



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

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS  
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, March 22, 1991

The House met at 10 a.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Mr. Jack Penner (Chairman of the Committee on Economic Development):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the First Report of the Committee on Economic Development.

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** Your Standing Committee on Economic Development presents the following as its First Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, March 16, 1989, and Tuesday, October 3, 1989, and Thursday, October 5, 1989, and on Thursday, October 12, 1989, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider the Annual Reports of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd. for the fiscal years ending December 31, 1987, and December 31, 1988.

Mr. P. Brockington, Chairperson of the Board, Mr. M. Wright, President and Mr. N. Briggs, Vice-President, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Reports and business of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd.

Prior to the passing of the Annual Report of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd. for the fiscal year ending December 31, 1987, your committee adopted at its October 3, 1989, meeting the following recommendation:

THAT the Standing Committee on Economic Development request the minister provide to this committee before its next sitting all working papers, documents and reports produced for or by the government of Manitoba or on behalf of the government of Manitoba or with the use of public funds, that relate to the Manitoba Mineral Resources ore deposit at Farley Lake, the commercial development of that orebody and/or the LynnGold mining and milling operations at Lynn Lake.

Your committee also met on Wednesday, March 20, 1991, at 8 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative

Building to consider the Annual Reports of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd. for the fiscal years ending December 31, 1988, and December 31, 1989. At the March 20, 1991, meeting your committee elected Mr. Penner as Chairperson.

Mr. M. Wright, President, Mr. N. Briggs, Vice-President, and Mr. C. Vickers, Comptroller, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Reports and business of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd.

Your committee has considered Annual Reports of Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd. for the fiscal years ending December 31, 1987, December 31, 1988, and December 31, 1989, and has adopted the same as presented.

**Mr. Penner:** I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairman of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Second Report of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

**Mr. Clerk:** Your committee met on Thursday, November 8, 1990, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building, to consider the Annual Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal year ending October 31, 1989. Your committee also met on Thursday, March 21, 1991, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building, to consider the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal years ending October 31, 1989, and October 31, 1990. On March 21, 1991, your committee elected Mr. Laurendeau as Chairperson.

Mr. H. Thompson, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. J. W. Bardua, President and General Manager, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Report and business of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the committee meeting on Thursday, November 8, 1990.

Mr. D. Penny, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. J. W. Bardua, President and General Manager, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Reports and business of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the committee meeting on Thursday, March 21, 1991.

Your committee has considered the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal years ending October 31, 1989, and October 31, 1990, and has adopted the same as presented.

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the report under The Trade Practices Inquiry Act.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the report under The Insurance Act.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 33—The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 33, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative, be introduced and that the same be now received and read for the first time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Budget Process Advance Information

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we are, unfortunately, I believe, engaged in a very, very duplicitous exercise in this House. We ask questions to the government about what is going on across the province in the public services. They deny it. They say it is rumour mongering. Then we find out decisions are being made, and

then the government says they cannot give us the answers unless it is in the budget which will be tabled in the House. Then there are layoff notices coming off out of housing departments, et cetera, so we go around and around and around.

I would ask the Premier, in light of the fact that the layoff notices under Sterling Lyon went out publicly on March 13, 1978, and the budget was tabled by Don Craik in the House on April 10, will the Premier now have the decency as head of Treasury Board and as head of the public service and the government of this province, to come clean with the people of Manitoba about where the cuts are going to be, where they are not going to be, so people can get on with their lives and get on with their purchasing in the province of Manitoba?

\* (1005)

**Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, if there is any duplicity being practised in this House, it is by the member opposite who just asked that question.

The fact of the matter is that day after day he comes to this House saying that we should not be spending any more money, that we should be keeping the deficit down; we should be keeping taxes down, but at the same time we should not be cutting anything; we should not be cutting anything, but we should keep taxes down; we should keep the deficit down, but do not reduce any programming. That is what he says. That is duplicitous, I would say.

Then, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, he says the problem is that they do not choose their right priorities. They should be protecting health care and education and social services, and the others are not as high a priority. So when we do that, which invariably means that other areas of government must be reduced and the cost must be contained, then he objects to that.

The fact of the matter is that you cannot have it all ways. Only the Leader of the Opposition could be that duplicitous as to try and have it all ways. We are not trying to do that. We have been open. We have been honest. We have said: Yes, we have to review all areas of government, and we have to examine every area and see where we can in fact make savings and where we can in fact reduce programming so that we cannot—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, underneath that rant we were able to get the answer to our questions.

Indeed, the tradition in this Legislature is to be up front with the people, and that certainly does not jeopardize the budget process as alleged by members opposite for the last month.

My question to the Premier is: His Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has now communicated to the municipalities that there will be a 13 percent cut in the -(interjection)- let me finish—tax transfers to municipalities based on decreased revenue in corporate and personal taxes, a major decrease in obviously the economy of Manitoba. The Conference Board has already identified Manitoba as being 10 out of 10 and last out of the recession.

I would ask this Premier to make the decisions and come out publicly with the decisions on the public service. They are affecting the private sector. They are affecting the total economy of this province. Do not keep this recession mentality in this province, as led by the Premier of this province.

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, I will correct the Leader of the Opposition, who never seems to be able to get anything straight.

The municipalities of this province were given a sharing of the revenues from corporate and personal income tax a number of years ago. It goes back more than a decade. Under those circumstances they, in many cases, benefit by huge increases if those taxes go up.

I might say that in 1988, when the NDP tried to cap those increases at 9 percent I believe it was, we defeated that budget and we took the cap off, and that year they got 22 percent increase in their revenues, because we kept the integrity of that system and we passed along the tax points to them and they got a 22 percent increase.

Now, when you are in the midst of a national recession and your incomes from those sources are down, they also ride with those differences, and this year that results in them getting less than they got last year. They understand that. They support it, because they want to continue to get the increases when they come in large measure, as they did in 1989 with 22 percent without cap.

**An Honourable Member:** Ask the mayors and reeves if they understand it.

**Mr. Filmon:** They understand it much better than the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), Mr. Speaker.

I might also say that we were the last province to get into the recession. Last year, the 1990 year, we were at a growth rate of 2.9 percent, the second highest in the country, the province of Manitoba. Under those circumstances we, too, have some good things that happened because of the way our economy is structured. Under those circumstances, when we are later getting into the recession, the recession has some effects on us, and the agriculture income, the expected drop in agriculture—

\* (1010)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Doer:** The Premier again missed the question. I do not know whether he did not understand it or whether he chose not to understand it.

The fact of the matter is that revenues are going down 13 percent in the corporate sector and the personal sector. The fact is—

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, no, on the personal side they are up.

**Mr. Doer:** Well then, we will get another answer then from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) than we got two days ago, but my question to the Premier is, does he not understand that this reign of terror in the public service is affecting both the public employees and private sector?

Our retail sales and other factors in our economy are flat and negative, and the longer he delays being forthright with the people of Manitoba, the public of Manitoba, the longer he continues the recession in this province and denies us the opportunity—

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

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, I repeat for him, two years ago those revenues, by way of income tax points, increased by 22 percent. So, you know, it goes in accordance with the national economy. This year as well, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said, the major effect is in lowering of corporate taxes being paid because companies are not making profits.

I repeat to the member opposite, we are doing everything we can to preserve as many jobs as we can, that we are looking at all avenues, including

ensuring that vacant positions are ones that may have to be cut, ensuring that there are opportunities for either work sharing or reduced length of time of work to keep people working.

We are looking at opportunities to ensure that wherever possible we consider the human consequences of the decisions being made, but surely he understands that if you want to preserve health care—Mr. Speaker, I ask the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) to stop trying to shout me down; I am trying to give him an answer. If he does not want an answer, he should not ask the question.

We are doing everything possible to ensure that we preserve as many jobs as possible, but in the final analysis, if we are going to preserve health care, education, social services, there are some areas of government that will have to do with less, and all those matters will be revealed when the budget and Estimates are tabled in this House. He can evaluate the fairness, he can evaluate the balance of the decisions we have made, and then he can make his judgment, instead of doing it from the seat of his pants, Mr. Speaker.

### **Community Colleges Staff Layoffs**

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Yesterday the Premier, when asked directly about layoffs, about elimination of positions in the community college system, indicated it was only fearmongering and innuendo. Yesterday I spoke to a number of people in my own constituency, Keewatin Community College, who have been told that their positions have been eliminated—six people, the carpentry program, the child care program.

I would like to ask the Premier, will he now confirm that people are, at this very moment, having their positions eliminated, and will he also indicate how many more people will lose their positions in the community college system because of the results of the policies of this government?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** There are basically three answers, I suppose, that could be given to that question, all of them consistent.

Mr. Speaker, on January 21, when I made a presentation to the legislators of this House and I asked for their support in trying to find ways to address our very serious fiscal standing, I also at that time indicated the approach that this

government would be taking, and one of the major elements was structural internal reform. That was based on results of programs. It was within all areas of government, looking as to how programs were delivering, and those that measured up naturally would be retained, and in some areas where they did not measure up some decisions might be made.

\* (1015)

Mr. Speaker, those decisions, to this date, have not been made in totality. At this point in time, there has not even been a first attempt to print the Estimates. No final decisions have been made in almost any respect of government that has been communicated to departments.

Mr. Speaker—(interjection)—well, the member says what a disaster. How did they budget? How did they budget during their time in government? For the member to say, knowing as he does, that there are term positions in almost every department of government, which from time to time are renewed and from time to time are not renewed because they are term positions, and today, to lay before the House his effort to try and make it believe that there is mass layoff, I say shameful on his part.

### **Education System Staff Layoffs**

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) says there are no final decisions, and yet people are being told their positions are eliminated, real people, and I have spoken to them directly.

My question to the Premier is: How many positions are going to be eliminated? How many people will lose their jobs in the education system as a result of the cutbacks of this government?

**Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, each and every year, term positions, until the Estimates are approved, are not able to be confirmed for the next year. We are not dealing with those Estimates or budget yet, and so there will be many circumstances in which people's term positions cannot be renewed unless and until there is financial authorization for that. That may be part of what is going on.

**An Honourable Member:** That is not what you said about Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and ESL.

**Mr. Fillmon:** We are not the hiring authority for the people at Winnipeg No. 1. Winnipeg No. 1 was

given no indication from us that they would not have funding. That matter was not even decided upon when they issued those notices.

We do not have, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has indicated, final information as to what jobs may or may not be affected by decisions made within departments, and we are not in a position to be able to do that. Now, it may give great delight to New Democrats to talk about job losses. This is great glee for them, Mr. Speaker, because all they want is to try and make a big storm in Question Period.

They are not concerned about the human costs of the actions that they are taking, but we are, Mr. Speaker. We do not want this to be done in the manner in which the New Democrats are doing it.

### Aboriginal Programs Reductions

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I wonder what is going on with this government, because some employees have been told that they will be in place until June, regardless of anything to do with the Estimates. I am talking about employees who have been told their positions are eliminated, particularly, in this case, employees who are dealing with remote aboriginal communities, programs dealing with our Native people.

I want to ask the Premier, is that the policy of this government, to start with hitting the aboriginal people, the northern people, perhaps because they did not vote right?

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

### Point of Order

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, what we have here is the most shameful imputation of motive that I have ever heard in this House. I ask the member to withdraw that. He is indicating to the government that because certain individuals may have voted one way or the other, the government, as a policy guide—(interjection)—Mr. Speaker, the member was talking about term positions in the Department of Education. He makes a most serious allegation and I ask him to withdraw that. I hope that you would, too.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I will remind the Finance Minister to recall the words of the—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable government House leader, I believe the Chair had already said that there had been a question asked, and I believe that Hansard has recorded such. I think that the remarks that the honourable minister is quoting was a remark that had just come across the floor, but we will indeed check Hansard on that.

**An Honourable Member:** No, he said it in his question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I will take this matter under advisement and will peruse Hansard. We will check the interjection mikes.

\* \* \*

\* (1020)

**Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I categorically reject the allegations made by the member for Thompson. Regrettably, the member for Thompson is always playing politics. He has no concern for the people that he represents.

I have said many times that the budget decisions that we are contemplating are the most difficult decisions that we have had to contemplate in my 12 years of government, in the time before that I was on Winnipeg City Council. During all of these deliberations, Mr. Speaker, we are doing everything we can to minimize reductions in terms of staff. There are programming changes; there are changes with respect to the way in which government is delivering services to people, so that we can keep faith with the people of this province, all the people of this province, and not increase their taxes.

We have to make difficult choices. I know that New Democrats never want to make difficult choices. They just raise taxes. The reign of error that we had for six and one-half years while they were government was just raise taxes, raise taxes, raise taxes, Mr. Speaker, for six and one-half years. We are not going to do that, as much as the New Democrats will urge us. We will not fall into that trap.

### Education System Staff Layoffs

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, twice this morning from his seat the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has talked about the shameful behaviour of the opposition. There is nothing more shameful than leading people to believe that their health, their education and community services are going to be maintained, and then cut jobs in those very areas.

Mr. Speaker, in this city alone 250 jobs will be lost in the public education system; in the direct line responsibility in this government we are told up to 100 community college jobs.

Can the Premier tell this House how he believes he is preserving education, when the teachers who are providing that education are being cut at all levels in this province?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, we as a government are faced with the very sad reality of having zero percent increase in our revenues. Regrettably we do not create the revenues in this province unless we -(interjection)- the only way that government creates more revenue is to raise taxes. Now, the New Democrats were -(interjection)- well, the New Democrats did not create jobs to get their revenues. They created more taxes throughout six and one-half years.

The member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), of course, is very proud of that. He thinks that is good management to raise taxes as they did, 150 percent increase in personal income taxes during the period of time that he was in government for six and one-half years. That is the kind of hogwash that they perpetrated on the people of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

We will not do that. The reality of the fact is that we are faced with zero percent increase in revenues in this province. In those circumstances we have passed along a 2 percent increase in funding to the public school system. Not as much as they want, not as much as they would demand.

Mr. Speaker, they have had to make difficult choices, like we have had to make difficult choices, but we have tried to cushion them against the blow of declining revenues. With zero percent increase of our revenues, we have passed along 2 percent to the public school system, not as much as they want, but they have had to make difficult choices, we have

had to make difficult choices. This is a matter of trying to be fair and balanced, and we are doing what we can within the resources available.

\* (1025)

### Civil Servants Layoff Notification

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** It is clear that there is no priority in this government for education of our young people and our post-secondary students in this province, but the other thing that the Premier likes to accuse the opposition of is fearmongering. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no better evidence of fearmongering than sending home civil servants tonight to their families, having to tell their spouses and their children, I might lose my job.

Mr. Speaker, surely it is the moral obligation of this government to let people know if they are going to lose their jobs at the earliest possible opportunity. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has told us that he has to get to the printing of Estimates. If they are at that point, they are also at the point where they must inform employees of their rights and obligations.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, every other government in this country understands the necessity to make difficult choices to keep faith with the people of their province. Let us take a look at how the Liberals would do it if they were in government and had the courage to do the right thing.

The Leader of the government in Newfoundland, Clyde Wells, is a Liberal, a good friend of the Leader of the third party here in Manitoba. Clyde Wells has cut 2,600 jobs. Clyde Wells has cut over 300 nurses jobs. Clyde Wells has closed 360 hospital beds. Clyde Wells has made cuts of an unprecedented nature—2,600 civil servants in a public service that is half the size of this.

That is what a Liberal does, Mr. Speaker, in government if a Liberal wants to remain in government and make the difficult choices, but a Liberal in opposition, like the Leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba, can try and be all things to all people, can suggest that she would do all of these things to avoid all of these difficult choices. She does not have that option, because she -(interjection)-



**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I think it is tragic when the poorest province in this nation has to cut hospitals and has to cut nurses. I also congratulate, however, the Premier of Newfoundland who increased welfare benefits, which we are not seeing from this particular government.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the issue here today. The issue here today is that a government stands up and pontificates about education being a priority, that pontificates with bird-like sounds that can only emanate from the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), who pontificates about Winnipeg School Division No. 1 sending out layoff notices and being reasonable, because they do not know their funding is in place.

How can this government be so hypocritical to their own employees and castigate others who try to be honourable?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the Leader of the third party because she got it wrong again.

We have in fact increased welfare rates for this province by the rate of inflation and, in addition to that, unlike some provinces, have allowed them to keep their GST rebates which gives them another 4 percent over and above an inflation increase. We have given a substantial increase to the people on welfare in this province, not as much as we would like to do if we had all the money; we do not have all the money, but we have kept faith with those people.

Time and time again, Mr. Speaker, we have said that we do not have the luxury of being able to fund all of the things possible in this province. We have zero percent increase in our revenues, and we are doing our best to try and maintain the services that we know are so vital in times of difficulty. We have not reduced welfare. We increased it by inflation, plus an additional 4 percent of their GST rebate. That is false, and I would ask the Leader of the Liberal Party to stop putting false information on the record.

### GRIP Program Review

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have been meeting with

farmers, and they are becoming increasingly desperate. They say the GRIP program will not do the job in this province. They say that there will be unfairnesses between districts, that the up-front premiums are unaffordable by producers, that they have to pay up front, that the governments are attempting to blackmail the farmers into signing up for GRIP in order to get a deficiency payment this spring, that there will be declining support prices, and that there is uncertainty over the coverage levels that they will have, and the list goes on and on.

Will the minister now admit that GRIP, as it is currently constituted, is a failure, and will he go after his federal counterparts and provincial counterparts to put this program on hold now, call for immediate deficiency payments so the farmers can get on with planning their crops this spring and go back to the drawing board—

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

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the member's question is absolutely incredible. Farmers have been involved in a course of over a year to put together a program they believe meets their needs. The task force of 33 people consisted of 19 farmers, so there was incredible farmer input. There are farmers on the implementation committee, there are farmers on the third-line-of-defense committee, and farmers are designing the programs for their own use. Farmers are in serious trouble in the grain industry, and that member just fails to realize it. He wants to have some quick-fix solution. There is not any quick-fix solution. This is a program designed to meet their needs in 1991 and the years beyond, as we hopefully get some international restructuring of the ability to access markets and have fair grain prices.

\* (1030)

The member just does not realize the situation the farmers are in. This program is going to pay the farmers in general terms at least three dollars to four dollars to one that they invest in premiums. It may well trigger a payout to the farm community in Manitoba of \$300 million to \$400 million, and that farmer wants to throw that program out and not support the farmers of Manitoba. For the biggest farm support program ever put in place to meet with the greatest urgency the farm community has ever had in the history of this province, and he wants to

throw it out, throw it out after the farmers have designed it. I cannot believe it.

### Minimum Acreage Payment

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, the minister knows very well the farmers did not design this. This was designed by bureaucrats in Ottawa with some input from farmers to make it look like a legitimate process, and the minister knows that and KAP admits that.

I ask this minister if he will not do the sensible thing and put this program on hold. Will he now commit to having these onerous premiums deducted at point of sale instead of up front so farmers can afford to pay premiums? Will he also put in place a minimum acreage payment across this province so there is some semblance of fairness in this program in terms of the coverage levels across the province?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the member talks about farmers not being involved. I find that reprehensible, because farmers were deeply involved. Farmers motivated and drove this. Farmers led the discussions and led the task force. It is reprehensible. This minister does not respect farmers' input in terms of trying to help design programs and meet their needs down the road.

The premiums are affordable. The premiums are not paid up front, Mr. Speaker. Premiums will be called upon at the same time crop insurance premiums have always been called on to be paid, and that is September 30 of the year, when farmers are starting to sell their crop. The program does require the farmer to get his first line of income from the marketplace, as they always have. So the premiums are not paid up front.

In terms of support to the farm community immediately, the federal government has committed itself to a third line of defence. We have called on the federal government to immediately make announcements on the Western Grain Stabilization payments that are due the farmers for the 1991 crop year. We expect that announcement momentarily, and that will help the farmers also in the spring of 1991.

### Agricultural Industry Interest Rate Relief Program

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the desperate action that has been taken at

Tilston this past week, where farmers prevented a farm auction, will this minister now admit that there is a financial debt crisis in Manitoba, that his Interest Rate Relief -(interjection)- Now they laugh at that, and that is one of the most serious problems facing young farmers in this province.

Will he admit that his Interest Rate Relief Program has been a failure—the figures which he refuses to divulge—that GRIP will not help, and will he now, Mr. Speaker, take the necessary steps to put in place a comprehensive interest relief strategy and debt reduction strategy in this country in co-operation with his federal counterparts to ensure that there are debt moratoriums, writedowns, set-asides, whatever to ensure that the debt crisis is relieved for young farmers—

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

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** This member is suddenly waking up and realizing we have some difficulty in agriculture.

I have repeatedly told this House and that member that the realized net income has dropped from an average of over \$300 million a year, three or four years ago, to \$145 million last year, projected \$90 million this year. Naturally there is a debt crisis out there.

What I want to tell that -(interjection)- Mr. Speaker, that member has had the opportunity to ask a question. I would appreciate that he would listen to the answer. It does show that he has no respect for farmers or any attempt to try to solve their problems, unfortunately.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would ask the member to withdraw his statement that I have no respect for farmers. It is precisely because of that respect for farmers that I am here asking these questions of this minister, who refuses to deal with this issue.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Findlay:** The farm community is in some serious difficulty. We have dealt with it through the Manitoba Mediation Board, where we have restructured the debt problems of many, many

farmers. It has been the best process in all of Canada, and other provinces are trying to copy what we have done in the province of Manitoba in terms of being able to resolve farmers' debt difficulties and keep the majority, the vast majority of them on their farms.

We have guarantees to support those settlements, and those guarantees are being called on less and less because farmers have had an ability, have found an ability in a new—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

### **Marymound School Sexual Offender Program**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, Marymound's extremely successful pilot project for the treatment of juvenile male sex offenders and sex victims is in danger of being forced to close prematurely.

Can the Minister of Family Services explain why, in a letter to Marymound, he stated he was "not optimistic" about being able to find funds for a program that can prevent upward of 20 young sex offenders from becoming adult sex offenders who statistically commit an average of 390 sex crimes each before they are caught, when the enormous financial, emotional and social cost to individuals and society attached to even one such sex offence is well documented?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question.

I think through our discussions in Estimates we agree on the great needs out there and the need to have in place agencies and funding to perform the functions that are necessary to solve some of these problems.

The program that the member makes reference to is one that has been funded by the federal government. We are seeing many, many cases where programs are started with a little bit of seed money from another source and then, when that source of funds is withdrawn, the group comes back to the provincial government for support.

We support Marymound by contributing over \$3 million to their budget and support the Marymound programs to quite a considerable extent. At the same time, given the fiscal situation in this province, we are not in a position to take over some of the

programs that have been funded by other levels of government.

### **Child and Family Services Funding Delay**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table in the House an Order-in-Council dated February 27 of this year authorizing the payment of \$162,500 to Child and Family Services Central for their '89-90 deficit reduction.

Can the Minister of Family Services explain to this House why, even though Child and Family Services Central presented a balanced budget as they were asked to do several months ago, the agency still has not been notified of the authorization of this Order-in-Council funding and why 24 days after the Order-in-Council was presented the money has still not flowed to this agency?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, we have worked very actively with the Child and Family Services agencies in Winnipeg. Our commitment has been very strong in the improved funding that we have given to Child and Family Services agencies over the last three years. In the last two years they have enjoyed increases in their budgets of 15 percent per year.

We are still dealing with the agencies in terms of putting forward business plans and balanced budgets for the coming year. Most of these have been approved at this time, and funding is flowing to those agencies in due course.

**Ms. Barrett:** Twenty-four days after it had been authorized I do not feel is due course.

Does the Minister of Family Services plan to reimburse Child and Family Services Central at least one month's interest on their \$162,500 deficit reduction plan to reflect the cost to the Child and Family Services Central agency of this government's delay in following through on its own commitment to this organization?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my previous answer, our commitment has been a very generous one to the agencies over the last few years, and in fact the funding to agencies has doubled over the last five years. We are working very actively with the agencies to come forward with balanced budgets so that they will not be in this kind of deficit position in future years, and we are working very actively with them to put together service and

funding agreements. Our work with those agencies is ongoing.

\* (1040)

### **Environmental Innovations Fund Tree Replacement Program**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

The minister's department recently received \$174,000 out of the Environmental Innovations Fund for tree replacement in the city of Winnipeg. That program was neither innovative nor new, which was what was promised with that fund. However, my question this morning for the minister is: Does that tree replacement program in Winnipeg include tree replacement on private property, and if so, on what basis?

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the program was innovative. Winnipeg faces the serious loss of one of its most prized natural resources, namely, the beauty of our shade elm trees. The program is specifically directed to be placed on private property, which no other program had before. We were simply offering residents of Winnipeg who had lost a tree. -(interjection)- Tree loss is important to many of the city of Winnipeg residents.

Both the city and the province had programs that operated on public property. This was a program which employed upwards to 20 young people—young people who did a fine job, I might say, in planting these trees. I had many calls from rural parts of the province hoping that perhaps that program could be extended to those areas, particularly some of those areas that have suffered similar damage from the disease. I am very pleased and very proud of that program. I thank my honourable colleague, the member from the Department of Environment for making those—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, for the same minister, we have learned this morning from one resident of Victoria Crescent in this city being visited by an officer and asked what trees he wanted replaced on his property.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister can indicate what other parts of the city, if any, are receiving that same type of giveaway from this department?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to indicate that private citizens who have had trees removed had made initial inquiries to us at the time of their removal. They are on a registry and we are revisiting those persons, making them aware of the program and simply asking them—because it is private property, we are not forcing somebody to walk across the street if they do not want to walk across the street with us, but if they do wish to avail themselves of this program, it is there for them to be carried out.

### **Water Resources Branch Staff Layoffs**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the minister getting back to us on what other parts of the city.

For the same minister, the minister was quoted today as saying that the Water Resources Branch of his department is to be targeted with respect to the forthcoming job cuts. Mr. Speaker, why would this minister target this branch, when he knows that this province is in the fourth year of a drought, he knows his government presently has major water diversion projects around this province in the works and he knows that the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) is going to need this branch's expertise if he is going to have any hope of assessing the environmental impact of these water diversion projects?

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, let me simply answer part of the earlier question more completely.

The program of tree planting is available throughout the city. The fact of the matter is that the disease has kind of corridors along the riverbanks, which tend to concentrate the disease in certain areas, but it is available wherever the disease has struck throughout the city.

With respect to the other matter, I invite the honourable member to have that discussion with me during the Estimates of my department. Certainly I do not bridge the two subjects the way he does. We need, and will continue to need attention to water sourcing in this province. Anything that is being contemplated will not make that more difficult.

### Economic Growth Government Initiatives

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the Minister of Finance.

It is about his recipe in this week's North Times for budget brownies. I am wondering if the minister is into trading recipes, specifically given how all of their policies are contributing to poverty in Manitoba, if he would like a copy of an 1852 recipe called, "How to prepare a large quantity of good soup for the poor" and secondly, given how everything he touches he turns into a problem—

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

**Ms. Wasylycia-Lels:** —if the minister would like a copy of the recipe, and I will table both of them, called, "Idiot proof pastry."

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, probably a little bit more germane to the discussion of Estimates and how it is one prepares a budget is this statement made by a person, probably well-known to the member for St. Johns, Arlene Werdsmann, Co-ordinator of Policies for the former NDP government, Executive Council employee in 1985, then also the NDP Research Director for Ed Broadbent, 1988, said this, and I quote: The main thing that I learned is that to be in government in the '90s is going to be tough because there is no money. You cannot do everything you want to do. It is not a matter of add-ons. It is a question of trade-offs. I will take that into account with the recipe that the member is going to send to me.

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for Oral Questions has expired.

### Committee Change

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Osborne (Mr. Alcock) for The Maples (Mr. Cheema).

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### DEBATE ON PROPOSED MOTION

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that this House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House will, at this sitting, resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, standing in the name of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), who has 25 minutes remaining.

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, I will continue the remarks that I had begun with yesterday, but I would like to make a few comments about some of the responses that occurred this morning in the Question Period.

Yesterday, I had indicated in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, that one of my concerns about this government is the total preoccupation with the debt to the exclusion of all other considerations. While I indicated I felt that was sincerely believed, I think that the blinders that are on the Finance minister and this government with respect to their total preoccupation has severely damaged the province.

\* (1050)

There is another area where this government has blinders on, Mr. Speaker, that comes out day in and day out with respect to Question Period, and that is in respect to when the people, when the public, has any comment or when there is any discussion out there, somehow the government in its way of dealing and reacting to the public has a sense somehow that this is an NDP-inspired initiative or some kind of initiative that is not genuine, it is not sincerely felt by the people.

So when the nurses were on strike, Mr. Speaker, somehow the government saw it as the NDP fomenting—to quote the comments of the Premier earlier in the week—some kind of discussion out there. When I attended the MAST convention and talked to the trustees from all across this province, who are dealing with the very serious budgetary shortfalls that have been forced upon them by this

government, was I fomenting dissension? No, I was listening to the legitimate concerns of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, when I attend MTS discussions and hear the concerns of teachers and students with respect to what this government is doing in the education field, am I fomenting discussion in this province? No, I am legitimately hearing the concerns of the people of this province, something this government is failing to do.

When we had the incident this week, Mr. Speaker, when the university students were not listened to—and I discussed that yesterday in my speech—the university students wanted to present their concerns to the government. In fact, they had a pamphlet that quoted the Premier. All they wanted to do was present their concerns. Somehow this is the NDP fomenting discussion and dissension, I presume, somehow amongst the public of Manitoba.

That is a very serious shortfall in this government, Mr. Speaker. They do have blinders on. They fail to see that there are legitimate concerns out there. There are legitimate people who are being hurt, and somehow they have adopted some kind of an attitude that now that they have a majority, now that a majority is a majority is a majority, somehow they have shut their minds and they have shut their ears out to any form of discussion or anything that runs contrary to their policies. I think that that is a very serious shortcoming. I just point that out to members opposite.

Earlier in discussion, Mr. Speaker, the Premier indicated that this government has held the line on taxes. They have held the line; there has been no tax increases. That is plain poppycock. It is not true. It is not true. If you look around the province of Manitoba, if you look at the increases at the school board taxes, this is nothing more than the off-loading of taxes from the provincial government onto the backs of the local taxpayers, something time and time again they promised they would not do, that should not happen.

I have quoted many times in this House, comments of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) when he was in opposition, how that this was something terrible and now they have gone and—why do they not just come clean and admit what they are doing, admit that they are offloading the costs? They are increasing taxes at the local level. I mean, it is the

fact. It is the reality. The public knows it out there but somehow this government seems incapable of admitting that or recognizing that, for whatever political agenda that they want to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I thought I would choose this opportunity today to read into the record some letters that I have received from average Manitobans. I am receiving considerable letters from everyone in this province and they are raising their concerns. Since the government does not seem to be responding and since somehow every time we raise an issue it is the NDP fomenting some kind of discussion out there, that it is some kind of a grand conspiracy, I thought that I would read just into the record today some of these letters and some of these comments that have been brought to my attention.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

For example, I received a letter this morning and the individual states: Between 1977 and 1981, during the period of the Lyon Conservative government, funding for education was severely cut back. As a result, tuition fees jumped 60 percent. Under an agreement, the provincial government was to match the funds received from the federal government earmarked for health and education, but the Lyon government, in common with other Conservative provincial governments, did not provide matching funds. As a result, the federal Liberal government was given the excuse it needed to begin reducing its share when EPF was renegotiated in the early 1980s. Since that time, federal contributions have decreased steadily to their current abysmal level.

Gary Filmon—this is the letter from this individual—was a cabinet minister in the Lyon government and as such, was a party to that government's underfunding of education. He is now faced with the legacy of that earlier irresponsibility.

What legacy will he have left behind 10 years from now, Madam Deputy Speaker? I think that aptly sums up part of the dilemma facing us. The federal Liberal government's indifference to the people of Manitoba, to the provinces and their cutback in funding generated this beginning of deterioration of the education funding system. When you have that followed by the Mulroney government in Ottawa and

a Conservative government here, that is a recipe for complete disaster in the education funding system.

I received a letter from the Whitehorse Plains, Madam Deputy Speaker, and let me quote it for you: Recently, your offices announced the funding Manitoba schools will be receiving next year from the provincial government. At that time, your office made it clear that any shortfalls in funding would have to be made up by the local taxpayers. Since the announcement you have also stated there will be no reconsideration on the government's part. In view of the recent Speech from the Throne, I find that the position taken by your office is both contradictory and irresponsible.

This is not my letter, Madam Deputy Speaker. This is a letter from concerned individuals out in the school divisions, and I will continue quoting: When the throne speech was delivered, the government established public education as a priority over the next few years. I find this statement flies directly in the face of the government's announced funding policy for the next few years. How can a government make education a priority and then underfund as badly as they have? The present government has forced upon the various school divisions of this province new rules and regulations pertaining to their rights as students, et cetera. However, due to lack of funding, many programs such as special needs programming, advanced placement, gifted education and all areas have either been cut or placed in jeopardy. Your government has the moral obligation to provide enough funding to let schools continue the programs that the government has told the schools they must provide.

During the month of January—and this is directed towards the minister—you attended a meeting at McMaster House and addressed the president's council. At that meeting, when questioned about funding, you stated that school divisions "had to trim the fat." Well, Mr. Minister, some of the rural school divisions do not have any fat to trim. In the Whitehorse Plains School Division we are losing 7.5 teachers out of a full-time equivalent staff of 80.5 teachers. This is a reduction of almost 10 percent. In addition, the school division must lay off approximately 20 teachers aides, several clerical and support staff. This will result in program cuts, students with learning disabilities completely mainstreamed and increased teacher workloads. As well, the quality of education in many of our

"slower students" receive will be seriously compromised.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I could go on, and on, and on, but I think this letter adequately addresses, and in a very direct way indicates, the—I guess the word I have to use is "hypocrisy" of this government when they say education is a No. 1 priority, and yet they go around saying, cut the fat. What the fat being cut amounts to is special needs students. It is programs, it is teachers and it is the children of Manitoba who are being affected by this government's insensitivity.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that the last several letters that I have read into the record speak volumes. I could go on.

I received this letter as well—let me quote from this letter: The provincial government's grants toward the funding needed to educate our special needs students is about 52 percent. In fact, I will just interject that I think that is rather high. In fact the departmental statistics given to me by the minister last year, in this very Chamber, indicated something under 50 percent, and I believe 44 percent of the special needs funding is provided by this government. So even this person was overly generous in attributing to this government responsibility for funding special needs. But I go on: These children must really struggle at school in order to obtain a level of education which will prepare them to become independent adults.

\* (1100)

I have two children in school, the youngest of whom is a special needs student. My daughter suffers from dyspraxia (phonetic). This disability affects her muscles which decreases her ability to write, speak and see clear. It also affects her balance. This disability, however, does not affect her brain and her ability to read, listen, use a computer or comprehend all she sees or hears. My daughter receives individual speech therapy, gross and fine motor therapy and psychological therapy in school at present. She also studies certain subjects in a special small classroom with a special needs teacher while being integrated into a Grade 5 classroom for the remainder of her subjects. She is doing very well, indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The Winnipeg School Division draft, based on a 3 percent increase, calls for the following reductions: special education teaching staff, 15; teachers aide staff, 15; child guidance clinicians, 18;

regular teacher staff, 13 positions. Furthermore, in light of the announcement of zero percent increase in grants, resource reductions of an additional \$901,000 will have to be identified. As a Manitoba taxpayer who believes in the undisputed right of every child to an education, may I suggest that you rethink your funding criteria for 1991-92 and reapply the 11 percent funding increase, from the private elite schools, to the public school system.

I think that might have been equally addressed to the Liberal Party, as well, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I digress. After all, if the private schools should have to close because of lack of funding, the children who attend these schools would still be entitled to the same level of education as every other child in the province.

Again, Madam Deputy Speaker, that letters speaks volumes and much as the government would like to create the impression that somehow out there we, in the NDP, are fomenting some kind of dissent, I can tell you—and the government polling should pick it up because, heavens knows, they do enough of it, should pick up the fact that out there the public are extremely concerned. In fact, there was a class of Grades 4 and 5 attending at this Legislature this week, and I went to meet them after the Question Period, and I had a discussion with them. They asked me, Grades 4 and 5 students, about the lack of government funding and the lack of government commitment to the public education and asked why the government was increasing grants to private schools at the expense of public education. I did not even have to tell them. I told them the facts, but they knew them. They knew them in advance.

In fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, they had an opportunity to watch members opposite and—

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

**Mr. Chomlak:** I find it curious that the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) is piping up from the back row today. It was very curious that today her former employer and the man that she worked for when she was his assistant in writing his speeches did precisely, in one of his questions, what she criticized members on this side of the House from doing last week in her throne speech when she said, do not talk about other provinces, talk about Manitoba.

The Premier, of course, every time he gets into trouble, pulls out and discusses the Liberals in Newfoundland or other concerns, Madam Deputy

Speaker. So maybe she is not writing his speeches anymore, but she should perhaps talk to him about at least staying on side with respect to those difficulties. -(interjection)- She continues to pipe up from her back row as I attempt to discuss matters.

I guess, Madam Deputy Speaker, the letters, the responses that I have been getting and the questions I have been getting indicate to me that this government is basically failing the needs of Manitobans.

Last night, I attended a meeting of parents of special needs children. -(interjection)- If I might add, Ukrainian Catholic go the other way so it depends if it is Ukrainian Catholic or Roman Catholic in terms of the crossing. Yes, but I digress.

As I indicated and on a more serious vein, Madam Deputy Speaker, I attended a meeting last night of parents of special needs children. I guess if members of the front bench had occasion to, that they would probably say that I was fomenting discussion there and somehow the NDP were out there organizing some kind of opposition to this government's policy, but let me tell you something, they disagree with government policy without me even having to tell them.

They are very, very concerned about what this government is doing in terms of special needs students. They very eloquently and—frankly, I could not probably express in my comments the concerns that they expressed to me about what is happening in special needs.

On many, many occasions, Madam Deputy Speaker, I have commended the government for at least making the start with respect to special needs by publishing its guidelines. I think that was a positive step. I think it is a step the minister is proud of and I think, to a certain extent, he should be. Unfortunately, those guidelines are not being enforced. They are not properly being looked at and, frankly, there are grave difficulties with respect to special needs students out there.

Unfortunately, they have been seriously compounded by the budgetary cutbacks and the capping of education funding by the government, the capping of education funding now that they have their majority. It is only serving to deteriorate an already difficult situation.

I cannot express in strong enough words, the concerns that we have on this side of the House as



to what the government is doing in the area of special needs education and only express our concerns that the government act. We would be prepared to give our support to the government's action in this area, Madam Deputy Speaker, if they would only act. I raise those comments for the attention of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and all members on that side of the House.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have discussed on numerous occasions the fact—and we have heard the comments all morning about zero, flat revenues on that side of the House. I discussed that earlier in my Throne Speech Debate, and I heard curious comments from the Minister of Education last week with respect to revenues when we have said on this side of the House, why did you give \$7 million to private institutions for training? The Minister of Education went out of the House and said to the press, we gave them \$7 million to force private institutions to train.

Well, if someone gave me \$7 million to force me to train, I think I would train as well. I mean, I found his remarks preposterous, but the point is, it is a question of priorities, it is a question of looking at where you are going to allocate your funds. All governments do that, but this government has chosen to go in a direction that is, I think, right off the road with respect to where the majority of Manitobans wish to go in terms of education.

Manitobans are proud of their public education system; it is something we hold dear; it is something that is considered a birthright in this province. Manitobans consider that they have an investment in their public education system, Madam Deputy Speaker, but this government has chosen to go off that road. It has chosen to go off, I dare say, for ideological reasons, but I will not question the motives.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

They have gone off this road to an area of privatization, to private training, to private institutions, Mr. Speaker, and that is seriously affecting the very foundation of our public education policy in this province. I think the government has to really rethink its direction, and I urged all last session the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) to put out his five-year strategic plan, the one that he failed to do so, so that at least we would know in advance where the Department of Education is leading us. I look forward to his release of his

five-year plan, as I look forward to the release of the funding model that will take education in the 1990s, as I look forward to some kind of review of school boundaries, as I look forward to some sense of where this government is taking us in terms of education.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have waited for a long, long time -(interjection)- and I hear the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) pipe up about school division boundaries and what seems to me to be a panacea for the Liberal Party, which is very typical of the Liberal Party, of the quick, glib solution, the one-shot solution. City boundaries will solve all the budgetary problems. School division boundaries will solve all of the budgetary problems. There is no question there is a problem with respect to school division boundaries. There is no question that it does not make sense logically to have one school division with 1,100 students and another with plus-30,000, but that is not a panacea.

The problem with the Liberal Party is they focus on these cute one liners and these one-shot solutions that are going to solve everything. What has the Liberal Party said about funding? Nothing, Mr. Speaker. What has the Liberal Party said about private schools? Lots in conjunction with the government. What has the Liberal Party said about the corporate tax breaks that they supported during the minority government, the giveaways to corporations? Nothing, Mr. Speaker, and those comments speak legions of where the Liberal Party sits with respect to public education in Manitoba.

I dare say the public is realizing, Mr. Speaker, that only one party actually stands up for public education in this province, and that is the New Democratic Party. It is rapidly becoming clear to the public of Manitoba that that is, in fact, the case.

I dare say that, over the months and years ahead, we will try to live up to that trust that is being placed in us by the public of Manitoba as they look to us to try to preserve the public education system, something this government is failing to do and something that the Liberal Party has failed to understand. In the months ahead, we will be presenting, as we already have, certain alternatives in terms of funding education and in terms of where we are going to go and where we would see taking the province in this regard.

\* (1110)

So I will not be proceeding much after this, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to indicate that I guess one could probably say that maybe the Brandon Sun in its editorial is fomenting dissension out there when it said, and I will quote from the editorial: Education is the key to opportunity, but the sad fact is that all too many kids do not get the chance to use that key. Three out of every 10 Canadians drop out of school before they ever receive the diploma that can unlock a myriad of opportunities. Our employment centre offices, welfare rolls, and even jails are filled with people who have fallen through the cracks of our system and, as a result, do not have the ability to get a decent job. While a recently announced stay-in-school initiative will likely convince some kids that education is important, one suggested it will take more than TV commercials and other public relations gimmicks to plug the holes in our system.

In February, the Manitoba component of the school program was launched through the minister's state for youth. The government hired Trevor Kennerd, Winnipeg Blue Bomber kicker, et cetera, as co-ordinator of the province's program. Brandon was introduced to that at a recent symposium. On a strictly superficial level, there is nothing wrong with implementing a program that attempts to convince some kids to stay in school. What is unfortunate, however, is that while the government is spending \$300 million to sell education to kids, it is cutting money needed to provide them a quality product.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the NDP necessarily saying that. That is the Brandon Sun in a constituency where at least one member is of the Conservative Party. If they are not hearing that—and I am afraid they are probably not—then they are in for some serious difficulties, because the public of Manitoba is saying: we want a first-class public education system. We do not want it privatized. We do not want big grants to corporations while school kids programs are cut. We do not want a Lyon kind of government that closes its eyes and closes its ears to any kind of opposition or criticism.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I made reference yesterday in my comments to universities and university students, so I will not proceed on that basis today. I will simply close my portion of the debate by asking members on the other side to listen, to listen very carefully to the people of Manitoba. I know you are polling. You may not be picking it up, but I can assure you the public of

Manitoba out there are very concerned about what is happening in the public education system. The government and the Liberal party together should take heed from what is happening out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The question before the House, whether this House will, at this sitting, resolve itself into a committee to consider the Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty. Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), 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.**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** While the opposition wishes to take this opportunity, as is customary, to ask a number of questions of various ministers on various topics, and I believe some of my colleagues are ready to ask members of the cabinet, I trust they will be here to answer those questions, as is customary. Technically and theoretically, all ministers are supposed to be here during Supply, not just one or two or three because I know some members have questions on Housing, other members have questions on Rural Development, some members have questions on Health. I see the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is here.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** At any rate, on a matter of point of order, Mr. Speaker, we should be in the Committee of Supply. I understood we were going to go into Committee of Supply. It was not my intention necessarily to debate the Committee of Supply, but I presume when we go from item 9 to item 10 we were then in that committee where we can have the questions put and answers obtained from the various members of the government, so I seek your guidance. So we are going to go into item 10, therefore.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans), at this time we are into item 8.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I guess then it is when we get into the committee itself that we will have questions and so on. I am prepared to sit down and wait until

we get into that stage, then I will make some opening remarks, and then we will have specific questions from myself and some of the other members in the opposition.

\* \* \*

**Motion agreed to**, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

### SUPPLY—INTERIM SUPPLY

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

**Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay):** The Committee of Supply will come to order, please.

The question before this committee is the following resolution:

RESOLVED that a sum not exceeding \$1,397,575,740, being 30 percent of the total amount voted, as set out in The Appropriation Act, 1990, be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992.

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader):** Madam Chair, I had the opportunity, as deputy government House leader, to confer briefly with my colleagues in both opposition parties.

As I have indicated to them, we will be trying to accommodate their requests for ministers to answer questions. I have a list, and we are now asking those ministers to be here to accommodate both parties. Should they have other ministers—if they could just provide me with those names, we will make sure that they are here for their questions.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Chairperson, I have some specific questions for specific ministers, including the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer).

Before I ask my questions, I wanted to make a general comment, and that is with regard to the entire fiscal strategy of this government. We are being asked to spend a great deal of money. We are being asked to approve a great deal of money, \$1.4 billion—a great deal of money. It is the traditional opportunity for members of the House to ask of the Treasury benches the specific questions on how these monies will be spent.

We would also like to comment about the very serious economic situation facing the province at this time. The bad news statistics seems to come out regularly, almost daily. Without taking a lot of time, I just want to remind the House that the Conference Board in Canada has forecast that the overall rate of economic growth of this province will be the lowest of any of the 10 provinces. In other words we will be 10 out of 10 in overall economic growth. That forecast, Madam Chairperson, is being borne out in the statistics that are coming out of Statistics Canada day after day indicating that if we are not at the bottom, we are very close to the bottom. For example, as of December of 1990—in fact, if you take all of 1990—you see the average weekly earnings in the province, we ranked 10 out of 10. The rate of average weekly earnings was the lowest in the entire country.

\* (1120)

We now have information on housing starts. Housing starts for the first two months of 1991 have declined by 67.4 percent, Madam Chairperson, and this after three years of steady decline in the housing industry. In 1988, the housing industry declined by 35.5 percent. In 1989, it declined by 29.2. In 1990, it declined by 27.7 percent. Now, after three years of steady serious decline we have yet further decline in the year 1991—the first two months, decline of 67.4 percent. So I say that the recent statistics are bearing out the forecast, that we are likely to be 10 out of 10 this year.

The value of manufacturing shipments—the figures have just come out from Statistics Canada. In January, we ranked nine out of 10 provinces. Our manufacturing shipments declined by 9.7 percent. Again, that is after a year of decline that preceded this month of January. We look at private capital investment. Again, the forecast is for decline, and we have had declines in 1989. We have had a decline in private investment in 1990, and now again in 1991, we are forecast to have additional declines.

If you look at overall construction, the construction work performed in the province, we have had declines as well in 1989; 1990 was a bit better, but now again we are declining in 1991. A leading indicator of this is building permits. The building permits showed a decline of 12.6 percent last year. We are still waiting for figures to come out for this current year, but all of the indicators reveal a serious weakness in the Manitoba economy.

Then, of course, we have the information. It is before us in the quarterly statements of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that our revenues are not growing. Our revenues are flat, and we are reminded of this daily by members of the Treasury benches in saying, therefore, we cannot do anything. We have to cut. We have to eliminate. We have to reduce our spending. Well, Madam Chairperson, I believe that this government is approaching the economic problems in this province in an entirely wrong-headed way.

The Minister of Finance says we cannot afford to do these things. He agreed that countercyclical action would be fine, that is it logical. He does not disagree with the logic, but he says we cannot afford it. Well, Madam Chairman, I say we cannot afford not to do something to stimulate the economy at this time. We should understand that there is the provincial financial balance sheet, but there is also the economic balance sheet of the Province of Manitoba.

When I look at the figures and we look at what is happening to the real economy out there, what we are doing by way of producing or not producing goods and services, what we are doing by way of employment or unemployment, we see that we are not utilizing our capacity. We have factories that are underutilized. We have services that are underutilized. We have people who are not being utilized, who are sitting at home having to draw UI or welfare, people who generally want to work.

People want to work and by not working, what we are doing is losing their services. Once we have lost their talents and their services through a period of time, we have lost it forever. We cannot go back and recapture this, so we are losing as a provincial economy. We are losing real goods and services that could be produced, and I say that governments have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that the economy performs at the optimum level, that we perform at the maximum possible level, so that we get the greatest amount of goods and services back for our benefit.

Therefore, the province, along with the federal government, can play a real role in stimulating the economy and ensuring that we minimize unemployment, ensuring that we minimize this underutilization of our productive capacity.

I know the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) continues to criticize the Manitoba Jobs Fund,

criticizes—he does not like make-work job programs and so forth, but there is an array of programs and policies that a government could pursue to stimulate the economy and to put real assets in place in the process.

I am reminded of a program that was engaged in by previous NDP governments, whereby we assisted municipal governments in this province to engage in worthwhile, necessary public works. We provided a stimulus to those municipalities by offering to pay a percentage of the cost of a particular public work that that municipality deemed that it wanted to have. What we did by saying, we are prepared to cost-share, we encouraged those municipalities to bring forward those projects to be proceeded with when unemployment was worse.

As a matter of fact, this is when you get the best prices out of contractors. This is the time that you get the best prices. So I say, Madam Chairman, that not only were we stimulating the economy, creating jobs, but we were putting worthwhile assets into place, and we were helping the municipal governments in the process.

One can go beyond municipal projects. There are a lot of worthwhile provincial projects as well that could be proceeded with. The Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) mentions highways, and I am not disputing him if that is what he is inferring—highways as needed, where needed, as required. There is simply nothing wrong, in fact a lot of merit to utilizing that—(interjection)— Well, I am talking in principle as to policies that can be pursued to stimulate the economy. Governments have their priorities, ministers have their priorities and cabinets have their priorities. They may want to stimulate in one way rather than another, but I am saying, in principle, there are a lot of things that the government can be doing. Of course it costs money, but I am suggesting that what you are going to be doing is ensuring that we provide more work, we have more activity, we are providing real assets in place. We are, therefore, improving the Manitoba economy. Yes, it is more of a drain on the provincial treasury, but I suggest that this is not the time to be cutting back.

As a matter of fact, Madam Chairperson, I recall in the last year or so of our previous NDP government administration, we did attempt to increase revenues and to ensure that we were moving into a surplus. As a matter of fact, we did

leave this government with a surplus for that year. We were on a course of trying to get surpluses so that we could begin to pay off debt.

This Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) chose to take that surplus money, put it into a Fiscal Stabilization Fund, and show another deficit. I say that, in a way, we are playing games with this Fiscal Stabilization Fund. It seems to be more of a technique to make the provincial balance sheets look good, and I know the Provincial Auditor has been very critical of the whole concept of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

An any rate, I simply say that we regret that this province, this Minister of Finance and this provincial government are pursuing a wrong-headed fiscal strategy and making matters worse rather than offsetting our economic situation. As a result, because we are doing nothing to stimulate the economy, we are making the economy worse; we are watching the erosion of our manufacturing industries; we are seeing people laid off, finding no alternative work; we see small businesses going out of existence; bankruptcies are still with us; estimates of private investment declining are coming out the surveys of Statistics Canada; residential construction has been at extremely low levels for the last three years, and is getting worse; wage levels are stagnating; and, generally, the rate of job creation is lagging. On top of that, we have outward migration of our people.

All in all, we have symptoms of a very poor economic situation. We maintain that the provincial government, as an institution, as an important body in our society, can do something to help offset the situation.

Madam Chairperson, this leads me to my first question, which I would like to ask of the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). We are concerned about unemployment, and the Department of Family Services, as I understand, still has the Careerstart Program. If I am not correct, maybe the minister can tell me otherwise.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Family Services.

\* (1130)

**Madam Chairman:** Order, please. Would the honourable Minister of Family Services please take his seat.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services about employment programs in his department. Does he have any employment programs still in his department or are they all—I know some have been transferred to the Department of Education, but does he have any training programs left in his department and could he tell us what those programs are?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services):** Yes, the only programs that were transferred to Culture, Heritage and Citizenship were the programs that relate to immigration.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** If that is the only training program that has been transferred out, I presume then that the minister retained responsibility for the Careerstart Program and, therefore, I would like to ask him what is the status of the Careerstart Program for 1991. Normally documents are prepared at this time, applications are prepared for business, forms are being prepared for students and so on. Therefore, could the minister give us a status report on the Careerstart Program for 1991?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** The Careerstart is still part of my department; your assumption is correct there. We, of course, are looking at all areas of the budget and examining very critically programs that we have offered in the past. Those decisions are still in process and would be announced, as we have indicated, before with the budget and the tabling of the Estimates.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, Madam Chairperson, has the department prepared application forms for businesses and nonprofit organizations, which are normally prepared by this time of the year, and sent out asking those businesses and nonprofit employers to submit their requests? Has the department prepared forms for the students who may wish to apply under this program?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Until the decisions are finalized, we are not in a position to go to the business sector or the nonprofit sector or the institutional sector that have accessed those programs in the past. Until we have made decisions and announcements, we are not prepared to present anything to the public until those decisions have been finalized.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, Madam Chairperson, I believe the minister is in great difficulty if he is intending to have a Careerstart Program this year. From my experience, all this material has to be

prepared now because you have got university students coming out of the institutions, the universities at the beginning of May, and normally they would have an opportunity.

As I recall, there are roughly, oh, about 5,000 jobs created under Careerstart in the summertime, and it is a pretty important program because this is a time that you have thousands of young people coming onto the labour market looking for employment. Unless there are some type of youth employment programs such as Careerstart, you are going to have a lot of, in fact thousands of young people who may not be working.

So I am wondering, Madam Chairperson, whether we are going to have a Careerstart Program. I do not know how you can have a Careerstart Program if you have not made a decision on that and had preparations for that. It is just physically impossible. So would the minister tell us whether they are considering cancelling the Careerstart Program for this year?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Madam Chairperson, I respect that the member is trying to get the information in various ways, and I am afraid the answer is the same. I am well aware of the students who are hired on Careerstart, and I am well aware of the cost of university. I have two children who will be attending university next year and the expense of that, of course, is a concern to any parent who has to pay the tuition and pay the expenses of university.

I know from my previous experience in the school system that a lot of students do seek summer employment, both at the high school level and at the university level. I expect that there will be students who are in the process of lining those positions up now for summer employment and contacting prospective employers.

I appreciate the member says that there are difficult decisions to be made. The member was once the minister of this department, and I know he is fully aware of the difficulty of making decisions in this department that impact on a lot of people across the province. I am afraid that I cannot give him any more information on Careerstart until those decisions are announced publicly.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Chairperson, I find it very difficult because in the past, not only have forms been prepared, but advertisements have gone out, fliers have gone out to businesses reminding them that the program exists,

encouraging to apply and so on so that we can find jobs because we have to help find the jobs—the willing employers for the students.

I am rather surprised, because we are on the verge of having a budget presented to us. It takes four weeks to print a budget, I would think several weeks, and I would assume that decisions have already been made. I rather gather from the minister's remarks they have made a decision, they just do not want to tell us. Madam Chairperson, we are debating expenditure of public funds. We are in Interim Supply. We are debating nearly \$1.4 billion worth of expenditure, and I think the House deserves an answer. Now is the time, and the students out there should know and the employers should know. They should be told that Careerstart is either a go or it is not a go. I find this very strange.

Maybe I could ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) how long it takes to have the budget printed. I would have thought that because we are on the verge of, never mind the budget, what about the Estimates of Supply? I thought we were on the verge of going into specific departmental Estimates, and I would have thought that those decisions had been made. Therefore, it is quite appropriate now for a minister to answer that question in the interim supply. I find it strange that—I am not asking a lot of details. I am asking simply, are we going to have a Careerstart Program or are we not going to have a Careerstart Program? I mean that is a legitimate question.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Well, you know, you have asked the same question four times, and the answer is still the same. We are in the process of developing the budget and the Estimates, and when we are in a position to table the budget and the Estimates, we would be, of course, prepared to discuss the decisions which have been made. I appreciate the comments that the member is saying, but I expect you are going to have to be patient until we are in a position to discuss that in fuller detail.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I have another question to the Minister of Family Services, but, before that, I wonder if I could ask the Minister of Finance, could he tell the Legislature, when are we going to have the printed Estimates of the departments available and tabled? It is normally—there is usually a pattern to this, but maybe we are in a different pattern this year, I am not sure.

I wonder if the minister could tell us, when will we have the printed Estimates of the departments laid before the Chamber?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Madam Chairman, I will attempt to address the questions of the member. Certainly the consolidated version of the Estimates will be tabled in this House the day the budget comes down. I am still hopeful that that budget date will be more or less early in the late half of April, but failing that, maybe the third week, at the worst, fourth week as to when the budget will be coming down.

\* (1140)

Certainly the Estimates will come down at that point in the consolidated fashion. I should also indicate to the member that to the extent there can be some departments that are printed—and none are printed as of today—and then I would receive concurrence and acceptance by the opposition parties to bring in a couple of departments, then I might entertain that discussion, to bring in a few individual departments so that we can begin the Estimates review on our return after Easter.

This is all speculative and hypothetical at this point in time. I guess the short answer to the member's question is that for sure the consolidated Estimates as a package will be tabled the same day that I bring down the budget.

I could not help but hear the question posed to the Minister of Family Services. Let me say, because I am a member of the Treasury Board and probably more knowledgeable of all of the decisions that have been made, many of which have not been relayed in final form to the departments at this point in time.

The member asked a question about Careerstart. I can assure him that the government is making every effort to try and maintain the Careerstart Program in some fashion.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Chairperson, well, that is encouraging news that, with Careerstart, every effort is being made to maintain it and we will likely see it again this summer. Just commenting on the minister's statement, I am not sure what this Legislature is going to be engaged in if it does not have some Estimates to look at, because there does not seem to be that much legislation before us to keep the Chamber occupied.

**An Honourable Member:** There is lots of work to do.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, if there is lots of work to do, fine, but if there is no agreement on getting Estimates in part, but only in whole, as has been the tradition in this House, then I ask myself—I will not ask the minister—just what items of business will be keeping this House totally and fully occupied.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services a question on Northern Youth Corps. Again, not asking details, but are we going to have a Northern Youth Corps employment program this year or not?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** The honourable member of course is asking for more budget information, and I would again say that these decisions are in progress and have been in progress for the past number of weeks. When the budget and Estimates are tabled, those announcements will be made and the information will be presented for all honourable members.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, I would be interested in pursuing this. I am going to yield the floor in half a second to my colleague, my friend from The Maples' (Mr. Cheema) constituency, who has some questions and he has some urgency, but I just tell you by way of comment, I really lament the fact that these decisions are not being made and not being conveyed to the public out there. There is a time urgency of these programs, and it seems to me that we are operating in a very inefficient way. You are either going to have the program or you are not, or you are going to have it at a certain level or you are not going to have it at a certain level, but a decision should have been made and should have been conveyed to the community out there. Otherwise, you cannot run an efficient program.

I say what is happening if we are being told procrastination, we are going down the path of inefficiency. I will yield the floor now to the member for The Maples.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples):** Madam Chairman, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson).

Can the minister tell us if this is a policy of the government to send people from Manitoba overseas? Who is in charge of sending for the purpose—I think the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should listen to my question, and we will save some embarrassment to his government if the

question is proven to be the right one. I am asking the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, during the month of October, November, December, if someone went from his department to Manila, Singapore and New Delhi. Can he tell us?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Chairman, to the honourable member for The Maples, certainly my understanding is that on occasion there are what you would call trade missions that are undertaken by the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism to various parts either of North America or in fact to other countries in the world, with very specific functions; on occasion the private sector is included.

I certainly know that probably for the past many, many years that those kinds of events have occurred with a very focused purpose. The one you are referring to, though, you are saying October, November, December and mentioning Manila and other countries, I have to indicate to you of course, I was not the minister at the time. I am not aware of the specifics on that particular possible trip. I certainly will undertake to get the details on your behalf.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, I will appreciate it if the minister could get back to us with that answer. It is a very important issue, because taxpayers' money must be not wasted in any way.

We want to know, what is the qualification of individuals who go overseas, who makes the final decision who should be going overseas, and how much money it is costing the taxpayers of Manitoba? Can he also provide us the detail of those trips?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Chair, I should indicate that the ultimate decision is in fact made by the minister in charge. The minister signs the final travel request after it has gone through the administrative process, being signed by the deputy minister and so on.

Again, in terms of qualifications, I would like to think that normally it is the person within the department and/or people from the private sector who have something very specific to either offer in terms of the economic activity we are pursuing or some knowledge of that activity or knowledge of that country and the opportunities that exist.

As I say, in terms of the very specifics that you have requested on that particular trip, I will get the information that you have in fact requested.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, I thank the Minister of Industry and Trade and will look forward to the answer within a few days if it is possible. I think it will save a lot of embarrassment to this government.

My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). In the absence of the Minister of Health, we did ask the question of the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The question was as it relates to the psychiatry building at Health Sciences Centre. This is a \$43 million building which was approved in 1989, and at that time only the physical structure of the building was approved and no program was put in place.

Now there is a question that the minister's own advisory council has come against the whole project in a way that they are condemning the minister that the minister did not consult, he has not made the proper decision, and so far there has been no response from the minister, either publicly or to the officials at Health Sciences Centre or to the original Mental Health Council.

Can the minister tell us: What is this government's policy as regards the community-based mental health care system, and how is going to justify this \$43 million on a physical structure when they have no program put in place?

\* (1150)

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Madam Chairman, the issue of the building, the psych building at the Health Sciences Centre complex, I fully recognize that there is significant concern emanating from the regional Mental Health Councils, not just the Winnipeg regional council, but I have probably received indication from most of the regional Mental Health Councils across Manitoba about their concern over the perceived change in direction, as they put it—I will just wait for a minute, Madam Chairman—of what they perceive, because you have to appreciate that Mental Health Councils are a new process in the province of Manitoba.

They were set up by myself almost two years ago now to allow consumer, family, professional input on a regional basis into the needs for mental health services, those needs—let me be very direct—to be identified in the regions and to help government with the planning process of spending smarter the over



\$200 million we currently spend on mental health services, which has been widely and legitimately criticized as being too much focused on the institution.

I am committed, this government is committed, and I think the people of Manitoba are committed to moving away from the institutional to the community-based, so that when the observers in the community see this new construction going on, they perceive, and rightfully so—I can understand that—that there must be a change in direction by government, that we are not serious about moving to community-based services.

I respect that concern and I take that concern very seriously. I can simply indicate to my honourable friend, as I have indicated to those in the mental health community who support a community-based move in service provision, that the new site building at the Health Sciences Centre will not deter from our movement to community-based service provision.

In that regard, let me just indicate to my honourable friend the several needs that were addressed by the new construction at the Health Sciences Centre. Needs, which were identified probably a decade ago, had become fairly significant and required action by government in terms of brick and mortar.

First of all, there is a need for a renewed facility for the Faculty of Psychiatry, and that was one of the components to be addressed in the new construction, because their facility, quite frankly, was not appropriate in today's teaching environment, and that happened to us from time to time and will continue to happen to us from time to time with different, special ambulatory care. The new facility at the Health Sciences Centre, a significant investment, is designed to help and assist in our teaching program for ambulatory care, outpatient procedures.

Now the second goal is that at the Health Sciences Centre there are a number of psychiatric beds. Those are in need of replacement because they are simply in older and very—well, in today's terms, in not appropriate rooms for those requiring short or—but an admission for psychiatric care, so the new facility replaces beds from those other buildings. There was the need identified for intermediate care, intermediate security forensic beds for those who are forensically, mentally ill. That is being addressed in that construction, and

what we are doing is making a bed for bed replacement.

Now I will leave myself open to the question and the criticism and the observation that we should do something more than a straight bed-for-bed replacement because that is really the essence of the criticism. I am willing to listen to those observations by members in the mental health community and to address the concerns that they have voiced to myself and have been subject to recent news coverage in the media.

In terms of the program design, that is the bigger concern. My honourable friend was correct in his assessment that when the building was announced there was no program design in terms of a substantially enhanced program, which is the concern, approved commensurate with the construction approval. That still is the case. That is, in essence, a role that we are inviting and will continue to invite the input from our regional mental health councils and other professionals in the delivery of mental health services.

Madam Chairman, I simply say to my honourable friend that, rather than as might have been the normal reaction to view the mental health council's adverse reaction to the psych building as detrimental to the policies that we are trying to put in place for the citizens of Manitoba, I, on the contrary, find that is exactly the role we hoped they would play as the honest brokers in the reform of the mental health system. Their observations are taken very seriously by this minister and this government.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, will the minister tell us then—when they had this \$43 million the approval was done in 1989 and there was a proposal as of 1982 and '83 and '84 and off and on it was put off. In 1989 the decision was made without any specific programs, and the minister took the credit and the government took the credit for the building. Now they are in the middle of a major policy change, and the policy change is to move towards the community-based mental health care system.

The minister has not answered my question how he is going to justify his own policy, which says that we should move away from the institution, when you have a \$43 million building. Even just to operate that building, to have those beds in place, you are going to have a cost of more than 110 percent just

for the staff only. The present policy says that you are going to have eight to nine beds for the forensic care. At the same time you are planning for the forensic beds at Selkirk Hospital, so its policies are fragmented now.

I think the minister has to clearly define which direction they are going to move, how they are going to make the best use of these beds. We have not heard any answer so far. It is \$43 million. The minister knows the money does not grow on trees. He is going to put \$43 million here and next month they are going to change their policy. It is the major deviation from his own policy statement of 1988 when he said that they want to move away from the institutional care; rather, he has moved backward now.

**Mr. Orchard:** Madam Chairman, my honourable friend made reference, for instance, to an investigation that has been ongoing now, or a joint planning proposal that has been going on for about a year now with the federal government on the high security forensic beds.

There is a significant difference between the intermediate level security forensic beds that are part of the Health Sciences Centre redevelopment compared to the high security forensic beds that are being investigated for placement at Selkirk right now.

My honourable friend knows that we have, up until, oh, I suppose, the last six or seven years, had relatively little difficulty in high security forensic placements of those criminally insane at the Saskatoon facility, which originally was built there, placed there, to serve both provinces. Unfortunately, it is at capacity and we need to examine how we address that issue, because we have been getting by probably—and I do not say in an inappropriate fashion—but we have been managing for at least a decade now on the intermediate security forensic psychiatry beds through Headingley and other of our low-security jails, but professionals have observed that is clearly probably not a reasonable approach, so that is why those were additional beds placed into the Health Sciences Centre.

\* (1200)

I just want to tell my honourable friend that you cannot confuse those forensic beds for criminally insane with the direction of moving to a community-based mental health system, because

there are two distinct and separate issues where I do not believe you can have a community-based program for the forensic mentally ill people. Although there are some who advocate that it can be done, I do not think it can be done.

The two directions are different, and I simply say to my honourable friend that we are very much committed to the community-based mental health service delivery system and hope to significantly advance that in the near future.

**Madam Chairman:** Questions? Is the committee ready for the question? Shall the resolution be passed? (Agreed) The resolution is accordingly passed.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

## IN SESSION

### Committee Report

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted a certain resolution, reports the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Before I move the motion to go into Committee of Ways and Means, I wonder if you might petition the House and ascertain as to whether or not it is the wish of the members that we sit past 12:30 today, until the completion of Interim Supply sometime this afternoon.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent of the House to sit past the hours of 12:30, until such time as Interim Supply is passed? Is that agreed? Agreed.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded my the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into committee to consider Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**Motion agreed to,** and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty

with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to ask some questions to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay)?

## SUPPLY—INTERIM SUPPLY

### COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees):** Order, please. The Committee of Ways and Means will come to order, please. We have before us for our consideration the resolution respecting the Interim Supply Bill.

RESOLVED that towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenditures for the public service of the province for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992, the sum of \$1,397,575,740 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund.

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Madam Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) why at year end, December of 1990, he still had underspent in his particular budget a sum of \$18,986,000 when it was a planned expenditure of some 67, he had only expended some 48?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** Madam Chairman, I would like to ask the member which budget she is referring to—the end of December I think she said?

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Very clearly, Madam Chair, I am referring to the quarterly financial report published by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) April to December, the nine months of the present budgetary year which has not yet been completed, and at the end of December the figures are very clear. The actual expenditure for the nine months was \$48 million. The planned expenditure was some \$67 million. The underexpenditure was \$18.9 million, and I would like to know from the Minister of Agriculture what that \$18.9 million, in what areas, that underspending occurred.

**Mr. Findlay:** Clearly, Madam Chairman, the situation of—you know you go through the year and certain expenditures happen more in some quarters than others. So the whole issue will be more discussable, more understandable when the year is

completed. Clearly, a lot of the major expenditures are undoubtedly going to occur in the last quarter.

If you are referring to this past fiscal year which obviously you are, the Interest Rate Relief Program, as one example, the major payments will occur in the quarter after the quarter she is talking about. This is not unusual. Year in and year out and in different quarters, the flows are not equal. How close we are to equal at the end is certainly going to be much closer to full expenditure than the figure she is now indicating of some shortfall of \$18 million. Our projection is, to the end of the year, it will be very close to the budgeted amount.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Madam Chairperson, that simply has not been the case with the Minister of Agriculture's budget for the last two successive years. If one adds this \$18 million, the underexpenditure of the Department of Agriculture since this Tory government became the government of the Province of Manitoba would be some \$47 million.

\* (1210)

That leads one to the question: How much money, since the minister refuses to answer to the media, has been spent by this department on the Interest Rate Relief Program?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, we budget expenditures in a wide variety of categories. We have not shorted the delivery of services in any of those categories. One of the reasons for underexpenditure in the past, and I am proud of the reason why, is that allowance for doubtful accounts at MACC, allowance for doubtful accounts at the Manitoba Beef Commission and the Manitoba Mediation Board were not drawn upon to the extent they were projected. So that meant that farmers were doing better and not having to declare as many bankruptcies or loss of payments on loans. It was a good news story that we did not have to expend those kinds of monies.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Well, that is a very -(inaudible)- for a conclusion. If the farmers are doing so well, one can only assume they have not had to use the government's Interest Rate Relief Program.

Would the minister like to tell us, since he will not tell the Free Press, how much money has been accessed by farmers in the province under the Interest Rate Relief Program?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, we put in place a program that was very well received by the farm community. We reduced their operating interest loan costs by some 7 percent up to \$40 an acre, the best program available in any province of this country ever on interest rate relief. It was fully utilized by the farmers who wanted to use it. -(interjection)- Madam Chairman, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) wants to answer the question. He is free to do it after I have finished answering his Leader. If he wants to interject with his Leader, he should ask her.

That program is well utilized. It did not cost the province any money on administration other than printing the forms. It caused no liability on the province for loans that were not repaid, and it was deemed by the farmers to have been very efficiently done. Money was available to every farmer who wanted it. As far as I am aware, very, very few were rejected by their financial institutions for not being deemed as somebody they could loan money to. There were some farmers, obviously, who did not use operating loan funds, who probably did not use the program because they said they do not use operating loan funds. Why would they set up an operating loan and rip the government off? So there was responsibility all the way through the program.

The program is not completely finalized in terms of the payments that were occurring, and it is part of a larger package. I will tell the Leader: it is part of a larger package still to be negotiated with the federal government, where a degree of initiative was done by them and by ourselves for the past fiscal year.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Madam Chairperson, we have a situation in which the government has taken the kudos for this program, made it in their budget, made it in their throne speech, bragged about the \$24 million in interest rate relief available to the farmers of Manitoba. Nobody criticized the program. Nobody said it was not a worthwhile program.

What we are asking the minister is how much of the \$24 million has been spent. Since he has an underexpended budget of \$18.9 million to December 31, 1990, can we assume that only \$7 million of the \$24 million has been used in the Interest Rate Relief Program?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, absolutely not. She is wrong, absolutely wrong, on all counts.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Madam Chairperson, no one likes to be wrong, and I certainly do not want to be wrong. So, if I am wrong about \$7 million, will the minister tell me, what is the figure? Since it is not \$7 million, what is it? It is certainly not 24 because if it was 24, we would not have \$18.986 million left in the fund as of December 31, 1990. So what is the figure? The answer is very simple. I just want to know how many of the millions of dollars, of the \$24 million promised, has been spent?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, as of this point in time, any figure that I would give the member would just be projection to this point in time. I have asked my department officials, as recently as yesterday, what is the figure? It is not final yet, so I cannot give her the final figure on what the expenditures were.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** But, Madam Chairperson, I did not ask for the final figure. I asked for the figure spent to date. Now we have had six months into the program—we have actually had more than that—but perhaps, since he would not give it to me in Estimates, perhaps he will now give me the figure for the first six months. Surely, some almost 11 months into the program, almost 12 months into the program, he should be able to at least give me the first half of the year's figure.

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, as I told the member earlier on, it is part of a larger package in negotiation to complete an agreement on a number of issues, four items in particular, and that package is still being worked on to get finalization of the program. Divulging that figure at this time will just make that process more difficult, and it would not serve anybody any useful purpose at this point in time. Although I will tell the member again, I am not aware of any farmer who did not receive the benefits he wanted, provided he met the bank's criteria of somebody they could loan to.

We accept no liability of loss, very little administrative costs, and the program was effectively delivered to all who wanted to utilize the program. She will be surprised at how many it was when the final figure is put together.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples):** Madam Chairperson, my question is for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Last June, I think it was the first week of June, a report came from the Drysdale company. The report was commissioned by the Minister of Health and cost close to \$40,000. The report was to deal with the whole mental health

services for the region of western Manitoba. The minister said that they were going to act on some recommendations, and so far, it is about nine months and the minister has not made a single statement which recommendation he is going to follow, which recommendation they are not going to follow. Also I would like to know that finally when you have spent \$40,000, how can you justify that \$40,000 and not act on those reports at all?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Madam Chairman, I can and I will.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, can the minister tell us specifically which recommendations the minister is going to follow, because it was clearly stated in their report it would take at least 36 months to have even the major recommendations to be followed up.

One of the recommendations was about the Brandon Mental Health Centre itself, the building. The building is 100 years old, is outdated, had a number of problems, and the recommendation was made that some of the beds should be combined with the Brandon General Hospital. I would like to know from the Minister of Health, since we are moving in this province away from the institutional care, how the Minister of Health is going to balance this approach and come up with a solution to this problem which has been there for a number of years. For political reasons in the past this problem has been put off for too long.

\* (1220)

**Mr. Orchard:** Madam Chairman, my honourable friend just exactly has put more concisely than I could using my own words exactly why this problem has not been dealt with. First of all, it has been a political football, a political hot potato; secondly, it has been before governments for better than 20 years and unacted upon.

That is precisely why we are taking diligence and a little more time than eight months to study the report and to integrate its recommendations with the general stated direction of moving the system toward a more community-based system of mental health service delivery. Naturally we are not proceeding or—how would my honourable friend want the wording to be because I am not as good with the words on this issue as he is?—that is why we simply have not made statements as to which recommendations may or may not be proceeded with, because they will fit into the plan for the region,

the Westman region, in terms of mental health service delivery.

I can simply assure my honourable friend that the Drysdale report, at a cost of some \$40,000, was a valuable report, because it identified for us, in today's costs. For instance, one of the areas of benefit was the cost of replacing the Brandon Mental Health Centre, that aging building that has plagued governments for 20 years and has not been acted upon. Having that target, it allows the similar kind of debate to happen in the community as is currently happening around the psych building at the Health Sciences Centre. That is a good debate which will guide and assist government, a government that is committed, for the first time in 20 years.

This government is the first government in 20 years committed to enhancement of community-based services and we will be guided by that very open public debate around the issues and the Drysdale report has been very, very good in providing one point of discussion in that debate in the community. I find that to be a very, very helpful debate, and the regional mental health council for Westman very, very reasoned participants in that debate and that discussion.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, these will be my final comments and then the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) can ask his questions.

I think it is a very crucial time, as the minister has said. I think each and every party must put their positions very clear on the table and to the people of Manitoba what they are going to do, how they are going to proceed with mental health care and not just wait for election time, when it is 1994, and in six weeks time discuss all the options and when you come to the real table you are talking from different sides of your mouth.

It is very crucial and I think that is why I would like the minister to—during the Estimates debate we will put our position, and our position has been very clear that the community-based mental health care system must be given a priority, and how that can be done over a period of three or four years. That is why we would like to see, in this budget, how a four- or five-year plan, how the minister would move from 87 percent institutional budget to a balanced approach in the years to come. When is he going to consider—they have to consider the psych building, they have to consider the Brandon Mental

Health Centre, they have to consider the Selkirk Mental Health Centre.

All that has to be taken into consideration, because you cannot make a decision on one angle of the province and not have an impact on the rest of the province when the money is not there. That is why I think it is very crucial and I will be very interested to see what the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has to say on this matter. It is a very important issue and it should not be a short and political situation.

I think we must look at the province as a whole, how it will help the people of Manitoba, not a political constituency because there are a number of issues in this area and we have to be nonpolitical here because the building does employ a lot of individuals. It is a major source of income there, for those people could be used in the system and the building could be put as some recommendation in this report. I am not afraid to say that, make it very clear. Some of the recommendations have to be met, you cannot just make a noise every second week and not follow some of the recommendations. In following their recommendations there may be some short-term political loss, but eventually people would realize that if we want to move to a community-based mental health care system then tougher decisions have to be made. I think it will be a very good opportunity by their debate in the Estimates process to see all the three parties work together to achieve their goal.

**Mr. Orchard:** Madam Chairman, I simply want to tell my honourable friend, the Member for The Maples, that he has been consistent in representing his party and has been supportive, and that is part of the reason for the ability that government has to move into reform of the mental health system. I appreciate that support and I appreciate the consistency with which he has approached the issues.

He has not been on one side of the issue today and another side tomorrow, he has been consistent. He recognizes—and the only thing I will disagree with him on—he says there are going to have to be tough decisions in the mental health system. I believe that the decisions we make to move toward community-based services are going to be very progressive and widely supported decisions.

I simply indicate to my honourable friend -(interjection)- yes. I simply say to my honourable

friend that they will be well received in the vast majority of not only the service delivery community—and my honourable friend knows that—as well as throughout the province and certainly by the citizens of this province.

I take my honourable friend's advice seriously to give us the plan into the future, and I intend to do that. I hope—I cannot guarantee this, but I hope to have the major portion of that available for debate this round of Estimates so that we can get into that very, very open and honest and apolitical discussion, because I look forward to sharing with my honourable friend and the citizens of Manitoba the kind of vision we have for mental health reform in the province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Cheema:** Madam Chairperson, I just want to add to what the minister has said. When I said the tough decisions, it is just a lack of my vocabulary. I have limited words, so I try to use them everywhere that I can. It is the way of saying that the tough decisions are critical, but in the human sense they may be right decisions. So I just want the minister to know that.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Chairperson, I had on my list of questions some along the lines that have just been asked by the member for The Maples and discussed by the Minister of Health with regard to the Brandon Mental Health Centre.

I could agree with what the minister has said. This is a question that has been before governments for 20 years at least. The question of institutional care versus community-based care is an ongoing discussion. Certainly there is a great deal of support for more community-based mental health care.

What I have observed is that, desirable as community services may be for the mentally ill, the problem has occurred in jurisdictions, not only in this country but in the United States, that the governments, the jurisdictions have not provided their resources in the community for those individuals. There are all kinds of horror stories of mentally ill people wandering around as poor lost souls, particularly in larger cities where they are ending up sleeping, in the United States in particular, on the streets in all kinds of very bad situations. Some are totally homeless and have just been left to fetch for themselves, and that is simply not good enough.

I think that is a legitimate concern that, while it is commendable to have more community-based services, governments have to be prepared to follow through and not simply cut back on the institutions as a way of saving money and trying to reduce deficits.

I also am reminded that if we are in such a mode to provide more community-based health care, why is it that the government has agreed to building such a large psychiatric centre in Winnipeg? I agree a new facility is needed, but I share the concerns of those in the mental health community, the association, as to the size of the building. Does that not contradict what the minister has been espousing here in terms of moving towards community-based mental health services?

\* (1230)

I can tell the minister that we have a lot of concerned staff at BMHC. They are puzzled, too, because they are wondering—not only the staff, but others who know the service offered by that facility—that it has a fine record of community outreach. As a matter of fact, a lot of the programs done in the community are only possible because BMHC exists. It is a core, it is a basis. It provides a solid foundation for a lot of community outreach programs. The staff, professional staff there, are very knowledgeable of the need to place people in the community and service people in the community. They are very knowledgeable, very sensitive about that.

Nevertheless, Madam Chairperson, I think it is a legitimate question for me to ask as a member of the opposition, as a member representing Brandon East, as to precisely, I would like to get more precisely from this minister what the timetable is for this particular facility, this institution, as we know it. He has the Drysdale report which, in effect, is a recipe for dismantling the structure as we now know it. In fact, the institution in the North Hill in Brandon would disappear as I would understand from the Drysdale report. Other structures would have to be put up, some smaller facilities and so on, which would cost money. The government would have to budget for that and so on.

Could the minister tell me, through me and through this House, tell the people of Manitoba and particularly tell people in that area just what is the time frame for BMHC? Just what can we expect? Will it be around for the next five years, the next three

years or the next two years? Can we expect any action, specific steps taken by this minister this year to downgrade the BMHC?

**Mr. Orchard:** Madam Chairman, I cannot give my honourable friend that information today. I am fully prepared to listen to my honourable friend and the advice that he may wish to put on the record in terms of moving to community-based mental health services. The one thing that I would ask of my honourable friend, the member for Brandon East, as a longstanding member of this House, is that he at least be as consistent in the advice he provides on the record as my honourable friend, the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), has been in terms of the mental health community and the reform.

I do not want my honourable friend to get caught in the trap where, at a breakfast meeting with individuals involved in the mental health community, he fully supports the reform of the mental health system, the move to community-based services, and then does an about-face in this House. If one thing we need from my honourable friend, we do need some consistency.

Now, I cannot give him the specific information that he requests today. That information will be part of, I hope, plans to be tabled on the reform of the mental health system that will be open for discussion as I have indicated to my honourable friend, the member for The Maples. I cannot give him the information today. Should he wish to persist in the questioning with me as he did with my colleague, the minister for Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), my answer will be consistent. I do not have that information for him today.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, Madam Chairperson, could the minister indicate when that information will be made available?

**Mr. Orchard:** I indicated to my honourable friend, the member for The Maples, that I hope to even have some of that information available for debate in this session's Estimates of the Department of Health.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Specifically, Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate with regard to staffing levels—and I am only talking about staffing levels now. I am not talking about buildings, programs or whatever. Can the minister advise us, what is the staffing level now? Have there been cutbacks? I have had all kinds of statements made to me by specific staff about their observation of

fewer psych nurses, fewer mental health staff being available and expressing concerns and so on that they are not able to deliver the kind of service they would like to, to the mentally ill who are residing in the facility.

I would like to ask the minister, has he cut back on employment levels at BMHC, and has he any plans for cutting back on employment levels in this coming year?

**Mr. Orchard:** Well, you see, Madam Chairman, I cannot give my honourable friend those answers today. Those are Estimates questions that I would be prepared to give them the best information that I would have when Estimates come for debate, but it is pretty clear to me that my honourable friend's only concern is maintenance of jobs in the institutional sector of mental health delivery. That is the caution I gave to my honourable friend from Brandon East about two answers ago.

You cannot stand before a breakfast meeting of those who advocate community-based support and say, I am all for it, as the member for Brandon East does from time to time, and then come to this House and advocate only for preservation of jobs in the institutional system of mental health services. That is exactly what those progressive people in the mental health community say is the problem, that we are at 88 percent spending on institutional care.

We must move that fund and those monies to the community to get a more balanced share from institution to community. My honourable friend, when he is in meetings of discussion with those who believe that the mental health system should be reformed in that direction, agrees and then comes to the House and advocates for protection of the jobs in the institutional system. I submit, that is not consistent, and you cannot have it both ways. Now, either you want to maintain the status quo of 88 percent spending on the institutional side of mental health service delivery, or you want to reform it, which means some of those positions move to community support. That is where I am coming from. That is where I have been coming from now for two and a half years.

If my honourable friend thinks that is wrong, please stand up and clarify your position, because there are those in the community that actually believe my honourable friend from Brandon East believes in moving away from institutional funding to community-based funding, lowering the budget

in the institutional side and using that budget to enhance the community side. If that is not my honourable friend's position, let us get it out on the table.

(Mr. Sveinson, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** In contrast to what the minister seems to think, I have always advocated a balanced approach in mental health services. I have done that throughout the years as a member of cabinet as well as a member of the opposition. I believe I am on record as saying that, and I have no difficulty in enhancing community health care, and I have said that before as well.

I say you cannot have good community health care unless you are prepared to put the resources. Now, the minister indicated perhaps some redeployment of resources. That is fine, but what I am concerned about is that you cut the resources at the institution, then there is not the necessary follow-up with providing the required resources in the community. I repeat, this has been the pattern in one jurisdiction after another on the North American continent where there has simply been inadequate care, inadequate resources for the mentally ill living in the community. It has led to all kinds of disastrous consequences.

Whatever is done, however, Mr. Acting Chairman, has to be done with a rational plan. It has to be well thought-out and everybody should know where we are going. So what I am arguing is not for simply maintaining the status quo; what I am saying is any change that comes about, we should ensure that we have adequate resources, adequate staff, adequate professional people, whatever is required—programs to maintain the people in the community. If you are going to simply throw them out of the institution, whatever the institution is, and not provide the necessary resources, then you are not helping the cause of mental health in the community, in the province, or whatever.

So I just say, for the members' edification then, that I can accept a balanced approach, which I have always advocated. It has to be based on careful planning and we have to ensure that there be proper redeployment of resources. Mr. Acting Chairman, I am not so sure—I do not know how confident I can be because I hear the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) telling us every day, we have to cut, cut, cut.



I am worried that the bottom line is we are going to see—when you look at the bottom line, how much money this minister has for mental health care, a shrinkage in real dollars of what is going to be available for the mentally ill in this province. When I say real dollars, I mean when you take inflation into account, because if you maintain a constant level of spending, when inflation is running at 5 or 6 percent, then in real dollars you are actually cutting back on the program. So we will be watching, Mr. Acting Chairman, and we will also be asking the minister more questions, specific questions, when he comes before the House with his departmental Estimates.

\* (1240)

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I have a question also for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and it relates to the results of tremendous community effort in Thompson that has led to the point where we are now able to purchase a mammography unit for the Thompson General Hospital. In fact the fundraising efforts in the community of Thompson were tremendous—far exceeded the expectations of the many people in the community who worked on it. We are in a position of being able to provide the service in a capital sense. The room has been allocated by the Thompson General Hospital.

The thing that people in our community are waiting for now is for the operating funding. Some concerns have been expressed that funding may not be brought in until later on this year and that is a concern to people because in the meantime, local residents, northern residents generally, are having to travel to Winnipeg for the test. What is happening is this course is an inconvenience to people involved. It is also a cost to the province in terms of the cost involved for transportation.

In addition, Mr. Acting Chairperson, what is happening is that there are fairly lengthy delays in terms of being able to receive the test. I understand that most facilities in Winnipeg are double-booked and, not only that, the people often have to wait in excess of a month, sometimes two months, to be able to receive an appointment.

So I would like to ask the minister if he can indicate what the situation is in terms of the provision of operating funding for that facility in Thompson?

**Mr. Orchard:** I cannot provide that information. I do not know whether the request has been made formally to the Manitoba Health Services

Commission and would be prepared to entertain those questions at a later date.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, as I said, there is some feeling of urgency in the community. I can appreciate the fact that the minister probably has not been the one who has been making these types of decisions, that it may be something that is being dealt with exclusively by the Health Services Commission, but I would like to ask the minister, will he undertake to raise this matter with his department and with MHSC to see if there is not some way in which the operating funding can be put in place.

I want to stress again that the community of Thompson has raised the capital funds. The community of Thompson can provide the space. What is needed now is really the operating costs, the operating costs that I believe will be offset by considerable savings in terms of transportation. Will the minister undertake to raise this with his department?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Chairman, all of those program requests are investigated and analyzed by the department and prioritized by the department, and this is one that will likewise be the same, but I just want to tell my honourable friend that although from his perspective Thompson has done the fundraising, et cetera, I simply remind my honourable friend that when he was in government, although as a backbencher in government, different programs were proposed for Thompson, which eventually received most of them under the change in government, approval to go ahead, funding from the Manitoba Health Services Commission, such as kidney dialysis, such as a substantial recruitment effort which has raised the number of physicians in Thompson to record levels and that the decision-making process is a very, very clearly laid out one and will be followed.

All requests that come in, whether they be from Thompson or The Pas or Boissevain or Virden, follow the same sort of procedures and, of course, we look at all proposals that are made in terms of their ongoing operating costs, their efficacy, the health outcome to be expected from those processes and make decisions in accordance with that.

I cannot as my honourable friend must surely acknowledge give him detail today. I simply do not have answers to his questions because I cannot even indicate whether the hospital, which is the

maker of proposals, has put this proposal as my honourable friend describes to the Manitoba Health Services Commission. So I will consider my honourable friend's advocacy with the usual diligence that I give to my honourable friend.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I raised this in as nonpartisan context as I could, and if the minister does not want debate on what is happening in terms of health care in northern Manitoba, I could get into an extensive debate in terms of the nursing shortage, the closure of the intensive care unit in Thompson; but I will not. That is not why I raised this. In fact, he used the parallel of the kidney dialysis machine. He mentioned that. I would say this is an exact parallel in the sense that the capital costs in that case were provided by the Kidney Foundation and what was necessary in terms of the provincial government was operating support.

That is what I am saying in this particular case. The community of Thompson has raised the funds for the machinery. The hospital has the space. What we are asking for right now is operating funds and there have been discussions with MHSC. My understanding is that there has been communication that it might not be until September or later before operating funds could be put in place.

I understand the government process. I also understand the role of the minister. What I am asking from the minister, in as nonpolitical way as we can ask in this Chamber, is whether he will personally undertake to raise this matter with his department and have his department contact, or preferably himself, the individuals in Thompson who are dealing with this, Mr. Acting Chairman, because they are somewhat frustrated, but they are not blaming the government.

I am not blaming the government either. I am saying this is part of the normal process, I understand that. But what they are hoping for, I can indicate to the minister, is that the minister will take a personal interest in this because of its seriousness for the women essentially involved who would like to be able to receive this service in the north and who otherwise have to wait extensively. That is all I am asking from the minister. It is not a debate at this time; we will have that debate at a later time.

Will he undertake to contact his department and also, Mr. Acting Chairperson, to have contact made with the people in Thompson who have worked so hard on this? I can give him the names of many of

the people who are involved with the hospital foundation. I am just asking if he will at least raise it in that context.

**Mr. Orchard:** -(inaudible)-

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister gave a rather confusing answer at best. He did not deal with a couple of the matters that I had raised. In fact one of the items I asked was a separate question. I was asking if he would at least talk to the people in Thompson directly, something I had not asked in the previous question.

I would appreciate if he would answer, not that I do not expect sometimes this sort of lack of response, but I am not asking it on my behalf as an individual. I am asking it on behalf of many people in the community who are concerned. I would appreciate if the minister would respond to the question.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I answered to my honourable friend. My honourable friend talked about personal interest by the Minister of Health. I would suggest that as Minister of Health over the last two and a half years, I have spent more time meeting with the board in Thompson of Thompson General Hospital dealing with their program needs, dealing with their aspirations and desires for their community than any other previous Minister of Health in a similar period of time, including the period of time that my honourable friend was in government as a backbencher. The results have been good for the citizens of Thompson.

\* (1250)

We took the initiative as government to provide kidney dialysis for Northerners, and I simply indicate to my honourable friend that that was not done while he could presumably, I would assume, have had direct access to the Minister of Health in the government for which he was a backbencher and could have gotten that minister personally involved, as he put it today.

I say to my honourable friend that this minister, myself, has become personally involved in the provision of mental health services, community based in Thompson for northern Manitoba residents, because of a personal involvement, something that was needed when he was a backbencher in the previous government and that he was unable to achieve with cabinet ministers with whom he sat in caucus.

You know, I find it a little bit opportunistic of my honourable friend that he says I ought to take a personal interest in Thompson in the health care matters. That is exactly what I have done on behalf of this government, and that is why we have successfully brought to Thompson and northern Manitobans a number of programs that, as a backbencher in the previous government, he was unable to bring to the citizens of Thompson because he could not obviously get the personal involvement of the Minister of Health of the day.

So I do not need to have my honourable friend in his very, very, well, his silly way ask me to become personally involved. That is why Thompson has been leading a lot of the communities in northern Manitoba in new service provision as provided by this government, efforts that he was unable to achieve for the citizens of Thompson as a backbencher in government. He could not get the then Minister of Health as personally involved as I have become on behalf of the residents of the northern community of Thompson.

(Madam Chairman in the Chair)

**Mr. Ashton:** Quite frankly, I am getting a little bit tired of the programmed answers from that minister. That is a classic response. I said to him—I asked a very straightforward question on behalf of the people who are involved. Instead, he goes into a political diatribe, Madam Chairperson.

If he wants to debate what has happened in terms of Thompson and be honest and forthright with the people of this province, the members of this Legislature, then he will have his opportunity.

I can indicate to him that, if he wants to debate the background of a kidney dialysis machine and try and indicate that he, as a minister, was responsible, I think he should talk to the people at the Kidney Foundation, because, Madam Chairperson, they were very involved with that. Certainly the operating support is appreciated, but it was the Kidney Foundation that took the initiative. I do not think the minister should try and take the credit away from them.

In the same case I am asking a question in regard to a community group, a nonpartisan, nonpolitical community group in Thompson that deserves credit for what it has done. It has taken the initiative. It has raised the funds. We are now in the position in Thompson to be able to provide that service. That

is why I asked today; it is because of the initiative of the community group.

I did not ask the minister about the loss of the intensive care unit or problems in terms of shortages of nurses. I did not get into some of the political concerns that we have about the hospital system generally in Thompson. I asked, as I said in a nonpartisan and nonpolitical way and in a nonpersonal way, Madam Chairperson, a very straightforward question. I made a very straightforward request to the minister.

Quite frankly, I am very disappointed by his arrogant response, because that is the only word I could use to respond to him. I will not respond in the same way at this point in time in a political way, because I did not raise this in any way, shape or form as a political question.

I want to repeat to the minister what I requested from the minister. Without rhetoric, without the arrogant response that we received here, I simply asked on behalf of the people of Thompson whether he would see if there was not some way in which the operating funds for the mammography unit could be put into place.

Madam Chairperson, if the minister cannot respond to that without a political harangue, I find that very disappointing. I will repeat, I am not in any way, shape or form trying to debate the record of this government, and certainly I could. I am not raising this as a political issue.

I said in my first comments to the minister that I recognize that he probably had not been involved in the initial discussions, nor should he have been, because obviously the initial contact would be between the hospital foundation, the hospital in Thompson and the MHSC. There was not even an implied or a direct criticism of the minister. I am not criticizing him whatsoever for this. This is a community initiative.

All I am asking, Madam Chairperson, is whether the minister could put aside the politics, which I am doing right now, and I am prepared to do. Can the minister put aside the debate? Can the minister put aside the personal comments, and can he please, please get involved in this on behalf of the people of Thompson? That is all I am asking for.

I am quite prepared to debate the minister during Estimates on health care policy in Thompson or in any other community. When I asked this question,

I did not intend it, I did not make it, as a criticism of the minister or the government. I made it in as nonpartisan a way as is possible in this Chamber. I did not in any way, shape or form suggest that this was any fault of anyone.

That is why all I am asking for is the assurance that the minister will deal fairly with this, take some interest in it, see if there is not some way of expediting it. It is just a simple request, not on my behalf, not as myself as NDP MLA for Thompson, but as someone who is speaking here today on behalf of the people from Thompson.

I spoke yesterday to one of the key people involved in raising the funds, someone the minister probably knows fairly well. He had requested that this matter be raised, and I indicated at that time I would raise it in a nonpartisan, nonpolitical way, and that is all I am asking from the minister, for some sort of nonpartisan, nonpolitical commitment to look at that. If he can assure me that is the case, I will accept that, but I would ask him not to turn this request into some excuse for a partisan political debate. If he wants that debate, I will do it, but I will not do it now, because this issue, in terms of mammography, is nonpartisan, it is nonpolitical, it is a community issue. That is all I am asking, for the minister to recognize and deal with as a very serious concern expressed by the people of Thompson.

\* (1300)

**Mr. Orchard:** Madam Chairman, that is exactly the answer I gave to my honourable friend several answers ago before he got into the political debate, which now he is whining about me engaging in.

I give him the answer directly to his first question. That was not good enough for the member for Thompson. Now he is worried about getting into political debate. I gave him the answer he wanted when he first posed the question.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Chairperson, I had some questions I wanted to ask of the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), who was here awhile back. There are a number of important questions we would like to ask him with regard to the whole Decentralization Program. In fact, there are only four or five ministers here, and I -(interjection)- well, you will take it, or maybe the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) can answer this one specific question.

A while back the former Minister of Rural Development made an announcement in the city of Brandon that monies would be forthcoming for a downtown urban project, the Business Improvement Area. The business groups have been raising money to ensure that downtown Brandon does not deteriorate any more.

They had asked the government of Manitoba for some funding, and last year before the election the Minister of Rural Development committed the government of Manitoba to a large grant of several hundred thousands of dollars. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he can tell me whether that grant has yet been paid to the City of Brandon.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Madam Chairman, that is an item that has received considerable discussion, and an awful lot of thinking has gone into the ultimate decision. I am in no position at this time, as the member would know, to make any type of a comment as to the decision with respect to the commitment to revitalization in the city of Brandon.

No doubt that would be a question that the member would want to continue to pursue, and certainly no doubt he will want to continue to provide greater questions or more detailed questions once the Estimates are tabled and/or we find ourselves in the Department of Rural Development.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, certainly, Madam Chairperson, we would want to pursue this in more detail in the Estimates of the Department of Rural Development but, nevertheless, I rather gathered from the minister's comments that there was some reconsideration to the promise made by the government to provide this grant to downtown Brandon renewal. I find that rather surprising. I thought there was a firm commitment made by the then Minister of Rural Development toward downtown enhancement. It was a large sum of money. I have forgotten the precise amount.

Is the minister telling me—I am seeking clarification—that the government is having second thoughts and may not be proceeding with this grant? Is that what the minister is telling me?

**Mr. Manness:** I am not saying anything of that kind at all. I am saying the government is well aware of its commitment, and the government will be providing full clarity with respect to that issue in due course, I would say probably in the month of April for sure.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Chairperson, we will look forward to being able to ask specific questions at that time.

I have some other general questions about decentralization as they apply to the city of Brandon. I know the Minister of Rural Development is quite familiar with the city of Brandon, being a city in the southwestern part of Manitoba in which the honourable minister has his constituency.

I would like to pursue a question that I asked the minister—I believe it was in the last session, prior to Christmas—when we wanted to get from this minister an outline of the rural decentralization program. We do have the press releases issued by the government naming certain towns and so on, but there was very little, there was not sufficient detail.

I understood that the Minister of Rural Development had undertaken to provide to the Chamber—not just to myself, but tabled in this House—a report outlining specifically which jobs and how many will go to what towns, in other words a report that I believe this Legislature is entitled to, knowing exactly how many positions are going to be set up, say, in the town of Melita or Minnedosa or Brandon or Thompson or wherever, and how many.

What is the plan? We have had press releases, but can we get, will we get this report as to the plan and then we should have—(interjection)— Well, the members opposite make rather light of this question, but I can assure you that my constituents took it pretty seriously when the Premier came to Brandon to make this announcement of this program. This is where he announced it, I believe. I watched him on television. I watched him in my house in Brandon. I watched him make this announcement. In fact, nobody invited me to the announcement or I might have gone there as well.

However, the fact is that there has not been the follow-through. We do not know what the status is, so this House should receive a report of the plan, and we should receive an update of exactly what has transpired today. I wonder if the minister will undertake to give us that report within a reasonable amount of time.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development):** Without using up a lot of valuable time, Madam Chair, I think it is important that I give a little bit of an outline as to what has taken place. I

will do it in the context of some two years ago when the initiative was in fact started. The conditions which we were facing within the province were somewhat different as far as the revenues and the activities within the province, and we embarked upon a program which had two basic principles.

One was to make sure that the government was providing services in communities that were in need of those services and, in fact, taking government closer to people; and the other was to make sure that we tried to do it on a basis of the most efficient possible manner. I say to date—and I will get that information in a more specific way—there have been, with government and with the Crown corporations, some 250 positions actually decentralized to this point and I will, as soon as possible, get the information for the member. I could give him some specific details, but I will get that in a general sense within a short period of time. It is a commitment I will make and I will do it.

The member knows that when you have some 17,000 people working for government, and you have some 18 departments of government, and you have different managers within those departmental people, we live in a changing world. There may be some things change within the management of those departments that would cause a decision to be made some two years ago to be needed to be impacted now and updated to this point. So what was decided upon then and made good and economic sense and was the right thing to do, the whole initiative has not changed, or the whole impetus of it has not changed, the commitment is still there, but some of the details of such a major initiative has and will change.

I would hope the member, having been a minister in government, fully understands that and appreciates it because when decisions are made for two years down the road, in the ensuing time if a manager or a deputy came and said to the ministry, this is different now because of certain management changes that we are making to deliver better services to the people, then to carry on to produce a service that really is not going to be needed, or in the most efficient way in that community, would not be the right thing to do.

\* (1310)

I say this, in light of the current budgetary matters of which we are facing—very serious shortfall of revenues for the province—that we in our process

of budgeting have had to make sure that we are doing the right thing. So you may say some of the decisions have been revisited, managers have been given a chance to come back if they have a different attitude and say we may have to change this to some degree, it may be smaller, it may be less people, or it may be the same and can be delivered as we initially set out, so that is a process.

The commitment to decentralize and to put jobs in these communities has not lessened. There may be some changes of some specific jobs, there may be some delays in some specific jobs, but the commitment is still there. I will use two examples, which the member is aware of. I have talked publicly about it. There are two specific ones, which I have referred to.

One of them was the move of the Vital Statistics to Dauphin, which in fact it has been put—basically, it is deferred because in the move, and it was identified in the move, there was some new equipment that probably should be bought when it is being placed in a different location. However, if it were left operating as it currently is, the need for that equipment was not as urgent as the need for the money for health care, so that is deferred until we work through the actual ability to do the upgrading at the same time the move was made. The decision was made to delay it.

The same situation applied to the bookstore at Souris where, in fact, when we made the initial decision, we were informed by the department that there would be an opportunity to move the bookstore because the lease would be up where the current bookstore is. Well, in fact, negotiations that ensued with the current occupant of the portion of that building were not going to open that building up or release that lease for some longer period of time, probably two years, so that put a delay on that whole move as well. One would not be doing the right thing to vacate space here and pay for vacated space when you are leasing or looking for space elsewhere.

There are some specific situations like that, and I think it is the responsible thing. I do not feel—even though there are people out in rural Manitoba who may be upset that it has had to be delayed, I do not think, when they understand why some of the delays are taking place, that they will be upset. After all, and the member I am sure would be supportive of this, if you see where you are going to expend

money that may not be in the most efficient manner, you should not proceed to do it at that time. When it can be done efficiently and properly, it should be.

I say this particularly to the member for Brandon (Mr. Leonard Evans) that there are, I believe, such activities as the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation that are currently in the process of having space allocation decisions made. There are other major initiatives of certain units of government that, as soon as the final budgetary process is completed, then those decisions will be announced, as will be announced what we have accomplished and completed to this particular date.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Chairperson, I certainly look forward to that report. The minister did say in the last session he was going to get it for us, but he has now recommitted, and we are looking forward to in the near future—I trust that is a matter of a short period of time, rather than a long period of time. As I listened, the minister sounded like the paradigm of reason. You know, he is sweetness and light and reasonable, and so on. His remarks as he was commenting, it seemed to me, are that what he has done is confirm to me that this decentralization plan really was not thought out as well as it should have been.

I mean, questions as to availability of space in town should have been looked into before you tell the town of Souris, we are going to bring the bookstore, or before you tell any towns or cities that you are going to do this, you are going to do that and then you find out—and people's expectations are lifted. They are waiting for great things to happen, and then all they get—and this is advice to the government—is disappointment. You lose rather than gain support from the public by not fulfilling what they expected was a promise. Even though you may still want to proceed, people begin to be a little suspicious and begin to wonder, well, what kind of efficiency have we here anyway? You could go down the list. I believe that there seemed to be no pattern of decentralization evident from the towns that were selected and the kinds of jobs going to the various towns. They did not seem to make sense.

I have advocated that, if you want true decentralization, we should look at moving entire departments to selected regional centres, Highways to Portage la Prairie, Natural Resources to Dauphin, Agriculture, let us say, to Brandon. I am just using

these hypothetically, obviously. You do it over a period of time, five, six, seven years. You announce it, and that is the plan, this is the program, and this is how we are going to proceed over a long period of time. Everybody knows about it. I say that, because I think this could be meaningful decentralization. I made a statement about this, stating my position last year, shortly after the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made the announcement as to the type of decentralization the government was proceeding with.

I would like to ask the minister specifically, however—well, two questions specifically. MACC apparently will only be located in Brandon when a new building is constructed. Is the government proceeding with the construction of the building? I know tenders were let, but there has not been any decision announced, at least to my knowledge.

**Mr. Downey:** As soon as the decision is made as to the proper or most acceptable proposal that is in the mill at this particular time, as soon as that decision is made, it will be made public. I would expect that would be before very long.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I thank the minister for that information, Madam Chairperson. I also would like to ask the minister the question about the Fire Commissioner's office. Is that still scheduled to be moved to the city of Brandon?

**Mr. Downey:** Yes, Madam Chair.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I just have the one following question, and I will yield the floor to my colleague from Burrows, who wants to ask questions in the field of housing, I believe. At any rate, can the minister advise, what is the time frame for the Fire Commissioner's office being moved to the city of Brandon? I know that is a specific detail, but it is a very large move, and I would imagine he would have it at his fingertips. When will the Fire Commissioner's office be moved to the city?

**Mr. Downey:** Madam Chair, I will respond to that just in a minute, but I do say that, when the minister made his comment about not knowing if there was a plan or did not appear to be, what probably happened was the fact that there was a two-year time frame put on the actual moves, which probably was not the most effective way of doing it. What we should have done was project to do it over a longer period of time. That is basically what I am doing at this time in saying there is a delay. I do not disagree with his recommendation. That is in fact what is

happening, that it is being extended out over a longer period of time, as we have the capability of doing it financially and properly.

I do not disagree with him, and probably he could take credit for accepting his recommendation. I will now tell the people that he has asked me to extend this and delay it. -(interjection)- I know you did not say that. I do not want to get into—I am saying I am accepting what he—I am pleased he—I will not accuse the member of advocating extending it, but agreeing with it, it is probably okay to do it if it is done properly, if he would accept that.

Time frames, I do not want to put on it, but I can tell you that I would like to see all these moves, as we are able to do them, move as quickly as possible. I am certainly not delaying it for other reasons other than economic and making sure it is done properly. -(interjection)- Yes. As it relates to the Fire Commission, the same thing. I will be encouraging them to move it as we have the capability of doing it.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Chairman, I have a few dozen questions for the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst).

As the minister knows, I am a very strong supporter of co-op housing, and so is our party. One of the best programs that we have that is converting existing buildings, mainly in Winnipeg and especially in the inner city, is the Co-op Home Start Program.

\* (1320)

Can the minister confirm that no new units or grants have been given in the last two years under the Co-op Home Start Program? I was able to verify in '89-90 reports that no new units were built and no new grants were handed out in the '89-90 year. I am wondering if the minister could confirm for me that no new units have been built in the '90-91 year.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing):** Madam Chairperson, I cannot for sure confirm or deny whether or not there were any units allocated. What I can tell the honourable member is that an analysis is presently underway which is anticipated to be completed by the end of June or July, with respect to the whole Co-op Home Start Program. An analysis is being done of a number of different projects, along with discussions and input from a variety of tenants in those projects and operators of

those projects to determine the best arrangement to be made for future co-op housing programs.

When that is completed, we will review the study, and then we will make some decisions. In the meantime, no new projects will be allocated until that study is completed.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Chairperson, I am pleased to hear that a program evaluation is being done. In fact, I was aware of that, because I know some of the tenants who are co-op housing members, who were interviewed for that program evaluation.

I would be interested in knowing some of the criteria in the evaluation and also whether, when it is complete in June or whenever, if I could have a copy of that evaluation.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chair, I do not have that information available with me here, but I will undertake to find out that information for the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

In terms of the completed study, again, we will investigate that situation. I can advise him at a later time.

**Mr. Martindale:** If no decision will be made until after an evaluation has been done, can I assume then that there will be a budget line for the Co-op Home Start Program in the 1991-92 budget?

**Mr. Ernst:** That would be telling, Madam Chair.

**Mr. Martindale:** Well, I think that probably that program is a victim of the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Manness) upcoming budget, but I guess in another two weeks we will have the evidence, and then we will know for sure. I hope I am wrong; I would like to be proved wrong; I would like to see the Co-op HomeStart Program continue.

As we know, the Core Area Initiative is winding down, it has one year left to go, and the current funds are being extended over another year, but at the present time there is no third Core Area Initiative Agreement in place, although I hope that you are in the process of negotiating one. If the core initiative is not replaced, or even if it is, I wonder if the minister could indicate what plans are in place to continue some of the good things, especially in housing, that are happening under the Core Area Initiative, whether or not it is renewed, either new housing programs or continuation of existing housing programs, either in a new core initiative or undertaken by Manitoba Housing.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, as the member knows, we have negotiated an extension to the existing Core Area Initiative Agreement. That extension is anticipated to be signed, because the existing core area agreement runs out in about a weeks time.

Once that is in place and reprioritization of the balance of the remaining funds under Core Area Initiative Program have taken place, we will be having discussions with regard to potential cost-shared federal-provincial-municipal agreements dealing with a variety of issues. It may not be another Core as it is known today, but I do not think anybody cares particularly what the name of it is as long as the kinds of programs that people are seeking are able to be carried out with funding from the federal government, along with the province and the city.

I guess we all have to address the situation in the context of everyone, that is, all three levels of governments' ability, fiscal ability, to carry out any kind of program. We have to look at the position of the federal government, and can the federal government, considering a \$35 billion or \$30 billion deficit and significant offloading onto provinces, do they have the financial capability and ability to carry out one of these kinds of programs again? Significantly, also, we have a similar problem here. That is well known to all members, and all members have been well apprised by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and others with respect to those kinds of programs.

In the same context, the city has to address that situation. Can they afford to carry out their end of another program? If you look at the city's current fiscal abilities, their current major debt load that they are carrying, the kind of problems that they are facing, even with cutbacks of 5 or 6 percent increase in municipal property taxes, you have to ask yourself are they really in a financial position? No matter how desirable it is, no matter how much we would like to do a program, no matter how many people would benefit from it, you have to undertake an analysis of the fiscal ability of all three levels of government to undertake another tri-level program of significant magnitude.

In the same context, I think you have to weigh, on the other hand, can you afford not to do it? Can you afford not to carry out some of these very valuable programs? Those kinds of analyses and



subsequent discussions with the federal and the municipal government over the next few months will, I hope, ultimately lead to a decision that is in the best interests of all the people of the province, having weighed both the ability and the need to determine whether you can afford or even not afford not to carry out one of these programs.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Chairperson, well, I am pleased with part of the answer, especially the latter part, wherein the minister asked the question, can you afford not to carry on some of these programs, because as I think he is aware there are costs to not carrying on some of these things in terms of inner city decay, if you like, depopulation, concerns about lack of people living downtown and, therefore, concerns about safety on the streets, et cetera.

So there is a cost, a social cost and an economic cost. You do not have enough people living downtown. You do not have a large enough economic base for businesses, especially retail businesses. I think that is an important consideration: Can you afford not to continue programs like the Core Area Initiative, regardless of what you call it?

I would like to move on now to the 98 public housing authorities that the minister abolished. As he knows, we in this party are very concerned about this very undemocratic decision and the consequences that it is going to have.

I would like to know why the minister made this major change in policy? I would be interested in knowing if he and his department think that there are major problems with the 98 housing authorities which led them to abolish the housing authorities and set up the Manitoba Housing Authority. If so, what are those major problems with the existing structure and the 98 local boards, which I think provided for considerable local input and local control, to say nothing of employment?

**Mr. Ernst:** The member has asked that question in Question Period, and I have given him the answer, so I will be pleased to give them to him again.

The first reason for changing from 98 different housing authorities into one housing authority is a saving to the taxpayer of approximately \$3 million on an annualized basis. No doubt he will argue that it is only \$1.5 million, and he would be correct if he said it is only \$1.5 million to the provincial taxpayer, but it will also be \$1.5 million to the federal taxpayer who, incidentally, is one and the same.

Madam Chair, in addition to that there were inconsistent applications of housing policies across a variety—not to be critical of those individual housing authorities, because the boards were all staffed with human beings, and human beings interpret things differently. They understand things differently. They have different opinions, interestingly enough, as we find out daily in this House, but there was an inconsistent application of provincial policy relating to housing units.

\* (1330)

There was also, Madam Chair, a significant lack of financial accountability across very many of those 98 public housing authorities so that, considering the millions of dollars of public funds that flow out of these housing units and have to be dealt with in terms of mortgage payments, repairs and maintenance and things of that nature, there was a significant need for greater financial accountability with respect to those, as identified in the Peat Marwick audit report done a couple of years ago.

So, Madam Chair, amongst a few other things the member asked the question, I think, as well, how many of them are causing problems.

Interestingly enough, we did not really know for sure because of the lack of reporting and the lack of accountability of these housing units, in fact, how many people were really employed by them. We did not know that, because that information was not coming to us. Also, we did not necessarily know the kind of financial cash flows and so on. There were guesstimates made because of the fact of the financial accountability aspect of it.

All of that now is changing because we have in fact not disbanded the housing authorities per se. Their individual operational units are still there in the same configuration as they were prior to 27th of February, but now they report directly. Now the bank transfer arrangements have been made so that the financial accountability and financial transfer of funds is happening on an automatic basis following the month end and the new rental payment schedule becomes due.

So, Madam Chairperson, there are a number of reasons why this change took place. I want to comment also at the moment and save my honourable member from asking a further question as to why it was done in a kind of a surreptitious manner. It was done because of the fact that a

decision had to be made and, unfortunately, if it was given a long period of time with which to deal with the various housing authorities, there was a concern—more of a financial concern than anything else—that somewhere along the way things might happen that should not have happened; that expenditures take place that would not necessarily be in the best interests overall of the housing authority; that a variety of other things in accountability problems may have arisen if more than a day or two notice at the time of the collection of rental income was given.

It is unfortunate that that had to take place. It is not the most desirable way of doing things. It is not something that I personally would have—I would rather have given people considerably more notice, particularly because most of the people on the boards were volunteers, people who gave freely of their time out of an abiding interest in social housing. That being said, it is difficult and sometimes business decisions have to be made that are not necessarily the most humane, but at the same time had to be made because of other considerations. Basically, protection of the taxpayers' money is the primary concern in that regard.

It is unfortunate that it had to be done in an abrupt manner, but it was absolutely necessary to do that in order to ensure that full accountability of the public's money was maintained during the transition period.

**Mr. Martindale:** We on this side are always interested in increasing accountability, especially financial accountability, and so we support worthwhile goals like that.

I would like to dwell one more time, and I guess the last time, on the \$3 million. The reason I originally raised it in Question Period is that your press release said that the saving was \$3 million and what the media picked up was that the province was saving \$3 million, because, as my recollection goes, the original press release did not differentiate between where the savings were going to be, which was 50 percent federal and 50 percent provincial. I think the press release in that regard was somewhat misleading, but since then the record has been corrected, I would say.

I think one of our main concerns is that it is much more democratic to have local control rather than centralized control. I am wondering if the minister believes that by abolishing 98 local housing

authorities, the new structured decision making is going to be more democratic and will allow for more local control or not.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, let me set the record straight once again. My statements at all times, both in the House and outside, related to the saving of \$3 million by the taxpayer. I did not say by the province; I did not say by the federal government; I said by the taxpayer. I maintain and perhaps my honourable friend from Dauphin does not understand that the federal and provincial taxpayer is the same taxpayer, but I would for his edification point that out once again. The taxpayer is a taxpayer. There is only one. Whether he pays municipal taxes, whether he pays provincial taxes or whether he pays federal taxes, he is still the same taxpayer.

With regard to the question of accountability and with regard to the question of local participation, it is the intention under two distinct areas to maintain local initiative and local input.

Madam Chairperson, firstly, through tenant associations in various housing projects, there is money available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to fund tenant associations. Those tenant associations then will interface with the departmental—under the new Manitoba Housing Authority, there will be in fact a departmental division dealing with landlord and tenant affairs. That division will meet regularly, both in rural Manitoba and in Winnipeg, with tenant associations to hear their concerns and allow for their input into the operations.

In addition to that, there will be social housing advisory groups throughout the province. They will have an opportunity to form in every municipality who wishes to have one to provide localized input from a variety of different places throughout the province to give us an indication of the kind of need and other association directed to the Manitoba Housing Authority from local communities. They will not, however, have their hands on the money. That will be done essentially with full accountability. That will be done, not in the way it was done in the past, but there will be an even application of housing policy across the province. There will be an even application of the expenditures of money to need and necessary maintenance. That local authority, having been abused in some cases and having been not perhaps accounted for as well as it might

have been, will be removed from the individual housing authority boards and will be conducted by the central housing authority.

**Mr. Martindale:** Going back to your original press release one more time, I think it was a very crafty press release because it left the impression that the province was going to save \$3 million. That was a misleading impression, and that was the impression the public was given, because that is what was recorded by the media, that the province was saving \$3 million, and that was a misleading and false impression.

On the question of the social housing advisory group—

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, it was neither misleading nor false information.

The fact of the matter is, it is true that there will be a saving of \$3 million. There will also be a saving of \$3 million to the taxpayer. If my honourable—

\* (1340)

**Madam Chairman:** The honourable Minister of Housing does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

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**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Chairperson, I think the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) gives me far too much credit. I was really talking about how the media interpreted the press release. After all, it was intended for them. Their interpretation was that the province was saving \$3 million, and they got that from your press release.

On to the social housing advisory groups, I think this has been set up as a kind of veneer to give the appearance that tenants are still being consulted, that tenants are still important and that their opinions count.

I have talked to the tenants who are on the Winnipeg Housing Authority board, and they know and we all know that people in an advisory capacity do not have very much power. In fact they do not have any power to make decisions; they can only make recommendations.

That is true of anyone's advisory committee, whether it is an advisory committee on any topic advising the government or any department. It is different to be on an advisory committee than to be

a board member, and I think being board members was much more important in the past.

Could the minister confirm or deny that on February 27, 1991, approximately 680 housing authority board appointments were rescinded?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, I cannot confirm the number, but it is probably close.

**Mr. Martindale:** Will the minister confirm or deny that more than 600 of these appointments were in rural Manitoba?

**Mr. Ernst:** Given that most of the housing authorities are outside the city of Winnipeg, then very likely my honourable friend's assumption is somewhat correct.

I want to add one more thing with respect to his comments about the social housing advisory groups. Obviously my honourable friend does not think they are worthwhile and should not be proceeded with and people should not be invited to participate in an advisory group situation.

I might ask the hypothetical question, Madam Chairperson, if he thinks resident advisory groups in the city of Winnipeg are also in a similar situation and ought not to be considered for consideration with respect to their advice given to members of community committees.

**Mr. Martindale:** I am wondering if the minister believes that by centralizing control of housing authorities and laying off 50 staff members, his government is meeting their stated policy of decentralizing Civil Service jobs to rural Manitoba.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, with regard to the—and I indicated a little bit earlier nobody was really sure how many people actually worked for these housing authorities, because that information was not forthcoming from them -(interjection)-

Madam Chairperson, if the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) wants to ask a question, let him stand up and ask a question. In the meantime, let me finish my answer to the honourable member for Burrows.

With regard to the total staffing of these housing authorities throughout the province, the fact of the matter is that a great many of those jobs were part time, that those people in fact were gainfully employed elsewhere and did this on a part-time basis because of the limited numbers of units associated with many of these housing authorities.

The large bulk of the housing authority units were, of course, situated in the city of Winnipeg, handled by two housing authorities, the city of Winnipeg Housing Authority to which the member referred and the Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority which handled by far the largest number of units within the city.

The question of decentralization and the support of rural communities has been widely spread by my honourable friend, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey). I can indicate that there will be at least seven regional offices outside of Winnipeg, and there will be subdistrict offices as well in at least two or three locations and perhaps more. The final configuration of those has not yet been decided.

Madam Chairperson, we are going to be providing long-term full-time jobs in rural Manitoba as opposed to some of the short-term and/or part-time jobs that were provided under local housing authorities. These will be full-time jobs. They will be located throughout rural Manitoba and provide a needed assistance to the economies of those places where they are located.

**Mr. Martindale:** Can the minister confirm or deny that with no notable exceptions, all of the job losses from the housing authorities will be in rural Manitoba?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, I cannot.

**Mr. Martindale:** Can the minister confirm or deny that those Manitoba Housing civil servants that are in the property management branch offices will become employees of the Manitoba Housing Authority?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, the Manitoba Housing Authority will seek applications for employment for every position within the Manitoba Housing Authority. Every Manitoban including those who are experienced and resident in certain locations are free to apply.

**Mr. Martindale:** I am interested in knowing what the status of these people will be. Will they forfeit their Civil Service status or will they remain part of the Civil Service?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, they are not members of the Civil Service at the present time. They are in fact employees of housing authorities, not of the Province of Manitoba. When they come under the Manitoba Housing—there are about five

or six different union agreements associated with these housing authorities. That matter has been referred to the Manitoba Labour Board to be sorted out, so that we deal fairly both in terms of existing collective agreements and the interests of the employees concerned. The Manitoba Labour Board will in fact sort out the problems associated with this and determine what is the best, most reasonable and fair way of proceeding.

**Mr. Martindale:** Could the minister tell me whether or not any of the staff employed in the Broadway office or the Smith Street offices have had their Civil Service classification changed recently, especially if any of them have been upgraded or given salary increases?

**Mr. Ernst:** Not to my knowledge, Madam Chairperson.

**Mr. Martindale:** I have had concern expressed to me that one of the staff who helped write up or draw up the new plan for Manitoba Housing—it has been alleged that his wife has been appointed to a key position in the restructuring of the new Manitoba Housing Authority. Is the minister aware of this or not?

**Mr. Ernst:** There have been no new appointments to the Manitoba Housing Authority, Madam Chair.

**Mr. Martindale:** Is the minister aware of what the average salary would be of the former housing managers who were let go? I have information that suggests that many of them were part time and that their average salary was about \$250 per month.

**Mr. Ernst:** As far as I am aware, Madam Chairperson, no housing manager has been let go.

**Mr. Martindale:** I would be interested in knowing if part-time housing managers have been or will be let go. I guess one of the reasons that I am interested in knowing this is that the government claims that they will save \$3 million. I would be interested in knowing how you plan specifically to save \$3 million, what portion of this is going to come from saving salaries and what portion from allegedly reduced maintenance and operating costs.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, I do not have all that detailed information here with me. I also would advise my honourable friend that this matter will evolve, if you will, over the next several months. It is not anticipated that the Manitoba Housing Authority will be in place until September, likely, at the earliest.

Madam Chairperson, as time goes along and as Estimates of the Department of Housing appear in the House, I will likely have a better ability at that time to provide additional information to the member on the operations of the Manitoba Housing Authority.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Chairperson, while we are disappointed that local housing authorities have been abolished -(interjection)- you were not listening before, Ed. We went through that before.

The alternative which the government is putting in place, which is the social housing advisory groups, even though they are second best, I would have to say that it is better than nothing. What I am more interested in is whether or not tenants will be appointed to the new Manitoba Housing Authority board and, if so, how many.

**Mr. Ernst:** No decision with regard to board appointments or anything of that nature has yet been determined, Madam Chairperson.

**Mr. Martindale:** Would the minister agree to appointing tenant representatives to the new board, and in particular low-income tenants, and if so, would he consider appointing tenants who live in public housing to the new board?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, I would be happy to consider that.

\* (1350)

**Mr. Martindale:** Would the minister be open to suggestions from tenant associations? Would he be willing to accept nominations or letters of recommendation, names of tenants who would be willing to sit or have their names considered for the board of the new Housing Authority?

**Mr. Ernst:** Considering, Madam Chairperson, that the new board of directors will likely be in the vicinity of 10 or 12, at the most, and that has not yet been determined, the fact that there were 98 housing authorities with a wide variety of membership from all across the province, I think at this time it would behoove myself, as minister, in making any recommendations to cabinet to deal with.

Well, the first list, shall we say, we can deal with is the list of existing housing authorities and those members who have served in the past, and who may wish to continue to serve in the future. Subsequent to that if there are tenants who are interested, we will pursue that aspect as well. If the member wants to provide me with some recommendations with regard to tenants, I would be

pleased to receive those recommendations from him; but I give him no guarantees that they will be appointed.

**Mr. Martindale:** I thank the minister because I think it suggests that at least he is open to considering the names of tenants, and it is a positive opening for the possibility of tenants being appointed.

Does the minister have any plans to sell off any units of public housing to the private sector, or in other words, to privatize in any way public housing?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, I have no specific plans at the present time to sell any housing units to the private sector. However, I think there is an opportunity for low income tenants, who are presently residing in a variety of structures throughout the province owned by the public both from a co-operative standpoint and from an individual ownership standpoint, who might well wish to be able to purchase the unit they live in, who might well wish to assume an equity or ownership position in a property.

It has been indicated I think in hundreds, if not thousands, of studies done on a variety of housing projects that the person who owns his own home creates a better sense of neighbourhood, creates a better sense of pride in ownership of that property, and creates something that communities have been striving to do after the expenditures of millions of taxpayers' dollars in urban renewal projects of one kind or another across communities right across this country.

If you can create that sense of neighbourhood, that sense of belonging, that sense of interest in the neighbourhood amongst the people there, Madam Chairperson, then we will have accomplished what we set out to do with those millions of dollars earlier under urban renewal projects. That, I think, can be assisted dramatically by having those people obtain ownership to the unit that they live in.

Now that is easier said than done because there are many, a myriad of problems, associated with that kind of concept. It is something that I will begin to look at over the next several months in an attempt to determine whether that is an appropriate course of action or not, and what kind of benefit would result.

I must say, Madam Chairperson, having participated with my honourable friend at the opening of the Westminster Housing Co-op the

other day that a number of people that I talked to there, in asking the basic question, should the tenants of projects be participating in its ownership under one form or another? The answer invariably, by all of the people that I spoke to was yes, they ought to do that. They have a sense of ownership, a sense of pride in the project, something that is not necessarily inherent in a multiple turnover, inflow and outflow public housing project, so that they are not all, of course, by any stretch of the imagination, suitable for that. There are some that may be, and I would like to pursue those options to see what benefits can accrue both to the tenant of those projects and to the taxpayer of Manitoba as a result of dealing in that manner with those housing units.

**Mr. Martindale:** Well, I thank the minister for that answer, because he is going in the direction that a lot of people are going in. In fact, the possibility of converting public housing units into co-ops has been tossed around for the last 10 years. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) borrowed this idea from me, and it ended up in a private member's bill from the Liberal Party that was debated in the last session. This party supported that private member's bill in the last session, and it is going to come back again.

We are always happy to share good ideas, even if it is with the Liberal Party. We would be very pleased if the government would follow up on this and enact some of the suggestions that are being put forward. Those ideas do not just come from me; those ideas are coming from people in the community. I think what we are going to see is people organizing housing co-ops and approaching the Minister of Housing and saying, we would like to buy X number of units of public housing and turn it into a co-op.

I would support that, although I think there needs to be a number of conditions on it. I think the residents who are living there now would have to be able to continue living there, that it would have to continue on the same kind of subsidy, and that the tenants who became co-op members would have to be eligible for a subsidy so that they could continue to live in the same kind of housing.

I remember at Law Amendments Committee in July 1982, the Minister of Finance and myself had an interesting discussion about co-ops. I am going to look up the record and see what the Minister of Finance said - (interjection) - July 1982, amendments

to The Landlord and Tenant Act and The Rent Regulation Act.

This will not be the last that you have heard from myself or probably our Liberal colleagues or from people in the community, most importantly, on the idea of converting public housing into co-ops. We have some very large public housing projects in Winnipeg, especially Gilbert Park and Lord Selkirk, that I think need some kind of new solutions to existing problems, and converting them into co-ops is probably one of the more positive solutions.

I would like to ask the minister, finally, if there are any plans to increase the level of contracting out of any function of public housing whether it be management or maintenance or repairs. I know that some contracting out is done now. I would be interested in knowing if you plan to increase that with the new Manitoba Housing Authority.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Chairperson, no.

**Mr. Martindale:** I would like to thank the Minister of Housing for all his answers today, and we will continue this discussion, I am sure, in Estimates.

I now have some questions for the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). Especially those of us who have inner city constituencies know that many people who are recipients of social assistance and therefore are clients of the minister's department are living and renting substandard accommodation in the inner city. In fact, many times people are renting accommodation that has outstanding work orders, for example, maintenance and occupancy by-laws, infractions of the City of Winnipeg to which work orders have been applied as a result, or sometimes people are renting places that have City of Winnipeg or provincial health orders outstanding.

We have seen some infamous examples of this in the newspaper recently where these landlords were taken to court, and two of them were actually sent to jail for repeatedly violating by-laws and the health act. In fact, they were doing something that the courts found most reprehensible, and that is, they were putting people into places that had been placarded. There is a fine of something like \$10 a day for living in a place that is placarded. Basically, when it is placarded you are supposed to get out, because it is deemed uninhabitable, it is unhealthy to live there, and yet landlords were continuing to rent these places.

The reason I bring up these examples is that sometimes economic security is actually paying the rent on these places that are being rented illegally. I have a suggestion to try out on the minister, because I think that we can solve this problem, or at least solve some of these problems. I think it could be solved by requiring that social assistance staff when authorizing rent payments to landlords—and sometimes rent goes direct to the landlord or to the tenant—to check for outstanding work orders or health orders, and if there are outstanding work orders or health orders, then the financial counsellor would refuse to pay the rent on that suite and say to the tenant or their client, you have to find another place to live, we will not pay the rent on this place that has a health order against it.

\* (1400)

Now, there are certain times when this would be disadvantageous for tenants, for example, if there was a zero vacancy rate that could create hardship, and I would not want to see that happen to my constituents or anyone else. However, I think we have a good opportunity now, because we have a very high vacancy rate in the city of Winnipeg and there are alternatives for most people if they cannot rent one place, to find another place to rent.

I think there is a precedent for this practice, and that is that City of Winnipeg financial counsellors have been very good, in my opinion, about checking with the staff at CARUMP, the Core Area Residential Upgrading and Maintenance Program, to see if there are outstanding work orders. This is done very simply, because they can make one phone call to CARUMP, CARUMP staff consult their computer listing of places with work orders and can immediately tell the financial counsellor of the City of Winnipeg whether or not there are outstanding work orders and therefore whether or not these clients should be referred somewhere else.

Now, I know that in the last several years the economic security department has been computerized or has moved towards being computerized, and so it seems to me that should be something could easily be done, or if there was a policy in place, if they could phone the City of Winnipeg, as the city staff do, and say, what about this address, should we be paying the rent on this address? I am interested in knowing what the minister thinks of this idea, whether he would take it under consideration, whether he would discuss it

with his senior staff and see if it is possible to implement this suggestion.

**Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services):** I thank the honourable member for his information and advice. Of course, we always take seriously his suggestions. I just caution him though that there are certain times of the year that it would be inappropriate to drive people out of their accommodations as he is suggesting. The dislocation of families who are already at risk is not something we would like to do, but certainly the member indicates that the housing that many social assistance recipients, whether they are receiving that from the city or whether they are receiving that from the province, their accommodations often are such that it is a concern.

We have, of course, increased allowances appropriately to provide that basic safety net for recipients and allow them to access their basic needs, but there is no question that a lot of the housing, which probably is more expensive than it should be, is not of a quality or standard that we can be proud of. If there are ways of assisting people to upgrade these facilities, we would be pleased to see what we could do in that direction.

The other thing that I would mention is regarding the direct payments. There are some instances where the provincial government makes those direct payments to landlords, but certainly in the bulk of the cases the money flows to the recipient, and the recipient pays that rent directly to the landlord. I think it is important that recipients have some feeling of independence, some feeling of decision making, and although at times they need the counselling to make appropriate expenditures, I do not think we want to get into the situation where the department is making all those decisions for them, paying all of their bills directly. I think it is important—these are already people whose pride and self-esteem is a big part of the problem. I think if the department was going to make these payments on their behalf, they would further reduce that self-esteem.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for the answer. It sounds quite familiar to the same answer that I got when I used to lobby the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) when he was the minister. The answer has a very familiar ring to it. -(interjection)- It does not mean that I bought the answer before or that I buy it now.

Although I understand what the -(interjection)- No. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) needs to understand that before I was lobbying on behalf of low-income people and, of course, I was outside government and had a totally objective point of view. The minister should know that.

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

**Madam Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. Martindale:** Just so the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) are not totally disappointed, I will give you a response to that answer, because I do understand the argument that you do not want to take responsibility away from clients who are on social assistance. On the surface of that, it sounds good and it looks good, and I accept that almost to its full extent. I do have a problem, though, in that many times low-income people do not know what their rights are, do not know that they can say no to a place, that they could move somewhere else, and that they should not be living in a place that has a health order. In fact, in many cases, they may not even understand what the significance of a placarded sign by the Health department means.

The reason that I raised the question about the rent being paid on substandard accommodation is not just that I am concerned about tenants who have to live frequently with very appalling conditions, but also I am interested in taxpayers getting good value for their money. Our research says that the department of economic security is spending—I am not sure—\$50 million, \$60 million a year for rent in the city of Winnipeg. Now much of that is going to go into the inner city, and a significant part of it is going to go into substandard housing. I personally do not think that it is fair to the taxpayers of Manitoba that your department is purchasing substandard accommodation. I think that there are ways to avoid that.

Now, if the minister does institute a new policy as a result of my suggestion—and I hope he will—I would like to see that policy be as humane as possible so that it only impacts on people positively and never has a negative impact on social assistance recipients. For example, I would not want to see people evicted because of the policy that I am suggesting. I was thinking more of people moving into a new place at which time a worker has to approve the rent. So I think it should be applied at the point of move-ins.

Secondly, to make it a humane policy, I think there needs to be a distinction between minor repair orders and major repair and health orders, because it is possible that you could have a place that is listed as having repair orders, but it may not be nearly as bad as a place down the street that has not been inspected, that does not have any work orders, but in fact is much worse. So I think there needs to be an element of discretion on the part of the staff.

I hope that the minister will follow up on this suggestion and discuss it with his staff and get back to me at some point in the future as to whether or not you are willing to implement the suggestion.

I would like to move on now to the Human Resources Opportunity Centres. I believe that this is a good program. I had a tour of the King Edward Human Resources Opportunity Centre when the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) was the minister responsible. We were told that this was a successful program. We were told that, six months after people graduated, 62 percent, I believe it was, of the graduates were still employed. When we talked to the students, they were very appreciative of the kind of training that they were getting.

I remember talking to single-parent women who were in, I believe, a kind of a life skills class. I do not know what else they were being trained for there, but they really appreciated the kind of financial supports that they got which enabled them to go back to get some upgrading. So I would be interested in knowing if there has been an evaluation of the Human Resources Opportunity Centre. If so, what were the criteria? What was considered in the evaluation, if there was one?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Madam Chairperson, I offer my regrets that the member did not have more influence with the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). I always felt that the member for Brandon East was a good listener, and I am sure could be influenced. I hope that you have not given up trying to present your ideas to him. As he gets to know you better, I am sure, probably he will be more swayed by your arguments. I regret that you have had to change your approach and your principles since you became a member of the Legislature. I would hope that you could operate in the same way as you did before, but I suppose that, if you feel you had to make some changes in your approaches and



your principles to better serve your constituents, that is a personal decision that you have made.

The question of your policy suggestions that you have put forth on housing, I would caution you that when you say you would only apply it if there were positive outcomes and you would not apply it to regulations if there was negative outcomes, it is very difficult to have policies and then discriminate against certain recipients who are in housing and not against others. I think what you are saying is that you would have sort of a selective implementation of this, and I would caution the member that if you only implement policies and enforce policies with certain members, certain allowance recipients, you run into all sorts of problems. Even though the aim of workers would be to be as kind and as accommodating as possible, I do think it is practical to have sort of selective implementation.

As far as the HROCs and HROPs are concerned, I have visited some of them as well when I was in Dauphin last fall and the previous summer in Brandon at the Westbran project. At that time, I can recall meeting with board members and staff at those locations. Our departmental staff frequently visit them and evaluate those programs, and I can assure you that staff are very much involved with the delivery of programs. The boards of those organizations are advisory boards, and members of the board, particularly in Brandon, were very open in giving their opinions of the operation of the HROCs and HROPs. Staff work closely with the people who are employed there, so I can assure you that staff in my department are very much aware of the operation of those centres and of what is happening in them.

\* (1410)

**Mr. Martindale:** I am going to have to go back and read the record and see what I said. Maybe I misspoke myself. I did not really hear that there had been an evaluation, and I was hoping that I might have heard that there was an evaluation.

I will wind it up with a final question and ask if the minister believes that the Human Resources Opportunity Centres are good training programs, that they are worthwhile, that they do what the throne speech said your party wants to do, and that is, to help Manitobans to help themselves. If you believe that, then I think you believe in job creation, or you would believe in job creation for people who are on

social assistance in order to get them off social assistance and get them back into the work force.

I guess I am trying to get the minister to commit himself as to whether he believes in these programs and whether he would fight to keep them, because I am concerned that they might disappear in the forthcoming budget.

I thank the minister for all his answers.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Yes, I believe very strongly in employment, and it is my hope, and I can assure you the hopes of all members on this side, that we could have full employment in this province and that we could work with individuals who access my department to have the necessary skills to move into the world of employment.

I think the member realizes that the municipal social assistance is directly involved with recipients who are deemed employable. Certainly those people have better opportunities to access the work force than the some 26,000 cases that the provincial government deals with in social allowances. Any programs that can be put in place successfully to assist people to re-enter the work force, of course, are of interest to me. It is a tremendous cost to the province and to the country to have to use tax dollars to provide that basic safety net for so many Manitobans and so many Canadians. So any programs that will remove people from the welfare rolls and put them into meaningful work are something that we are interested in.

By the same token I know that of the recipients who access social allowances from the province, many of them have been on social allowances for a long, long time, and it is very difficult to provide them with the skills that are necessary for jobs in today's world. Any progress there in terms of training and moving large numbers of recipients back into the work force is very difficult.

I can tell you that I met recently, and I believe we had a private conversation with some of the 25 or 30 members who access the food bank and the kitchen across the street here. I met with them just a few short weeks ago and had very interesting discussions with them on their feelings about being on social assistance, their limited abilities to find work, problems with housing, and mainly problems with self-esteem. I can tell you, from my work with people in my previous vocation, I went away from there feeling very sorry for them, but I also felt that there were going to be real limitations on the amount

of training that could be provided for people like that and their ability to access jobs. These were people with multiple problems, not only with self-esteem, but also health problems, lack of education, lack of direction, lack of appropriate counselling. Some very, very significant things would have to happen to them before they would become employable.

I am not saying it is impossible, but I think the member recognizes what a slow and agonizing process this is, to provide training to people who have been unemployed, unskilled, untrained for a long, long time. I think we will continue our efforts to work with people such as that through my staff and through various programs, and our hope is that we can make some progress.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Chairperson, I did want to ask one question relating to housing co-ops of the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) after listening to some of his answers, more so in terms of some type of indication of solid support of the whole concept of converting nonprofit housing into housing co-ops because so many people are affected from his department. He makes mention of self-esteem and indignity. This is in part what allows many of the residents in nonprofit housing. Madam Chairperson, I do not know if you heard, I was going to ask the question of the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), and he has left the Chamber. He is coming right back.

The question put specifically to the minister is: Does he support government moving in the direction of converting nonprofit housing into housing co-ops?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** I missed it.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Chairperson, I will start again for the sake of the minister here. I was wanting to find out because so many clients of economic security live in nonprofit housing, there is an argument and a concept of converting nonprofit housing into housing co-ops. The minister made mention of the importance of a person's self-esteem, and the whole question of giving dignity by ownership I believe can be answered in terms of another alternative to nonprofit housing, housing co-ops.

I had asked the former Minister of Housing about housing co-ops and was somewhat pleased with some of the remarks that he has put on the record, but I am wondering if the current minister would be

an advocate of such a program that would see nonprofit housing units converted into housing co-ops.

\* (1420)

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Madam Chairperson, the question of self-esteem is one that I was discussing with the previous questioner. I think that a large part of the mentality and the feelings and the makeup of the recipients of social assistance is a lack of self-esteem. We have to do everything we can to improve that self-esteem and improve the way they feel about themselves, particularly with the young children who live in those circumstances, or else we are going to have a repetitive cycle where children of parents who are drawing social allowances are going to know that as their way of life. They are going to grow up with the same lack of self-esteem that their parents have. Anything that we can do for the creation and the building of self-esteem for individuals like that, I think, is very, very important. Part of it has to come through education, and part of it can come through counselling and working with parents to parent as best they can to create that self-esteem in the young people.

I think there are other ways, too, in terms of trying to put these people into jobs, into meaningful jobs, to feel more independent. Some of the allowance recipients that I talked to described their feelings of having to go to social allowance offices, the feeling they had and the fear they had as they attempted to discuss their situations with some of the workers there, both at the municipal level and at the provincial level.

As far as your question on housing, I would defer that to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst). I think he answered a similar question from another questioner not too long ago, but certainly a big part of the allowances that recipients get goes to housing, much of it by, I am sure, your standards and my standards very substandard housing. Anything that we can do to provide a better housing and better housing situations for these people is certainly something that my department is interested in.

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** My question is to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson). The minister will recall that we discussed, or I asked some questions about, tourism in the province of Manitoba. I know that, under normal circumstances, the Tourism

department begins an advertising campaign or has in the past, at least, begun an advertising campaign, in the early spring. I also recall many times being lobbied by the Tourism Industry Association for an earlier start to the advertising campaign, because, of course, people make their traveling decisions weeks and months in advance.

I am wondering whether the minister can indicate why we have seen no tourism ads on television at least, or there is no obvious campaign to entice Manitobans to stay at home. It seems to me that one of the things that is most important, and would be most important, for small businesses in this province would be to attempt to ensure that Manitoba travelers remain in province. The statistics we talked about yesterday included the fact that there had been some 30 percent increase in day traffic to the United States, and there had been a reduction in traffic the opposite way.

I am wondering why we do not have any campaign, any general campaign, any specific campaign, to keep Manitobans in Manitoba. What is the logic behind that, and what does the minister intend to do to make sure that Manitobans stay here?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** The first part of it, in terms of our tourism campaign, part of it has just recently been approved in terms of the campaign that will in fact be taking place in North Dakota, South Dakota and the northern Midwestern United States in terms of the more focused campaign that you will see occur this year, as opposed to the more generic campaign that has occurred in the past. In terms of the issue that the member touches on, there are at least two parts to it. I am not so sure that it is as much tourism related, as we talked about the other day, that what is happening all across Canada in the southern part of Canada is—there is the word “leakage” which has been utilized in terms of people going down to the northern United States primarily because of economic decisions in terms of perceived or real opportunities or deals that are available in terms of purchases and so on, so it seems a lot of Canadians are taking so-called advantage of that. With our dollar strengthening, that has compounded that problem.

In terms of the solution to that, I think there are many. I think one is that our dollar probably should more appropriately end up where it really probably

really should be, as opposed to being buoyed up by the federal government.

It is also partly the business climate, the kind of economic climate we create in our own province which I touched on yesterday. Part of the root of the problem is the competitive ability of our own businesses and the establishments here in Manitoba. We have to continue to strive to make sure they can be very competitive, and that brings into play the whole issue that we talked about so often from taxation to other costs of doing business, to Workers Compensation rates, to payroll taxes and all of those kinds of things that lead to a situation where our businesses, unfortunately, cannot be quite as competitive as some of the businesses in the northern United States. So certainly those are some of the long-term problems.

Our department is in the process of looking at whether or not there is some merit to a Manitoba-pride kind of a campaign. I should say to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), I was out in Brandon just this week, and the Brandon Economic Development Board expressed some concern because it is certainly affecting that kind of Manitoba in terms of the so-called leakage. So that is a campaign that we will be looking at in terms of if we see that there can be some benefits in terms of encouraging people to stay in fact in Manitoba, not necessarily so much tourism-related as the whole issue of Manitoba pride.

It is similar to an import replacement that if you spend your dollars at home, we realize all that flows from that in terms of the economic benefits to establishments here in our province, in terms of the tax revenue that is generated by governments, keeping our dollars here in Manitoba. So that certainly is an initiative that we will be looking at very closely, and I will get back to the honourable member with more specifics later.

**Mr. Storie:** Madam Chairperson, yes, I recognize that the minister did reference, I guess, the role competition plays in maintaining some advantage for Manitoba, but, as he suggests, there are many other factors that go into someone determining that they are heading down to the United States for purchases.

I believe that there are many myths perpetuated about the advantages of shopping south of the border. I, like other Manitobans, have, on occasion, perhaps once in the last five years, been to the

United States, and I do not believe that there is as significant a savings to be had down there on most consumer goods, as is the common perception.

What concerns me, however, is the minister's seeming insistence that there is nothing that we can do or that we should be doing. Just because that this—

**An Honourable Member:** This comes from a group that chased out the U.S. Consul—

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

**Madam Chairman:** Order, please; order, please.

**Mr. Storie:** Madam Chairperson, I know the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) continues to persist in his twisted view and revisionist view of history, and the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme) continues to ask, who burnt the flag? -(interjection)- The member for Riel says he knows who burnt the flag. Well, perhaps he can clear up who burnt the flag. Clearly no one from our caucus had anything to do with that particular event. However, I have recognized that it will be indelibly imprinted on the psyche of members opposite, and that is unfortunate, but it does not reflect the facts as long as that is part of the record.

Madam Chairperson, I feel several more questions coming on, dozens of questions coming on, as the member for Riel continues to chirp from his seat.

**An Honourable Member:** That is what we are here for.

**Mr. Storie:** Indeed, that is what we are here for. I apologize to the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson) for being drawn into these side debates. There were some serious questions that I wanted to address to the minister.

Madam Chairperson, one of the I think disturbing aspects of the minister's response is the suggestion that somehow the province is now gearing up for a campaign. I would dare say that if the minister consults with the tourism industry they will tell him to keep his money in his pocket, that in fact the opportunity has been lost, that unless the minister was perhaps not specific enough in his response and the money has—some advertising has already occurred—but I gathered from his remarks that in fact the Tourism budget, the advertising budget, the marketing strategy has in fact not been implemented, but it will be implemented.

I can tell the minister from previous correspondence and discussions with the tourism industry that in fact we are now months too late to really have any impact. Having said that, I want to make it clear that the only people, or the majority of people who will be affected by this late developing strategy will be the Americans coming to Canada. I think we can predict now that the 10 percent decrease in tourism traffic that we saw last year will be further exacerbated. We will have fewer Americans yet. We will see another decrease in traffic to Canada, probably as a direct result of the lack of initiative on the part of Tourism.

\* (1430)

However, Madam Chairperson, it seems to me that we can still effect the decision of Manitobans to make day trips to the United States, to increase their tourism within the province, if we choose to. I am wondering whether the minister can address the question of whether there is going to be a significant effort on the tourism marketing strategy to keep Manitobans at home. Do we have any plans that we are putting in place to make sure that the people from Winnipeg travel to Roblin-Russell or Flin Flon rather than Grand Forks or Fargo?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Chairperson, once again we are blending two issues here. We are blending tourism and we are blending the economics and the economic development and enhancement here in our province.

I want to go back to some of the honourable member's first comments about tourism and being late into the market and concerned about what is going to happen here in Manitoba. I want to indicate to him that the kinds of initiatives that we have undertaken have significant private sector involvement.

We have a specific initiative called a Travel Card Program that has in excess of 250, upwards of 300 private sector businesses directly involved in the campaign. We work very closely with all of the private sector and all of the tourism organizations, and I certainly want to stress that with the honourable member, that I think we take pride in terms of how our government functions in terms of keeping in very close contact with both the private sector in terms of tourism development and with the organizations, whether it be Tourism Winnipeg, the Tourism Industry Association of Manitoba, or TIM, Tourism Association of Winnipeg or all the various

tourism-related organizations, the Manitoba Hotel Association and so on.

I take some offence to his comments that the private sector would tell us to keep our money and not bother promoting. They are very much a player in this process. They are very involved in the kinds of initiatives that we undertake.

For the first time in the last couple of years, instead of the generic broad-based advertising that has been done and has not necessarily been as effective, you are going to see more focused, more targeted advertising going after the market niches that we have something to offer, the areas we have something to offer, and telling those people why they should in fact be coming to Manitoba.

I am very optimistic about the kind of marketing initiatives -(interjection)- Pardon me? Promoting the arts, promoting the festivals, promoting outdoor Manitoba from the fishing, hunting and outdoor lodges, promoting all of Manitoba in a very positive but focused fashion—so I am very optimistic about the future of tourism in Manitoba. In fact, I am optimistic about the economic opportunities and the future of Manitoba in general, unlike some members.

I want to go back to the question of—I used the expression “leakage” in terms of people who are going down to the United States for, as we have said, maybe real bargains and maybe some perceived bargains. I have to admit, on that I agree with the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), that in many cases I think it is more perception than reality, but there seems to be this idea or this myth with some people, and it draws them down to the United States to spend some of their money and so on. I indicated, and I am not sure if you heard me when I spoke a few minutes ago, that I recently had a meeting with the Brandon Economic Development Board, and they are very concerned about that. They have undertaken some very positive local initiatives, I might add as well, with the private sector in that community.

Really, in terms of that issue, there is very much of a role for the private sector to play, both outside of Winnipeg in rural Manitoba and cities like Brandon, and right here in Winnipeg. I do want to indicate to the member that it is something we take very seriously. I indicated to the Brandon Economic Development Board that there are some ideas and some thoughts that they shared with us

and that we have. We will be looking at initiatives and are continuing to pursue initiatives in those particular areas, but I cannot stress often enough, Madam Chairperson, that the bottom line is that we have to create a very healthy and competitive environment right here in Manitoba, that that in itself will make Manitobans stay, and that Government does not play a regulatory role or a high-handed role in terms of trying to force people to stay in Manitoba.

The best thing we can do is the kind of economic climate that we do in fact create here in our province in terms of the long-term benefits that we will derive. Thank you.

**Mr. Storie:** Well, the minister is beginning to repeat himself, Madam Chairperson. I think the minister did not answer several questions perhaps intentionally, either because there is no answer or the answer is not going to be viewed as satisfactory from a tourism point of view. The minister did not answer the question of whether there is going to be any strategy particularly for keeping Manitobans in Manitoba.

I acknowledge the role that the private sector played. The minister may or may not know that I was responsible for tourism at one time. When the NDP were in government, we had a co-op advertising program that involved hundreds of private sector partners. We did get involved in supporting directly the Tourism Industry Association of Manitoba. There was a \$30 million tourism agreement put in place. In fact, I signed it with the then federal Minister of Tourism, Tom McMillan. There was a major marketing effort, a major facility development initiative during those years. Tourism is an important industry.

I would like the minister, however, to contact the tourism industry, contact the private sector groups and ask them the very specific question, does an advertising program for asking people to consider travel plans that begins now—what?—in the middle of April, have any effect? Is that the wisest way to begin to promote Manitoba, co-operatively or the province doing it independently?

I think he will find that the people who understand marketing in tourism know that the advertising has to take place in January and February, not now. Certainly that is what we were told by the Tourism Industry Association, by representatives from individual tourist events and facilities in the province of Manitoba at that time. I believe that still is the

case, that you cannot expect to advertise now when many of the travelling decisions have been made weeks and months ago.

I would like the minister perhaps to do some field work and ask the people out there in the industry whether in fact we are going to have very much impact jumping into the tourism advertising market four months late. I think it is a serious question.

No one is arguing, Madam Chairperson, that we should not be doing it, that we should not be co-operating with events and so forth, but I think it is a question of timing. If we are getting in this late, I think there is a very legitimate question about how effective our campaign can be.

Finally, we have a -(interjection)- That is another question I have not had the chance to ask. It looks like we are going to be here for a while. The minister also referenced the role of the private sector in supporting, I guess, the stay-in-Manitoba approach. I do not think that relieves the province of the obligation of perhaps spearheading that initiative.

What specific action is the government going to take to work from the Tourism department or with private sector businesses, facilities, events to make sure that the message gets out there, that in fact there are reasons to stay at home?

While I would acknowledge that pricing for tourist packages and events and activities is important, it is not the sole determinant by any means of where someone goes. People will not go to the Canadian Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin unless they know about the event. They will not travel to Boissevain to the Turtle Derby or Flin Flon to the Trout Festival unless they know about the event. In fact, notwithstanding the comparative bargains that Canadians, Manitobans might find in the U.S., they have to be aware of those events.

What is this government going to do over the next few months to make sure that happens, that that message gets out there, that those events in fact are advertised?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Chairperson, it never ceases to amaze me, the continual doom and gloom and negative attitude that is portrayed across the floor. I have to say that because I would like to think that some of the people on the other side—first of all, in terms of this doom and gloom, I have not heard any of that from the tourist industry associations, I have not heard any of that from the

businesses that are effected, I have not heard any of that from the businesses of Manitoba, and my door is open and they know it.

In fact, organizations that exist today—when I was on Winnipeg City Council I was directly involved in the establishment, as you know, of an organization like Tourism Winnipeg here in the city of Winnipeg, which I might add, is leveraging significant private sector dollars, an organization like Winnipeg 2000, concerned about the economic future of Winnipeg and Manitoba and taking on an initiative recently, some million-dollar initiative, without coming to us for dollars for that initiative, doing it on their own in conjunction with the private sector.

\* (1440)

Madam Chairperson, I certainly think that in terms of the -(interjection)- there were many people involved with the Winnipeg 2000 report, many fine people involved with that report. They prepared an excellent document.

Madam Chairperson, I do get a little upset and offended by the attitude of the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) relative to the involvement of the private sector, the involvement of these organizations, when he should well know that the door in my office is wide open to those organizations.

I have met with many of the individuals associated with them. I know many of them personally, and they know that they can make contact on those kinds of initiatives and that this government will act on them and will pursue them.

The concern and the doom and gloom is coming from one person, the member for Flin Flon. That is the first we have heard relative to our tourism initiative. I do not know whether he is trying to drag out time here this afternoon, that he is sitting there thinking, what doom and gloom can I bring up next, what idea can I bring up next that is going to continue to feed on a doom-and-gloom attitude, which is only portrayed across the way.

In terms of the initiative, I guess I have to repeat myself to the honourable member for Flin Flon in terms of that we met recently with Brandon. Again, I will be meeting with other organizations.

There is a role, I agree, for the government to play, but it should be private sector driven, because we are doing everything we can in terms of the overall climate here in this province in terms of making it viable for businesses to stay in Manitoba and to do

business and not have the highest taxes in Canada, not have every tax that exists, not have a payroll tax, a corporation capital tax, high Workers Compensation rates. I could go on and on and on into the kind of government that we had for seven years, have 124,000 people leave our province from 1982 to 1988 under the previous government.

With that, I would gladly look to constructive options, constructive opportunities from the honourable member for Flin Flon, but if he is merely trying to fill time and paint a doom-and-gloom attitude, he is not doing anybody any good.

**Mr. Storie:** I do not know what has exercised my friend from Kirkfield Park. There was no doom and gloom on this side. I was simply pointing out that, as the government has confirmed, they are doing nothing. That is what we had confirmed. The minister said, we are going to leave it up to the private sector, the Tourism Department has no role to play anymore, we are out of this, but he assures us that his door is open and he is always listening.

Madam Chairperson, if the minister's door is always open and he is always listening, that may wash in the tourism sector for awhile, but pretty soon, sooner or later certainly, they are going to ask him to do something. He is telling us now that really he is doing nothing, and he is really not prepared to do anything. That is tragic.

Madam Chairperson, the minister also referenced some population loss while the previous government was in power. He could not be more incorrect. In fact, we had the highest population gain in two decades during the NDP administration. It is only during the Conservative years and the Filmon years when we have actually had population declines in this province, and we are going to see more as more and more people vote with their feet and move where there is an opportunity and where social services are available.

I have one more question for the Minister responsible for Tourism. I do not expect a forthright answer on this question either. My question is: Is the reason the province has not launched an advertising campaign in the province of Manitoba because the Tourism department and this minister are having a difficult time selecting an advertising campaign promotion company?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** The short answer is no, Madam Chairperson, but I cannot leave some comments by

the member for Flin Flon untouched relative to that we are not—I never indicated in my comments that we are leaving it entirely up to the private sector. I wish the honourable member would listen closely or take some notes so that he knows exactly what I do in fact say, that we are not leaving it entirely up to them. Clearly, there is a role for them to play, and I hope that he would recognize that there is in fact a role for them to play, a very important role.

I do want to reconfirm to him that in fact from 1982 to 1988, if we are talking about numbers in Manitoba and inflow and outflow of population, that a 124,000 people did in fact leave Manitoba during that time frame. Of those 124,000 people, 75 percent of them, three-quarters of them, were under the age of 35. Not only were we losing people, we were losing our young people, the future of Manitoba, during that particular government.

\* (1450)

**Mr. Storie:** We are going to see another minister join the Executive Council who is particularly adept at manipulating statistics for his advantage. The fact of the matter is that Winnipeg 2000 report and that reference to that statistic has been totally discredited. Even a Free Press editorial has torn it apart. The fact is that there was population growth, historic growth during the last regime. We are going to find, and the member will find over the course of the next couple of years as this government's economic policies fail, and they will fail, that our population is going to decline again, much to the chagrin of everybody in this Chamber, perhaps, but it is going to be as a direct result of this government's initiatives.

Madam Chairperson, my more specific question to the minister is: Can the minister indicate which companies or company has received the Manitoba Tourism marketing contract? Which companies will be benefitting from the largesse of this government, and when can we expect to see the results of their efforts?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Chairperson, talk about a contradiction. On the one hand, we are being criticized for not spending enough, we are not doing enough and so on. Now the honourable member is talking about, who is going to benefit from the largesse of our government?

In terms of the contracts, I believe there are three agencies that are receiving the funding available for our program. Rather than name them today—I am

not 100 percent sure of all three—I will gladly provide the honourable member with that particular information.

**Mr. Storie:** I appreciate the minister's undertaking, and I will look forward to receiving that information. I would like to also request that the minister—this will be my last question—get us that information before we conclude, hopefully in a very short period of time.

I would also ask that the minister provide the House with information respecting the amounts of the awards, so that we have a list of the people who are involved in the marketing campaign this year, and the amount of the award to those individual companies. If the minister will undertake to provide that information, I would like to ask some questions of the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme).

**Mr. Stefanson:** As I indicated, Madam Chairperson, I will undertake to provide the information. I cannot guarantee that—what time frame is the honourable member talking about? I will certainly provide it to him, but I cannot make any guarantee or commitment that it would be available within the next short period of time.

**Mr. Storie:** My question is to the minister responsible for Government Services. -(interjection)- Everybody is. -(interjection)- Well, I am still waiting here. Madam Chairperson, we continue to hear from this government -(interjection)- Yes, he is going to get the number.

This government continues to suggest that it is very concerned about the way in which the taxpayers' dollars are being spent. When we see Mr. Moore getting some of it, when we see Mr. Isler getting some of it, when we see those kinds of, I guess, expenditures on the part of this government, we become dubious of whether they are serious.

My question is to the Minister of Government Services respecting the cost of barring the doors and preventing people accessing this Legislature last week. Can the minister indicate how much exceptional, I will say, unnecessary expense the government undertook to enforce its really quite dishonourable policy when it comes to access to this Legislature?

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services):** I do not believe it is unnecessary when people's safety is at stake in this particular building. First of all, to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie),

I am receiving a report from all the people involved in the day. I will gather and have a video of the day to be assembled, and I am having reports of all the people, the security guards, et cetera, including the security guard that he had to talk to on that particular day.

**Mr. Storie:** Madam Chairperson, I will certainly make it no secret that I had a discussion with a security guard, and I made it clear to the security guard in question that I did not hold that security guard responsible for the policy of the government. I recognize that that security guard was left in an almost untenable position, trying to defend the government policy that denied access to the building to an MLA. Of course, that is a matter of privilege. I expect we will have a ruling from the Speaker on that in due course, and for the minister to raise that matter is perhaps out of order.

I asked him a direct question. How much is it costing the people of Manitoba to keep in place and to further refine an extensive security system that is unnecessary? The minister wants to talk about public security. Anybody who has ever been involved in crowd control knows that the way to cause a problem is to start pushing people, start denying access when there is no justifiable reason for denying access. If the doors of the Legislature had not been locked and chained, if security guards had not been there denying rightful access to people, there would have been no problem.

I have been a member in this Chamber for almost 10 years. There have been dozens of demonstrations, and there have been dozens of times when these galleries were full of people. There is no excusable reason for denying people access to this building. I can certainly tell you that if the doors had not been locked, if people had not been pushed and denied access to the building, it would have been a much more peaceful and I think successful demonstration.

Their being denied access, frustrated in what they saw as their legitimate rights, was the reason for the dangerous situation which developed at the front door in which in fact one person did experience some problem as a result of the crush of people trying to gain access to this building. It was a serious mistake.

My question is: How much does the security, the locks at the doors, the automatic sentry, the overrides, all cost the Province of Manitoba, and



how much additional paraphernalia is this government prepared to put in place to keep people from coming here to express their legitimate concerns?

**Mr. Ducharme:** Obviously our philosophy is a little different. We are more concerned about the protection of the people in this building and people not getting hurt.

**Mr. Storie:** You hurt me.

\* (1500)

**Mr. Ducharme:** Would the member for Flin Flon please refrain from—if he wants the answer, we provide it. If he would like to take his headset, we provide it.

Madam Chairman, we are here to protect the people. It is easy for him to get up on this floor today, after no one has been hurt—a few people got shoved, no one was hurt—maybe he would like to visit with me some day to go out to St. Amant and see people who have been hurt from head injuries, et cetera, who have fallen on granite floors, this type of thing, that we have prevented for the safety of this particular building.

I have no bad feelings in regard to someone not getting hurt in this building. I will continue to work to make sure the safety of this building is carried on.

**Mr. Storie:** Madam Chairperson, that is the most lame excuse a government has ever attempted to foist on the public of Manitoba. Perhaps the minister can tell us whether in fact there has ever been anyone injured as a result of the kind of accident the member is talking about.

I can tell the minister responsible that there were people injured as a result of the crush of people at the locked and guarded doors in this Legislature. That certainly has never happened before, because the legislative doors have never been barred before the way they were on Wednesday. If they have been barred, then it is this government's action that barred them previously too, but they have never been chained in the manner certainly that I have ever seen. The Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) is wrong, and this policy is wrong.

Madam Chairperson, I want to put on the record that in January of 1990, when this government first started talking about making the Legislature an armed camp, we opposed it. I oppose it personally; I oppose it in principle; I think it is wrong. We are sending the absolutely wrong message to a very

skeptical public right now. That this Legislature is our preserve and somehow we are going to lock ourselves in it as inmates is a ludicrous proposition. It is antidemocratic, it will cost us money and it will cost us all in terms of a lack of respect for what is going on in this Chamber, but the minister has not answered the question. How much did all of this paraphernalia, all of the installations cost? We are concerned about cost. How much?

**Mr. Ducharme:** Madam Chairman, I did indicate to the individual that I am having a full report from the staff in regard to the incident of that day. I must say to the member that it is always easy for someone to get up and question after the prevention of injury in this building was prevented on that particular day, and I will continue to protect not only the people in this building but also the staff and everyone connected with this building. It is easy to get up, and he has done this. He does this repeatedly to the Minister of I, T and T (Mr. Stefanson), and I will continue to do that.

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

**Madam Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. John Plohan (Dauphin):** Madam Chairperson, we have an opportunity here to discuss important issues affecting Manitobans in a style of debate that leads to give and take, an opportunity to share information and ideas and positions on issues and to clarify these issues much more than we can during a throne speech debate and certainly much more than we can during Question Period, which is very limited in terms of the latitude that is allowed for members in asking questions.

I want to explore with the minister for a few minutes today the issue that I raised with him last week dealing with the Hog Producers Marketing Board in this province and the issue of the buyer that has been put in place by the board to protect the prices for producers in this province.

What bothers me most of all about this whole issue is that when we asked the minister about this last November, he attempted to leave the impression that he was completely impartial on this issue, that he had no position, that he was playing a neutral role, a mediating role, and that he had not taken a position one way or another. He said, we are not taking any sides in the issue—it was page 2021, November 26, 1990. He said, we are trying to

act as an intermediary, trying to find a resolution that both sides can agree to and so on.

I left it at that, at that time, that in fact that was the role he was playing, because we had a very short time span to deal with the Estimates of the department and many issues to deal with. Although I had received information that was contrary to that assertion at that time, I chose to take the minister's word for what he said at that time.

I think he had opportunity last week, and he has opportunity now, to clarify for the record precisely the position because I think it is more than abundantly clear that the minister has not been completely forthright in divulging the role that he has played in this House, not completely forthright, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) as well in the role that he has played with regard to applying pressure to the producers' marketing board, the hog board, to remove their buyer.

The minister may think he has every reason and that is what I wanted to hear last November when we asked about this. Why is he insisting on applying pressure to the board to, in fact, comply with the wishes of primarily one packer? The minister knows that. He knows that it is Burns and Arthur Child who are primarily behind the lobby—and if this is incorrect, he will have an opportunity to say that—to have this buyer removed.

Schneider's has told me that they do not see any problem with this, and my understanding is the other packer at the Dutch clock auction is also not insistent. It seems, therefore, that it is one lobby. It is clear to me and that is why I raised this issue. It bothered me to raise it regarding contributions, and I hope that it does not provide any motivation to the government. It should not.

They should respond on the basis of fairness to the issue, as opposed to responding to a person who is applying pressure and who has made contributions. I would rather that was not the case, and I hope it was not the case, but clearly they have been applying the pressure on this minister and he has taken that further to the board. He can deny it if he wishes, but I think the record is clear. There are enough sources to know that the minister has not been completely pristine in this issue, that he has not played a neutral role, as he has said he has, and that in fact what he has done is applied pressure to the board to remove the buyer from the board.

I say to the minister, we want to see the best possible producer prices in this province. We do not want them to be uncompetitive, and clearly the information shows that they have not been with the buyer there. As a matter of fact, they are lower, my sources tell me, than in Kitchener and Omaha, for comparison in outside province markets; they are lower, the price, on average. Therefore, the packer, or Burns in this particular case, does not have a strong case to make that the buyer should be removed, and yet the minister has taken the position that the buyer should be removed, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) also.

You know, the minister knows that he does not have to apply a lot of direct pressure. He said it is unfair, the Premier said it is unfair, to have that buyer there. You know, when a minister in that position and the Premier of this province say those kinds of things, that is a lot of pressure on a marketing board. Whether they gave a direct order, you must or not, is another thing, but the fact is that the pressure that they have applied has been there, evidently, clearly. That is why the minister should not be saying in this House that he has not taken sides on this issue and he has applied no pressure.

I expect that he would want to clarify his position and why he has taken that position with the marketing board clearly here so that we can pursue this issue a little bit further. I have a lot of concerns about it because I think the minister has to realize that the wholesale price of pork from the packers to the retailers is not less expensive in this province than other areas. As a matter of fact, the last time it was printed it was one of the highest in Canada. The minister may be able to provide information on that, too, because the latest information we have received from Agriculture Canada on the wholesale-dressed meat prices is that B.C. is reporting, Alberta is blank, Saskatchewan is reporting, Ontario and Quebec, but Manitoba is not reporting anymore, and they have not been for several months—the price—that packers are selling to wholesalers for pork.

\* (1510)

I think that is of concern, because we do not have all of the information there. Why are they hiding it? Maybe the minister knows about that. The fact is, when they did last report it, according to the information I had sometime last December, the prices were higher than all provinces with the

exception of B.C., at the wholesale level. So I am saying to the minister, if he thinks he is protecting the consumers or can use that argument, that is not going to wash, because the consumers are not getting the lower-priced pork in this province. The producers are not going to benefit from removing the buyer, so who is going to benefit? It is clear that it is Burns that would benefit. I would like the minister to clarify why he is taking that position.

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairperson, members got into an issue and spent five to 10 minutes talking about it and tried to misrepresent the issue. The position that I put on the record in November of 1990 was clearly the position we had at that time. It has been the position we have had before that time, ever since that time and still today. The hog industry we have in the province of Manitoba is a very good industry. It allows producers in Manitoba, farmers, to have their second-largest commodity income. Wheat is first; hogs are now second. It has surpassed cattle. The value of the hog industry is that the processing occurs in this province, so we have hundreds and hundreds, in fact, thousands of jobs created from processing in the province of Manitoba.

For every six hogs raised in this province, one job is created. The member has ignored all of that. He has ignored all that, and he has talked about wholesale-retail prices. If he wants to get into that, he can get into it, but it is not going to support his argument as to whether the buyer should or should not be there. The issue is that not long ago we had five buyers on the Dutch clock auction in Manitoba; we now have three. The Province of Alberta does not have a competitive system for setting price. They have the marketing board and the government as the two buyers. Well, how do the producers in Alberta know what the real value of pork is?

Saskatchewan, you have one processor. There is no bidding there. Ontario and Quebec both have a Dutch clock auction. They do not have a buyer on that auction. Manitoba has the Dutch clock auction, which has operated quite well for a long period of time. The buyer has been on for the 15-year period. The buyer has basically been there to buy surplus hogs to sell on orders from outside of province. The processors, and I say to the member all the processors, have met with me. They have phoned me, they have written me, they have met with my staff on numerous occasions over the

past two years raising some concerns about how the Dutch clock auction was operating.

So we set up the review of little over a year ago to answer a number of their questions or challenges. Basically, they have turned out to be unfounded, by and large, but they still have some concerns about the buyer. So we have asked the board and the processors to get together, work out their differences, try to resolve their conflict on this issue. We have acted as the mediator in this process, and both sides have come to the table. There was time when they really would not talk to each other. We have brought them to the table to negotiate across the table, face to face, on this particular issue, and I think it is a serious issue.

As I said earlier, we had five buyers here at one time; we are now down to three. What happens if one more, or two of them, decide not to buy or close the doors? We will lose the jobs and the processing that is now in the province. The hog producers need the processors here; they need the buyers in order to create a viable market, a bidding system that is competitive. If the day comes that we are the same as Saskatchewan and Alberta and we do not have a competitive bidding system, I think everybody is a loser. Certainly the producers are a loser, and the producers have to be concerned that if the processing sector does not survive in the province of Manitoba, in the hog sector, where do they get their hogs processed?

So on the producers' side I think they can lose if something happens that is unpredictable at this time, and certainly the economy of the province loses if, for some reason, these events lead to decisions that are irreversible with regard to processing and jobs. So you take the whole thing in balance and clearly we are in the middle.

I, as the Minister of Agriculture, stand on the side of the farmers, by and large, on every issue. This issue I am in the middle because I think the producers will be the loser if something untoward happens in the future.

Right now a lot of hogs are being bought by the processing sector out of Saskatchewan, not killing Manitoba hogs, but killing hogs out of Saskatchewan. I will ask the member: Does he understand why? It is part of this whole issue; it has to get resolved; the two parties have to be able to negotiate a settlement or an understanding they can live with. You cannot be on one side or the other.

That member clearly is on one side; he does not want to support the retention of processing jobs in the province of Manitoba. We are talking about diversification, produce more commodities and process them here and sell the processed products and have the job of processing in this province. That is exactly what we want.

We have met many times with the producers and with the processors. We have brought them together, and staff have worked carefully to be sure that they do not antagonize one side or the other. The issue has been discussed and discussed and talked about, and I am very pleased to again report to the member, the same as I did the other day, that the two sides have worked out some agreement that they are trading back and forth now and shaping up to deal with the issue, and the issue is a complex one. Naturally, both sides are twisting and trying to be sure that in the end they have a slight advantage. I do not think it is a good idea that either side has an advantage. It is a good idea to have a system where the bidders can bid and the sellers can bring their product there and have it sold.

The method at which the buyer operates is a bit of a contentious issue, and you cannot walk away from it. The member says, leave him there and let him do his thing, and the processors decide, okay, I will not come there and bid anymore, what is he going to then offer? Tell the government to get in there and influence? No, the government does not want to be in there influencing. The government wants to bring the two sides together, let them negotiate their way out of their dispute, and the dispute has been there for a long time. I think that the member would be well advised to let the parties work out their differences in this process.

I am hopeful a resolution will occur that will be for the good of the entire hog industry, producers and the processors, because it creates a lot of jobs in this province. I do believe that this industry can grow, and I want to see it grow with the processing in the province. I would like to see another processor or two come here. Olympia Meats has now got a contract in Neepawa; I would like to see them make a bigger investment in the province of Manitoba. It is critical to the hog industry that those sorts of things happen, keep the whole package together.

Do not forget we have got a feed industry here that is very dependent upon the hog industry. Now

that member was a member of a government that drove the cattle slaughter industry out of this province, drove it out, and they have not learned their lesson. We are here to maintain the hog processing industry. We are going to be neutral on it, and we are going to do our very best to see that it stays here.

**Mr. Plohman:** That is utter nonsense, Madam Chairman, and this minister knows very well that it was not any actions of the previous government that have indeed driven any packing industry out of this province. It is the inaction of this government. If he thinks, by taking the side of one processor on the Dutch clock auction, remove the buyer so they can get their hogs cheaper, it is going to be the way he is going to save the packing industry, he has another thing coming.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Findlay:** That member, when he got up earlier, said we could discuss an issue. He continues to misrepresent everything that I have just said. I said all processors have come to see me, all, and he stands up and says, one. I would like him to correct the record and withdraw that allegation.

\* (1520)

**Madam Chairman:** The honourable Minister of Agriculture does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Plohman:** Madam Chairman, as the member knows, he was proven wrong in his facts the other day, and we do not want him to get loose with the facts in this House, as he has many times in the past. A clear indication is that one of the processors is applying pressure.

I have talked with Schneider's, Bill McLean. He has indicated to me, he does not have any problem with that buyer there. He has another problem, and that is a level playing field, the contract at Olympia, and so on. He has a lot of other problems, but he is not talking about the buyer on the clock.

The minister is singling out this one issue as a major point of contention when in fact it does not have to be a major point of contention. He has made my point when he said that there are only three buyers on the clock. That is precisely why there has to be a buyer from the board there, because there

is not the competition there. There are not sufficient numbers to ensure competitive pricing at that auction without that buyer being there.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Chairman, in the Chair)

It is totally irrelevant whether 98 percent of the hogs they buy are shipped out of the province and 2 percent are sold back, because what is most important—and the minister has not said how many they actually buy. The fact is, they buy very few on most days on that auction. They are there to ensure that the prices are competitive. They offer them back to the processors at the going average price, so the processors themselves are not paying a higher price even if they buy them later on. It is not a relevant point to say that 98 percent of—because the minister has not said how many. We know it is a very small number that are usually bought by the buyer, but they do keep the buyers, the processors, at the clock competitive. That is what is most important for producers in this province.

I want this minister to know that this side of the House clearly supports the processing industry in the province, the processing jobs. We have always supported them. We have always protected the jobs, but that does not mean—but the minister cannot distort the position on this issue for his own benefit by saying that if you do not support the packer, and in this case Burns particularly, with their position that they must take the buyer off at the expense of the producers, that somehow we do not care about processing jobs in this province. That is misrepresenting our position more than anything that has been said in this House.

Let the minister be clear, concise and accurate on this issue. It is important for him to know that we are of the opinion, clearly, that the minister has not been completely forthright, and that he has said that he has not applied pressure to one side or the other. Yet the arguments he makes without saying this are clear that he is taking the side of the processor on this issue.

The fact is that under duress the board has put another proposal forward, I know that—but under duress, under pressure from this minister. They did not choose to do that. They realized they might have to change their marketing techniques at some time in the future, but all the reasons that the minister has given are hypothetical. What if one more goes off the Dutch clock? Maybe they will not be able to

use this system any more. -(interjection)- Yes, they may have to change in the future, but right now—

**An Honourable Member:** What if?

**Mr. Plohman:** That is right, what if? That is what the minister said, and in our case the minister says, what if one of the processors leaves? He is talking about hypothetical situations. We are talking about the facts now, and we know the situation now. The process that is in place is working, and this minister is manipulating it. I am glad that this has been brought out in the open. I hope he will truly mediate in the future, not exert pressure on one side or the other, and that he will indeed take steps to ensure that the processing industry does grow in this province, but it does not have to be on the backs of the producers as he wishes to do and as he has seemingly done under the kind of pressure tactics that he has undertaken in this province.

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman, it is absolutely incredible that—

**An Honourable Member:** Madam Chairman?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Chairman—oops, sorry, Mr. Deputy Chairman. Your hair is not long enough.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member just used the statement "on the backs of the producers." I would like to remind you that he set up his Beef Commission. It is a few years ago—remember that? In 1982 he set up the Beef Commission, designed to keep the processors in business, and he put it on the backs of the farmers. He asked the farmers to sell each finished animal at \$50 less than it was really worth to keep the processors happy. That is what they did. That is what drove the processors out, because he put them in a non-competitive position. It drove the feeding industry out of this province and that is what he did.

**An Honourable Member:** I remember Alberta; Cargill in Alberta did it.

**Mr. Findlay:** Oh, well, that was 1989 as I recall. This is seven years earlier and you really—that is seven years apart. The member has selective memory. He destroyed the cattle industry in this province by his actions. He destroyed it, and we now have a hog industry that we want to maintain. Yes, the other processors have many issues that they want to discuss. Is the member saying that when they come forward with issues we just close the door and say we do not talk to you, we will not try to help resolve those issues? Is that what he is

saying? That is what they did exactly. They have numerous issues.

We want a level playing field for producers and for processors, and clearly, Alberta has tilted the level playing field in their direction. I am pleased to report to the member discussions have moved very well towards reaching, not too far down the road, a more level playing field. It may not be perfectly level, but a much more level playing field than we have today, because we have done some things on this side of the ledger, they are going to do some things—I would believe in the future—on that side of the ledger that will help the producers; and the processors, we want to keep them in this province. If we ignore the issue and say they get enough at the wholesale price, they should just pay and pay and pay, then we might have—sure, it is hypothetical—a situation in the future we will regret.

The processors need the producers; the producers need the processors.

I want to remind that member that when we meet with the processors, we give them a very tough message, that you need the producers in this province. You need to pay enough to keep the producers selling you the hogs. The member probably does not realize that more and more hogs are going directly out of this province, directly to the states to be killed in the states. Is he proud of that?

So I am saying to the processors: You are going to have to bid to get those hogs. You are going to have to bid. If you are going to keep your plant open, and you want to keep your workers fully working, you are going to have to bid to get those hogs. So both sides are somewhat at fault in this dispute, and we expect that they will resolve it. We will act as a mediator, always have, always will, but I will not say we will ignore one side and talk only one way, will not ignore the other side. We will talk about both sides.

That member has chosen to talk only on the one side. He wants to ignore the job possibility, the losses. They talk all the time about job losses. Here we are trying to prevent job losses. We are trying to create more jobs in the processing sector, and he is against us. Absolutely and phenomenally, he is against us.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member, also in his comments, related the issue the other day as to what the review committee had recommended. I was right on 98 percent of the issue. He was right on 2

percent of the issue, because 98 percent of the hogs are sold internally. The review related to only the 2 percent that are exported out of the province that are bought by the board.

Right now, we have a situation where there is a deficiency of hogs in the province. The processors could kill more hogs than presently is being offered. We need to build the industry. We need to have more production in this province to meet the full ability, capability, of the processors to slaughter and sell hogs in this province. That is something we should be trying to do. I think that the hog industry is quite competitive in terms of feed costs in this province and technical capability. I would like to see the growth occur, but it is very important that the producers have the processors and the processors have the producers.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think the minister should realize that if he wants to build the packing industry in this province, and he wants to support the producers and they both need each other, he should realize that what he has to do is improve communication between the two—and I realize that is necessary—rather than taking the position of one or the other.

That is all I have said with this minister. If he would come clean in this House, say that he had mistakenly wandered off too far on one side or the other, then of course this debate would not have to take place, but he has not clearly admitted that in this House. I say to him what he should do if there are disputes, ensure that they go through the dispute mechanism, the appeal mechanism that is through the Natural Products Marketing Council in the act that is available for such disputes. In the meantime, what he should be doing is encouraging a dialogue between the two to improve their communication.

I will just say one other point about the report that came out. The minister keeps talking about that he was right on 98 percent of it, and that he was only misleading the House 2 percent. The fact is, the recommendation makes no differentiation between 98 percent and 2 percent. It just simply says, it is recommended that the board's buyer continue to purchase hogs on the Dutch clock auction system under the same conditions as the processors. They do not say for those hogs sold in province and not those sold out of province. That is why, at the time

that the recommendation was made, there was not that kind of qualification.

\* (1530)

So, when the minister stood up in this House and simply said that they made no such recommendation, he did not clarify that they made no such recommendation for 2 percent or 98 percent; he just said they made no such recommendation. He was, in fact, misleading the House, and I hope that he does not try to fudge that fact now after he has apologized. It was appreciated that he did in fact apologize on that issue, and now to come back on it and say, well, you know, I was 98 percent right, I think, is making light of the issue and the fact that he did mislead at that particular time.

**Mr. Findlay:** The book is entitled Manitoba Agricultural Review of Manitoba Pork, and I turn over to page 8, if he wants to look at the top of page 8, item (c) that they are to address. Is it necessary for the board to purchase hogs for out-of-province sales on the daily auction, out-of-province sales? Now let me turn over to the recommendation on that question. Now I will read back what the member just said to me. Now we know what the question is: That, based on findings of this review as to the processors' concerns with the role of the activities of the board buyer, it is recommended that the board's buyer continue to purchase hogs on the Dutch clock auction system, under the same conditions as the processors, but the question was relating only to out-of-province sales. I gave him the figures that the out-of-province sales were 2 percent and the other 90 percent were internal resales, and the member does not understand the difference.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, put in another way—

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. The honourable minister has the floor, and I would appreciate listening to him.

**Mr. Findlay:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, this member has clearly taken one side. He is against jobs, he is against the processing sector; we are in the middle, we are mediating this. He says he wants us to mediate it. We have been doing it for months and months. He says, use the Natural Products Marketing Council, and that is exactly who was operating and doing the mediating on behalf of the Department of Agriculture. They have met many times; they are acting as the mediator; they put this

report together. So we are doing everything the member wants, but he wants to politicize it. He does not want it to be resolved. He would like to see something happen to benefit his side of the argument. He does not want to see it mediated, and I am really disappointed in that.

**Mr. Plohman:** If this is how this minister mediates, he perhaps should turn it over to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). He is probably known as a great mediator; he could do a better job.

Let us make it very clear that we are for jobs, that we are for processors, and that we do not like to see the minister working as Minister of Agriculture against the producers of this province and calling on his Premier to assist him and reinforce him in doing that. That is not satisfactory for him to be saying that it is unfair for the buyer to be there. I will leave it at that point—(interjection)— Well, okay, we will go further on it. As a matter of fact, we will be pleased to take—

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has the floor and he is about to place a question and I would appreciate it if everybody would be quiet. The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

**Mr. Plohman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chairman. We can debate this issue for some time, including on Monday, if the minister wishes to. We can go as long as he wants, and we can have as many votes as he would like to have as well. Now let—(interjection)— and we would attempt to be co-operative, but let not the minister distort the position.

He has to remember the role that he plays as minister and the role that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) plays when he is speaking to groups. Whether you say, you must do this or whether you say, it is unfair what you are doing, the message is the same. You are delivering a message that you have to change the way you do things. That is the message those people took out of that meeting. That is the message they have received from this minister on numerous occasions.

This minister should not skate around that. If he is going to mediate, let him mediate. Let him not put pressure on one side only to do certain things that will appease the other side. I ask the minister to truly take a mediation role in this issue or else turn it over to somebody else who can do that.

**Mr. Findlay:** It was unfortunate the member used the statement "bring the Premier in."

The hog producers board requested a meeting with cabinet. The member must realize, the Premier has every right to attend a meeting of cabinet. Okay?

We have talked about this issue with the processors and the producers board many times, talked about it over and over again, about the pros and cons, as we have done here today. That member continually wants to distort the issue. He used the word "demand" the other day. I notice today he is backing off of that word. He is trying now to use other words.

I talked with the vice-chairman immediately after he had raised the issue in the House. The vice-chairman assured me that his interpretation of the meeting was totally the opposite to the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), who was not in the meeting. He suddenly knows everything, but he was not in the meeting. The board is not on his side. The board has a different opinion, that we have an ongoing discussion while we are mediating.

I will remind the member that, as we have done for many months, we will continue to mediate this situation. I hope that the two parties will be able to resolve it with the paper that they are floating between them—I hope. I cannot guarantee it. I cannot force it.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) said the other day, we know the role of the producers board. We cannot force it. We would like to see it resolved so both sides are happy. To tell you the honest truth, I do not care which way it is resolved as long as the two sides are happy and that we get on with the hog industry growing in this province, as it has done over the past two years under this administration, and that the processing sector can continue to grow to be able to process in this province and keep the jobs here.

(Madam Chairman in the Chair)

**Mr. Plohman:** Madam Chairman, in the interests of being co-operative, my colleague, I believe, has some questions yet, but very briefly, I understand. I have numerous areas that I would like to discuss with the minister, particularly in light of what is happening with GRIP and the grain producers' situation at this particular time.

However, realizing the situation on Interim Supply, we certainly will be discussing these issues during the Estimates. I hope we will have an early opportunity to do that, because there is a very pressing situation that we could explore for hours with the minister at this time. I know that my other colleagues have some discussions, and there is an interest in moving forward with the motion that is before us. Thank you, Madam Chairman.  
-(interjection)-

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** The honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) has already had his chance to speak.

I would like to ask some questions about senior citizens. The one primary concern of mine is about the -(interjection)- He is there—health of our senior citizens. As we grow older, we become more or less limited in our activities, in our abilities to take care of ourselves. It has been suggested that about 10 percent of those who are eighty years old become more or less housebound, almost entirely dependent upon other people.

What concerns me is what I have observed and what I have heard when I attend at some housing complexes of our senior citizens. For example, I have been many times in 185 Smith Street, and people were suggesting to me that, if they need one important thing that is essential to their well-being, it is the presence of some medical people in the building. They were suggesting to me that it would be very desirable indeed if there would be a full-time registered nurse who would be in the building so that the nurse would be available in case of unexpected medical emergencies.

\* (1540)

What I would like to ask the honourable minister is whether he would undertake to situate, that such things happen, that there be a registered nurse stationed in huge housing complexes for senior citizens, particularly those that will have need for these kinds of medical emergency services, especially those who are disabled and are unable to be attended to by emergency ambulance services.

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister responsible for Seniors):** To the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), the whole idea of the Seniors Directorate is to liaise with the different departments, and I have continued to do that with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). As he is probably aware, there are situations with senior homes throughout the city



where they are in conjunction with personal care, and they do have medical on the site. As the member did mention that the older seniors along the way, we want to make sure that they carry on in their usual lifestyle that they do appreciate. We will continue to work with the Minister of Health to make sure that those services are provided. That was the whole idea of the Seniors Directorate, to establish that type of directive, and we will continue to do so.

**Mr. Santos:** Another matter that I am seriously concerned about is the plight of single seniors, particularly those who are widowed or alone, especially women between the ages of 55 and 60 before they reach the age where they could qualify for Canada Pension Plan or old-age assistance. These women mostly are handicapped by inadequate income, and as a result, especially if they are not able to meet all the requirements for their well-being, they are usually isolated and malnourished. Would the honourable minister change some of the rules so that single, unattached seniors will have at least the same kind of privileges as married couples with respect to the 55 PLUS additional assistance?

**Mr. Ducharme:** First of all, to the member for Burrows, it was this government that established probably the leading roles in the supplemental program. The previous administration did little to establish and carry on those particular roles. Again, the discussions with the different groups throughout the seniors—and we know that there are more and more—as lifestyles improve as you get older, there will be more and more. We will work with the seniors on all pensions and continue to work with them on all incomes that they require.

**Mr. Santos:** If there is some incident that is not very desirable happening among our senior citizens, it is the case of abuse of our senior citizens. Not necessarily physical, it might be financial or psychological abuse. Sometimes the abuse is done by people who are closer to them, like some of their family members. Would the honourable minister undertake to implement a register by which it will be a mandatory requirement that abuses of this kind should be reported? There will be a register of abusers, as well as a register of abused persons.

**Mr. Ducharme:** Madam Chairman, when the survey was done in 1989 when we went about the province checking to see which abuses were the most prevalent, we discovered that the financial

abuse was the most prevalent. If the member for Burrows has missed it, there was a recent announcement on this government and my first couple of weeks in office as the new minister, to establish with the federal government a 50-50 arrangement to the tune of \$100,000 to work with the Bankers' Association to establish a video, posters, working with those groups, and we will have that finalized by about the end of June.

We felt that when all results were in, as a result of consultation with all the senior groups throughout the province, the most prevalent was financial abuse. We have made one large step forward to make them aware, because you have to remember if you do not make them aware then they do not know who is going to abuse them. So that is why we have taken upon ourselves this very important role and have been able to negotiate—the first province to negotiate with the federal government of such a program.

**Mr. Santos:** It is not only the problem of becoming aware or enough publicity of cases of this kind. By the very nature of things, abuses are a very sensitive subject matter to even draw to public attention. However, my concern is about people who may not be necessarily related to the abused person. If these people reported any kind of abuse about their neighbours, of senior citizens who are their neighbours, will there be enough legal protection for those who report these kinds of incidents that are happening around, sometimes in our community?

**Mr. Ducharme:** To the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), we are also establishing a working relationship with the Public Trustee's Office. We will be working with them on whether any legislation is to be considered, and our first step is, as he appreciates, that we want not only to make the people aware, but to make sure that they know how they can get these problems solved. That is why we have taken this very, very important initial step in financial abuse and working with the seniors.

**Mr. Santos:** Madam Chairperson, would it also be desirable, and would the minister agree that there also is a need of some kind of a temporary lodging place for senior citizens who are the subject of abuse either by their families and, therefore, they need a new place temporarily to reside?

**Mr. Ducharme:** To the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), I am sorry, again I mentioned he was from another constituency, but if he wants to look back,

in the election our Premier announced that we would be looking at setting up this temporary type of protection in some of our homes, our senior citizen homes, so that they can go into these homes and be away and protected from the abuse.

To the member, there are now Donalby Moore (phonetic) alarm systems that have been established by the police. On a recent announcement by the police on the spouse abuse, we will also be able to apply that once we get our program, in fact, apply that to the seniors also.

**Mr. Santos:** I would like to thank the minister for answering this question. Since we are running out of time, I would like to reschedule my questions later on at some other opportunity.

**Madam Chairman:** Shall the resolution pass? The resolution is accordingly passed.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

\* (1550)

## IN SESSION

### Committee Report

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Ways and Means has adopted a certain resolution, reports the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that leave be given to introduce Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991, (Loi de portant affectation anticipée de crédits) and that same be now received, read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

**Motion agreed to.**

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation anticipée de crédits), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, very briefly, Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act is required to provide interim spending, commitment and borrowing authority for the 1991 fiscal year, pending approval of The Appropriation Act, 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I apologize for making that mistake. I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Interim Supply Bill for third reading.

**Motion agreed to,** and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report of Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991 for third reading, with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991

**Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay):** Order, please. The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991.

We shall proceed to consider Bill 21 clause by clause.

Clause 1—(pass); Clause 2—(pass); Clause 3—(pass); Clause 4—(pass); Clause 5—(pass); Clause 6—(pass); Clause 7—(pass); Clause 8—(pass); Clause 9—(pass); Clause 10—(pass); Clause 11—(pass); Clause 12—(pass); Clause 13—(pass); Preamble—(pass); Title—(pass).

Is it the will of the committee that I report the bill?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Chairman:** Agreed and so ordered.

Committee rise, call in the Speaker.

**IN SESSION**

**Committee Report**

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation anticipée de crédits) and has directed me to report the same without amendment.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the report of the Committee of the Whole be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**REPORT STAGE**

**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991**

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in.

**Motion agreed to.**

\* (1600)

**THIRD READINGS**

**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991**

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), with the leave of the House, that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991, be now read a third time and passed.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, be now read a third time and passed. Agreed? On division? On division. Agreed and so ordered.

**ROYAL ASSENT**

**Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Roy MacGillivray):** His Honour the Acting Administrator.

His Honour, Kerr Twaddle, the Acting Administrator of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour the Acting Administrator in the following words:

**Mr. Speaker:** May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in session assembled, approach Your Honour with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and government, and beg for Your Honour the acceptance of this bill:

Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act; Loi de 1991 portant affectation anticipée de crédits.

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** His Honour the Acting Administrator doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence, and assents to this bill in Her Majesty's name.

(His Honour was then pleased to retire.)

**Mr. Speaker:** Please be seated.

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**Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I am about to move an adjournment motion of the House until April 2. I should indicate to members of the House that House leaders of the various parties have indicated their willingness to treat April 2, Tuesday, as if it were a Monday.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that when the House adjourns today it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 2, 1991, at 1:30 p.m.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to treat Tuesday, April 2, as a Monday? Agreed? Agreed.

**Motion agreed to,** and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until Tuesday, April 2, 1991, at 1:30 p.m.

# Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Friday, March 22, 1991

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