze on personal care home construction. In two consecutive budgets we have committed almost 300 new personal care home beds for the service of those Manitobans who are panelled for placement. That will add significantly to our ability to serve those individuals needing personal care home placement in the Province of Manitoba.

Head Injuries Services

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, we can summarize this Minister's action in four words. The Minister as a chief of Health Advisory Network, department of broken promises, this Minister with a generic answer for the last 19 months.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: as of last year we have been asking him a question with regard to the people with head injuries. He promised -(interjection)- I am asking a question. Can you wait? Are you the Speaker or is Mr. Speaker there? Mr. Speaker, who is the Speaker here?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): There may be question in the Honourable Member's mind who the Speaker is, but there is none in mine. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member should get on with his question, is the point I am making.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, the Honourable Member for Kildonan kindly put his question now, please.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us what plans he has in his mind to meet the needs of the patients with head injuries? There are 2,000 people who suffer with head injuries for a year in Manitoba.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I know my honourable friend must be frustrated in terms of Liberal policy development. He today advocates, I presume, the construction and placement of panelled residents of Manitoba into personal care homes, while his Leader in Neepawa says to toss 40 percent of them out. Somewhere there has to be consistency in the Liberal Party policy.

* (1420)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, on a point of order.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Yes, Mr. Speaker. This is about the 15th time that this Member has deliberately provided incorrect information to this House. He knows it is incorrect information and I demand that he withdraw.

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

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) cannot rise ostensibly on a point of order and put forward allegations that are out of order, such as that the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is deliberately putting false information forward. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition needs to be called to account for her words just now, and she should withdraw them and apologize to the Honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), where he alleged that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) had deliberately misled, that is not correct. There is no point of order there.

On the point of order raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, it is clearly a dispute over the facts, and therefore it is not a point of order.

Rheumatologists Shortages

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Kildonan, kindly put his question now, please.

Mr. Guizar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, for the last few months we have raised the issue of the shortage of rheumatologists in Manitoba. Can the Minister of

Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us today what he has done for the last 19 months to meet the needs of the patients who need the rheumatologist services? People are going out of Manitoba to receive these services at the expense of tax dollars.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I do have to apologize to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). She did not say that 40 percent of Manitobans ought not to be in personal care homes in Neepawa. She said it in Minnedosa, and I apologize for getting that wrong.

The point remains that she and her critic of Health ought to get together on what the Liberal Party policy is, because it is raising fears amongst those Manitobans in personal care homes that a Liberal Government would throw them out into the streets.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Gimli.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Gimli has the floor.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Penner (Minister of Rural Development) for Gilleshammer (Minnedosa); Cummings (Minister of Environment) for McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General); Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs) for Oleson (Minister of Family Services); and Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs) for Praznik (Lac du Bonnet).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I too have a committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), that the composition of Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: The Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minkenko) for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles); the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would like to obtain the unanimous consent of the House to vary the Estimates sequence established under Subrule 65.6.1) and tabled in this House on June 15, 1989, by setting aside the Estimates of the Department of Labour to consider the Estimates of the Civil Service Commission and the Women's

Directorate, also known as the ministry responsible for the Status of Women; and for the purposes of this announcement, Mr. Speaker, this change is to apply to today only. The arrangements for the next day for Estimates will be discussed amongst House Leaders.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to alter the sequence for the Estimates? Room 255 now will have the Civil Service and also the ministry responsible for the Status of Women. Is that agreed? Agreed. For today only? Agreed. The Honourable Government House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Civil Service, and the Status of Women; and the Honourable Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) in the Chair for the Department of Family Services, and the Department of Education and Training.

* (1430)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE

Mr. Chairman (Harold Gilleshammer): Order, please. I call the Committee of Supply to order. As agreed to by the House, this section of the Committee of Supply will this afternoon consider the Estimates for the Civil Service Commission and the Estimates for the Status of Women. We shall first examine the Estimates of the Civil Service Commission and we will begin with an opening statement by the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In introducing the 1989-90 budget Estimates for the Civil Service Commission, I would draw attention to the 71st Annual Report of the Civil Service Commission for the fiscal year 1988-89 which was tabled in the House November 27, 1989. This report explains the organization, programs and activities of the Civil Service Commission over the '88-89 fiscal year. I would also draw the committee's attention to the Supplementary Estimates information which has been produced by the Civil Service Commission to provide additional detailed information clarifying the printed Main Estimates. This information provides supplementary background, organization, program and financial information designed to assist the Members with the Estimates review now before us.

As indicated in the printed material, the budget Estimates for the Civil Service Commission are

comprised of three main components. These include the salary and operating expenses of the Commission as set out in Item No. 1; the Government's contribution to the various Civil Service benefit plans as listed under Item No. 2, and the provincial payroll tax as set forth in Item No. 3.

As can be seen from the Main Appropriation Expenditure Summary, the largest areas of expenditure within the Civil Service Commission's Estimates are associated with Items 2 and 3, the Civil Service benefit plans and the levy for the payroll tax. With respect to the various Government benefit plans, the majority of these are fixed through statute or collective agreement. Similarly, the payroll tax is calculated based on the payroll for Government employees employed under the authority of The Civil Service Act.

Regarding the program activities within the Civil Service Commission over the past fiscal year, much detail is provided within the text of the 1988-89 Annual Report.

Members will recall that in the Speech from the Throne reference was made to initiatives to humanize the workplace and ensure all Manitobans enjoy true equality in employment.

In the Estimates currently before us, staff years and operating costs to a total of \$271,000 will further enhance the affirmative action initiatives and special measures being undertaken within the Civil Service Commission.

Women currently comprise 47.35 percent of the Manitoba Civil Service, slightly higher than their labour market availability of 43.35 percent. Access to employment is not the primary issue with women as a target group, but rather equitable distribution across all levels within the service and, in particular, senior management.

Within these budget Estimates, funding and an additional staff year have been allocated for the establishment of an Executive Development Program For Women to identify and develop women at the professional and middle management level for executive management positions within Government. The program will consist of a series of interrelated components including an assessment centre, management education, developmental assignments and an executive development placement inventory. At the present time, a professional staffperson has been hired to co-ordinate the program and an advisory committee of senior women executives across all Government departments has been appointed to assist in the initial and ongoing development and implementation.

Mr. Chairperson, this Executive Development Program For Women is an important initiative, not only in the context of affirmative action, but also in the context of an overall human resource management objective to enhance managerial effectiveness in the Civil Service.

An executive development policy announced by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) earlier in this fiscal year provides the framework for ongoing executive development to

meet future work force challenges and requirements of a changing society and work force composition, and limited resources for new and existing programs and services.

I would also like to call your attention to the new focus being given to the Career Development Program.

Since 1986, the Civil Service Commission has operated a Career Development Program initiative to accelerate the advancement of affirmative action target group members from the senior clerical-administrative ranks into the professional-middle management categories. The program has recruited primarily internal candidates from the affirmative action target groups and has provided a two-year developmental program involving both structured classroom training and a series of specific developmental assignments geared toward attaining the individual's career aspirations. The first group of five graduates completed the program in 1988 and the second group of trainees completed their program in 1989. From its inception, the Career Development Program was created as a pilot project; while provision for staff years were made available from a central pool, there was never provision made for salary dollars which had to be recovered from other sources.

Within the 1989-90 Estimates now before us, the Government has approved the continuation of the Career Development Program and has provided an additional seven staff years and salary dollars for the recruitment of a full time coordinator and an additional six administrative trainees. This will increase the total number of potential trainees to 12. The next offering of the program will be focused towards the recruitment of affirmative action target groups external to the Civil Service in order to provide the experience and training necessary to bridge to a career within the Manitoba Government.

A coordinator for the Career Development Program has recently been hired and we will be moving quickly toward the implementation of the third phase of this important initiative.

These new and enhanced initiatives are in addition to many other services being provided through the Civil Service Commission in support of the implementation of affirmative action across Government. Other initiatives in the areas of staff training and development, employment counselling and support services, communications, and auditing and monitoring employment practices are referenced in several areas throughout the Annual Report. In addition, earlier this year at the request of Manitoba Women in Government, the Premier announced an independent audit of employment and classification systems within the Civil Service to determine whether there is any inequitable treatment of women or other groups within the application of these systems. This review is targeted to be completed by June 30, 1990.

Mr. Chairperson, these initiatives show that we are prepared to respond to concerns about opportunities for women and other designated groups with positive concrete action. Static to limited growth within the Civil Service over the past several years combined with a general trend to lower turn over rates in an aging Civil

Service population has resulted in a decreasing number of employment opportunities. These factors make it increasingly more difficult to meet the career and promotional aspirations of existing civil servants and to make rapid gains in the changing target group representation within the Civil Service.

* (1440)

Numbers of Civil Service competitions, for example, show a steady decline from 939 in 1986-87, to 836 in 1987-88, to 730 in 1988-89. Employment security provisions and the priority requirement to internally redeploy employees impacted by budget decisions have contributed to this decline. Despite this tight employment market, however, the statistics do indicate that all designated target groups are increasing their representation within the Civil Service.

It is important to note that while the total number of appointments through the bulletined and advertised competition process decreased considerably from 836 competitions producing 1,166 appointments in 1987-88, down to 730 competitions resulting in 1,037 appointments in 1988-89, the number of target group appointments, i.e., Native, disabled, and visible minority, increased from 11 percent to 12 percent of all appointments over the same period. This would indicate that affirmative action measures are having a positive impact despite the tight employment market and keen competition for Civil Service vacancies.

More significantly, Mr. Chairperson, if we examine all new appointments to the Civil Service in all categories of employment, i.e., regular bulletin competitions plus term appointments, entry level appointments, sessional and seasonal appointments, et cetera, again we see a slight decline from 2,526 appointments in 1987-88 to 2,365 in 1988-89, a decrease of 6.3 percent. However, if we examine the total number of target group appointments among these new employees, they have actually increased over the same period from 298 to 337, an increase of 13 percent.

Since we are dealing here with new appointments to the Civil Service, these are the very numbers we have to increase in order to change the actual representation or mix in order to achieve our affirmative action goals. So, Mr. Chairperson, despite the fact that employment opportunities have been impacted by the economic realities limited to no growth and lower turnover rates, affirmative action measures still appear to be having an impact within this difficult employment environment.

Turning to other areas of responsibility within the Civil Service Commission, I would note that 1989-90 marks the final year of a three-year collective agreement negotiated with the MGEA and other professional bargaining units back in 1987. The cost of living adjustment was implemented September 22, 1989, in accordance with the formula negotiated within the collective agreement, and providing on average for a salary increase of 4.7 percent. Based on discussions with the MGEA, it is anticipated that both parties will get an early start on the renewal of the collective agreement and therefore collective bargaining will

become a major undertaking for the Civil Service Commission during the upcoming year.

As Minister responsible for the Civil Service, but also considering my role as Minister of Labour and Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I have a particular interest in ensuring that the Manitoba Government as an employer leads by example in the area of developing work options designed to meet the changing needs and diversity of a work force where, on an increasing basis, family responsibilities are shared between two income earners.

In a review just recently conducted by the Women's Directorate, I was pleased to note that the Government of Manitoba has shown leadership in this area most notably in such provisions as job sharing, paid maternity leave, adoptive parent leave, and a very full prorated benefit package for part-time workers. A newly revised sexual harassment policy is soon to be implemented, and new initiatives in the area of workplace mediation are being developed, both of which are designed to make the workplace an even safer and more equitable environment in which to work.

I recognize that some of the recently developed programs and work options could benefit from some fine tuning, and there is a need for greater awareness across the system. Also there are, no doubt, other options to be developed to meet the ever changing demands in the workplace. However, as Minister responsible for the Civil Service, I am committed to ensuring that the Government as an employer, the province's largest employer, maintains its leadership position with regard to the quality of worklife within the Civil Service.

With these brief initial remarks, I look forward to providing additional information in response to any question raised during the debate before us.

Mr. Chairman: At this time we will allow time for the critic of the official Opposition Party to make an opening statement. The Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray).

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Chairperson, I basically will defer any opening comments and leave some comments towards the end, particularly since we are short of time. I would just indicate that we certainly hope, within the short amount of time that we have for Estimates in this department, that we will get some grasp from the Minister as to the extent of this particular audit. We have questions on that, and I am also looking forward to the tabling, which I thought we might have heard in opening statements, of the Government's Affirmative Action implementation plan, as we were promised in the House a number of weeks ago. With that, I will not spend any more time on opening comments. I look forward to getting into specific questions.

Mr. Chairman: We will allow time for the critic of the New Democratic Party to make an opening statement. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I would first of all like to indicate that this

is one area where I believe the change in Ministers is appreciated, particularly by people in the Civil Service. One only has to recall that last year we spent a significant amount of time in Estimates discussing the comments made by the previous Minister, comments he had made supposedly jokingly to his staff about pink slips, comments which were totally inappropriate, comments that we spent considerable time in Estimates trying to get the Minister to disown.

I appreciate the fact that the current Minister has not shown the incredible insensitivity the previous Minister showed as the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission having made those comments. I say that in all sincerity because I do believe the current Minister has the greater appreciation for the sensitivity, the concerns of our civil servants than did the previous Minister.

I want to indicate that I too will be asking a number of questions throughout Estimates on a number of important areas. Last year, for example, we raised concern about direction in terms of affirmative action, particularly following the elimination of the affirmative action co-ordinator's position. That is an item that I will be raising questions on in, once again, Affirmative Action.

Pay equity, I am sure, will be coming up both under this section and also under the Status of Women and Labour. It really cuts across various areas, and we will be asking questions in that particular area. Last year I raised concerns about privatization. It is a continuing concern.

This year the question I think obviously has to be asked as to what impact the Government's announced decentralization program will have in terms of individual civil servants. I state that because I fully support decentralization. In fact, I believe it is not really a new concept in Manitoba. Much of what we have currently, for example, in northern Manitoba was put in place under the Schreyer Government back in the early 1970s when the Department of Northern Affairs was established, when many departments of Government were moved to communities such as Thompson, The Pas, Flin Flon and various other communities in northern Manitoba. That was also something that was done in other rural areas as part of the stay option that was part of Government policy at the time.

* (1450)

We are dealing with what is not a new policy. It is a policy I fully support, but I do believe that the Government, as we discuss Civil Service Estimates, should be willing and able to provide information as to what departments it is looking at moving, how many civil servants are going to be involved, what provisions are going to be made in terms of the adjustment in terms of the civil servants involved.

I state once again that I fully support, 100 percent support decentralization, and I am a bit surprised quite frankly. I am glad the Deputy Premier supports it as well. I believe it is a positive move, but I am quite surprised actually at this point in time, after the policy has been announced—and once again in the New

Democratic Party we have indicated our complete support for that, it is something we have been working on the many years we were in Government—I am a bit surprised that there is not an action plan in place that is being announced as part of these Estimates.

It seems to me that if this policy is going to be anything more than a political announcement, that there should be some substance forthcoming fairly soon. I would say that if the Government has announced that 500 jobs are going to be moved, presumably that must be based on some analysis, some discussion of which departments those—I mean that figure, presumably, should be a real figure. If it is not, I would hope the Minister would indicate that. If it is simply a target, or it sounded nice so the Government is going to use that figure whether or not that is going to be the number in the final analysis, I would like to know. I believe civil servants would like to know. I believe that rural and northern Manitobans would like to know as well. I look forward to some answers from the Minister on those questions as we go through Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Prior to starting the line by line consideration, we will call the Minister's staff forward. We would invite the Minister to introduce her staff this afternoon.

Mrs. Hammond: I would like to introduce Civil Service Commissioner Paul Hart, Terry Edgeworth who is the ADM Human Resource Management, Gerry Irving ADM Labour Relations, Audrey Clifford who is Management Support Services, Yvette Creft, Director of Communications and Bob Pollock, Secretary to the Civil Service Commission Board.

Mr. Chairman: We will proceed at this time then to item 1 the Civil Service Commission, 1.(a) Executive Office (1) Salaries \$248,200—the Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: I wonder if the Minister would be able to supply us today, as is customary, with a copy of her opening remarks. That would be my first question.

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, that is fine. I understand that we have some extra copies here.

Ms. Gray: I would begin by asking, could the Minister tell us, she had indicated a number of weeks ago in the House, that we should be looking forward to these Civil Service Commission Estimates, because at this time she would be tabling an Affirmative Action implementation plan, and I am wondering if the Minister could table that plan at this time.

Mrs. Hammond: The staff has prepared a package for each of the critics.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has tabled a package. Can she tell us, because I have not had a chance to look through this, is within this package a new implementation plan by this particular Government as to how they see affirmative action being implemented?

Mrs. Hammond: There is a copy of the Affirmative Action Program. I think that the Member will find

everything in it that she needs as far as the implementation strategy, starting at the beginning. I will just go through this briefly.

The information package contains the structure, diverse roles and the various accountabilities of the participants within this collaborative effort. It reviews the numerical goals and timetables for the program, the monitoring and control mechanisms which have been put into place, special measures taken with regard to recruitment, training and other support initiatives, and finally an outline of the specific objectives set for 1989-90. In addition, you will find a summary package of statistical data measuring various aspects of program results along with informational brochures on the program in general and some of the more specific services. It is intended that this package will be updated as additional informational material is produced and used as background information in presentations by staff to various groups interested in our Affirmative Action Program.

* (1500)

Ms. Gray: Other than the indication of recent statistics, which is data compilation, can the Minister tell us, what in this document is a specific different implementation strategy than that which was developed by the former administration? This Conservative Government spent much time complaining about the poor implementation of affirmative action. I am wondering if the Minister can explain for us exactly what is in here in regard to a change of focus in implementation. What is here that is different from what the previous administration had planned to do?

Mrs. Hammond: The role of Affirmative Action Co-ordinator has been elevated to the level of Assistant Deputy Minister of Human Resource Management. For the first time, the Civil Service Commission Board has been made more representative through the appointment of Native and visible minority members to vacancies on the board.

I want to say that we made a point of making sure that representation was on the board. The appointment of the Deputy Minister of Health, he was added to the Affirmative Action Central Committee. A system has been established for monitoring temporary appointments to the Civil Service to ensure the use of inventories of target group applicants obtained through outreach activities.

I believe in my own office that I have someone who came through on that system, who is in a term position and is working very well. As well as being in the visible minority category, she is a new immigrant, and we are planning to assist with English language supports. Emphasis has been placed on monitoring affirmative action progress in departments through the audit of departmental staffing activity. A staffing delegation is withdrawn if affirmative action results are not indicated.

A career pathing program has been introduced in the Brandon area to provide opportunities for clerical staff to expand their experience through short-term, cross-departmental work assignments. Affirmative

action, intercultural and related training programs are offered on a regular basis. Some of the things that we are doing, of course, are ongoing. There is no point in reinventing the wheel, but we are constantly adding and making sure that the programs are working. I think the critic for the NDP will probably be able to say that it is not an easy goal, but it is something that we are committed to doing as a Government.

* (1510)

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, given the tidbits of information that the Minister had given us, I would not call that an implementation plan. Some of the things that she has mentioned are really not any different from what was in place before. Really, we have a Government which promised some new, innovative implementation plan, because they spent a lot of time talking about how poor the former plan was under the former administration. Now what we have really is not a lot of changes in regard to affirmative action.

Now, the Minister had said that the position, the Affirmative Action Co-ordinator, has been elevated to the position of Assistant Deputy Minister. That statement to me is very, very clear. She is now saying that the Affirmative Action Co-ordinator is now at the level of an Assistant Deputy Minister. Therefore I assume that in fact that position description and the job responsibilities that go along with that job all relate to affirmative action. Am I correct?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, a significant portion of that job is related to the affirmative action. That is not all that person does, but we have elevated it to that role to give it a higher profile, and we feel that doing this, having somebody at that Assistant Deputy Minister level allows us to be able to keep a closer handle on what is happening in other departments.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us what percentage is a significant portion, what percentage of the ADM's time?

Mrs. Hammond: Probably better than 50 percent because the whole idea of affirmative action is to integrate into all of the programs, so anything that we are dealing with has an affirmative action component.

Ms. Gray: Well, since the Civil Service Commission deals with position descriptions all the time and usually percentages of time for various responsibilities are indicated, I would assume that would be on the ADM's job description. I am wondering if the Minister would table that job description today.

Mrs. Hammond: We do not happen to have that information today, but no problem in getting it to the critics.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, with the responsibilities of affirmative action now with the Assistant Deputy Minister, can she explain to us exactly what this position has in regard to authority for any implementation of affirmative action? I am asking this

because is there any actual line authority tied in with this position, or is it merely co-ordinating a monitoring role?

Mrs. Hammond: If you will turn to the page on Accountability, it indicates what the ADM Human Resource Management does: develops policies and programs for ministerial Cabinet approval; communicates program policies, goals and guidelines; delegates staffing authority to departments; develops central support services to departments; develops special cross-government initiatives; reviews and evaluates program effectiveness; and liaises with target group communities.

Ms. Gray: One of the difficulties that was identified a number of years ago with the implementation of affirmative action was that there did not seem to be the commitment on the part of a number of managers and supervisors in regard to implementing affirmative action, and part of that lack of commitment was identified also as not having the information, or not really understanding the concept of affirmative action. I am wondering if the Minister can indicate if there have been any steps that her Government has taken to ensure that there is a thorough understanding of affirmative action and what it means, and how that translates into what a supervisor's or manager's job does, and has there been any further workshops or training of staff in this area.

Mrs. Hammond: Yes there have been a number of workshops and training for both management and employees, and the ADM has been meeting with the committees that are set up in each department.

Ms. Gray: I have some more specific questions that relate to affirmative action and hiring boards, and I am not sure whether this is the time to ask them or whether I should be waiting until another session such as the personnel services.

Mrs. Hammond: The Human Resource Management Division, when we come to it.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, it is always interesting asking questions on affirmative action, because when I campaign in elections I usually have to defend affirmative action against the attacks of Conservative candidates, including my opponent in the last election who accused the NDP—and this is a direct quote—“of creating racism,” through its affirmative action programs, which is a rather bizarre statement to say at the least. So it is interesting running against a Conservative Party in the election which has no commitment, certainly in my area, towards affirmative action and then asking the Government here along the lines of the Liberal Critic as to whether they are living up to their stated commitment to try and improve affirmative action. So I sometimes do not know which way the Conservative Party is coming from. It seems to be coming and going at various different times.

I will say that this Minister appears to have a better grasp of affirmative action than the previous one. I do

not mean this to be a broken record throughout the Estimates, but I spent a considerable amount of time in the last Civil Service Commission Estimates trying to get some inkling of understanding from the previous Minister about what the real cost of affirmative action was. The more you asked questions of the previous Minister, the more you started seeing that he had no idea really what the concept was about and that the whole concept of affirmative action was essentially on auto pilot.

I believe the Liberal Critic is correct here in saying that essentially what we are seeing is that many of the policies that were put in place—and it is important to note the fact that it is in the documents that are here that the agreement on affirmative action was signed several years ago. Basically, affirmative action was initiated in January of 1983. Records have been kept since 1986, I believe, and we are really in the initial stages.

The evidence shows that affirmative action is, to a certain extent, doing what is supposed to do. There seems to be some improvement in hiring in terms of Native and disabled applicants, although if there is one disappointment, it is in the area of the hiring of visible minority applicants. In fact, I would like to ask the Minister if there is any indication why there seems to be some success in the area of Native and disabled applicants but an actual decline in absolute numbers in terms of visible minorities.

* (1520)

Mrs. Hammond: One of the reasons is that 50 percent of our hiring has been outside of Winnipeg, and, unfortunately, 90 percent of the visible minorities are in Winnipeg. That is one of the areas. There is another area, too. Sometimes people do not choose to put down that they are in a visible minority category or any other category. Sometimes they do not want to be categorized and so there is a possibility that we could be doing better in the Civil Service than indicated in our stats. All we can do is ask people, but we certainly cannot make that judgment on our own.

Mr. Ashton: I recognize there is a breakdown in the role in the areas in the city, but obviously there was also a breakdown in 1987-88. I am just comparing the figures that the Minister has provided the committee, which shows a drop, and what I find a bit concerning is the fact that all the target groups, if there is one target group that is expanding, it is in terms of visible minorities because of our immigration patterns in the last number of years. If anything, you would expect there would be an increased number of individuals or from a visible minority being hired.

I am wondering if the Minister would perhaps undertake to review that. I am not trying to say there is not progress in other areas. I think the program is working, but in other areas perhaps not as quickly as would be liked, but it has declined, there are fewer visible minority applicants hired during that period of time.

I am just wondering if she would undertake a review, perhaps through discussions with various organizations

in Winnipeg, multicultural organizations, for example, being an obvious first stop, asking for their advice on ways in which this can be improved. Perhaps part of the problem is lack of awareness. I suspect that, by the way, is the case, that people are not aware of the fact there is an Affirmative Action Program and what it really means. I am wondering if the Minister would undertake a review in this area.

Mrs. Hammond: We are currently embarking on exactly that kind of review. One of the reasons staff tells me that we have done more hiring in rural Manitoba than we normally do, and that was one of the reasons for the change between last year and this one that we are comparing, but it is a good suggestion to be talking to the communities because, of course, those are the very people that we need to get out and talk to, to find out how we can best help them to be able to compete in some of the competitions and how we can give that kind of support.

Mr. Ashton: I think that would be worthwhile, and particularly with the talk of further decentralization. I think there should be a real effort to ensure, when you have decentralization even if it is existing jobs now, there will be job vacancies in the future which will obviously be filled through bulletins, to network with multicultural organizations, organizations in particular representing visible minorities, in particular in the . . . I think that is the area where the lack of information is probably the most significant to point out these opportunities because I believe that it is a problem of awareness.

I believe if people have job opportunities they will move. I believe that is the case regardless of—when we talk about the population as a whole or visible minorities, let us face it, in today's tough economic times some of the jobs that are being bulletined are pretty desirable jobs. It is hard to say what kind of job security you have, it depends on the Government of the Day to a certain extent, but you have some job security and the salaries are fairly reasonable. I would urge the Minister to do that.

Moving on to decentralization, what I would like to ask the Minister is when we in the Legislature will receive details as to what the Government's plan is in terms of decentralization, details which will include the number of people who will be moved by department, which departments, and where they will be moving to.

Mrs. Hammond: That is not an area that I will be able to answer at this time. When the announcement is ready to be made—the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made the announcement of round figures and that is the only indication that I would be able to do at this time. As soon as possible they will be making announcements on those moves, because we do understand that it is important that our staff have every opportunity to have as much time as possible if there is a move coming.

Mr. Ashton: I would like to ask the Minister how the figure was arrived at, because I think that is something that has been on people's minds. I mean 500, the Minister said this was a round figure. Are there figures

of 499 and 500 sounded better? Are there any figures? Is this a target? Is it just a figure that the Premier thought the UMM might like or would look good in an election leaflet? I am trying to get some idea of where this number came from and what it means in terms of people, departments and jobs. I look at it in my case; what does it mean to the City of Thompson, for example? How many jobs are we looking at? What departments is the Minister contemplating moving to the City of Thompson? There are a lot of questions that are being asked. I am wondering, if the Minister cannot give detail, can she at least fill us in in terms of what that 500-person figure is?

Mrs. Hammond: There was a task force set up, headed by Brian Ransom and Gerry Forrest. It was developed by department on what moves might be recommended. The task force has—I think is still working or has—reported to the Government. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the Rural Development Committee of Cabinet will probably be making that announcement when the time comes. Certainly the first people that they want to talk to are going to be the staff involved.

Mr. Ashton: I am puzzled because the Premier made an announcement. The way I understand the Minister's answer, there really has not been a final decision in terms of departments, jobs and people. Can I ask the Minister if she is willing to table the report of this subcommittee and provide some explanation as to how the 500-person figure was reached?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairperson, that was not my report, so I do not have that report to table. You can carry on further in this questioning, but there is really nothing further that I will have to tell the Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I will pursue this because it is an important issue. I want to make sure that the policy of decentralization, which I support, which I argued for, which was part of the policies of the previous Government, is followed through and that there is some substance to what the Government is talking about. Further to it, that it is not botched, because I think that is something that is also very important, to make sure it operates smoothly. I am asking once again. I can continue asking, and I will continue asking. The Premier made an announcement—500 people. The Minister referred this to a round figure.

I mean, to my mind, 500 people, 500 jobs is a significant number. I want to know what that represents, how that figure was arrived at and whether that is a target, whether that is a commitment, whether it is just a number that was pulled out of a hat. I do not believe the Minister has answered that question. I am asking her because she is the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission. If anyone should be asking these questions in the current Government, it obviously should be this Minister.

So, once again, what is that 500-person figure? What does it represent?

* (1530)

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairperson, I have the Government news release with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) when he made his announcements. He announced that more than 500 Government positions will be relocated to rural Manitoba, and that it will begin as early as next summer. As soon as the final decisions are made, because there are a lot of decisions that have to be made, initial relocation notices will be issued in March to allow employees to transfer in time for the new school year.

It is going to be a definite process, but unfortunately I am not in a position to give you the numbers by department or who is going to be moving where. That will be made by another Minister.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I am puzzled. I mean, this Minister is responsible for the Civil Service Commission. These announcements are going out in March apparently. That is not even two months away; that is barely over a month. The Premier announced a figure of 500 jobs. I think most people assumed there was some substance to that, would hope there was some substance to that. Why can the Minister not give this committee some direction in terms of what has happened? I mean, she is the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission. Surely she has been involved in the discussions, in the development of this policy. Why can she not tell us, in approximate terms, how—I am trying to be reasonable there—500, I hear it is more than 500 according to the press release. What is that figure? What does it represent, and what is it going to mean to civil servants involved and the communities they are going to be moving to over the next period of time?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairperson, I have already given the fact that there will be approximately 500 people that will be moved. As the Member said, he wants to make sure it is not botched. Well, the first persons that will hear about the move will be the employees themselves. We have negotiations to do with the employees, with the departments and with the union.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I would suggest that it is rather bizarre on the part of the Government to announce that the first people they should talk to are the employees involved, when the Premier (Mr. Filmon) went and announced this sometime ago. What is happening in the Civil Service, in case the Minister is not aware, is that there is a great deal of uncertainty. People are not sure what is happening; what is happening in the communities. They are looking in terms of job opportunities in their own communities. There is a lot of uncertainty too, as to what this means. Quite frankly, I do not understand the answers of the Minister, and I do not understand what this Government's agenda is in terms of that.

If they wanted to talk to the civil servants first, why did they announce this to the UMM several months ago? Why have they not provided any details whatsoever to the individuals in the communities involved? I mean, why are they handling it in this way, setting a 500-person figure? They have not yet indicated where it comes from, how it was arrived at, what it represents, then trying to fit jobs in Civil Service

positions into that. I do not understand the rationale behind that. How did they come up with the 500 person figure? I will ask it again. Why did they announce it before these discussions were arrived at?

Why did they announce a 500-person figure when apparently they had not decided who was going to be moved, or which positions were going to be involved, or which communities were going to receive the jobs? To my mind, that is a bizarre way of dealing with a major policy decision, which is to come up with a round figure—the Minister says 500, the Premier says more than 500. Why have they not followed this process, followed through in terms of deciding department's jobs in communities, discussed with the Civil Service employees involved and the communities that will be receiving the jobs, then come up with the figure, then announce it publicly? Why do they have everything reversed?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairperson, that is the way the Member may have done it. The way we have chosen to do it is to ask the departments to come up with programs and people they felt could be moved to rural Manitoba. That is the process that has been taking place. We met with the MGEA before the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made that announcement, to make sure that they would know about the announcement. Now what is happening is that it is being finalized. They have hired Sid Reimer from the Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board who is the Chair there. He has been appointed as Decentralization Co-ordinator and is working with the communities to make sure there is a smooth transition, as smooth a transition as you can have when you are going to be moving people.

I know how difficult that is and how difficult it is going to be. The Government is very aware of this sort of process, that it is upsetting and is going to be upsetting for some people. There are other people that may very well welcome the move, but as far as giving anymore information, that is all the information that I will be giving to the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, I am very disappointed. We are dealing with the Civil Service Commission Estimates. These decision are apparently imminent, and we are getting nothing more than we can get from press releases, nothing more than we already know. I hope the appointment of the individual who is involved in the Manitoba Disaster Assistance Program is not an indication that this program will be handled in a way which will be described as a disaster.

I wish, by the way, for the Deputy Premier that this is handled properly. I believe that if it is handled properly, you can deal not only with the best interest of rural and northern communities involved, but you can also deal with it in a way which is not going to disrupt people's lives.

I believe that there are a lot of attractions in rural and northern communities, and I will be the first one to sell the benefits of my own community in Thompson, as I am sure many other rural residents would be in terms of their own communities. I guess what concerns me is we are sitting here January 23, months after the

Premier made this announcement. What it looks like to me is the Premier came up with the 500 person figure almost without any consideration of the departments and jobs involved, and is essentially now trying to fit the departments and jobs to come up with that figure. I just do not see the logic of that.

To my mind, it might be 600 jobs that could be moved. It might be 700 jobs. I do not understand why the Government has set this arbitrary figure, other than like I said before, maybe I am a little cynical here, but perhaps it sounds better in election leaflets, newspaper articles, news releases or speeches to the UMM. They have done nothing really to this point to get the process working properly. It seems the cart is before the horse on this one. The answers from the Minister just a few weeks away, which I consider answers, and I hate to use this word, but I consider the reaction of the Minister to be one of stonewalling in terms of the questions. She has not answered one question yet in terms of how these numbers were developed and a breakdown.

Surely, in the Estimates of the Department of Civil Service, this Minister should be able to provide them. I will ask the Minister, perhaps she can answer this question. Has she been involved in the development of this policy? If so, at what level and further to that, what her recommendations have been in terms of how this policy has been developed and the final results of this policy.

* (1540)

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, as with any policy that is of this magnitude, as Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission, these are not decisions that I make. These are decisions that are made by the Government as a whole. The Cabinet Committee for Rural Development has been taking the lead on this in this particular area. What has happened as far as a breakdown is concerned, when the task force was put in place, they asked the departments to go through their department and make recommendations to the task force which they did.

They are working toward a finalization of what is going to happen. When that announcement is made, that is when the Civil Service Commission will come into the fore because the department will be the ones that are handling a lot of the things as far as union goes, as far as the regulations dealing with the Civil Service.

Mr. Ashton: I would think that the Civil Service Commission, the Minister responsible for the Civil Service should be taking a lead role. I would think that it would be appropriate at this point in time that the Minister would be able to answer some of these questions. We are not asking for anything that is unreasonable. We are asking for how this figure was arrived at.

What it seems to me has happened and I will be interested if the Minister can prove that this is not the case, but the information has been presented to this committee: essentially the Government has come up with a figure, it sounded nice, and they are now trying

to develop the policy to match that figure. As I said, my interest is in terms of making sure that decentralization works. I am concerned that the Government is, because of the way that it is handling this, not going to be doing it in the most appropriate way.

I will state, and it is obvious we are not going to get any further answers from the Minister on this issue, that I believe this detailed information should be made available. It should be made available to the employees involved, to the communities that are going to be involved, because I am getting many questions, for example, from my own constituency in terms of what is happening. I have given suggestions to people in terms of departments that I feel can be moved. I will be the first one to assist in the process; I am not trying to be critical. I can list half a dozen Government departments which could be relocated partially into northern Manitoba, for example, whether it be my constituency or others.

Beyond that I think the people of Manitoba through their elected representatives deserve this type of information. I think people on a major policy decision as this should have that kind of information made available at this committee. If the Minister cannot or will not provide me with that information I want a note for the record that I consider this once again to be part of the fact that the Government on this is not proceeding in what I would consider the way which would be the most appropriate in terms of assuring decentralization works properly. I hope for the sake of the Government and I hope for the sake of the rural northern communities that things do work out in the end.

I tend to believe personally that many people will adjust very well to rural and northern life in terms of when transfers are involved. I will stack up the quality of life in communities such as my own and other rural and northern communities any day in comparison to the city life. I mean that as no insult to Winnipeg. I do believe that rural and northern communities offer a particular quality of life. That is why I want to see this process work. I am not saying it out of a partisan criticism as much as wanting to see this thing work properly. I do not know if the Minister has any further comments, but I did have one question on a different matter.

Mrs. Hammond: I just wanted to say that we are working to make sure that it does work and I appreciate the Member's concern, but I do believe that we are working in a most responsible matter and it would be most inappropriate of me to make an announcement before an employee was told. I believe that it will work out. There are going to be some tough times for some people but I agree with the Member that rural and northern life is very enjoyable. It certainly is a different way of life and I think that a lot of these moves are going to have very, I hate to say happy endings but that is exactly how I feel about people once they get into these positions.

Mr. Ashton: Shifting to another area, I asked this question last year, and did not really receive a response.

I want to deal with the policy of the Government in terms of privatization and in terms of contracting out. I am asking the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission because obviously these are two policies that deal directly with this. In terms of contracting out there have been concerns expressed in terms of work that would normally be done by the Civil Service being contracted out. I think that is a very clear-cut issue and I would like some indication of what the policies of the Government as a whole are in regard to the Civil Service. I know for example in the area of health care as it relates to the health system the Government has changed its policy and now supports contracting out. I would like the Minister's answer on that.

My second question is in regard to privatization. We are seeing a trend with some right-wing Governments, most right-wing Governments towards privatization. We are seeing in terms of a number of items, whether it be Crown corporations such as MPIC and MDS where the Government is moving in terms of privatization in this province. There may be other areas, I do not know, the Deputy Premier may wish to fill me in on that.

Concern has also been expressed about privatization, and I will deal with privatization in terms of Crown corporations involved at the time. There is also a concern expressed about possible privatization, and changes involving people who are currently employed by the Government itself, one area being in terms of education in this province.

I would like to ask the Minister if she has been involved in the development of any policies in regard to privatization and, in particular, if the Government has any plans that she is aware of that would involve privatizing any existing Civil Service components?

Mrs. Hammond: Concerning contracting out, that is in the collective agreement. If the employees have any concerns about that I am sure they will bring it to the table when they are in negotiations.

Mr. Ashton: I am not asking about the collective agreement, I am quite aware of the collective agreement provisions in regard to privatization. I am asking about the Government's policy. Is this Government contemplating privatizing any function of the current Government itself? I am not talking about Crown corporations, we are aware that they are looking at privatization in those areas.

For example, is the Government looking at privatizing any of the current functions in terms of education or any other department that would impact in terms of the Civil Service? I would assume that the Minister, being responsible for the Civil Service Commission, would be involved with any discussions affecting privatization. I am just asking if there are any plans on the part of the Government to privatize any areas of the Government itself.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, not that I am aware of.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, in regard to decentralization, can the Minister indicate to us what

role, if any, the Civil Service Commission has had to date in this whole decentralization process?

Mrs. Hammond: The commission has put forward discussion papers on different ways to help employees move. They have also been liaising with the union. There is also a Deputy Minister's committee dealing with this that the commissioner sits on.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister tell us from the Civil Service Commission's point of view what are their main concerns that need to be addressed in a decentralization process?

Mrs. Hammond: Probably one of the main ones is how to deal effectively with employees who choose not to go and also to make sure, when decentralization takes place, that the services are maintained, so making sure that the staffing is kept up.

Ms. Gray: The Premier (Mr. Filmon) had indicated in the House that it should be clear to us that the Government was talking about moving positions, not necessarily people, yet in the Minister's comments today all her references have been about moving people. Can she clarify what I see as a discrepancy in position between the Premier and the Minister?

* (1550)

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairperson, I do not see any discrepancy at all. Of course it is positions, but I guess when I am thinking of moves, I am thinking that we are dealing with people. It is people that I am interested in, because these are the ones—if you can move a vacant position. It is going to be people's lives that are concerned. Those are what we are interested in, in making moves as easy as possible, and in giving them all the help that they are going to need in these moves. So when you are talking about positions and people, to me it is the people that I am concerned with.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister indicate, when it has been decided or once it is known, which positions are to be decentralized? If an individual happens to be occupying that position at the time, what options will they have under The Civil Service Act and/or the collective agreement in regard to a decision to move with that position or to remain with the Civil Service in Winnipeg?

Mrs. Hammond: It is the same as any type of moves. We really cannot make that decision, to begin with, on what moves there might be made until we know what are the positions and if those people are going to move or not. Until a decision is made on whether somebody chooses to go or to stay, we will not know if there is a position open for them presently in the Civil Service.

Ms. Gray: Perhaps the Minister did not understand my question. My question is this: once it has been decided which positions are targeted for decentralization, taking one position for an example, if there is an individual in that position, what options does that employee have in regard to what choices they have available to them?

Mrs. Hammond: Right now, what would happen is that they can take the move. If not, then they would be subject to redeployment. If there was not a position, then it would be a layoff. Those are the options right now. That is what exists under the current collective agreement.

Ms. Gray: So employees will have an indication if in fact their positions are targeted before the collective agreement runs out.

Mrs. Hammond: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister—I am not is she going to tell us—but is the Minister aware of those positions, which ones have been targeted and within which departments? Is she aware of that?

Mrs. Hammond: As with all Ministers, I have a general idea of what will be happening, but it is subject to final approval by Cabinet.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us if there has been any analysis done of those jobs in regard to what groups of employees they affect, i.e., one might be concerned if of 500 jobs, 490 happen to be held by women?

Mrs. Hammond: There was an initial analysis done and what it showed is the breakdown that is comparable to the Civil Service as it is now, so there will not be an extreme dislocation of one set, or one gender, if you like.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us if there was a breakdown done in regard to whether these positions were middle management, supervisory or senior management? I guess what I am asking is, is the plan in this decentralization, if we are truly looking at decentralization, which is a good concept, we really should be decentralizing authority and accountability to rural and northern areas. So what I am asking, are we moving out divisional offices and middle to senior management divisions and branches of the Government? Is that what the decentralization involves?

Mrs. Hammond: I think the answer is very similar to the one I just gave. The mix is comparable to the Civil Service.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, a couple of questions about the audit that is being conducted. But before I get there, I wonder if I could just have some clarification on a couple of points in The Civil Service Commission Act. Now the Minister can correct me if I am wrong; I understand that a full complement of commissioners is seven, and there was a vacancy but that has recently been filled so we now have a complement of seven commissioners. I also understand that in order for those commissioners to be removed, for lack of a better word, from their position, unless it is voluntary there has to be an agreement on a certain percentage of legislators in the House. Correct?

Mrs. Hammond: I think it is two-thirds, yes.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate, though, and perhaps she can point it out in the Act because I do

not know where it states this, it would seem that of the seven commissioners one is designated to basically carry on responsibilities of the Commission as an employee? Am I correct, i.e., Mr. Hart?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes that is correct, and it is 4(3) on page 7. The full-time commissioner is a civil servant.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell me, of the seven members, how is it decided which of the commissioners will assume that responsibility, and what authority is there to make changes as to that particular position; in other words, rotate one of the other commissioners into that job?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, in 4(2) the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may provide that any one or more of the members of the commission shall be required to devote to the business of the commission only such part of his or their time as is prescribed in the order. It is done by Order-in-Council.

Ms. Gray: When?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, when Roberta Ellis-Grunfeld was a commissioner. We had two full-time commissioners. When she was Pay Equity Commissioner.

Ms. Gray: If for whatever reason another commissioner was going to take this full-time position now, then that would be done by the Minister of the Civil Service Commission through an Order-in-Council?

* (1600)

Mrs. Hammond: It would be.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us if the audit that is to be completed as she indicated by June 1990, has that audit been tendered for contract?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, it has.

Ms. Gray: Has there been a successful individual or company that has received this audit?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, Hay Management Consultant was chosen.

Ms. Gray: Have the terms of reference of this audit been determined?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, they have.

Ms. Gray: Could we have a copy of those terms of reference?

Mrs. Hammond: That should not be a problem. We would have to get you a copy.

The terms of reference were set out by the steering committee that was composed of—there were two representatives, two from the Civil Service Commission, two from Manitoba Women in Government and two from the Manitoba Government Employees'

Association, and the Chair was the ADM of the Manitoba Women's Directorate.

(Mr. Parker Burrell, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Ms. Gray: While we are waiting for that copy, I want to go back to the affirmative action. Another question came to mind. If the Minister can clarify, she had indicated that one of the things that they had done was to take the Deputy Minister position of Health and add it to the central committee. Can the Minister indicate what is it about the Department of Health that the Deputy Minister would be on the central committee?

Mrs. Hammond: He was appointed so that we would have a senior member from the visible minority community on the central committee. I think it was only helpful and wise that we would make that decision, especially to have somebody at the Deputy Minister's level.

Ms. Gray: How many Deputy Ministers do you have who are visible minorities?

Mrs. Hammond: I believe just one. I would just to like that he was appointed by the present Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Ms. Gray: These terms of reference in this particular audit—has there been a methodology defined as to how they are going to go about this audit? Has that been looked at? I ask that question because are there going to be consultations or opportunities for civil servants and for people outside the Civil Service to present information to the audit team?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, definitely, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

Ms. Gray: Other than the terms of reference, is there a written methodology or implementation process that this audit team has defined?

Mrs. Hammond: They have quite a lengthy proposal, I understand, describing the method that they will be following. It is quite a lengthy process. They want to make sure that they talk to as many people as they can. They want to make sure that they cover all the bases when this audit is being done. It is going to be very thorough.

Ms. Gray: I would ask the Minister, I guess I have a few concerns when I read the terms of reference and I have no difficulty at all that there be an emphasis on women's treatment in the Civil Service, but given that the Affirmative Action Program clearly specifies other target populations as well, I am concerned at the amount of input and information that will be obtained which would affect other target populations, i.e., Natives, physically handicapped and the visible minorities.

Mrs. Hammond: Those groups are going to be included and I think because this is an audit on women that we include them as far as Natives, visible minority, and the disabled. That is not an exclusion at all and they will definitely be targeted.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister clarify, is this an audit about women or is this an audit of the provincial Civil Service?

Mrs. Hammond: It is an audit on the employment systems and practices within the Civil Service, but I think the Member should remember that the reason that this audit came about was when the Manitoba Women in Government had the panel of the three Leaders speak to them. They wanted an audit because they felt there were inconsistencies in the Civil Service and they asked for an audit. It was the women that asked for it and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said, yes, that is what would happen. It certainly will be broader than that, but that is where the impetus came and it has been the women that have done most of the work, making sure that this has come about.

Ms. Gray: I would ask the Minister, she has indicated that there is some detail on this particular audit. Will more information be available to the Women in Government and to Members of the Legislature as this audit proceeds so that we all have an opportunity to participate?

Mrs. Hammond: The steering committee, which has participants from the Manitoba Women in Government, will be meeting all through this procedure. They will be meeting with the consultants, and they will be following the progress as the audit takes place.

Ms. Gray: We can pass this section.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Burrell): Item 1.(a)(1) Salaries, \$248,200—(Pass). Item 1.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$43,800—(Pass).

Item 1.(b)(1) Salaries, \$783,800.00. Will this item pass? That is Administrative Services—the Honourable Member for Ellice.

* (1610)

Ms. Gray: Perhaps I can just get clarification from the Minister now. The remainder of my questions relate to classification series, reorganization of regions and how that impacts on the Civil Service Commission and how they relate to educational leave policies, that type of thing. Perhaps the Minister could tell me where best it would be to have those questions asked—(interjection)—Let us pass to (c).

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Burrell): Okay, then item 1.(b)(1) Salaries, \$783,800—(Pass); 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures, \$445,600—(Pass) Now page 18, Civil Service Continued, item (c) Human Resource Management Services. This is where you want to—okay. The Honourable Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the Minister tell us, with the educational leave policy for civil servants, does she have any statistics on the number of individuals who are given educational leave? I would ask the Minister if she has a breakdown of the number of individuals in the Civil Service, who would in one

given year be given educational leave from their various departments. Does she have any breakdown as to which positions are usually given, like—I guess what I am asking is, within that educational leave, is it mostly senior management that are given that opportunity or is it evenly spread throughout the clerical field worker, supervisory level? Does she have that breakdown for us?

Mrs. Hammond: The Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) will find it in the annual report—educational leave that is longer than 30 days. There were five, and it is mostly middle management, professional and administrative.

Ms. Gray: Has there been any thought to change that policy to allow, within what I really consider would be an objective of affirmative action, people to increase their skills and education so that they are then better able to apply for senior management jobs? Can the Minister tell me—I am assuming one of two things, that very few people are aware of educational leave and therefore do not apply, or in fact many apply but very few numbers i.e. five are granted that. Could she comment on that?

Mrs. Hammond: I am advised that over the past year a thorough and detailed review of the existing educational leave policies and practices has been undertaken by the Civil Service Commission, and a revised policy incorporating affirmative action goals and corporate objectives have been emphasized within the policy. The proposed policy has been circulated through departments and extensive consultations have taken place. Changes and recommendations resulting from these consultations are currently being incorporated. It is anticipated that the policy will be finalized and ready for implementation early in the new year.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am glad to see that the policy is being reviewed, because it has been stagnant for many, many years.

I would ask the Minister, with the Civil Service Commission, and it is a question about what authority they have and what authority they can delegate to the human resources departments. My question would be, when we have individuals who are staff who have been reclassified to a higher level and a decision or recommendation has been made that they should be reclassified, is that a decision that is delegated to the Human Resources Department or does that final authority still rest with the Civil Service Commission?

Mrs. Hammond: The classification decision still rests with the Civil Service Commission.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, so as a further question, if a human resources department or personnel manager sent out letters of promotion to individuals, I would assume they would not have done that unless they had the approval of the Civil Service Commission?

Mrs. Hammond: I understand that these are two different issues, they are separate. A promotion is different from reclassification. So which—

Ms. Gray: Reclassification.

Mrs. Hammond: Reclassification is what you are looking at, and what was the—

Ms. Gray: When it has been decided the person should be reclassified either upward or downward, does that final authority rest with the Human Resources Department or is it the authority of the Civil Service Commission.

Mrs. Hammond: Reclassification rests with the Civil Service Commission.

Ms. Gray: So if it rests with the Civil Service Commission, I understand letters still come out from Human Resources, from their offices. The letter does not come from the Civil Service Commission even though the authority rests with the Civil Service.

Mrs. Hammond: That is probably correct that they are confirming a decision that was made by the Civil Service Commission, and usually the recommendation has come from the department to start with.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I thank the Minister for that clarification, and I ask that question simply because as the Minister's staff are aware and probably the Minister, there is an appeal process going on. It would appear that in fact the Civil Service Commission has been saying that the Department of Family Services Human Resources were premature in sending letters of reclassification out. My understanding was that they would not do that unless they already had approval from the Civil Service Commission. That is why I had asked for that clarification.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

Mrs. Hammond: I understand that is still under appeal.

Ms. Gray: Yes.

* (1620)

Mrs. Hammond: So it is really not appropriate to make comment on it at this time.

Ms. Gray: I have no intention of making comments on the appeal. I was simply asking for clarification about a procedure throughout the Civil Service Commission.

It has been indicated that, with some of the difficulties that have arisen because of various departments going ahead with reorganization and, for whatever reasons, not appropriately involving the Civil Service Commission, the Civil Service Commission has developed a somewhat better process, I understand, for ensuring that any further reorganizations do not result in fiascos and a number of appeals which we know are in process right now.

Again, I am wondering if the Minister could indicate—first of all, I am pleased that in fact the Civil Service Commission, as the result of an internal audit that was done through the Departments of Health and Family

Services, feels it is appropriate to work with the two departments and ensure that the departments are aware of what steps should be taken in regard to reorganization. I am wondering if the Minister could tell us, does she have the information as to what steps the Civil Service Commission feels are appropriate when a department is considering a major reorganization?

Mrs. Hammond: One of the things is that the departments should get involved as early as is possible with the Civil Service Commission so that they can get ongoing advice as they see the reorganization taking place. Then they do not get into unnecessary problems with moves or with classifications.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell me if the Civil Service Commission has been involved with the pending reorganization of the Winnipeg region back into one region?

Mrs. Hammond: The commission has been involved.

Ms. Gray: Is it the feeling of the commission, when we are looking at a reorganization such as in Winnipeg region, that it is important when there are new positions involved or changes in positions—and I understand there will be—that job descriptions be developed and those job descriptions be point rated before individuals are hired or appointed into those positions? Is that a reasonable process, and does the Civil Service Commission support that?

Mrs. Hammond: In any reasonable process that it is wise to have job descriptions and that they are classified. So, yes, we would suggest that is the route to go.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, is that the process and will that occur in the case of the Winnipeg region reorganization or has that occurred?

Mrs. Hammond: I understand that the final decisions have not been made, but we are having ongoing consultations.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister clarify, which final decisions is she referring to?

Mrs. Hammond: In terms of the nature and structure of the reorganization.

Ms. Gray: I can appreciate that answer, but what I am asking is, basically, once that structure has been upon—well, in fact, we know it has been decided upon, there are going to be program managers. I mean, Reg Toews has been indicating that, and he is the one that is spearheading the reorganization. So what my question is, do those program managers have position descriptions being developed, and has there been a classification assigned to those positions?

Mrs. Hammond: We do not have the answer to that right now.

Ms. Gray: Just again to clarify, the Minister is indicating that basically the process would usually be in a

reorganization that you would want to develop position descriptions and attach classifications to them. Is there any reason to delay attaching classifications to these positions, given that in a new structure one might want to see if these positions gel, if I can use that term, or solidify, i.e., with a brand new structure? Can we really say, yes, these are the positions and this is the classification when in fact we have nothing to go on? They are brand new positions, and people have not had an opportunity to be in those jobs and have not been able to really say, yes, this is what I do.

Mrs. Hammond: I think that is a judgment call that has to be made. You have to put some classification on it, and possibly after a person has been in the position for, say, six months to a year that the classification may be reassessed on a new position. There is a need to understand the full impact of the reorganization to classify. I would think that common sense sometimes, hopefully, gets into these processes and is most of the time. If a job is classified and it is found to be either under or over, they would take a good look at the position once it has been filled, see how it is working, and see if there are more responsibilities or fewer.

Ms. Gray: With the HS Series, which spans a number of departments, can the Minister tell us, is the Civil Service Commission aware of any difficulties that there appear to be with that particular series? Or, since it has been implemented, which is over 10 years, I am sure, has it basically been running very smooth and have there been relatively few problems?

Mrs. Hammond: It is running smoothly on the whole, but from time to time there are problems. If you lose somebody who has the expertise, then the retraining comes in. But on the whole it has been running fairly smoothly.

* (1630)

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I find that answer interesting, since I can name a number of managers who worked in Corrections and now work in the Department of Family Services, who have said that in fact it has been brought to Personnel's attention, and hopefully on to the Civil Service, and that in fact there are many, many problems with the HS Series. I recall back in the early '80s where in fact I happened to be involved in one of the reviews. It was mentioned numerous times by the then personnel director of the Department of Health about the difficulties in the HS Series and the need to have it reviewed.

It would appear that need has been identified by a number of senior managers in the departments for years, so I am surprised that the Commission is not aware of that.

Mrs. Hammond: There evidently is a group right now that is examining the series. We will certainly make sure that we take a good look at it and the results of what they find. This series may not have anymore or any fewer problems than others. We will be looking at them.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, in regard to Affirmative Action and how that applies to competitions or boards. From time to time we get individuals who express concerns when there are positions that are bulletined in the Civil Service. They say, well, I do not belong to the Civil Service, I am an outside candidate, so there is no point in me applying because of course favouritism is always given to civil servants who have an advantage when they go to the board.

Now I am wondering if the Minister could indicate when there are competitions that are held and selection criteria are developed and questions are written, et cetera. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that in fact there is no advantage that would be given to inside candidates? As an example, we might even have individuals who are actually in that position that they are applying for on an acting basis. So therefore we do get calls from outside individuals saying, well, I did not have a chance, that person got the job before they went to the board.

Mrs. Hammond: 55 percent of all jobs go to internal applicants, and 45 percent go to external, so it is a pretty good mix. I understand what the Member is saying, that it is pretty difficult sometimes for people—at least I think there may actually be more of a perception than a reality that those jobs are unattainable. I think that we certainly do our best to try and keep a healthy mix. I think it is good for people from outside to be able to access the Civil Service positions.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, once the selection board is determined, i.e. those individuals that would be on a selection board for a particular position that is being bulletined, I am assuming that board then has the responsibility for preparing selection criteria and questions. Am I correct?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister then tell me, if something should happen, where those questions and/or selection criteria were distributed to people who are not on that board, would that be a reason to overturn the board?

Mrs. Hammond: My advice is that, yes, that probably would be reason for an appeal. So if the Member has any specific—

Ms. Gray: No, I had just asked that question because again when individuals come to us from the outside and say well I know that the questions were developed and other people had access. My question was I do not even know if that would be a reason to appeal or to see that a board is overturned. That is why I was asking how confidential those questions and criteria were in regard to those individuals on the selection board.

Mrs. Hammond: In some cases, if you gave everybody the questions then it would be fair, but if it was just given to selective persons that would be out of the question and, certainly, would be appealable. I am

pleased that the Member does not have any specific instances to show, because I would hate to think that sort of thing would happen. I just think that maybe that is a perception of people who apply, especially from the outside, because it is only natural that someone from inside understands the Government better and the procedures.

Ms. Gray: With regard to positions, are all positions that are bulletined, is it determined whether that position is targeted for a particular affirmative action target group? Is there an indication on that job one way or the other?

Mrs. Hammond: In most of the cases, the target is the whole target group, but in some instances they do target in a specific area. One might be, for example, in the Native secretariat that they are looking for someone who is Native.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I asked that question because I think in some of the middle management positions, at least in some of the departments that I am familiar with, and I think of one target population—the women—where there is probably representation of women and possibly director positions in some of the departments. I do not know that, but I think of Family Services. I have not done any counting, but as I think of the number of directors—child day care, youth unemployment, et cetera, et cetera—one sees women in those positions which I think is excellent.

I guess my question is if there was a vacancy that came up would they necessarily, if women were already represented in at least 50 percent of those director positions within a department, would they then look towards perhaps another target population? Let us say if a woman applied and a Native person applied, a Native man applied, and women were already well represented. Let us say the two people applied for the board and both were equal, both had equal qualifications—the woman and the Native individual—would that Native person be given a preference in that particular case?

Mrs. Hammond: That is how the Affirmative Action Program is structured. If they had a good proportion of women, that is exactly what they would be looking for.

Ms. Gray: How would an applicant find out if that particular position was targeted or what particular target populations were identified? If a person applied for the job, and they wanted to know if in fact they were given any preference as a Native individual over, let us say, some women who applied, how would they find out what the status of that particular position was?

Mrs. Hammond: Generally, they will assess the applicants before they would know that. If they are going to target a certain area, if they know ahead of time, they may say that special preference will be given to a native, to a visible minority, to a physically disabled.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, you mean the Minister is saying that they would assess the candidates? So if

they had a Native person applying and all the rest were women, is she saying—I am not understanding what she is saying.

Mrs. Hammond: The judgment cannot be made, in the case that the Member has given, until a fair interview is given. That person may not come anywhere close to that area, so they would not be considered. If it was a fairly equal balance, then by all means.

Ms. Gray: Just a couple more questions. What is the Civil Service Commission's position on Government directly appointing to jobs? We raised concerns in the House before Christmas about the Government directly appointing people to positions whether in fact they were on a permanent basis or whether in fact they were on a term basis. The point was that there was not the opportunity given to other individuals within the Civil Service to apply for those jobs. I wonder what the Civil Service's position is on direct appointments to jobs.

* (1640)

Mrs. Hammond: Normally we would like to see competitions for jobs. There are always exceptions to the rule. Sometimes these things happen. On the whole, I think we would prefer to see the jobs bulletined. In cases there might be direct appointments because of career development.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell me at what point the Civil Service Commission decided there is enough of a concern that they should raise it with the Government? When did they decide that in fact there were too many direct appointments without competition to positions?

Mrs. Hammond: It is one of the key areas that the Civil Service Commission looks at in departments. They do audits, and if there are too many waivers, then they withdraw delegation and take it back to the Civil Service Commission.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister give us a bit more information on how often are departments audited? Within the last year, what is the status of departments that have been audited and how many?

Mrs. Hammond: It is in the annual report on page 13. What happens is they delegate for a one-year term and if that is satisfactory then they extend it to a two-year term and then the audit would be done in that time. I think if you look on page 13 you will see that the different departments have been—like Labour is April 1 of '80 and this was extended to September 1 of '89, Municipal Affairs 1 of '80 and extended to 1 of '91, Agriculture March 1 of '80 and March 1 of '90 and it goes on for all the departments. There is a regular process set up to audit.

Ms. Gray: Does the Civil Service Commission—are they involved with the Effective Performance Management System? Does the Civil Service Commission review that, and I am wondering if there has been an evaluation of that program since its implementation and, if so, could we have access to that evaluation or review?

Mrs. Hammond: The Government approves the policy and it is more done through Treasury Board. It is the management practices guide through Finance, but the Civil Service Commission does give a lot of support to the departments in training so that they are able to have effective performances for management.

Ms. Gray: Is the Minister aware of any evaluation that is being done on the EPM System? That is really my question, has an evaluation been conducted on the EPM System?

Mrs. Hammond: I am advised that it is part of the Provincial Auditor's audit, but it is fairly new and we are not sure if it has been performed at all.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I hope I am not covering any ground already covered. My questions have to do with the policy of sexual harassment. Could the Minister tell us if a policy on sexual harassment in line with the Human Rights Act has been developed and is in place?

Mrs. Hammond: The answer is yes, and it has been revised and within the past year the commission has developed a comprehensive policy. They consulted with the Women's Directorate, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and the Manitoba Government Employees' Association. It is being printed right now.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is the Minister in a position to table the policy today?

Mrs. Hammond: They are not sure that this is the final that they have right here. As soon as we can, we will certainly provide it to the Honourable Member.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I will look forward to receiving the policy. Some concerns had been raised, or some suggestions made, probably by a number of groups, but particularly the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I am wondering if the concerns raised with the Minister in a letter back on May 26, 1989, signed by the Acting Chairperson, Ruth Blaser, if the four suggestions and concerns in that letter have been addressed. Specifically, does the policy include a specific definition of sexual harassment? Is there an alternative avenue of complaint being proposed? Are there limits on the investigative process? And are informal and oral complaints of sexual harassment being documented?

* (1650)

Mrs. Hammond: I understand that all the concerns were addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of the present Advisory Council. There is a letter that I had received: we had just reviewed the most recent version of the Manitoba Government's sexual harassment policy and wish to convey our satisfaction with the current document. The policy, as it now stands, expresses much more of a preventative victim supportive attitude which, we believe, is essential in a policy of this nature.

We made sure that the Women's Directorate and the Advisory Council were involved, because we wanted to make sure that we came up with a policy that was going to be satisfactory. I believe we have.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I will again look forward to receiving the details, and I am particularly interested in the precise definition of sexual harassment that is included in the policy. What are the plans for communicating the policy and for informing all supervisors and employees of the policy, and ensuring that all avenues of procedures are known, as well as some preventative work begun in the area?

Mrs. Hammond: We plan to have training sessions that involve both management and employees. We want to make sure that this policy is as widely spread as possible. The first thing we are concerned of is prevention, and we feel that if we can get the policy out and if people understand it that it may cut down on a lot of things that are happening in the work force.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Will that include posting the policy in every place of work so that it is well communicated?

Mrs. Hammond: That is one of the areas that certainly can happen, but because this is a sensitive issue and one in which employees may feel uncomfortable discussing with supervisors, or even peers within their own workplace, a confidential phone line has been established with the Employee Assistant Program within the Civil Service Commission, through which counselling information can be provided.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: That is certainly appreciated. In addition to that, it has often been documented in terms of the journals and academic studies on this issue that any movement in terms of prevention requires a really aggressive policy, posting of the policy, clear indication to all supervisors and employees that it is unlawful conduct, the inclusion of it in all seminars and workshops for managers, and efforts taken to ensure that the complainant does not feel that the action is being taken against her—if it is a him or her, but it is usually her—rather than harass her, and so on. Is there a concerted effort to, not only put in place a process so that it is clearly in line with the Human Rights Act, but also a vehicle to ensure that we can move toward prevention in this area?

Mrs. Hammond: The Member has described exactly what we are planning to have happen. We want to make sure that this is widely accessible and people know about it, because I think that even having the policy in place may well prevent some sexual harassment, and will certainly alert people to what is acceptable and what is not.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass; (c)(2) Other Expenditures \$859,000—pass? Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$129,000—pass; (d) Temporary Assignment Program: (1) Salaries \$133,000—pass; (2) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$133,000—pass; (e) Labour Relations Services: (1) Salaries \$655,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$142,500—pass.

Resolution No. 17: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,866,200 for Civil Service, Civil Service Commission for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

2. Civil Service Benefit Plans (a) Civil Service Superannuation Act \$17,827,000—pass; (b) Canada Pension Plan \$9,442,000—pass; (c) Civil Service Group Life Insurance \$1,947,000—pass; (d) Workers' Compensation Board: (1) Assessments re: Accidents to Government Employees \$3,500,000—pass; (2) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$2,800,000—pass; (e) Unemployment Insurance Plan: Government's Share of Premiums for Government Employees \$15,775,000—pass; (f) Dental Plan \$4,497,500—pass; (g) Long Term Disability Plan \$1,072,000—pass; (h) Ambulance and Hospital Semi-Private Plan \$369,900—pass.

Resolution No. 18: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$51,630,400 for Civil Service, Civil Service Benefit Plans for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

3. Levy for Health and Post-secondary Education \$13,366,000—pass.

Resolution No. 19: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$13,366,000 for Civil Service, Levy for Health and Post-Secondary Education, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1990—pass. This completes the Estimates for the Civil Service Commission.

Does the committee want to proceed directly to the Status of Women Estimates, or shall we call it five o'clock? The hour being 5 p.m., it is now time for Private Members' hour.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY—FAMILY SERVICES

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Neil Gaudry): Will the Committee of Supply come to order, please? This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Family Services. We are on item 5, Income Security (a) Central Directorate (1) Salaries, \$1,085,800—the Honourable Member for Logan.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Acting Chairman, I know we were, probably the department were all hopeful that we were going to finish last night and we did not quite. There are just a couple of areas that I feel are fairly important that I wanted to raise with the Minister and see what her feelings are about these two situations and also what plans or actions the Government has to deal with what are very, very serious issues.

The first one is single parents. We now have, I think over 6,000 single parents in the inner city. These are Native, they are visible minorities, they are women and many of them are under 25. 40 percent of them are living below the poverty line, 75 percent of inner city parents are paying more than 25 percent for housing. Unemployment of single parents is at 17 percent, but

for Native single parents it is 35 percent and for those under the age of 25, which is a very large portion of single-parent women, the unemployment is 41 percent.

What I am trying to do, I guess, is paint a picture of a growing crisis. I think two out of three parents in the inner city who have children between the ages of five and 18 are single parents and all of these characteristics that I have just described are the major characteristics of single-parent families. They have more difficulty advancing their economic status than any other subpopulation in the inner city and there are many groups having a great deal of difficulty in the inner city.

* (1430)

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

Single parent, single-parent women, single-parent young women, single-parent Native young women are probably the most disadvantaged. They do not have an education. They often do not have families. They do not have any support; they do not have any opportunity to break out of the dependent position they and their children are put in, that they may stay in for the rest of their lives in a life of dependency unless we find some way to break them out of it.

I want to know if the Minister is aware of the seriousness of what is seen to be a growing crisis in the single-parent community, whether or not they have identified it as a priority of action, and whether or not they have any programs or activities that will help move these young women into training programs that may lead to employment, that may lead to an independent life and move them out of the poverty cycle that they and their children are now subject to.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services):

Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, I am concerned with the statistics that the Member quotes. From time to time I get that sort of information in various forms from reports, studies and so forth. It does concern us. That is why this year we have not only continued with the programs started by the colleague of the Member, the Single Parent Job Access Program, but we have increased funding to that to allow us to take more people into that.

I remember when I did visit that particular program, when I was first appointed as a Minister, I could not help but note the youth of the people who were taking part in that program. I do recognize what the Member is saying.

As well as that, we have instituted, as the Member may be aware, a program called Gateway which is designed a little different from the other program in that it is designed with two components, one a classroom component, the other working in an actual workplace setting. In discussing this type of program with colleagues across the country at ministerial meetings, it seems to be the general consensus among other social service Ministers that this type of program, where you can include not only the classroom training but also on the job training, seems to be the best method of getting people into jobs. Of course we had the agreement with the employer that when they take

them on, they will continue their employment, but not only that, the areas, the experience they can get working in actual job settings instead of just the theoretical experience they can get in a classroom. These programs seem to work, and we started it as a pilot. It has not been going very long, but we are quite confident that it is working well.

That does not address the whole issue. I am not trying to imply that it does, but that goes to some measure to help the situation. We also of course with this department have Human Resource Opportunity Centres where people can come in and discuss their problems and get help with job searches and so forth. There are programs in place.

I was at a graduation of a program run by—I may not be correct, but I think it is run by—the school division in Winnipeg where young mothers and their babies go to a course at which time they can complete their high school with this program and have some child care, and also in the process learn some aspects of child care, nutrition and so forth as well. There are other programs undertaken by various agencies that do help in this regard. I recognize what the Member is saying, and we do need to take further look at it to see what we can do in that regard, particularly with the inner city where the Member is correct, the problem is identified as being the largest.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, does the Minister have the information with her to tell us how many out of those who are on social assistance are a single parent? Can she tell us how many are on the training program in a given year? I think she said that they had increased it a bit. How many of the mothers of the total population are able to have the advantage of the training program?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the total number of single mothers, 9,461 and of the fathers component, 365, now 9,820 in total.

Now with regard to the programs, I have a listing here of how many people are served by each individual program. I can give the Member the totals in the '88-89, 6,975 were served by one program or another in the department. In '89-90, we have 7,039.

Ms. Hemphill: It is a bit hard to figure out exactly the level of services they are getting since the Minister has given—can she give me the number for those in the training program that are actually?

Mrs. Oleson: In the single parent job access, the actual number of persons served in '88-89 was 757, and the estimated number '89-90, 678. In the Gateway Program, 110 last year in the estimated number. The intake this year will be 110 as well. That is some measure of it and, of course, that is a voluntary program, we do not force people to take it and so forth. Of course, we have to do it within the funds allocated to the program.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, can the Minister tell us why the numbers went down in '88-89?

Mrs. Oleson: What I understand is that with our experience in the program, we served the 757 last year

but only projected to serve the 678 this year, because we have discovered that we have to give a longer training period. The initial group that were trained were perhaps the easier to train or did not need as much concentration, and now we are finding that the group that is coming in needs some extra work and a little longer training period. While we are spending funds, we are, unfortunately, having to serve fewer people but hope to serve them better.

Ms. Hemphill: The other area that I wanted to discuss a bit was one that we touched on the other day, and that I know the Minister is aware of. It is the growing apparent need and the growing, very significant increase in the use of food banks by families in the inner city. Particularly, single people and women and children are the largest users.

We have 10,000 family units who are living on less than 60 percent of the poverty line, a really shocking figure. Out of those people, 3,800 families are using the food bank. They count two people per family, so you can double that to get the number of people.

We have 7,400 single people earning less than \$7,000 a year for gross income and over 12,000 family units with less than 14,000. This is the economic group from which the people are coming that are using the food banks. Seventy-five percent of them are on some sort of social assistance program, not all of them on the social assistance program of the province. It may be UIC or pensions, but 75 percent of those users are on some form of social assistance program.

* (1440)

It is also clear that not only are more using it, the ones who are using it are using it more often. The children are getting two-and-a-half to three meals a day; mothers are eating, I think, one to one-and-a-half meals a day. It appears that mothers are cutting back on the amount they eat in order to feed their children.

At Christmastime they had three times the volume that they have had in previous years for the same kind of demand. You have nine food banks serving 1,200 meals a day.

There have been studies done that show that there is a direct correlation to the people using the food banks to the level of money that they have. I do not think it is the case, although I do not suggest that it is not with some people, but I do not think the suggestion that the Minister made, that even if you gave them more money they would just find other things to spend it on and would not necessarily spend it on food. That would mean that they would no longer need to use the food banks. I do not think that is true. I am not saying it is not true in some cases where people might not be responsible, but I do not think overall that it is true. I think most people who are using the food banks to feed themselves and their children are using it because they do not have enough money for one reason or another to buy enough food.

They have done a study that shows that if people were paid up to the 60 percent of the poverty line there would be no need for food banks. I think that

information has been given to the Minister. I know people have talked to the Minister about the food banks. I am wondering if she has had her department look into these kinds of statistics, who is using the food banks, why they are using the food banks, why the increase, and what steps need to be taken to eradicate food banks that I think may be understandable, or may be justifiable in a Third World country, but I do not think are in a country like Canada that has the kind of social service system that we have. There is something wrong and there is a deficiency somewhere.

We had tried to point out yesterday that we thought a fair amount of it was related to the inadequacy of the housing allowance in the social assistance department, and we are not convinced yet, although the figure that the Minister gave us that 77 percent of them get all of their rent paid, we have also got the figure I mentioned yesterday from the Barstow Report that says 66 percent of them are living with rents that exceed the rent guidelines fairly significantly.

I am wondering if the Minister is concerned about this and, apart from being concerned, which I am sure she is going to say she is, whether or not they see it as a serious issue that her department should be identifying the cause and coming up with some solutions so that we reduce and hopefully, even move toward elimination of food banks to feed families in Manitoba.

Mrs. Oleson: Well, as the Member predicted, yes I am going to say I am concerned because I am, and the department of course is concerned as well. I do not think that this is an issue, I know this is not an issue which is peculiar only to Manitoba, to Winnipeg and smaller centres in Manitoba. I think it is an issue, at least from my reading, that would indicate that it is an issue all across Canada, the increase in the use of food banks. Certainly my department does monitor costs and so forth and we did increase the allowances this year to reflect the cost of living.

We certainly will be looking further into it. There have been some investigations by the department into the use of food banks and who uses them. They did not at that time come up with conclusive evidence that it was—and the Member indicated herself she did not think it was—all people on social assistance. There can be people from low income families who are low income for varying reasons who will use food banks, but that is something the department will be actively looking at.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Acting Chairman, in view of the fact that new UIC rules and the extra pressure that will put on the social allowance people, because when they cut back the eligibility, naturally people go on social assistance earlier, and certainly in view of the impending imposition of the sales tax by the federal Government that will put further pressure on funds by the provinces, of course realizing they are 50 percent funded by the federal Government. Could the Minister give us a view of what impact that might have on Manitoba and what contingency may be included in the budget in the future to take care of increased costs in that regard?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the research department is currently looking at both issues, the GST

and the unemployment insurance changes that have taken place. We will be taking those matters into consideration when we do our forecasting for next year's budget. With regard to the GST, they are working particularly with the Finance Department as well in trying to further identify exactly what effect it will have.

The Member will recall though that part of the thrust with the GST is to give tax rebates to low-income families, so there may not be as large an impact. There may be at the store, but the rebate then would come. So that will likely cover it, but we are certainly studying that with a view to how it will impact on our department.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Acting Chairman, along the same line, some time ago—I think it was in committee—I asked the Minister if she could check with her, well not her federal counterparts, but the people in the federal department responsible for the UIC in regard to the backlog of claims and the disposition of the applications in Manitoba that had grown to some extent up to two months, as I understand it, in the area of Selkirk. At that time—if I remember correctly—she indicated she would be in touch with that federal department to see if they could not speed up the process and thereby relieve some of the pressure on our programs for the Social Assistance. People were having to apply in that direction when they were not getting a speedy resolve of their UIC claims.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not recall the Member's specific question before, but the staff do work with the UIC office and share concerns that they may have over those matters. Within the last year or so, the Winnipeg office increased their staff to deal with UIC backlog, so I hope that matter is alleviated. My staff do have contact with that office with regard to those matters. I do not have the information about any backlogs today. I suppose it is possible for us to get it, but no, I do not have this information with me right now.

* (1450)

Mr. Rose: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think I alluded to the fact last evening—and I think a great deal of the problem that I am going to discuss right now is principally because of federal cutbacks and spending that are having an effect right back at the grassroots in Manitoba. They are tightening criteria on certain social programs and disability programs and benefits. So more and more people seem to be applying for Social Assistance and having problems qualifying because of overlapping of jurisdictions and circumstances.

I did send earlier today to the Minister—I know she would not have had time to peruse it yet in anything but a very quick manner. We are disturbed about the number of calls that we are getting. I think that it would not be so disturbing the number of calls that we get, but it is disturbing to me, particularly with limited staff, that so many people have to call upon the Opposition to get help in this direction. As a matter of fact, since I wrote that letter just at noon, I have had another one thrown at me of a lady in distress with a family of one son to support.

I would urge the Minister to have speedy resolve of those matters. I know that I have had one meeting with her department and another one is scheduled for Friday. Hopefully in the future we can take more of a co-operative approach to these things. I cannot say that there has been a confrontational approach, that would be wrong, but there has almost been an reluctance on the part of the department to follow up on these matters. I know it has become increasingly frustrating to the people that are involved on social assistance.

I do want to, Mr. Acting Chairman, sum up perhaps—I know we are running out of time. I think that sort of sums up the problems of social assistance and it might answer the question of why the Minister seems to be puzzled on occasions when I get somewhat a little emotional over the needs of these disabled and other disadvantaged people.

I want to recall, Mr. Acting Chairman, that yesterday in Estimates, I mentioned a paraplegic fellow who was in the gallery here last night. Unfortunately, when he was a year and a half old he lived on the farm and he got run over by his father in the car. It was just one of those things that could happen, but since then he has been completely confined to a wheelchair. That is mentioned, his whole file, or the current file that I have has been sent to the Minister today and along with four others.

In that file there is a letter from his doctor. It alludes to the fact, as I mentioned last night, that he had major bladder surgery five months ago and that his hemoglobin is low because of an inadequate diet. I had mentioned last night the special diet and this is a specific instance where this is most essential. He had requested a special diet and it had been refused. To add insult to injury, Mr. Acting Chairman, the department is even making a \$10 a month deduction from the gentleman because of some previous overpayment. So he is really not getting the basic necessities of life, even as defined by the Minister's department.

Last night, Mr. Acting Chairman, would you bear with me because I think this does sum up the situation. On leaving the Legislature last night the Minister may have noticed this gentleman among his friends at the entrance to the Legislature. Maybe not at the time when she went by but shortly after he was openly crying. I can see why he was crying. He was crying because his shoes were completely worn out from just—he does not even walk, but they were just worn out from scuffing on the edges and hitting walls and whatever you would do in a wheelchair. It is pretty hard to maneuver them especially when there is non-access. Certainly it was evident that all of his fingers were protruding from his gloves. As I saw him the last time, some months ago, and brought up to the Minister and indeed the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), his jacket was torn in shreds from rubbing against his wheelchair. There should be special allowances for those cases because gentlemen like him, their clothing wears out much faster than regular.

Most of all he was crying because he was starving, and unfortunately—and I am pleased to participate in these things but as it happens, Mr. Acting Chairman, I had to once again, as I have done on many occasions

bought this fellow a meal, so at least he could have one night of a full stomach and a good sleep.

He sobbed to me out on the Legislature steps about the humiliation and agony of his situation. It was not a pleasant thing and it is not some thing that is isolated. He also, what shocked me was he mentioned that others in his plight, that would be in his sort of a plight would take the easy road out perhaps and throw a brick through a window or commit some other crime, so that at least they would be able to get the pleasure, the warmth of a jail and a steady diet and the corresponding care that they are able to get in a jail more than they are amongst society.

Mr. Acting Chairman, some might say, well, what is he spending his money on? Well, we never know for sure, but from the knowledge that I have and I admit it is limited but we get to know these things. This gentleman never uses alcohol or other drugs, does not smoke or gamble, and I am sure that all his money goes for mere sustenance. He has other problems that able-bodied people do not have.

I relate this story because it was close to the Minister and close to the Government, right in this Legislature last night, with the hope, Mr. Acting Chairman, that the Minister will once and for all start examining the problems that I do bring to her attention and to the department's attention. I realize when they have been brought into the Legislature there has been a resolve on many matters, as I mentioned yesterday, the Sais case and others, but I would hope that through these Estimates, and the limited time, that the Minister would open her mind to these matters.

I would hope that she would open her heart and more importantly I would hope that she would open her purse strings a little bit to recognize that this is not a cost but an investment in the future of Manitoba, to cut down on illiteracy, to cut down on crime and violence and the things that flow from them. I would hope that she and her department and her Government would start having some empathy to assist these fellow citizens of Manitoba so that they might live in dignity. I would hope that this Government would start to—people who are handicapped for whatever reason, most of them beyond their own cause or their own ability to be otherwise—share with them the bounty that we enjoy—certainly the Members of the Legislature—from the fruits of this great province.

* (1500)

If that would come about, I am sure that the Minister and the Government would find it most rewarding and politically, if that is what we are worried about, I do not think we need worry about that, I know there are a hundred more Manitobans out there with similar predicaments. They are friends of yours; they are friends of mine; they are relatives. We see it every day, but we just cannot brush it under the rug, we have to face that problem head on. We hit it head on by giving these people the resource that has allowed them to live in dignity in this province.

I know that this would certainly meet with the approval of a vast majority of Manitobans because, as we

witnessed over the weekend, the outpouring of generosity by Manitobans to the Lions' Telethon which many of the members of this Legislature participated in, where close to half a million dollars was pledged for the disabled.

I would hope that we have a turning point here and that we would see some concern for these people and a recognition of these files and the plight of the individual people, and I thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I appreciate the Member's concern and the fact that he has brought this before us. I did receive his letter just this afternoon and I understand that the Member is having a meeting with some of my staff on Friday to go over some of these cases and the concerns that the Member has about them. I really appreciate him bringing these matters to our attention.

We want everyone to live in dignity, we want everyone to have what they are entitled to, enable them to live as well as possible. I certainly want to assure the Member that I am not pushing this under the rug. We are dealing on a daily basis with many, many cases, and I am glad that the Member is taking a co-operative approach and drawing these to my attention immediately.

I know the Member has a concern that we do not get back to him as quickly as he would like. I must assure the Member, as I did last evening, that we do have to do a considerable amount of research into files, and so forth, when the Member brings a matter like this to our attention, and to go over every detail and be sure that we are assisting people in the appropriate way. I am glad that the Member is bringing these forward by letter and meeting with the staff to get these matters solved in a co-operative fashion, because that has always been my intention, to work with the Member in that regard. I too have been the Opposition Critic for the Social Assistance Program, and I know the calls you receive and the people who come to see you. The names that you sent me today are familiar to me for that reason alone as well as the fact that I have had dealings through the department.

As I reminded the Member last evening, or yesterday afternoon, when we have 25,000 cases before us, it is difficult for anyone to be on top of the details of each and every case at any given moment. As I said before, I am glad that the Member has drawn these matters to our attention. We will certainly look into them and see that we can deal with them. We will not always be able to do exactly what the Member or the client would like us to do, but we will do everything we can to give them everything that we can, everything they are entitled to.

I have instructed my department to try to be flexible with people in the position that you were discussing, the gentleman in the wheelchair. I know the problems that have been drawn to my attention, the extra problems that persons in wheelchairs have with regard to clothing for instance. The department does try to be flexible in that regard. Also with the diets, if someone's doctor indicates they need a particular diet,

we try to accommodate them. However, with this specific case maybe that was not done, and I do not know why that was not done. We will follow it up and be sure that person gets the help they require and they are entitled to.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairman, I just have one final question. It goes back to the points about the single parents. I think we are looking at over 10,000 single parents, most of whom are mothers, a few of whom are fathers. While there was a suggestion that nearly 7,000 of them were getting some kind of a program, there are only about 800 getting the actual training and things that will lead to employment and, we hope, independence.

To that end, I wanted to discuss with the Minister something that has been a bit difficult for us to understand, and that has been the Government's attitude toward the protection and the continuance of the parent-child centres in the inner city. They are largely serving single-parent women, and they are serving single-parent women who do not need or would not be using day care but who do need supports and help, both to learn about child development, to have help looking after their children. One of the things that is coming out of them is that it is a tremendous support and a tremendous confidence building for those young women who attend there with their children. To date they are continuing only because the Winnipeg School Division has provided some sort of interim funding to keep them going.

When this was raised in the House, time after time, the Minister always seemed to be saying that this is a good program. It in fact is one of the best programs that has come up in the inner city in years, delivering one of the best services. There seemed to be recognition for that. This is a good program, we do not want to see it go down the tube, but somehow for the inability of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and the Minister of Community Services to get their departments together to decide who the funding would come from, there was no funding. They were literally going to close their doors until the Winnipeg School Division came in, and sort of bailed them out on an interim basis.

Could the Minister explain why they let it go so far, why they did not resolve it, in terms of determining what financial support this Government would give to keep those centres open, and what their plans are in the immediate future to deal with the issue so we are not faced with it again, when the interim funding of the school board runs out?

Mrs. Oleson: I thank the Member for raising that issue. It has been under some considerable discussion over the past while, and the Member should recall that parent-child centres were not funded by this department in the past and so there was no budget for them.

When they came to us, first we wanted to assure ourselves just exactly what the programs were doing, so we did ask for a review of those. That review took place, and we are happy that the Winnipeg School Division did see fit to give them some interim funding.

However, in meeting as we did with the group, the Education Minister (Mr. Derkach) and myself, and meeting with the education people separately as well over this matter, it was a feeling that there are some parent-child centres, as the Member will be aware, that are run under, I believe it is the compensatory fund it is called, with education. It is felt that is the best way to fund these programs, through that vehicle, and that in consideration of the budget for next year, those centres were encouraged to apply through their school, ultimately the school board, and the board in turn could apply for the compensatory funding.

* (15 10)

I agree with the Member that there is a great deal of value to programs like that, and it is the feeling that the ones run by the schools had a better measure of success, a better—mind you, if you get down to the dollars, they are cheaper to run that way than through a centre which is run in a rented space in a shopping mall or something. So from the dollar point of view, from another point of view, the education people feel that they are a good thing to run out of a school because of the parents taking their kids into that setting; it gets them used to that type of setting. They can have use of, say, the library at school, some of the school activities they may be able to partake in.

Some of these young mothers, as the Member will know, did not finish school themselves and therefore have perhaps not the just the best of attitude toward schools. I am not saying them all. I said this is one example that has been brought to my attention. That by having them connected with schools and under the auspices of schools, it gives the parent and the child a better feeling toward schools that gets them into that milieu.

So I think that probably, if we can see fit to be funding them, that is probably the vehicle which we will use to fund them.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I have just a few last questions on the parent-child centres. Given the turmoil in this whole area and the failure on the part of any of the ministries to take responsibility for funding of this, Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) says it is the Minister of Family Services' responsibility. Can she give us some assurances that she is seriously looking at core funding for all parent-child centres, existing ones, and incorporating that into next year's budget?

Mrs. Oleson: Those final decisions will be made as part of the budget preparations, but what I can tell the Member now is that we are looking at it, and I will have further discussions with the Minister of Education on it, but what we are looking at is having them apply through the education system for those funds.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Yes, a couple of cases that have some general policy questions, I will try to be as quick as possible.

I would like to know generally when a single-parent woman, and it is often this way, is getting maintenance

support payments, and suddenly those payments stop and this woman is forced on welfare, and then the courts finally catch up with the man and he is ordered to make back payments on a monthly basis, what is the policy for determining how much of that total sum of court-ordered back payments is this woman expected to pay back to the system. Is there a formula for what percentage?

How does the woman get her feet back on the ground if she has been on welfare, used that money just to subsist. She starts getting a little bit of money back on a regular basis, is then told she has to pay back because she was collecting social assistance payments. Is there a policy or some formula that both is fair in terms of the system but also helps the woman back on her feet?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, with regard to maintenance, we do try to get, if there is a problem with people getting paid maintenance, we do encourage it to be paid directly to the department. Then we continue to pay the welfare, so there is not a gap there. When it occurs that there is a lump sum payment from that payment then the person would go off welfare for a period of time say and then come back onto it if necessary. It is a problem, I know. We have been trying to work through Legal Aid and so forth to try and resolve those problems, but that would be how in general terms it would be dealt with if she got lump sum payment. Then she would have those funds and be off welfare for a period of time and then come back into the program if necessary.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I believe in this case she has been asked to make a lump sum payment back to the Government because of the fact that she was collecting social assistance for a period of time and then got this court ordered back payment. However, if I could have assurances from the Minister that if I bring the details of this case before her that she will look into it both in terms of the specifics and the general policy matter.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think that would be the best course because, of course, every case varies somewhat. If the Member could do that, then we will certainly look into it for her.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: On another specific case that has a general policy concern, I would like to ask the Minister, how does a guaranteed investment certificate fit the description of assets and income available to a household for basic necessities?

I would like to raise that question in the context of a particular case involving a single parent, mother and a child who have a guaranteed investment certificate for \$1,200 and are being told that they are only allowed the \$400 a piece, giving them \$800 exemption and, therefore, \$400 being treated as income.

My questions are: why in this case for \$400, for an investment certificate that is for the children's studies, why are they not allowed to have that considered totally as an exemption when it is for the student's education and they cannot touch it for a period of time?

Secondly, if that is the case, and that is the policy, why is on the \$400 this person required to pay so much a month in terms of what is deemed income, and then why on top of that is she paying, is she expected to declare the interest on the total sum as income? In other words, on the whole \$1,200 as well as the deemed income on the \$400.

It is getting rather confusing, but I think the point is that this person is being hit from several angles on a very small amount of money that was designed for the children's education down the road. It is not available to the family.

Is there a policy on these kinds of situations, and would the Minister consider reviewing this whole case, even though it has gone through the appeal process and this individual has been very disappointed with the appeal process and found it to be, in her words, a farce?

Mrs. Oleson: I should indicate to the Member that we have to consider this sort of thing as a liquid asset and there has been no policy change. That has been the policy that has been in the department for some time, with the ceiling of \$400 per person. If the Member wants to provide me with the particulars of that case, we will certainly take a look at it to see if our policies and regulations are being applied properly. I would certainly be happy to look into it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Finally, Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is clear that if our exemption levels were higher in the Province of Manitoba, a case like this would not have to come before us, and these individuals would not have to experience this kind of troublesome situation. Given that—and I believe this has been raised before, but I would like just a clarification on it. Given, as I believe, that Manitoba has the lowest exemption levels of any province, what are the plans? What work is under way for revision in the area of exemptible assets for all Manitobans requiring social assistance.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

* (1520)

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the Member brings up a good point, but that has been the policy, that has been the level, for some time. I have undertaken, I believe, in questions by other Members that we will certainly take a look at that. I do not how soon we could resolve it, or what the cost implications to the department will be, but I am having the staff have a look at that.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Shall the item pass—pass.

5. Income Security (a) Central Directorate: Provides central program management, policy direction, program analysis, program audit services and administration for the Income Security Programs. (1) Salaries, \$1,085,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$489,000—pass.

5.(b) Income Maintenance Programs: The Social Allowances Programs provide financial assistance to

ensure that no Manitoban lacks the basic necessities essential to their health and well-being, including non-insured Health Services. The Municipal Assistance Program provides for cost-sharing with municipalities their municipal assistance and welfare services expenditures for those in financial need who are not eligible for the Social Allowances Program. Provides for provincial services delivered by regional operations throughout the Province. (1) Salaries, \$7,173,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$2,578,800—pass; (3) Financial Assistance, \$224,198,600—pass.

5.(c) Income Supplement Programs: Provides a financial supplement to low-income Manitobans. 55 PLUS - A Manitoba Income Supplement provides quarterly benefits to eligible persons 55 years of age and over. The Child Related Income Support Program (CRISP) provides monthly benefits to eligible families raising children. Provides for the delivery of Income Supplement Programs. (1) Salaries, \$610,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$261,400—pass; (3) Financial Assistance, \$16,050,000—pass.

Resolution 47: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$252,447,700 for Family Services, Income Security, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

6. Youth and Employment Services: Undertakes various activities which contribute to the development of the Province's human resources, specifically: design, implementation and monitoring of programs and services for youth, social assistance recipients and immigrants including: counselling, referral, placement, settlement and support services delivered on a regional basis. (a)(1) Administration: Salaries, \$324,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$111,600—pass.

6.(b) Youth and Regional Services: Branch Operations, \$879,400—pass; (b) (2) Youth Programs \$7,246,700—pass; (b)(3) Southern Employment Resources \$668,300—pass; (b)(4) Northern Development Agreement - Canada-Manitoba - Northern Employment Support Services. \$8,794,400—pass.

(c) Special Programs and Immigrant Services: (1) Branch Operations \$139,200—pass; (2) Human Resources Opportunity Program \$6,147,500—pass; (3) Employability Enhancement \$4,846,700—pass; (4) Immigration and Settlement Services \$1,056,100—pass.

Resolution No. 48: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$21,420,200 for Family Services, Youth and Employment Services \$21,420,200 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

Now we will revert back to item 1, to the Minister's Salary, item 1. Administration, 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$20,600—pass.

Resolution No. 43: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,330,400 for Family Services Administration and Finance \$6,330,400 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

Mrs. Oleson: I just wanted to pass a couple of remarks before we adjourn and those remarks have particularly

to do with the "thank you" I want to give to my staff. I want to thank the critics as well, of course, they kept this going. I just want to say a few words. I know that with changes in the reorganization and so forth within the department this year, there has been extra work and extra strain on the staff. I do really appreciate their work and want to publicly state that and to thank them and also thank them for all their work in preparing for this Estimate process that goes before the House, of course, every Session, thank them for the ongoing work they do to make my life easier in the department.

Mr. Rose: Very briefly, Mr. Acting Chairman, I just want to say that, although we did not have time to get through as thoroughly as we would want, I feel a sense of frustration for that. I feel a sense of frustration during the Estimates process here that the third Party takes so much time to ask questions that when they were in Government for so many years could have been solved. It is almost ludicrous that we sit here, they are almost like questioning themselves.

The third amount of frustration that I have is that the few questions that we did get to ask, there were few answers given and certainly those that were must be considered to be woefully inadequate for the seriousness of this department. On the other hand, I do not find this surprising from a Government that is so uncaring, and I want to assure the Minister that when we do have more time in concurrents, that we will be asking many more questions and hopefully trying to get many more answers, particularly in the areas that we did not have too much time to cover here, employment services and immigration services.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the department for their patience and their co-operation and hopefully in the future we will see a resurgence of co-operation and certainly that always has existed on this side since April 26, 1988 and, hopefully, it will be reciprocated by the Government.

I thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

* (1530)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Since we are putting brief comments on the record at the end of these Estimates, I too would like to add to the comments made today in terms of the work done by the staff in the Department of Family Services, and say that we too appreciate their patience throughout this process of Estimates and also their hard work throughout each fiscal year. We do not have problems with the staff in the department. We have concerns about the political directions and the overall policy directions of this Government. There are many unanswered questions and concerns, and we will look forward -(interjection)- to

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis:—getting answers to those questions and pursuing many of these concerns on a regular basis from here on in.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Shall Resolution 43 pass—pass.

We shall take a short recess to set up the next department that will be considered.

RECESS

SUPPLY—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Neil Gaudry): This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Education. We will begin with a statement from the Honourable Minister responsible—the Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Acting Chairman, the time has come once again to begin examining in detail my department's Estimates for this current year. Before I begin, I would like to first of all indicate that we have been looking forward to this moment, because indeed it has been a long time in coming. It is important that our department does indicate the kinds of activities that we have been engaged in, and I would like to indicate that we have had some new staff join our department in the last year. I would like to welcome all of them to my department, especially my new Deputy Minister John Carlyle, and also Assistant Deputy of the Finance, Administration Division, Denise Lovatt.

I would also like to thank all of my staff members who have worked so diligently over the last year in conducting the affairs of the department, and I would like to welcome to my department the staff who have come as a result of the amalgamation of the department.

A great deal has happened since the last time we met to renew the educational expenditures and activities, and the most obvious change, of course, is the expansion of the department and the renaming of the department. In recognition of the life-long nature of education, training and labour market matters were added to the responsibilities of the former Department of Education.

I will speak in more detail about the new training component a little later, but at this point I would like to make a comment with regard to the change as an illustration of this Government's commitment to responding in a meaningful way to the challenge of providing Manitobans of all ages with education and training opportunities that are going to take us into the '90s and into the 21st century.

The new reality is that we are now living in a transitional period. A radically different society is emerging than what one knew 10 years ago. People today are called upon to live in and accept a world marked by unending and increasingly rapid change. This is particularly true in the workplace. Skills and equipment become obsolete very quickly due to technological advances. New skills must be learned continually. Outdated equipment must be replaced and new kinds of jobs are constantly emerging.

Although it is constantly more difficult to predict what is going to happen in the future and the kinds of skill requirements that we are going to need in the short term, the general direction is clear: the workplace of the '90s will demand more highly skilled workers, greater analytical, problem solving and communication skills, and indeed these skills will be more and more important as we move through the '90s. The workplace will demand

people who are adaptive learners—people who have the ability to upgrade existing skills, develop different skills and broaden the range of their skills.

This new reality has implications for education at all levels. From kindergarten to grade 12 we must ensure that we are providing our young people with a solid foundation for life-long learning. At the post-secondary level we must keep pace with the latest advances in science and technology as well as the constantly shifting demands from business and industry for new and more advanced skills. We must also be prepared to assist those already in the workforce to adjust to the changes of the labour market.

For all of these reasons, the department has been expanded and reorganized to improve the coordination of the activities in all of these related fields.

The first area I would like to deal with is the legislation. At this Session, after consultation with educational interest groups, I have introduced a number of amendments to The Public Schools Act designed to increase the efficiency and meet the current educational concerns.

* (1540)

The main concerns in the Act are as follows. To begin with, we must clarify what trustee qualifications are. We must increase parental access to student records. That is a commitment that we made during the election campaign. It is a commitment that I am indeed bent on ensuring that it happens and we must proceed in that direction. We must oblige school divisions to report a teacher convicted or charged of sexual assault. I think we have seen evidence of that and indeed that we are moving in the right direction in that area. I think we have to ensure that the Minister of Education and Training has the power to set regulations requiring additional criteria in order that independent schools qualify for grants. It must allow the Minister of Education to create regulation regarding home schooling.

In addition, there are a number of changes of a housekeeping nature. I do not think that we need to dwell a great deal on these changes, but they are changes that come up from time to time that we have to do in order to keep our Act current.

These changes have been introduced because they require immediate action. We are, however, about to embark on a complete overhaul and renewal of legislation governing public school education in this province.

The last major revision of The Public Schools Act and Education Administration Act took place way back in 1980. As I have mentioned earlier, many changes have taken place since then.

To enable the department to provide effective leadership and direction in the new environment, major legislative reform is essential. To ensure that this reform is relevant to the needs of the present and of the future, it will be done in consultation with all of those who have an interest in education in this province.

A method of consultation will be embarked on with education organizations, with parents, with anyone who

may have an interest and something to say about how we conduct our affairs with regard to the Education Act.

We anticipate through this process the creation of some new legislation which will respond to the needs of the '90s and will for the people of Manitoba.

In the area of spiralling costs and limited resources, the financing of education is an issue which deserves special attention in the '90s. In 1989 the Manitoba Government committed over \$700 million to support the operation of our public school system. We must ensure that our grants system is indeed meeting the needs of the many and varied school divisions across the province.

For this reason, in response to a longstanding request for educational organizations, I have established a Minister's Advisory Committee on education finance with representation from major educational organizations and the public at large to participate in an ongoing dialogue on all education finance policy matters.

Issues which the committee is considering include funding for special needs, capital projects, transportation, declining enrolments, expanding enrolments, local autonomy and equity in sharing the education tax burden between the urban, the rural and the northern areas of this province.

In 1989 provincial support for public education increased by 6.1 percent to \$700.2 million, an increase of over \$40.4 million over the last year.

For the six month period, January 1 to June 30, 1990, operational funding levels have been increased by 4.8 percent to \$388 million. This is an increase of \$17.7 million over the same period in 1989.

The transitional funding was necessary because in July of 1989 school divisions moved to a fiscal year based on the school year.

In addition, a total of \$27.6 million was allocated for school construction and renovation in 1989. Of this amount \$17.4 million funded major capital projects, such as new schools, the replacement of older schools and the provision of additional facilities in existing schools to accommodate increased enrolments.

I was also very pleased to be able to lift the moratorium on vocational and practical arts facilities. About \$2.4 million was provided to meet the backlog of request for these facilities.

We also introduced a \$4 million environmental assistance program designed to help school divisions improve air quality conditions in school buildings over the next four years. Costs will be shared equally by Manitoba Education and Training and school divisions.

In order to increase the degree of choice available to parents in selecting the most appropriate education for their children, the level of support for students in independent schools was increased to 50 percent of the established per pupil support in the public school system in 1989.

In addition, a curricular materials grant of \$40 per pupil and categorical grant support for full-time special needs students was available to independent schools.

As a result of discussions with representatives from the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools, and the amendment to The Public Schools Act I mentioned earlier, I expect to be able to announce very soon the criteria which independent schools will be expected to meet in order to qualify for provincial funding.

On the program side as well, we are at a stage of review and renewal. As you know, a policy advisory committee has been studying the report of the High School Review panel in relation to comments and suggestions received from educational organizations and the general public. A report recommending courses of action and time frames is now being prepared which I expect to receive early in the next month.

Since the reform of high school education will have very serious consequences for the future of our young people and the province as a whole, we want to be very certain that we are moving in the right direction to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, the skills, and attitudes to meet the needs of a changing society.

In view of what we are discovering about the extent of the literacy problem, the time may have come to review programming in the middle years and in the early years as well. Consideration is being given to embarking on such a review in the near future.

In the area of special needs, we have already introduced guidelines designed to provide a framework to ensure that children with special learning needs can take greater advantage of educational opportunities. The guidelines outline a process involving parents and professionals for programming and placement of children that is consistent, and at the same time, sufficiently flexible to enable educators to respond in a meaningful way to individual needs.

We are working to develop strategies to meet the needs of the child at the other end of the spectrum as well, and that is: gifted education. The department already provides the services of a half-time consultant to assist school divisions in planning programs for gifted students and will soon be publishing a source book offering a theoretical framework and guide for teachers in creating relevant, innovative, and cohesive programs for the gifted. In addition, plans are underway to hold in-service sessions on gifted education throughout the province.

* (1550)

This month AIDS education is being included or introduced all throughout the province in grade 5 and grade 6 as part of the health education curriculum. AIDS education is now mandatory for all schools from grades 5 to 12, although parents may still choose to opt their children out of these programs. AIDS is a worldwide public health problem which has reached epidemic proportions. The most effective method we have to combat this disease is through education.

The department has also revised the AIDS material for the high school level and published a parents' guide to encourage parents to become more active and more involved in AIDS education.

Another area of concern which is gaining increasing prominence as we head into the end of the century is the environment. Environmental issues are already firmly imbedded in our science and social studies curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12. However, to ensure that our young people are gaining the knowledge and developing the attitudes that they will require in the '90s, we are enriching our programs with regard to environment. As a matter of fact, we are going to be appointing an environmental consultant in the near future.

The bureau de l'education francaise continues to provide support for French language throughout the province which is much appreciated by school divisions. I am pleased that this year we were able to reinstate the federally-funded bursary programs which allow French language teachers to study in Manitoba and out of province to increase their linguistic and pedagogical skills.

As I mentioned in my opening, technology is presenting us with many challenges. On the other hand, it is also opening up opportunities to dramatically expand the number and variety of educational opportunities we are able to offer Manitobans throughout the province at a relatively low cost.

At present, the Distance Education and Technology Branch is involved in 63 projects to assist schools and post-secondary institutions to develop distance education programs.

In addition, the correspondence unit serves about 10,000 students directly, and Manitoba educational television provides about 400 hours of programming.

This year, METV has become more heavily involved in video production. An excellent example is the eight-part series on the nature and importance of conserving our soils, which was broadcast recently.

Distance education techniques are having a significant impact on the delivery of educational programs at all levels of education, and I expect that the area will continue to expand.

At the post-secondary level, provincial support for Manitoba's universities increased by 7 percent, the largest increase in six years. The support increased by \$12.9 million to nearly \$197 million in 1989-90, providing about 85 percent of operating funds. Operating funds increased by \$10.45 million, or 5.9 percent over the 1988-89 level. The ACCESS Fund remained the same at \$790,000.00. Capital funding increased by \$2.5 million, or 36 percent, to a total of \$9.5 million.

This is the second year in which capital funding has increased substantially, signifying this Government's support for post-secondary education. Two years ago the allocation was only \$5 million.

Distance education techniques are now making it possible to expand opportunities for Manitobans outside large urban areas to take university programs. By next fall, the fall of 1990, up to 10 first-year courses will be offered to students in rural and Northern Manitoba. All class instruction will be done by the three Manitoba universities through local schools.

The Minnesota-Manitoba Agreement on Education Co-operation signed in September is expected to further expand the educational opportunities for Manitobans. The agreement, unique in Canada, will allow Manitobans attending Minnesota universities to pay the same tuition as state residents do, allowing them to cut their current costs in half. The pact also promotes joint academic research.

A highly successful inaugural meeting was held early this month to explore areas of greatest interest and potential for co-operation between the two jurisdictions. I am confident that the agreement will result in a cost-effective means of expanding the province's educational and research opportunities.

Last June I established an advisory committee, including representatives from business, industry, Government and the colleges, to study governance of the Manitoba community colleges. The committee has been looking at operating models for community colleges and other institutions currently in place across the country, and they look at them in relation to finance, equipment and accountability. Their report has been presented to me, and I expect that over the next while we will be embarking on approaching a model which will be most effective to our province and will adapt to our province in the most efficient way.

Some organization has already resulted in the transfer of responsibility for northern training programs to Northerners. During this current fiscal year responsibility for administering and delivering all northern training and employment agency programs, and three ACCESS Programs was transferred to Keewatin Community College.

Constant change in response to market demand is a feature of community college operations, but I would like to highlight one initiative of particular importance, not only to college students, but to very young Manitobans and their families, as well. I am speaking of the new and expanded child care program that will add 70 training spaces in all. New programs are being established at the Keewatin Community College Regional Centre in Thompson and St. Boniface College, while existing programs have been expanded at Assiniboine Community College and Red River Community College. We should experience a 50 percent increase in the number of qualified day care workers entering the labour market in June of 1991, and an overall increase in graduates of over 120 percent by July of 1992. I am particularly pleased that the new programs are beginning to address the needs of specific groups such as northern residents and Franco-Manitobans.

As you know, last April the department's responsibility for training was expanded far beyond the courses offered through the community college. To assist us in developing strategies to prepare the provincial work force for the '90's, this Government for the very first time went for advice to the very senior representatives of industry, business and labour.

When I established the Skills Training Advisory Committee last summer, I was very pleased with the calibre of people who showed an interest in becoming

involved in shaping the direction of training that Manitobans need in the future. Since that time the committee has been reviewing existing skills training programs and looking at ways that business, Government and training institutions can work together in developing training partnerships. By early March I expect a report making recommendations for critical training priorities and suggestions for the provincial skills training strategy. Implementation will follow shortly after that.

In the interim, the third cycle of the Job Training for Tomorrow Program is providing on-the-job training support to Manitoba employers and the unemployed. This measure ensures that employers have an opportunity now to train new employees on the job, supported by wage assistance and training expertise. The program is very close to having fully committed the budget of \$3.5 million for this cycle and it is estimated that between 700 and 750 new training and employment opportunities will have been created in the province.

I have also established a working group to recommend ways to recognize the credentials and work experience of immigrants. Many of these workers have valuable professional and technical skills, often in fields where there are shortages. The 10-member working group will consult with professional organizations and post-secondary institutions to develop ways to assess and recognize immigrant credentials and qualifications.

There are, of course, a wide variety of training programs operating in the province, but there are two that I would like to highlight as examples of the type of co-operation we would like to encourage. The first is the \$700,970 program to train long-distance semi-trailer transport drivers, a joint venture cost-shared by Manitoba Education and Training, the Canadian Jobs Strategy Skills Investment Program, the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative and the Manitoba truck driving industry.

* (1600)

Over a 10-month period, 84 transport drivers will have been trained in seven courses of 11 weeks in duration. The program was developed and is managed by my department's New Careers Program and the Manitoba Trucking Industry Education Advisory Committee, representing 11 major truck companies in the province.

This is an excellent example of co-operation between different levels of Government and the private sector to help bring about a solution to a problem that has been an obstacle for the quickly expanding Manitoba trucking industry.

We are also very proud of the Stevenson Aviation Technical Training Centre in Winnipeg, which received national accreditation status for its aircraft maintenance engineering apprenticeship program, a first in Canada. This three-year apprenticeship program combines classroom instruction with on-the-job training. As a result of this new status, the demand for training has doubled with applications from as far away as Toronto and the Northwest Territories.

As you know, along with training, my department was given responsibility for labour market matters. The

decision to merge employment related activities with training puts us in a much better position to develop a coherent skills training strategy for the province.

In consultation with the Departments of Labour, Family Services, and Industry, Trade and Tourism, my department is developing a co-ordinated provincial labour market strategy linking economic development, future employment and skills needs and the expenditure of public funds on training in Manitoba.

Before I close, I would like to go back to the basics, the solid foundation that all of our citizens require to function in the '90s. In the first month of International Literacy Year, I am very pleased to be able to report that Manitoba has already made substantial progress in dealing with the problem. Immediately upon the release of the report of the Task Force on Literacy, the Government acted upon two major recommendations: establishing a Manitoba Literacy Council and a Literacy Office to support the work of the council. Just last month I announced provincial grants totalling \$432,800 to support new and existing programs throughout the province, combined with a \$154,200 grant announced in September of provincial funding for literacy programs which now, in total, amounts to \$587,000 for the 1989-90 fiscal year.

These programs are targeted to the five main areas identified in the task report: urban, rural, northern, aboriginal, and multicultural literacy. Francophone programs have also been identified as a priority area for funding, and funds are being provided for training involving inmates in correctional institutes.

As you can see, the department is moving on a number of fronts to ensure that our education system maintains a high degree of excellence, responds in a relevant way to the needs of Manitobans today and also to the needs that we will have in the future.

We need to be cognizant of Manitobans who need educational opportunities, regardless of their age, whether they are the very young, middle aged who need to be retrained, or the elderly. Wherever they live in this province should not be an obstacle in their acquiring an education. This department's responsibility is to ensure that we provide those opportunities wherever they may exist.

I am proud of the work the department has done to date. I am proud of the work that the staff has done. I feel that the staff of this department has worked very hard to indeed address many of the problems that we have, many of the challenges we have. We are turning many of the challenges of this province into opportunities for people throughout Manitoba.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): We will now have the customary reply by the critic of the official Opposition, the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Acting Chairman, unfortunately, I do not have a copy of the Minister's opening remarks, but I did try to make some notes as he was speaking. I do not have a prepared text, but I certainly have a good number of thoughts to put on

the record. However, because of the very short length of time that we have to discuss an \$800 million plus budget, I will try to keep my remarks rather short. I hope not simple, but certainly short.

When the Minister began, "the time has come," I thought he was going to wax into something from Alice in Wonderland. Some of the remarks, I think, were a touch Alice-in-Wonderlandish. He made reference to the change in the name of the department. I have in the past said that I find the term "training" to be somewhat offensive. To me "education" is a wonderful word, but the word "training" brings to light the circus fellow who is working with a seal or in fact a dog trainer who is training his dog. I do not like to use the word "training" when it comes to people, because I think what we are doing is, as the Minister did say, creating life-long learning opportunities for the people in our province.

He also referred to the amounts that were provided to some of his departments. The one of which I think he is most proud is in the area of literacy. I would suggest that perhaps high dollar figures in the \$500-thousand-plus is certainly a substantial amount. But just increasing the dollars does not necessarily, particularly in new areas like literacy, mean that the programs offered will be of high quality. I think there has to be a much greater level of accountability and a much greater level of following the programs that are offered by these particular areas.

Another area that I have of great concern with is the ability of this particular Minister, in fact this particular Government of Manitoba, to lobby and make requests of the federal Government. Certainly in the area of education and life-long learning, the federal Government is letting us down terribly. I will venture to guess that in the next few years we will see less and less in the way of actual dollars of assistance from the federal Government. I think that particularly in the area of post-secondary education this is very distressing.

We are blessed in this province with very fine post-secondary education settings, and they are in danger of having difficulty, some of them, in continuing offering the programs and continuing with level of research, albeit not as high as it could be already. They are in danger of decreasing the actual levels that they are able to offer because of the federal Government cutback. So I would urge the Minister and his colleagues on Cabinet to do everything they could to speak to their federal counterparts and to urge increased funding.

One would think, with a Tory Government in the province and a Tory Government in the country, that this funding would come more readily than it does. Maybe what we need is a Tory Government with a little more push in this particular province. I agree that the Minister commented on the legislation he has put forward. Certainly, when the last major revision was 10 years ago, there is a definite need for major, major revisions. I was pleased to hear him say that they are going to work towards additional revisions.

I think the parental access to records that he referred to is something that we too stated in our campaign

promises that we would push for. On behalf of many parents with whom we have spoken, I know that this will be a good thing. Obviously I am somewhat dissatisfied with the teachers charged with sexual abuse, convicted or charged with, and having the Minister have these offences reported to him. I would agree that the Minister certainly should be informed but have concern with what is done with this information that he has received.

On every single case, we have been consistent in saying that an individual who has been charged with sexual abuse and deals with children should be removed from their close association with children. I believe this Minister should do everything in his power to notify areas where a teacher has been charged, or any individual. I think when I spoke to that particular Bill, I said I disagreed with just the term teacher. I think any individual who is in contact with children in any school, in any area in our province, should be removed from the possibility of working with children.

* (1610)

There are lots of other activities that teachers or other individuals that work with children could do until those charges have actually been taken to court and proven. His independent school accountability and regulations for home schooling, we are waiting for, and very soon is something that we have heard since last June so I would hope that very soon will not be next June. We are waiting to have the Minister share with us what his regulations are for accountability of independent schools, for the auditing processes for home schooling, I believe that immediate action is absolutely essential.

The finance and education which he stated needed special consideration. In the Estimates book where the Minister of Education has said for his departmental overview that the primary role of Manitoba Education and Training is to ensure that Manitobans have equitable access to a full range of high quality education, I think there are a lot of people throughout our province who would dispute that particular statement and wonder whether the Department of Education and Training was meeting that particular objective as well as in the statement in the overview that the Department of Education should be representing the province in negotiations with the federal and other Governments because I would suggest that perhaps it could be a little more push to the negotiations.

The High School Review, the Minister alluded to the High School Review which has been on the plate for a very, very long time. The review that was put forward on the suggestion of my colleague to my left took a good deal longer to put together than had been estimated, and because of that it built up a great deal of hope in the minds of many of the educators throughout the province, people who were saying, oh, this wonderful report is going to come forward and it is going to be innovative and we are going to have a lot of grand things coming forward. When my colleagues and I received this report in the House, many of us were rather disappointed with the calibre of this particular report. So I was not terribly surprised when

the Minister ordered a review of the review. What I am upset with is that this review of the review is taking so long to come forward.

I know that there are people in areas of the province, Whyte Ridge is one. Whyte Ridge is a community that has grown and grown and grown and the students are being bussed and it has doubled in population in about a year, I believe. I think there are over 500 school-age children and I think the province probably got the architects together and made a drawing of a school, I do not know, I understand there is a drawing somewhere and I think it is a K to six school and, yet, this particular report recommends K to eight, and nine to 12. I do not understand why they would go ahead if they are putting such faith in this particular report. Planning K to six schools when they believe nine to 12 should be, if they in fact do believe.

Those are the sorts of things. That is the reason why there is some urgency and why sometimes I think a lot of people in Manitoba, myself included, would like to put a non-lethal bomb under this Minister to get him actually moving. I do not want to see him explode, but I would like to see him move a little bit.

He talked about AIDS education and the fact that there is education now from five to 12 and I would certainly support that. I would think that in this area, so many people have said that education is the key, is the answer to trying to prevent this dreadful pandemic that has taken place.

Just recently, I went to a very wonderful session at the University of Manitoba that was put on by the University and Dr. Allan Ronald, who is a well-known individual in Manitoba with infectious diseases, was on a panel with Dr. Elizabeth Ngugi from Nairobi. She discussed some of the things that were occurring in Africa. I thought, my gosh, that country is far ahead of us. In fact, Dr. Allan Ronald said, I have not got the direct quote, but when somebody asked him if he thought that medications might be forthcoming to stop this dread disease or cure this dread disease, he very emphatically responded that medications are not the answer, education is. I think that the Minister in his curriculum development group should look very closely at enhancing and expanding the AIDS education programs in the province.

Distance education, how essential. When we look at the higher and higher and higher cost of education as we see higher and higher costs in the Department of Health, there have to be innovative ways of addressing these high costs.

Again, I sat in on a distance education class in the fall and perhaps the Minister has had the opportunity to sit in on distance ed classes. I never had. I was tremendously impressed when the moderator, the chairperson, or whatever they are called, the facilitator I guess, in this particular classroom responded with people from Churchill, from Thompson, from Flin Flon, from Morden, Manitoba, from Portage la Prairie, and they were all sitting a mike between two students. The teacher, who was in a soundproof booth at the campus of the University of Manitoba, could identify the people who were speaking to him by their voices, after having

conducted only two or three classes in, I believe, introductory psychology. It must be far more cost effective to provide programs such as these. The students with whom I spoke told me that they felt a great bond with the instructor and they had actually met the particular professor, and I believe the professor was to make one or two physical trips to the sites where these students were being taught in their half-year course.

* (1620)

Of course, the other instrument that can be used is the video machine with a lot more personal, interpersonal reaction. I think that is something that I would be pleased to support seeing expanded.

The Minister was very proud of himself when he spoke about the increase in funding to the universities in our province and how great that was, the \$2.5 million for capital for the universities. I know that he, like me, has tramped through the steam tunnels at the University of Manitoba and has looked at the dreadful, dreadful facility that the poor people in the Faculty of Agriculture are trying to use to present their classes. I think \$2.5 million will barely touch the increase they need for capital.

Skills advisory group, yes, I think we have to have a group of people who will assist, but I was displeased when I saw the makeup of that group, not with the people that were on it because they are very, very fine individuals, but with the lack of educators on it—actual educators. I think if you are going to present programs and have an advisory group that is going to look at programs that might be necessary to help with their skills, they should also have somebody who has an understanding of how these programs are going to be provided to the people who will enroll in them.

We are blessed with a very high calibre, high level of teachers and professors throughout our province. I wonder if the Minister has had discussion with several of them and has heard of their frustrations. Some of them are concerned with the thrust for mainstreaming for instance, not with the idea that mainstreaming is perhaps not a good one. It should not be all inclusive. In some cases there are young people in our province who would be better educated, it would be better for them and those around them and the teachers, et cetera, if they were taught in a more segregated setting.

If there is going to be mainstreaming, there should be more assistance provided to the teachers who are going to be responsible to these people. I am also concerned when I look at the words equal access in the front of the departmental overview, and I think about the student in Churchill who would very much like to enroll in an IB or an advanced placement high school program, but there are not any up there. It would be costly for them to move down to the urban setting. I think it is unfortunate that they have to move to the urban setting. I wonder if we can really talk about equal access.

Partly for that reason, I have been pushing for a review of school division boundaries throughout the province, and again the 79 school trustees in the same

area where we have our 29 city councillors. I know the Minister is rubbing his cheek and saying, not again. It is a concern. I had promised that I would not go on and on, and I will not. I will just close by saying, I am pleased that he talked about the child care training programs at the community colleges, and I wonder if his vision could go beyond the end of his nose, because very soon these same child care training programs, again training is a bad choice of word, but the learning experiences for these programs are going to have to be presented by somebody. When we do not have a CCW3 program taking place in one of our universities, or two of our universities, we are going to run out of the administrators, the educators to educate these Child Care Worker 1's and 2's at the community college level.

I look forward to receiving answers to questions and I have a good deal more questions, and I know I will be allowed to present. I can send volumes of material to the Minister because I have met some of his staff, certainly not all of his staff, and I think that he is blessed with some of the highest calibre of people in the Department of Education, certainly those with whom I have met and been fortunate to deal with. I certainly am pleased and grateful, because I know that they will be able to do everything in their power to make this particular Minister, and this particular department have the appearance of shining. Thank you very much.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): We will now hear from the critic of the Second Opposition Party, the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I want to begin with—I appreciate the applause from the Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard). I want to begin where the Member for Sturgeon Creek left off, and that is by indicating that I appreciate the comments of the Minister with respect to the staff. I had the pleasure of dealing with many of the people that the Minister was referring to. I can say without hesitation that they are a very dedicated group of professionals. I have had a chance to meet some of the new people that the Minister has brought on, including his Deputy Minister whom I have found to be, and from all reports is, a very dedicated and thoughtful individual. I know he is providing the Minister with some good advice. We can only guess, I suppose, in the final analysis how much all that advice the Minister is accepting. It is not always apparent that he is accepting good advice. However, I know that the professionalism that is embodied in the department is a very important ingredient in maintaining a stable and an improving educational system.

I wanted to begin by saying that the remarks of the Minister were obviously self-serving in many respects. Through his somewhat lengthy remarks, he was attempting to pat himself on the back for doing some things that were already under way, and perhaps by embellishing the truth somewhat, when it comes to the actual achievements of this Minister with respect to education and training in the Province of Manitoba.

I wanted to start off by talking about a few of the concerns that I have. They are going to be rather generalized and I, like the Member for Sturgeon Creek, do not want to take too long because we are going to

have to compress the time span we have for reviewing these Estimates.

I wanted to touch on a couple of the areas touched on by the Minister, or should I say glossed over by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). The first one is the question of the programs that are offered in our schools. The High School Review clearly has produced a report. There has been some criticism of it. Clearly, when I first saw the report, I too shared some of the concern that it was a rather cautious review of what was needed to change our high school system.

I think, nonetheless, that there is a basis for some action on the part of the Government, and although the changes that are proposed are not earth shaking, are not earth shattering, I think they are good proposals in terms of adapting the curriculum to more reflect the needs that our community at large has with respect to graduating high school students, and I would like to see some movement. I would like to see a recommendation for school counsellors in every school to be implemented. I would like to see recommendations about the changes and additions to the Language Arts communications portion of our curriculum beefed up. I think the idea of consolidating across the provinces grade nine with the high school program is a good idea. The idea of having the programs broken down where there is a general moving to a more specific educational targeting is also a good idea.

* (1630)

I obviously am disappointed that the Minister has chosen to add a year, a year and a half, two years to this process, because we do need some changes. We do need some changes right now, and the Minister could be starting the process. The difficulty I have, and I think the difficulty most Manitobans, most educators have with this Minister, is that after a year and a half, approaching two years, certainly in my mind, and I think in the public's mind, there is no clear idea of how this Minister views education. He has not enunciated for the public any clear view of where he wants the school system to go.

So we need some changes in the high school system. I think they are long overdue. I guess, Mr. Acting Chairperson, we can accept some criticism for not - (interjection)- the last changes to our system resulted from a New Democratic Party review of the high school program, a public review of the program back in the early '70s for the Member for Virden's (Mr. Findlay) information, and the second one was started perhaps too late, we can all agree. But there are important changes needed in the high school system and we have to get to them.

So I am concerned about the delay. I am concerned that the Minister has not enunciated, nor has the Government, its view of what the public school system should be doing. The Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) has also shared some criticisms of the review, although she has not either enunciated a very clear view in my mind of where she would have the High School Review go, what recommendations should be in there that are not in there, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

An Honourable Member: But you are going to be clear?

Mr. Storie: I already have.

An Honourable Member: Oh, when?

Mr. Storie: On many occasions, including offering two examples right now. Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am certainly prepared to debate my view on each and every of the 69 recommendations, and I am certainly prepared to tell you where I think we could have gone somewhat differently.

However, I did not write the report. The report was the consensus of a group of individuals who have a stake in the educational process, and that was their view.

The second point needs to be made that this Government has not acted in another area, which relates to the entire educational process, and that is in the area of establishing a provincial wide basis for the gifted and talented students we have in our school system. There are individual divisions doing an excellent job, but there is no consistent provincial view, and no provincial support I might add, for the support of our gifted and talented in our schools, and we have yet to see any revamping of the support that is going to special needs students in the Province of Manitoba.

I think it is easy for the Minister to suggest that this has to be put over or should be put over until there is an opportunity to revise the educational funding model. We are all anxious to see what the Government proposes when it comes to changing the model that is in place for educational funding.

The Minister in his remarks on page 8 says that he is responding to a request from educational organizations to establish a committee. The fact of the matter is that a committee was established before this Minister took office. The Minister, I do not know whether he is aware of it or not but there was a committee that was meeting, did make presentations to the Government, and was to be a part of a process for changing the funding formula, and the Minister is now announcing that he is going to start this process all over again.

An Honourable Member: You abolished it.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I certainly never abolished it, and the Minister is dead wrong.- (interjection)- Absolutely I am on the record, and I can tell you that I certainly never abolished the committee.

There is a need to change the way we fund education in this system. I think we all agree, I think the Teachers Society and the trustees association and others agree that unless we move away from a per-pupil basis, unless we move to a program basis where divisions, regardless of their ability to fund from local resources, can offer programs and have those supported by the province, we are not going to have equality of educational opportunity across the province.

I am anxious that the Minister gets some results from the committee. I am anxious that he take this as a

priority, because I think it is important. I do not envy the Minister the task. I know that it is difficult. I think we both know that when changes are made of this scope there are going to be winners and losers, and the Minister's job is to make sure that (a) the people understand the process, and (b) we minimize the dislocation for school divisions, for schools, for students and for trustees I guess, as much as possible. It is a job that needs to be done, and the Minister has not seemed to be too willing to take that task on.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have another major concern, one that the Minister has only addressed in his opening remarks by reference to legislation, and that is the question with respect to where are we going with private schools in the Province of Manitoba. We have the Liberals and the Conservatives now suggesting one—the Liberal Party suggesting in the election, without any reference to accountability I might add, that they are going to move to 80 percent funding. The fact of the matter is that we need a thorough debate about where we are going with respect to private schools. Clearly the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Teachers Society are not in sync with the Government of Manitoba, nor the Liberal Party when they talk about moving to 80 percent funding for private schools.

It is not simply a question of accountability of public funds, although that is a major question and I agree with the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) on that. It is a major question. If we are going to spend additional funds on private schools, then we need that accountability, but the question is much deeper than that. The fundamental question is what are the implications of creating an atmosphere, a financial atmosphere even, where the option of a private school becomes more and more attractive for those groups who, for educational reasons, for religious reason, for cultural reasons, want to establish their school - (interjection)-

Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Member may want to talk about what happens in Saskatchewan. There is a fundamentally different system in Saskatchewan and Alberta, but I can tell the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that where in Canada we have a system, the same kind of system of private school funding, where this Government and the Liberal Party want to take us is Newfoundland. If you talk, as I did, to the Minister of Education there who happened to be at that time a Conservative, he will tell you it is a nightmare. It is an administrative nightmare, it is a financial nightmare, and it is an educational nightmare. On top of that it has ramifications for the cohesiveness of society, which cannot go overlooked in my opinion.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I support a public school system in Manitoba. I believe to the extent that parents have educational rights, they are available in the Province of Manitoba. No one has ever suggested that there should not be private schools in the Province of Manitoba, I least of all. I would never suggest that.

What we are talking about is establishing the primacy of the public school. We are talking about establishing a school system which can legitimately meet the needs of all members of society. I think the Department of

Education and the previous Government tried to do that. They tried to introduce a multicultural education policy, they tried to increase heritage language programs and bilingual programs in the public school system. The question now becomes, and I believe it is one that needs to be debated publicly, what are the implications of moving in the direction that this Government and the Liberal Party want to take us? It is a debate that I am certainly prepared to take on in a public way.

I think before we talk about incremental additions to legislation, incremental responsibility going onto those who operate private schools, that is begging the question of a) does the public of Manitoba want that to happen?, and b) what are the implications of making those decisions? I will have more to say on this. I am sure that the Minister and I will have a chance to ask and to answer some questions about what the Government's intentions are in this regard. It is an area which shows me again, as with the question of addressing and responding to the High School Review, that this Government does not have the clear direction. There is not any real sense that they have a view of where we want to end up not next year but five years or 10 years from now with respect to our educational system.

The public school system in Manitoba has served our population extremely well. I do not think anybody—I hope no one in this Legislature wants to do something which would tend to undermine it. I say that intentionally, and I believe the intentions may in fact be honourable on the part of some of those who have been promoting options which I do not favour. We have to understand what the implications of that course are. I do not believe anyone has seriously addressed it to date.

* (1640)

Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have a series of other problems which have not been addressed. I certainly do not want to pretend that I am laying the blame at the feet of this Minister when we talk about the relationship of the Department of Education to private schools which are not publicly funded and the question of home school week. Clearly we have to be more definitive when it comes to our expectations of those two systems. We have to ensure that there is some accountability, and we have to do that for the sake of the children who are being home schooled or are in private, non-publicly funded institutions.

We have an obligation. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has an obligation. I believe it is a serious one to the extent that those problems were not addressed satisfactorily while I was Minister. There were previous Ministers there over the last 10 or 15 or 20 years, then we all share some blame. The fact of the matter is, that when I was Minister we did set up, establish a committee to address the question of home schooling. Unfortunately, the committee reported after I had left and I lost touch with the recommendations. However, I think reasonable people can find some reasonable solutions to the question of accountability, the question of identification of those students within the province. The Minister has some work to do there,

and it is work that I am sure will be supported by both the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) and myself as it goes forward.

We are anxious that it occur quickly. The Member for Sturgeon Creek has touched on the question of university funding, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) gave us some statistics. It is another area where unless the Minister found some gold at the end of the rainbow there would never be enough money. The universities for a whole plethora of reasons have been underfunded for the last 15 years. Some of it has to do with changes to the established programs financing, the agreement between the federal and provincial Governments that supports education and health. Some of it has to do with the limiting effect of the changes in equalization which occurred in the early 1980s', 1981-82, the limiting effect that had on revenues available to the province. Some of it has to do with changes to the National Research Council's granting structure, and the inability of smaller provinces and smaller universities to tap into research money. Some of it has to do with the way in which universities had managed their capital programs. Some of it has to do with the limited dollars that universities have been given for capital improvements, for major upgrading, for additional infrastructure.

The fact of the matter is, however, that the Minister's response to date has not met the need. The Faculty of Agriculture is only the latest in a series of cries from the university for additional support. I only hope the Minister can help because there is considerable need out there. I recognize that he cannot work miracles. There are only so many dollars to go around, but like the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), I am concerned because we have not heard this Minister, I guess urging, requesting, leading any kind of assault on the federal Government to live up to its obligations with respect to post-secondary education.

They do have a major responsibility, and as far as I am concerned everything we have seen both in education and training, and I will talk about CJS, the Canadian Jobs Strategy in a minute, lead me to believe that they are not pulling their weight. We had a beautiful post-secondary education forum in Saskatoon in 1987, the former Secretary of State, David Crombie, was the Chairperson and virtually nothing came out of that. No commitment for action, no commitment for study, no commitment for co-operation; it was a public relations exercise.

I believe that the Minister should be leading the charge, should be attempting to develop a national consensus on the federal Government's role and responsibility. It should be a loud one, because the educational system, our post-secondary system is in jeopardy as a result of the lack of the federal Government in part meeting that responsibility.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister also knows of my concern when it comes to the Northern Development Agreement, and the adult and the continuing education programs that it funds. Almost one-half of that \$255 million agreement from 1982 to '89 is devoted to the development of our human resources. We have doctors and teachers and nurses and social workers and civil

technologists, and a host of other people being trained under the auspices of that agreement.

When I asked the Minister the other day about the implications of no new Northern Development Agreement, he seemed to shrug. I told him that staff were telling me that the BUNTEP program, that the Northern Development Agreement would not be renewed and that we only have two choices in the province. Either we pick up an additional 60 percent of the dollars we are collectively, the federal-provincial Government, spending on post-secondary education, or we lose some courses.

To some that may not be such a desperate situation, but if you understand how important those courses are to the people in northern Manitoba, the inner city of Winnipeg, you recognize that they have few alternatives. Those programs have to be supported. I am fearful about the future of those programs. Again the Minister has said precious little publicly or otherwise when it comes to the importance of those agreements. That is a said indictment of his lack of understanding of how important these agreements are to many in this province.

Literally hundreds of people annually are supported under these programs. If they disappear, the opportunities that those people enjoyed, that some young people, some single parents, some disadvantaged, some Native people might have enjoyed, are not going to be there to be enjoyed. There is a whole series of funding problems that the Minister has to address in the area of adult continuing and university education.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister and the Government generally also have to lend some serious assistance to school divisions such as Winnipeg No 1. I remember in previous years the discussions that were had between divisions about Government support to the Winnipeg School Division. I hope this Minister recognizes what a difficult chore the Winnipeg School Division has when it comes to dealing with the disparity amongst its students. They have the whole range of educational challenge if you will, whether we are talking about students who come with English as a second language, immigrant students, aboriginal students, we have gifted and talented, we have a plethora of social and economic problems which pervade the lives of students in many parts of Winnipeg School Division No. 1.

They need some assistance, they need some additional support. We, I think, have to help them meet their commitment to the children in that school division by providing some additional support. We have done some in the past. I know the Minister continues to give Winnipeg School Division additional support. We are talking millions of dollars, I assume. It used to be \$2 million, I do not know whether the Minister has increased it, in recognition of the nature of their student population.

* (1650)

There is another area where we also have a crisis in the inner city. That is with respect to the parent-

child centres. I do not know whether the Minister has received calls; I have certainly, including a call yesterday, urging me to raise this matter in the Estimates, and that is the question of whether this Government is prepared to fund parent-child centres. The Minister, I am sure, remembers the history here quite well.

The parent-child centres were out of funding; they were told to get some support from the Winnipeg School Division; they did; they received some interim support from the Winnipeg School Division and now they are coming back to the Government of Manitoba and saying, can we count on you. Because this is exactly the kind of program that can be invaluable to the school and the classroom teacher in the inner city of Winnipeg. They need that support and the Government, I feel, is obliged to provide that kind of support. It is very important if we are going to improve the success of our educational programs in the inner city.

It does not end there. We need a commitment from the Government to work on distance education programming, on providing means by which rural students and northern students can have access to a fuller range of educational programming, particularly in the high school and in the adult and continuing education area. We have unique educational needs in every part of the province and what we have seen from the Minister thus far leads me to believe that those concerns have not been addressed in any strategic way.

The only area, the one area where the Minister has made a serious effort is in the area of literacy. I was quite critical of the Minister's establishment of the Task Force on Literacy. I believe that the recommendations that were made by the committee, and I am not suggesting that the recommendations were not a legitimate review of the problems, but I believe that they were somewhat redundant, given that the Minister had his own internal report and recommendations.

The department had been working for a number of years to establish literacy programs that were working and I noticed in the Minister's remarks that he referenced the fact that much of the money went to enhancing existing literacy programs.

It is an important initiative and the Minister, I think, should receive some credit for the funding level that has been achieved; it is important. I will want to ask some questions about how much of that is going to literacy, how much of it is going to English as a second language program, because I think there is a distinction there that we should make.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think those are my introductory comments. Obviously the Minister and I will have a chance to explore some of these issues in a little more detail, but we can proceed with the detail at this point.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): I would remind Members of the committee that debate on the Minister's Salary, item 1(a), is deferred until all other items in the Estimates of this department are passed.

At this time, we would invite the Minister's staff to take their places in the Chamber.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Is the Minister prepared to introduce his staff members present to the committee?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would like to present to the committee Mr. John Carlyle, who is Deputy Minister; Ms. Denise Lovatt, Assistant Deputy Minister of Admin and Finance; Mr. Bill Claydon, Director of Personnel; and also Mr. Alex Krawec, who is the Director of Planning and Research.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The item before the committee is 1.(b), under Administration and Finance: Consists of the central administrative, financial and computer services necessary for the operating programs of the Department. Provides strategic and operational planning and policy support for the Department; maintains records of teacher qualifications and certification and student academic records. Item (b) Executive Support: Salaries, \$318,600.00. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Storie: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just one question. Could the Minister provide with us a list of the support personnel who would be covered under that? It does not have to be right away, just a list.

Mr. Derkach: Under item 1.(b), the staff, with regard to—I am wondering, is the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) asking about the staff from my office and the Deputy Minister's office?—(interjection)—Okay, the staff that support in my office are Mr. Dave McGill, who is my Special Advisor; Mr. Greg Slywchuk, Executive Assistant; Karmen Gill, Secretary to the Minister; Anne Marie Blair, Secretary; Edith Fillion, Secretary. In the Deputy Minister's office, Mr. John Carlyle, Deputy Minister; Pat Lavoie, Administrative Assistant; Diana Saaid, Secretary to the Deputy Minister; and Vivian Misurka, Secretary.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Shall the item pass? Item 1.(b) Executive Support: Salaries, \$318,600—pass.

(2) Other Expenditures, \$67,100—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I am the same as I was in the last Session when we began Education Estimates, trying to organize questions that fit the appropriate area.

The area that looks at policy and development of policy, is that not this particular area that we are looking at right now? Am I in line, Mr. Acting Chairperson, asking questions about the current policy on small schools and if there is a change foreseen in the policies that were presented during the tenure of the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill)?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, I can answer that question right now. No, there is no change in the policy with regard to small schools.

Mrs. Yeo: Okay. I am wondering if the Minister has looked at any proposals from some of the school divisions to study the need for schools in the future or

the possibility of certain school divisions having to, in fact, close down schools because of the declining enrollment that many, many school divisions in the province are finding themselves faced with.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, in a general sense I guess I would have to say we are committed to ensuring that small schools are supported adequately so that they, in fact, can offer adequate programs for the children within their catchment area or in those communities. Indeed, it is becoming more and more difficult, especially in areas where we have a declining population in communities.

It is ultimately the question that has to be answered by school divisions in terms of when a school division decides that a school is no longer viable. For that reason we have a set of guidelines that are in place for school closure. We expect that all school divisions would adhere to those guidelines before they would close a particular school. That means that there is adequate time of notification that the school is going to be put on a list for closing, and secondly that there is consultation with the community with regard to when that school will close and the reasons for it, so that there is community input into that.

Basically, the guidelines as they were established have not been changed in the last two years.

Mrs. Yeo: Because the time is flying by I would like to ask the Minister sort of a housekeeping question if I may. The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) asked for a list of who was working in his department. I am wondering how the Minister would like us, if we wish to have lists—and I am looking on page 44, Statutory Boards and Commissions—I would like to have a list of who is on those particular boards and how many times the boards have met in the past.

If we have questions such as these, how would the Minister like us to proceed in making these requests ahead of time?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Chairman, we have the information available here. So when we get to those sections I can certainly read the members of those committees and indicate to the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) when those committees sit and how often they have met and any other details with regard to those committees and also the boards and commissions that she may have questions on. There is a section in the Estimates here when we can address that issue.

* (1700)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' hour.

Committee rise, call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Neil Gaudry (Acting Chairman of Committees): Monsieur Président, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and ask leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

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

COMMITTEE CHANGE

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), on House business.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): A committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Uruski for Storie.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PRIVATE BILLS

BILL NO. 89—AN ACT TO AMEND AN ACT TO INCORPORATE UNITED HEALTH SERVICES CORPORATION

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), Bill No. 89, An Act to Amend An Act to Incorporate United Health Services Corporation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la "United Health Services Corporation", standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): We are prepared to let that Bill go to committee.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Stand? No leave. Is the House ready for the question?

The Honourable Member for Transcona, on a point of order.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, perhaps due to a certain amount of commotion in the House, it was not heard by all Honourable Members that the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) did express willingness on the part of the third Party to grant leave for this Bill to proceed to committee.

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I introduced a Bill. Do I close debate?

Mr. Speaker: If the Honourable Member so wishes.

Mr. Pankratz: I would just like to put a few comments on—

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

Mr. Pankratz: I just want to thank both Party Members for allowing this Bill to get this speedy passage. At the same time it will go to committee. If there will be any questions in regard to that, and if they would want support staff to come forward at that point in time, this could be made available. With those few comments I am happy to see this Bill go to committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 4—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 4, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

* (17 10)

BILL NO. 10—THE BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boissons, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to place some words regarding this Bill on the record. Firstly, I wish to applaud my colleague from Springfield on the initiation of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a long time coming that we address the issue of recycling some of our goods that we are presently having in our homes, which we have a tendency to lump all together and throw into the landfill sites. I am a great believer in being conscious of the fact that too many of us in our day to day lives have a tendency to discard plastic containers, aluminum cans, items of that nature, into the garbage container and then of course sending it out to the landfill site.

Mr. Speaker, as you can well appreciate, when it comes to aluminum cans it takes decades for it to disintegrate. Therefore the proposed Bill, that my honourable colleague from Springfield brings up, I think is an example of what the Liberal Party stands for. The Liberal Party is a great believer in our environment. We are a great believer in protecting our environment. I think that this Government should not take a very soft stand on this particular issue. If they would have seen the wisdom of this Bill, they would probably take and incorporate it into one of their own Bills and make it a very, very good Bill, whereby our children's children would not live in a world in which we have today.

Mr. Speaker, I have travelled this province from north to south, east and west, to almost every community there is in Manitoba. The one startling thing that has often come to my attention—as you drive down the streets or down the roads, I often see aluminum cans, beer bottles, soft drink bottles, plastic of course, and glass, littering our roadways. There is nothing more damaging to the environment than that particular type of uncaring by the motorists of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I find that the Government of the Day should take some initial kind of action. One particular incident that strikes me to heart is when I was going through Minnesota. I noticed on a board as you were driving down the highway that they have got actually a penalty if you litter the highways. They actually have a penalty.

I am not suggesting that that is what we should do in Manitoba, but maybe the Government might consider it. Maybe they might consider it, I do not know. That would certainly eliminate some of these litterbugs. You go down and on the way to Portage la Prairie I know there is a drop-off, a little container, I forget now what they refer to it as, along the highway, and you often see as you are picking up these receptacles and putting them into the Highways and Transportation trucks, you often see all kinds of litter being strewn all over the ditches.

That type of appearance to a tourist is very, very bad, because they obviously get the impression that we do not care about Manitoba. Our province is a very, very lucky province whereby we have the saying on the back of our plates, Friendly Manitoba. Here we are, we drive down the roads, and we see nothing but litter of all shapes and sizes.

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but I cannot understand why the Government of the Day has not taken some kind of initial action to improve our highways with respect to the cleanliness of our highways. I appreciate that it is almost impossible to make it perfect, but at least some semblance of decency should prevail. As I said, it certainly is an avenue that I think that the Government should look at. Again referring to my colleague's Bill, not only do I think, I am very, very confident that this type of a Bill certainly would enhance the abilities of people to be a little bit more cautious when we dispose of these various objects into our garbage containers.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has stated in his Bill that metal cans, plastic bottles, refillable and non-refillable glass bottles, and other things are defined

by the regulations as a container. I think it is an admirable way to start. We always have to start some place. I am not saying that we should—perfection is almost impossible in any Bill, and I do not care whose Bill it is. When we send it to committee stage, there are always going to be people who are going to disagree with that wording or that wording, but at least this is a very good start in saving our atmosphere and saving our planet.- (interjection)- What do you want?

* (1720)

Again I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to the Members in the Legislature, please review this Bill with heart, not with politics, because this Bill has a lot of merit in it. If only this Government would quit being its obnoxious self, quit being its arrogant self and saying all kinds of bad things about the Bill—I have listened to the comments that were put on record by the previous speakers—I am confident that if we work together toward a common goal and that common goal is very, very simple, the preservation of our planet. The only way to start is by one step, one small step for mankind, one step for mankind. This Bill, I feel, certainly does take that one step for mankind.

There are other things that I would even suggest we could probably augment into this Bill which would make it make far better, I hope. At the present time, until it goes to committee stage—and I would certainly plead with this Government to send it to committee stage, whereby it could be discussed in a rational manner, whereby we could then with cooperation with this Government develop a good substantive Bill which will stand the test of time and then it will protect our atmosphere and our Earth.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to put a few comments on the record on this particular Bill. The Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) has brought forward what I believe is a very progressive piece of private Member's legislation that will no doubt enhance the environment and clean up the surrounding areas in which we travel on a daily basis, whether it is within the City of Winnipeg or if it is in the rural areas of the province.

Earlier in the 1989 year we had taken a northern tour, and one of the delegations that met with our caucus was very concerned with the amount of bottles and empty aluminum cans, and so forth, that are seen around the area, around the communities. I think we received a very strong message in terms of the direction that they would like to see the province go in terms of bringing forward positive legislation that will take care of problems of this nature. It is, in fact, a bit of a problem in all of the rural areas, and in fact, as I pointed out, in the City of Winnipeg, too.

Steps that we can take as legislators to facilitate or to take care of a problem of this nature, I think we should. I think if we take a look at—by adding value and we only need to look at the pop bottles, beer bottles, and so forth, once you put a value to a returnable item, there is then incentive for that item to be returned. By having items being returned, I believe, you are facilitating a solution to a particular problem.

The particular problem here is if you drive down the highways during the summertime, anytime, actually during the year, you can see our ditches are littered with all sorts of garbage, whether it is bottles, empty bottles, cans, other types of litter that really make an unsightly drive in many cases, especially along some stretches of our highways. Closer to the City of Winnipeg there seems to be a bit larger mess in our ditches and so forth.

There are many groups and associations that go out, whether it is inside the city or if it is outside the city, to clean up the ditches and so forth, and they can do this not only just to clean the environment but also they use it as, a bit of a fund raiser. There are many different types of organizations that benefit by having bottle collections, by cleaning up the areas in which they might operate out of, in order to gain monies to be able to perform certain functions that under normal circumstances they would not have, had they not had that particular drive.

There are many other benefits, Mr. Speaker, that result from that. By having the fund there, by encouraging people, in particular organizations, to go out and collect the trash that has been thrown out or misplaced or however you might want to say it, it will clean up the area. It will give extra monies to those organizations that are going out there cleaning it up. By putting the monetary value to returning items in which we do not have—you will see that much more of an effort in doing that.

In walking in different areas in my riding, and it is not just limited to one riding, if you walk anywhere within the City of Winnipeg, inside a town in a rural community, you will see that there is broken glass. The broken glass, as I tried to point out, is because there is no incentive for someone to retain a liquor bottle or a wine bottle or that type of glass container. In many cases it ends up being tossed into someone's garbage, and whether it is intentional or not intentional, in many cases it ends up as broken glass on the sidewalks, on the streets, in the rural and urban areas, on grass, in parks, and so forth, Mr. Speaker.

What it has done, other than just dirtying the environment in which we live, it also is somewhat hazardous. Many of the children, most children will go out to play in the local parks. Everyone walks on our sidewalks and we drive on our streets, and the damage that is incurred by having broken glass, wherever it might be, is very large. I think we could probably all relate to maybe stepping on a piece of glass, whether it was in that park or on that sidewalk. This is somewhat unfortunate, but it happens.

This is one piece of legislation that I believe, as I have tried to point out, tries to alleviate or tries to take care or address that particular problem. There are other aspects that will benefit from a Bill of this nature.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that I am somewhat disappointed in a sense that the Government—and I must admit it is not the only Bill that the Government really has not been putting up speakers to find out where they lie on this particular Bill. They seem to have done it on numerous Bills.

Since the Bill was introduced by the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), in terms of when he actually spoke on it in second reading, it was last year, Mr. Speaker, in October. We have had several of my other colleagues who have spoken on the Bill. This Bill comes up virtually every Tuesday and Thursday, and we do not really see Government Members except for one who has actually stood up and spoken on the Bill.

This Bill affects the rural areas just as much as it affects the urban areas. The rural Members of the Government should be standing up, should be expressing their concerns. There is nothing wrong if a Private Member introduces a Bill that will benefit—there is nothing wrong with a Government Member standing up and speaking in favour of Bills of a Private Members' Bill. You will see on many occasions, the Official Opposition has stood up and has said that this particular Bill that the Government has brought forward is a good Bill, that we will be supporting it.

An Honourable Member: When did you say that?

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says, when have we said that. We have said it on numerous occasions to the Minister of Health. We have not seen that coming from the Government. The Government should be standing up and saying where they stand on specific Private Members' Bills to give us some type of indication in terms of how they would like to see this particular Bill and all other Bills proceed.

I believe that it is a good Bill. I do not see, nor do I understand why the Government would not necessarily not want to speak to this Bill. I am left to the impression that, well, if they stand to speak, does that mean they are going to speak in favour of it, and as a result of that, they do not want to put up speakers on the particular Bill? I do not know; we can only speculate. I would like to know where the Government stands on it. I would like to see the Bill go to committee.

I see nothing wrong with, during Private Members' hour, for Governments and Opposition Parties to debate in second reading in good faith on Bills. If the Bill deserves or has the merit to proceed on to the next stage of the legislative process, we should be doing that. We should be bringing it to the next stage where we can hear the representations in terms of what other Manitobans feel about a particular Bill.

I believe there are many Manitobans who would love to be able to speak on this Bill, but we are limiting it to discussion in this particular Chamber because the will is not there on behalf of the Government to actually see a Private Members' Bill go into committee. As a result, the public is denied the opportunity to be able to speak to the Bill. Mr. Speaker, I believe if the public was given the opportunity to give some input on this particular Bill, you would find that there is a great deal amount of support for it.

* (1730)

I pointed out that during a tour that we had taken, and it was in the northern rural area, they thought it

was a great idea. They thought it was something that was really needed. Like the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) has pointed out, the Liberal Party has put the environment as a very high priority. This Bill addresses a part of that Liberal policy stand regarding the environment, and I believe it is reflective of what is needed in this day and age.

If the Government continues to stand the Bill, it is completely up to them. I do not believe the Opposition should put them in a position of forcing it into committee, but I must stress that I am very disappointed. I am disappointed not only in this Bill, but other Private Members' Bills, which this Government has seen fit not to stand up to let us know where we stand.

During Government Bills, Mr. Speaker, the combined Opposition have a responsibility to stand up and speak to the Bills. We take that responsibility very seriously. Given the opportunity, we speak to all of the Bills. I would expect that the Government should be doing the same, that they should be commenting on this Bill.

The Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), might have an interest in it. At the very least, the Minister of Environment, Mr. Speaker. This Bill in principle will do a lot for our environment.

I believe in concluding that we do need to have a discussion on this Bill. I would prompt Government Members to speak on it, and if they do not want to speak on the Bill, for this particular Bill, I believe that there is merit to see it go to a committee, and the sooner it goes to a committee, the sooner we will provide the opportunity to have public input on the Bill. I think that is important because out of that public input we might find a better way of enhancing it, of enhancing or providing incentive for not only bottles or aluminum tin cans, but other things that do damage to our environment, other ideas.

We, as 57, are somewhat limited in terms of the number of ideas that we can come up to as a province, as a province of many. The potential for positive resolutions to come forward is so much enhanced once we go into a committee process if we do it in a favourable manner. On this particular Bill, I believe that there is nothing wrong with seeing it going to committee. It does not have to be as political as some might say that we are trying to be on it, Mr. Speaker.

Our intent, or I believe the Member for Springfield's (Mr. Roch) intent, is very sincere. He has recognized a problem. He has done extensive research in trying to come up with a solution to the problem. He has consulted with other interested parties, organizations, and I commend him on the work that he has done this far. I think it shows in the wording of the Bill, and I would encourage, as I say, that we do try and make an effort of seeing this particular Bill go to the committee. I believe that if it does go to committee, we will all benefit from it. We have spoken, as I say, in favour of many Government Bills, and have co-operated in terms of seeing it going into a committee in an appropriate and timely fashion.

I would suggest to the Government that they might want to consider doing that to a couple of the Private

Members' Bills, or if they are not willing to see it go to committee at least give us the courtesy and let us know by standing up and speaking to the Bill and let us know where you stand on the particular Bill. This way, as the Opposition, we know what you are doing and we are informed of what you are doing, but to deny us both, Mr. Speaker, I think is wrong. If you are not going to allow us to see it go to a committee, tell us why.

I see my light is flashing, so on that I will conclude my remarks.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, and the motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that the question be now put, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 16—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), Bill No. 16, An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs.

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Which Bill are we on?

Mr. Speaker: Bill No. 16. The question before the House—the Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 17—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Bill No. 17, The Employment Standards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 18—THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. Speaker: The next item of business before the House is Bill No. 18, The Ozone Layer Protection Act; Loi sur la protection de la couche d'ozone, introduced by the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak).

As some Honourable Members may be aware, there is some similarity, some duplication of content in this Bill and in Bill No. 83, The Ozone Depleting Substances Act; Loi sur les substances appauvrissant la couche d'ozone, introduced by the Honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

I recognized that the apparent similarities between certain provisions in both Bills might present the House with procedural difficulties. I therefore consulted with the Law Officer of the House respecting the differences and similarities between the two Bills and was advised of the following similarities:

"With respect to means, each Bill contains a prohibition. Bills 18 and 83 each contain penalty provisions: Sections 4 and 8 respectively."

The Law Officer's correspondence also identified a number of differences between the two Bills which share a common purpose.

Beauchesne citation 624(3) provides that:

"There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills relating to the same subject and containing similar provisions. But if a decision of the House has already been taken on one such bill, for example, if the bill has been given or refused a second reading, the other is not proceeded with if it contains substantially the same provisions and such a bill could not have been introduced on a motion for leave. But if a bill is withdrawn, after having made progress, another bill with the same objects may be proceeded with."

Manitoba Rule 31, which states, in part, that, "No Member shall revive a debate already concluded," also applies to the situation in which the House currently finds itself. Bill No. 83 has received second reading - that is, the debate on the principle of the Bill has been concluded. If the House now continued to debate Bill No. 18, it would be reviving a debate already concluded because of the similarity in content.

Combining the advice obtained from the Law Officer of this House with the authorities just quoted, it would be procedurally improper, therefore, to permit any further debate on Bill No. 18. To do so would contravene the provisions of Beauchesne's Citation 624 and would also be contrary to our own Rule 31.

The Honourable Member for The Pas has two courses of action open to him. Bill No. 18 can remain on the Order Paper, not be proceeded with any further and die when this session is prorogued. Alternatively, he may seek the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw it. A further option is open to the Honourable Member in that he may propose amendments to Bill No. 83 when it is in Committee to introduce into it provisions now contained only in Bill No. 18.

BILL NO. 20—THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), Bill No. 20, (The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), standing in the name of the Speaker.

BILL NO. 21—THE UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT

Mr. Speaker: The next item of the business before the House is Bill No. 21, The Unfair Business Practices Act; Loi sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales, introduced by the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

As some Honourable Members may be aware, there is some similarity, some duplication of content in this Bill and in Bill No. 64, The Business Practices Act; Loi sur les pratiques commerciales, introduced by the Honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

I recognize that the apparent similarities between certain provisions in both Bills might present the House with procedural difficulties. I therefore consulted with the Law Officer of the House respecting the differences and similarities between the two Bills and I was advised of the following similarities:

"I have reviewed the Bills and, in my opinion, there is indeed both overlapping and conflict between them.

The broad, general purpose of both Bills is the same, namely, to curb unfair business practices and provide redress to consumers who fall victim to such practices.

The means for achieving their purpose is in general the same in both Bills. Indeed, a great many provisions of each Bill are identical in wording to parallel provisions of the other Bill."

The Law Officer's correspondence also identified a number of differences between the two Bills.

* (1740)

Beauchesne's Citation 624.(3) provides that:

"There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills relating to the same subject and containing similar provisions. But if a decision of the House has already been taken on one such bill, for example, if the bill has been given or refused a second reading, the other is not proceeded with if it contains substantially the same provisions and such a bill could not have been introduced on a motion for leave. But if a bill is withdrawn, after having made progress, another bill with the same objects may be proceeded with."

Manitoba Rule 31 which states, in part, that "No member shall revive a debate already concluded" also

applies to the situation in which the House currently finds itself. Bill No. 64 has received second reading—that is, the debate on the principle of the Bill has been concluded. If the House now continues to debate Bill No. 21, it would be reviving a debate already concluded because of the similarity in content.

Combining the advice obtained from the Law Officer of this House with the authorities just quoted, it would be procedurally improper, therefore, to permit any further debate on Bill No. 21. To do so would contravene the provisions of Beauchesne citation 624 and would also be contrary to our own Rule 31.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) has two courses of action open to him. Bill No. 21 can remain on the Order Paper, not be proceeded with any further and die when this Session is prorogued. Alternatively, he may seek the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw it. A further option is open to the Honourable Member in that he may propose amendments to Bill No. 64 when it is in committee to introduce into it the provisions now contained only in Bill No. 21.

BILL NO. 22—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 22, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave. The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): It gives me great pleasure to be able to rise to speak on this Bill, to put some comments on the record with respect to consumer protection legislation. But there are a few comments I need to put on the record as well with respect to why we are introducing Bills and resolutions during this Private Members' hour, and that is, this is the only avenue we have available to us which does permit individual Members to put things onto the Order Paper that we consider important and we would like to have debated in this House.

I am beginning to take umbrage when I find that Government Members refuse to participate in the process, because it does frustrate the exercise that we are engaged in. I mean, when we are in the process of debating second reading where, as the Speaker has so eloquently stated, we are debating the principle of a Bill, one should think that principles are not always agreed to by Parties, that there is difference of opinion and that significant argument can be put forth to try and sway the other side as to the error of their ways. However, I see none of that in this Chamber during Private Members' hour, and I begin to question the value of the exercise.

Perhaps we should be looking at the very rule which does permit it, because if Government is not going to stand up and put its comments on the record to allow

us to react, then I feel we are putting the process into a position to be questioned.

Bill 22 is a case in point. It is consumer protection legislation, and I was prepared to listen to the ruling of the Speaker on 22, which would be similar to his ruling on 21, because 21, as he stated, is contained in the provisions of 64. Therefore, you cannot have it passed through; you do not wish to address something on the same principle. Here in 22 we have something similar. Part of 22 has already been included in a Government Bill No. 63.

I believe that for us to take a look at 22 and realize that somewhere Government saw some value in what we here in the Private Members' hour introduced, and chose to include this in their legislation, legislation which they, because they are Government and because the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) can put things on the Order Paper in a different fashion than we can; they can call forward sooner, and therefore we discuss more quickly, and therefore can actually, if by leave of the House, move to the committee stage where interested people of Manitoba can put forth their own ideas, that we can actually get out of this Chamber, out of the second reading process.

When I think about the process, I am convinced there is merit by that very fact to what we have done here, because the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) introduced several Bills. Other people have introduced Bills which have subsequently been picked up in Government legislation and therefore in essence made redundant in this hour.

However, there are aspects here that I feel we should address. Consumer protection legislation is necessary. Bill 22 is one case in point. I believe that if we take a look at how consumer legislation has come about we have to harken back to the Latin phrase "caveat emptor," let the buyer beware. Everything is fair game as long as you have dollars to be taken out of your hand, out of your pocket, because it is the seller of the good who has the power to convince you that what he wants you to have is something you—he will convince you that you want this so badly that you actually will voluntarily part with your hard-earned dollars.

Sometimes, individual consumers do not have the skill with which to combat unscrupulous sellers. I think a simple example would suffice. My mother, bless her soul, 76-years-old, finds it very, very hard to refuse anybody at the door who comes to the doorbell and says, would you buy a chocolate bar? Would you buy this? Would you buy that? In fact, it gets to such an extent, particularly when some of the people coming to the door are larger than the eight-, nine- and ten-year-olds who might sell the chocolate bars, who tend to be older people who might be selling services door to door, she actually will lock the door, go hide in her bedroom, and hope they will go away, feeling that she has not got the skill to argue against somebody who is going to high-pressure her into a situation where she might be buying something, a service or a good, that she really does not want.

In order to protect consumers who are unfairly placed into a contest of such a case, we have consumer

protection legislation, and I am pleased to see that parts of 22 have been adopted by Government in their Bill No. 63, particularly as these apply to prepaid services and, in essence, we have increased the protection that consumers have when it comes to buying and selling in Manitoba.

* (1750)

But one would ask if Government sees some value in some of the legislation put forward by Private Members, and we heard the Speaker refer on past occasions to Bills Nos. 20 and 37; today, to Bills Nos. 18 and 21, Bills whose provisions have been co-opted as it were by Government and introduced from the strength of their side, then, as I indicated earlier in my remarks, debated because they can be called sooner and furthermore debated because this is now a Government Bill. You can get the pro and con. The principles are debated in the Chamber and eventually through to third reading, but here, as I said, we sit and watch in absolute—well, the expression that comes to mind is dearth of Government speakers, but dearth does not really apply because dearth applies to the absence of, a desert-like quality, an emptiness, which—well, perhaps it does actually apply to Government Members, to the Government side.

At any rate, we do have an absence; there is an insufficient number of Government speakers perhaps to come forward. I would like to challenge Government to put forward perhaps some of their backbenchers who I see sitting waiting for their opportunity to speak, and I think they should have the opportunity to put forward at least another side in order to debate legislation and debate resolutions in this Chamber, because that is the purpose of this Private Members' hour, and I see that we should be utilizing this hour in the manner to which it was set aside because I personally, Mr. Speaker, would not like to see Private Members' hour done away with.

I think it does provide Private Members, backbenchers, an avenue whereby they can put things onto the Order Paper, onto the Table, that can be discussed and are important to be discussed.

If I think back to some of the labour legislation of the past, when we did not have as many large-scale contracts, large-scale unions—if I may use, for example, the Manitoba Teachers Society, which bargains from individual bargaining units, there was a point in time in bargaining where it was beneficial to have the lighthouse agreement, the one agreement which would create the ideal to which somebody might aspire in larger bargaining units, and eventually all units would be able to achieve the same standard.

Now that is one way which we can utilize Private Members' hour. Maybe not all Private Member legislation has that ring of absolute correctness about it which would make it something that is universally apparent, but it does provide individuals to start debating, to put the thoughts on record, so that perhaps at some later point in time, a later season, a later time in the Session, somebody sees the validity in what has been stated. I do not have to repeat, we have already

seen that in this Session four or five times, and probably will occur with Bill No. 22 as well, because so much of it is included in Bill 63.

There is one aspect of 22 which we should address for a few moments, which is not included in 63. I wonder why not, because this addresses the aspect of the manufacturer's suggested retail price to be affixed as a sticker to automobiles. The principle here is one that is very simple. A person who goes window-shopping or car shopping for automobiles should have a rough idea of what these vehicles are going to cost. I know that there are arguments by sellers of automobiles that indicate that this is a restrictive practice, but other jurisdictions have adopted these. I would like to find out from Government what they feel about this aspect of the consumer protection legislation, because surely a consumer has a right to know.

I know when I go into a store to buy something and I pick it up, in my mind's eye I see this as something I want. I want it, I would like to purchase it. If I turn over to the price tag and suddenly, hey, this is beyond my means, I am not even going to look at a salesman to say—because nobody bargains these days with respect to most sales. If I go back to the last time that I purchased a new car, there was no such thing as bargaining either. We used to think that a person purchasing a car could go and negotiate with the seller because there is this massive range between the asking price and the offer.

We still do this with houses, but even in houses, I think if I take a look at a very large, big-scale item, when one goes to purchase a house or goes to go house shopping I believe there is a published price that people can take a look at. There is no published price—someone corrects me—there is no published price. Well, maybe I have not been buying houses recently. It seems to me that when I take a look at a price raise they will give us a price range. So it gives you an idea because I know, within my limited earning capacity that I now have, I will not go into a house where they are asking for a major, major commitment of my income, in the neighbourhood of \$200,000 or \$300,000.00. This is beyond my means. I will not look, although I could probably make that assessment by taking a look at the square footage of the house.

A 3,000-square foot house is not going to be within my price range and, perhaps by that token, a person willing to debate Bill 22 might tell me that a person walking into a car dealership should know the difference between a Cadillac and a Chev BelAir, be able to state that the Cadillac is going to cost him or her too much, and therefore only start looking at the Chev BelAir.

But you know something, we do know retailers do all kinds of things to move a product. They may have a sale. I know that we have—I have seen on television these cash-back offers. Come into the showroom, buy this car. We give you a thousand dollars. What is so hard about stating in the same situation, look, come into the showroom, look at this car, we only want to have in the neighbourhood—this is the asking price. We are still going to negotiate, we are still going to haggle because you are going to want this option or

that option. There will be a difference, but at least you have a rough idea as you go in.

I think this is only fair. I believe that retailers have a right to a fair return on what they do. I also believe though that consumers have a right to understand what they are going to be expected to pay. Now the purpose of a Private Members' Bill, even if the Bill is one that does not have universal acceptance, not even acceptance perhaps—if there is a consensus that there are aspects to this Bill that are favourable. Still, because there are individuals, perhaps large lobby groups, that firmly believe that this is something that is not correct, they should be given a chance to put their thoughts, their comments onto the record.

That is what is missing in this debate. We do not get the other side, all speaking from one side essentially. I do not get the other picture, the other side, because there may be real validity to why the suggested manufacturer's retail price should not be placed as a sticker on a vehicle's windshield.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's time has expired. Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? No? Okay.

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 22, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of—we just did that one?—the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). That was already agreed to stand.

BILL NO. 23—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 23, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 24—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 24, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave.

**BILL NO. 26—THE REAL PROPERTY
AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

**BILL NO. 37—THE MUNICIPAL
ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT (2)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 37, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (2); Loi no. 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale. That matter will remain standing in the name of the Speaker.

**BILL NO. 41—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
AMENDMENT ACT (4)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 41, the Highway Traffic Amendment Act (4); Loi no 4 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

1730