



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

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
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	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
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	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 29, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege.

I rise today on a matter of privilege which will be followed by a substantive motion. I first want to make it clear that this is the earliest opportunity that I have had to rise on this matter because it was important for the process of this House that I be given the opportunity to read Hansard of yesterday, and that was not available to me until this morning.

Mr. Speaker, on May 21, I asked the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) for some information with respect to the construction budget for the Department of Education. I was denied that information because that information was, he said, incomplete and not totally and finally approved.

On the 28th of May, I asked a series of questions asking why some members of this House had been given that information, but other members of this House had been denied that information. The minister was not available at that time, and so it was necessary to wait for him to make an announcement yesterday. At that time, he made no apology for the fact that some members of the House had been given information that other members of the House had been denied. He simply stated that it was inadvertent that it had been made public.

* (1335)

In further questions to the minister as to whether that information would now be made available to me as a member of this House, I was told no, that information would not be made available to me until the list was completed, despite the fact that other members of this House, by the minister's own admission, clearly had some of that information made available to them. Therefore, I believe that my privileges as a member of this House have been eroded by the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach).

I therefore move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the Minister of Education and Training's conduct in providing information to government members and then refusing to provide the same information to opposition members by denying its availability be referred to the Standing Committee of Privileges and Elections to determine whether the minister misled the House and whether he is competent to remain in his position as Minister of Education and Training.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am a little bit troubled by the member's motion. Most definitely, it is a serious matter. The member claims that her rights as a member have been eroded by the Minister of Education and Training. I want to, for a moment, lay on the record the process that I am led to believe has maybe brought the member to her feet to rise on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, it was only a very short time ago that cabinet has considered the total capital budget of the Department of Education. I know that there were still some certain final aspects that had to be put to that capital plan. I know the minister was troubled by the fact that he could not lay that capital plan before the Legislature during his Estimates review, but there were some elements of that capital plan that were accepted by government which, not only did the minister share with certain members of the government, but also with, indeed, I understand, a member of the opposition.

I do not know—we are far out of the whole area of convention with respect to how capital plans are handled in this House with respect to various departments, which are the Department of Health, the Department of Education or, indeed, the Department of Highways. There are no specific rules within this field. That is the point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker.

The minister informs me that the press release is being prepared right at this particular moment with respect to the release of the whole capital plan of the Department of Education, and there is hope, indeed, that might be done yet this week. We are

following procedure that has been practised in this House over a long period of time, and I would ask you, therefore, Mr. Speaker, to rule in that fashion and to find the motion by the member for River Heights wanting and therefore to rule it out of order.

* (1340)

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, what we are dealing with in this matter of privilege is a very serious question here. It relates to the question of whether we are still a parliamentary body, whether this Legislature is still the ultimate authority or whether we have a new system—some might consider it an Americanized system—whereby cabinet ministers and members of the government caucus operate by a different set of rules.

We have seen that, Mr. Speaker, in other areas. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) has been quoted as saying that he feels only the 18 cabinet ministers represent the province. That will be news to the many people who vote for 57 MLAs in an election. We see other examples. We saw just recently, just yesterday, when reports were being distributed to the press before they were distributed to members of the Legislature, something that is not acceptable.

Again, we are seeing, with the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach), further evidence of the fact that this government is not paying attention to the privileges of this Legislature, which is nothing more or less than the privileges of the public of Manitoba to be informed first, rather than certain individual members of a certain caucus informed first about important public matters.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you, when you look at this, to review the clear evidence in terms of Beauchesne when we talk about what is a matter of privilege; that it is indeed a serious matter. I ask you to reflect on whether we still are a functioning Legislature, or whether we are going to be subject to a different set of rules set by an arrogant government that feels that it can have one set of rules for its cabinet and one set of rules for the Legislature, something that has never been accepted in hundreds of years of parliamentary tradition, something that would destroy the very system of parliamentary democracy that we hold dear in this province of Manitoba.

I would submit to you that by ruling that this is a prima facie case, a matter of privilege, you will be defending the rights of Parliament, defending the

rights of the members of this Legislature and defending the rights of the public of Manitoba.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, we must appeal to you, Sir, in your capacity as Speaker of this Assembly, to ask you to ensure that the rights of the members are, in fact, protected.

You are charged with the duty of determining whether or not a prima facie case of privilege exists in order that debate on a motion which must accompany such a matter be given precedence. According to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 6th Edition, Citation 117, in doing so, you must be satisfied with two things: (1) that privileges appear to be sufficiently involved to justify giving such precedence; and (2) also that the matter that is being raised is being raised at the earliest possible time.

The member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) has demonstrated that, in fact, it is being introduced at its earliest time, and in terms with No. 1, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) had asked, during the Estimates process, the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) questions regarding capital expenditures. The Minister of Education and Training had given us the impression that nothing would be released until the overall capital plan has been brought forward by the government.

We then found out that certain members of this Chamber, all of whom happen to be with the Conservative Party, have been given information that, in fact, we were denied from the Minister of Education and Training during the Estimates process. Yesterday, during Question Period, once again, it reinforces what, in fact, the government has done.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, to take it under advisement and bring back to the Chamber your results. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to thank all honourable members for their advice concerning this matter of privilege as raised by the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), and as it is indeed a serious matter, I will take this matter under advisement, peruse Hansard and peruse the rules that will apply to such a matter. I would like to thank all honourable members.

* (1345)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Routine Proceedings, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today His Excellency Wen Yezhan, who is the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon, sir.

Also with us this afternoon in the Speaker's Gallery, we have Her Excellency Laila Valere, the High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago; and the honourable Winston Dookeran, the Deputy Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

Also with us this afternoon, we have from the Green Valley School sixty Grade 5 students, and they are under the direction of Mr. Tim Sawatzky. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): To the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

The petition of the undersigned The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital, humbly sheweth:

THAT The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital Incorporation Act be amended to reflect the amalgamation of the Governing Council of The Salvation Army, Canada East, with the Governing Council of The Salvation Army, Canada West and forming the Governing Council of The Salvation Army in Canada, and further to permit The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital to own and/or operate one or more elderly and infirm persons' housing accommodations as referred to in The Elderly and Infirm Persons' Housing Act, including a personal care home or homes, and to reflect the current organizational structure.

WHEREFORE your petitioner humbly prays that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to pass an act for the purposes above mentioned.

And as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1988-89 report of the Clean Environment Commission of Manitoba.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 63—The Northern Affairs Amendment Act

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that Bill 63, The Northern Affairs Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les Affaires du Nord, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House.

I am pleased to table his message as well, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 64—The Energy Rate Stabilization Repeal Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 64, The Energy Rate Stabilization Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la stabilisation des emprunts d'Hydro-Manitoba à l'étranger, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House, and furthermore, I will table the Lieutenant-Governor's message attached to the motion.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 66—The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club

Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club," be introduced and that the same be now received and read for the first time.

Motion agreed to.

* (1350)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Civil Servants Conflict of Interest

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Question Period, the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), in answer to a question about the activity of senior political staff with the Premier, dealing in the activity of Seech Gajadharsingh and Claro Paqueo, answered in terms of the senior staff of the Premier that it was the position of the government on the record that individuals who worked in any ministerial office are free on their own time to participate in whatever activities they feel are in their own interests.

I would ask the Premier: When did the government exempt senior political staff of the government of the day from the 1984 conflict of interest guidelines passed and published in 1984 and published in '85?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, clearly, the reference was to being able to participate in political activities, as is provided for by the changes to The Civil Service Act that was passed by the former NDP administration, activities that have allowed many members of the public service to run for public office for New Democrats, for Liberals, for Conservatives.

Clearly, there was no intent whatsoever, nor could there be any opportunity, to waive the rules and regulations with respect to The Civil Service Act and The Conflict of Interest Act. They apply to all public servants and politically appointed public servants as well, Mr. Speaker.

Immigration Consultants Investigation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I am pleased to see the Premier changing the position the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) took in this House, because clearly there is a totally different set of—

This is not the first time that we have had problems with the Deputy Premier, Mr. Speaker, and I would

suggest it is a very serious matter dealing with the integrity of the public service and the senior public service, especially in cases of such importance where people who are immigrants to this country and this province are potentially involved in an investigation, where people are preying on their vulnerability in terms of the immigration to this province.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is: Will he table all the reports and investigations that have been conducted by the government? The Premier mentioned a number of reports and investigations that would take place. We have asked the Premier to have an independent investigation outside of government. Yesterday's answer by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) certainly lent credence, I think, to that position of having it outside of the provincial government.

Can the Premier table the reports of all the investigations? Will he now be agreeing to go to an independent investigation to deal with the associations, not only in the internal public service, but the allegations dealing with linkages with these two individuals to the Premier's own political activity?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly, the reports in the investigations that are going to be conducted and the inquiries by the RCMP will be the most independent ones that we could have in this province. If the Leader of the Opposition believes that the RCMP somehow will not be independent in their investigation, I think he ought to say so publicly.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the independence of the Civil Service Commission for their reviews is set by virtue of their requirements under the act whereby this government cannot remove a Civil Service Commissioner. They are responsible to this Legislature. It would take a two-thirds vote of this Legislature to remove a Civil Service Commissioner. The senior staff of the Civil Service Commission who remain in place are the same senior staff who were in place under the former NDP administration.

That inquiry will be the most independent that we could conduct into the affairs and the actions of a public servant in this province. Any and all allegations, whether made in this Chamber, whether made in the media, whether made in any other way are being referred to both of those investigations depending on their application. Certainly, all is

being referred to the RCMP and anything that has to do with the public service of Manitoba is being referred to the Civil Service for their inclusion as part of the evidence in their investigations.

Mr. Speaker, all of the results of those investigations will, indeed, be made public.

* (1355)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Premier well knows that the RCMP is the legal authority to investigate criminal matters. I have never questioned that.

Mr. Speaker, the question remains: Who will be investigating the relationship with the two individuals who were involved in the Premier's own leadership race and are now implicated and being investigated for immigration consulting?

Yesterday, we had an announcement from another department where we have \$75,000 missing, and the Securities Commission has taken action on that case. We have had another part of this investigation dribble out of the government's Department of Family Services. We have other departments all over government investigating.

Is the Civil Service Commission—or who is investigating the relationship between the two individuals involved and their influence with the Premier himself in terms of the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I have no idea as to what allegations the influence is producing upon myself. Until the Leader of the Opposition wants to make an allegation, I am in no position to refer anything. If he has something, I will refer it to either the RCMP and/or the Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission is empowered under the act legally to do the investigations that are called for with respect to any and all actions on the part of a civil servant, any civil servant in this province. That is what they are empowered to do.

Further to that, every single area of involvement of the individual who was named in the I-Team report, Mr. Paqueo, have been examined by various government departments which is why it has produced: a) a revoking of his licence as marriage commissioner; b) a revoking of the appointment, which he was given by the former NDP government, as a notary public; c) his licence temporarily suspended as a real estate broker. In every aspect, those matters are being examined to seek, under our legislation, what involvement he might have with respect to provincial government appointments,

statutes or whatever have you. In every case, we are taking the appropriate action.

If the member believes that action is not sufficient, then let him lay information before us that we can turn over to either a) the Civil Service Commission or b) the RCMP, and it will be dealt with.

Abuse Treatment Programs Funding

Ms. Becky Barrett(Wellington): Mr. Speaker, this government has repeatedly refused to provide adequate resources and services to adult survivors of sexual abuse, often with tragic consequences.

Given the recent dramatic upswing in abuse survivors disclosing what has happened to them in their past and their stories, including just in the last 24 hours people from Knowles Centre, recent residential school disclosures and Cameron Kerley on the radio this morning, will the Minister of Family Services now recognize the severity of this problem by reconsidering his previous totally inadequate budgetary decisions in this matter?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the member is full well aware that this department has received the largest increase in budget of any department in government. We also recognize the needs of very vulnerable people in society in many areas of my department, and I have referenced these for the member before. There certainly are needs that this department would like to address. We do have the largest increase in our budget of any department, and we have decisions to make of where to put that particular funding.

The member references the disclosures and the news media reports about the Knowles Centre. I would remind her that it is the subject of a police investigation, and there will also be an external review committee involved with that situation.

* (1400)

Knowles Centre Inc. Abuse Investigation

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the member is fully aware, on this side, of the total lack of increase for funding available to Child and Family Services agency programs that deal with this, that the major bulk of the increase in Family Services' budget is for social assistant increases because of

the dreadful roles that this government is playing in job creation.

The Family Services department received notification six weeks ago that there were allegations of abuse at Knowles Centre. Can the Minister of Family Services explain the delay in implementing this review that he has just undertaken when he stated this morning in the paper, "I'm very concerned that proper procedures were followed and that information is acted upon immediately"? If he is so concerned about it, why has he taken six weeks to begin this procedure?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I would inform the member that, while allegations were brought to the department some weeks ago, they were allegations. The disclosure that has been made to the police department, which is now the subject of a police investigation, happened within the last two weeks. We are reviewing the regulations and standards, and they clearly state the responsibility of people who work in the agencies to report this immediately, and these will be the subject of the external review.

We have met with the board at Knowles, and we will be bringing this to their attention, that the guidelines are very clear. There should be no confusion with any service providers, what their responsibility is when there is the disclosure of abuse towards children.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, there should be no confusion on the part of the minister that six weeks is an unconscionably long period of time.

Unlike previous investigations which have not yet seen the light of day, will the minister guarantee that the recommendations coming out of this investigation and any report are made public so that other agencies can be helped in this matter should situations occur in their agencies, and so that children who are vulnerable will be protected and know where to go for help in these situations?

Mr. Gillehammer: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that the substance of the external review will be made public and that we will certainly be acting on those recommendations. I would caution her that under The Child and Family Services Act, there are details of investigations which cannot be made public for the protection of the child, so that all of this information does not become public information.

Cartwright, Manitoba High School Closure Justification

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Training.

Last evening the Turtle Mountain School Division met yet once again, and once again they refused to tell the parents of the children attending the Cartwright school what the economic or academic reasons were for the closure of their school effective June 30.

Can the minister tell the House today why he will not instruct the school division to provide the rationale to the parents who have the greatest vested interest in the education of their children?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, although the member for the third party will not know necessarily that I have met with the school board, indeed, I have. As a matter of fact, I think it was published in the papers that I had met with the school board, and at that time I indicated very clearly to the school board that it is incumbent upon them to meet with the community that is affected and to enter into dialogue, into discussion and into debate, if you like, as to the rationale for the closure or the transferring of students from one school to another.

However, Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate to you very clearly and to the House very clearly that this is a matter which is within the jurisdiction of the school board. It is their decision with regard to transferring the students but, indeed, it is also very important that all school boards dialogue with the communities, especially when emotional things of this nature affect a community as they have in the Cartwright situation.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, I was well aware, as the minister should have remembered, since we had a full discussion in Estimates about the meeting that he had with the Turtle Mountain School Division.

Can the minister tell the House today, if it is incumbent of the school division to provide this information, and they are not providing the information, why it is not incumbent upon him to make sure they do?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the Leader of the third party has made many allegations and sometimes without substance. There are two trustees who represent the area who sit on all board

meetings and, indeed, have a responsibility to report to their communities and to participate in the discussions and in the decision making at the board level.

Mr. Speaker, the board members are accountable to the people who elect them, and indeed it is their responsibility to make sure that the information goes back to that community. In meeting with the school board, I made it very clear that, indeed, it is important for them, as a corporate body, to meet with the people from the Cartwright area to ensure that the people in that area have complete information.

Mr. Speaker, we have undergone many school closures in this province. We have undergone many areas of transferring students from one school to another. In all cases, it is important that there be discussion and dialogue between the parents who are going to be affected, the students who are going to be affected and the communities that are going to be affected. Indeed, we call upon the school board and the community to come together and discuss the impact and the effects of this in a full debate and in a full discussion.

School Board Meeting

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, but the school act very clearly says that there must be the availability of parents to meet with the trustees. That availability was denied last evening when certain individuals could not get into the room because of space, despite the fact that the school division had been informed that there would be an overflow crowd and were, in fact, asked by parents in the Cartwright area to move to a larger site, a decision they refused to take.

Can the minister tell the House today if he will now enforce his own school act and ensure that the parents who wish to communicate with their trustees are given that opportunity by requiring the school division to hold their meetings in a place which is suitable for the attendance at that meeting?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I had staff of my department speak with the superintendent just a short time ago to ascertain whether or not there was any attempt to keep parents and people who may want to attend the meeting out of the meeting. I was told by the superintendent that there were 40 extra chairs set up in the meeting room for the parents who might be attending, for the people who might

be attending from the Cartwright area. That is the information I received.

I am told also that there were in excess of 60 people who did arrive at the meeting, and the room was filled with people who were from the Cartwright area.

This matter is a very serious one for me because it impacts upon the quality of education for students. I therefore am calling today, publicly on both sides, to meet and to be able to resolve this matter. In that spirit, I am offering the services of a conciliation person who will be prepared to meet with the two sides and will be able to conduct a meeting and to try and resolve this matter in the interest of the education and the quality of education for students in the Cartwright area.

Cartwright, Manitoba High School Funding

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, to say the least, to watch the Minister of Education and Training and the Leader of the Liberal Party wring their hands about the problems that are being faced by small communities as their schools close around them.

In 1988, these two members, more than any other, were responsible for moving the province into a position where they would fund 80 percent worth of the contribution to private schools, a move that is now costing the Province of Manitoba \$10 million this year—\$10 million.

Mr. Speaker, I will be interested to know whether the Liberal Leader will join me—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Flin Flon, kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Storle: Perhaps it is time for the Leader of the Liberal Party to join me in asking the Minister of Education and Training: Will he now acknowledge to the people of Cartwright, the parents of the students at Cartwright collegiate that there is something that this government can do? It can provide some additional financial support as an interim measure to keep Cartwright school open.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must advise visitors in the gallery here today that you must not participate in any manner in the proceedings of the Assembly.

* (1410)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the member for Flin Flon, when he was Minister of Education, was making such contributions toward education as 2 percent at a time when revenues in this province were in excess of 6 percent, and he thought it was all right at that time to do that.

Mr. Speaker, let me indicate that we have done everything we can in terms of supporting education in this province this year. Indeed, given the financial circumstances of the province, where our revenues are at zero, this department still received the third or 3.5 percent overall, one of the three largest departments to receive increases from government during this fiscal year. That is an indication that education is a priority.

Mr. Speaker, let me go on to say that you cannot simply answer all questions by dumping large sums of money every time there is a problem. That is what the NDP have constantly called upon every time they sense a problem, is to dump more money into a situation.

School boards in this province have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker. They have met the challenge—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the people of Cartwright will be pleased to know that \$160,000 spent on saving a school is dumping; \$10 million on private schools without one additional student is dumping.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate.

The honourable member for Flin Flon, kindly put your question, please.

Mr. Storle: My question is to the Minister of Education and Training.

The minister has announced today that he is prepared to provide a facilitator or a mediator to resolve this dispute. Will the minister now admit or agree to provide to this committee the flexibility that they require to settle this, including providing additional funding to the Turtle Mountain School Division if that is the only solution to resolve this matter and save the school in Cartwright?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I guess, one can understand that, if you are in opposition, you do not have to be accountable or responsible for the

statements you make. Indeed, the member for Flin Flon is demonstrating just that.

Mr. Speaker, let me assure the Assembly today that, if we did not have to spend \$550 million on interest costs incurred by the former administration of this province, we would have abundant sums of money to put into place for educational programs. It is that member, who was a part of that administration, who caused this kind of dilemma and this problem.

Mr. Speaker, we have been able to afford to the educational areas of this province as much money as we can, given that our revenues are zero percent this year, given the fact that we have a \$550-million interest cost incurred by the former administration.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

School Division Boundary Review

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Turtle Mountain School Division has received about 6 percent or 8 percent less than inflation in the last two years, while private schools in this province have received 100 percent in funding. That is priority.

My question to the minister is: The people of Cartwright, the community of Cartwright, may be asking this minister to establish a separate school division for the community of Cartwright so they can operate their own school. Given this government's intention of establishing a boundaries review commission to look at the whole question of school division boundaries, will this minister now consider asking the Turtle Mountain School Division to suspend this decision until that boundary review is done and until the people of Cartwright have had an opportunity to present their case to this boundary review commission?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, in terms of the separate school division and establishing it at this present time, indeed the member should know very clearly that there are processes one has to go through in order to be able to achieve anything of that nature.

I have met with the parents and the community of Cartwright on two separate occasions. Indeed, I have acknowledged that I would also meet with

them later this afternoon to try and ensure that this matter is resolved. The member simply calls for more money to be dumped into this situation. How many other communities are there out there that are facing similar difficulty?

There are school boards that have been elected with certain responsibilities, and indeed it is their responsibility to determine which schools will be open, which will be closed and where students will be transferred. The member knows that very clearly, that it is not a matter for the Minister of Education and Training to intervene in those kinds of situations.

School of Psychiatric Nursing Selkirk Closure

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, last night in Selkirk, psychiatric nurses put the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on trial for killing the School of Psychiatric Nursing in Selkirk and for his lack of understanding of mental health care in this province. The verdict was guilty. The judge allowed the voters of Selkirk and of Manitoba to decide the sentence.

My question is to the Premier. Will he now order his Minister of Health to rescind the closure of the school?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, at some point in time, the people of Selkirk may well put their MLA on trial, particularly when he makes some of the embarrassing comments that he has in posing past questions in the House.

Let me tell my honourable friend, as I have indicated to him in the past, that we are consolidating the two schools of psychiatric nursing into one school in Brandon. That school in Brandon, coupled with the opportunity to have a baccalaureate program established at Brandon University, will enhance the training opportunities and provide a professional discipline in a reformed mental health system that I think all Manitobans will be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that my honourable friend representing the constituency of Selkirk has to bring forward their case on behalf of the town and the community. I wonder if my honourable friend has discussed this issue with the member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans), who, I believe, is quite pleased that there will be an enhanced level of educational opportunity in Brandon, or whether my

honourable friend from Selkirk is simply operating in isolation within caucus.

Selkirk Closure Justification

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, can this Minister of Health explain why he is spending \$45 million on a new institution in Winnipeg when last night the prosecution in the trial revealed that it would cost \$800,000 to keep the school open?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I can certainly draw one conclusion—that my honourable friend would never be a Finance minister.

Mr. Speaker, the decisions that we are making in health care are system decisions which have impact across the system. Those decisions will, I think, be quite well accepted in the reform of the mental health system that this government has embarked on, a process that was urged upon governments in the past and not proceeded with.

My honourable friend talks about the cost of operating the school at Selkirk, and there will be opportunities created in the city of Brandon with the consolidation of the School of Psychiatric Nursing, not only in terms of employment and possibly investment in Brandon, but certainly in terms of student activity in the city of Brandon.

* (1420)

Selkirk Mental Health Centre Long-Term Planning

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): During last year's election campaign, this government gave no indication that they were considering closing the school.

A very simple question for this minister: What are his long-term plans for the Selkirk Mental Health Centre?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, long-term plans for the Selkirk Mental Health Centre include, in part, discussions with the federal government for the potential establishment of a high security forensic facility, an issue that has been before governments of this province for a number of years.

If my honourable friend, as part of a New Democratic caucus that publicly says they are in favour of reform of the mental health system—then they will be asked to support a reduction in the number of psychiatric beds throughout the province

of Manitoba. When that decision comes, I hope they do not quickly disappear in their support for a reformed—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Child Care Centres Special Needs Children

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services.

The Discovery child care centre in St. James is being forced to cancel its special needs program because government funding is \$8,000 below what the centre requires to continue this high quality program. According to government regulations, a child care centre will only receive funding for a trained staff complement that does not exceed two-thirds of the total staff.

However, given the fact that special needs children require specialized care from highly trained workers, and that as a result of this cancellation of the special needs program at the Discovery Children's Centre, fewer special needs children in St. James will be able to access this quality care, my question for the minister is: Will he review the regulations and the money given to this centre and others that provide service to special needs children to ensure that special needs children in St. James and around this province receive the quality care that they need and deserve?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, yes, we are aware of the concern that has been raised, and we are meeting with the individuals in the next few days.

I would remind the member that we have put additional funding into special needs children in day care, some \$370,000 in this last budget. We are aware of the concerns that this specific centre has raised, and naturally these apply to others as well. Department staff have become aware of that, and we will be meeting with these people in the next few days.

Mr. Edwards: Well, Mr. Speaker, one thing the minister may want to take to that meeting is the fact that this child care centre received a total funding increase of 2 percent which was not even enough to include the 3.5 percent increase the GST will force upon them.

Funding

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Family Services tell this House how child care centres are supposed to provide the quality care that they owe the citizens of this province when this government will not even ensure that the centres can meet the increased cost caused by their Tory cousins in Ottawa?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): I would point to the member that, by far and away, in excess of 80 percent of the costs of day care centres is for staffing and that the GST impact is limited to the expenditures and other portions of their budget.

I can tell the member that we have substantially increased funding in the day care system over the last four years. It has increased by some 60 percent, and we have announced some structural changes that are going to take place within the day care system. I would refer to his Leader's comments of May 20, 1987, when she is quoted in Hansard as saying, "... my position has always been that it is the child who I would like to see the subsidy go to, not the day care centre."

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the shortfall for this centre is \$8,000.

Child Care Centres Special Needs Children

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Finally, for the Premier: How does the Premier justify a \$350,000 grant and over \$4 million in loans to build a highrise for wealthy seniors in St. James, Mr. Speaker, but does not have \$8,000 for St. James special needs children at the Discovery day care centre?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, with respect to -(interjection)- if the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) will permit me to answer the question, I will be happy to respond.

With respect to the funding for Family Services, we increased funding in this budget more for Family Services than any area of government, 6.9 percent increase in funding for Family Services, in recognition of the priority that we place in Family Services.

With respect to funding to child care in this province, the increase in this year's budget to funding in child care brings to 50 percent the increase that we have put on child care since we have taken government just over three years

ago—50 percent increase, Mr. Speaker, to child care.

We think that is a very strong commitment to day care. We have carried through our commitment, not by the rhetoric that used to be put forth by the NDP, not by the empty words that were put forward by the Liberal Party Leader when she was advocating for day care, by real money, a 50 percent increase in just over three years, Mr. Speaker.

City Council Reduction Government Position

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): My question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

One of the several inconsistencies in the Eldon Ross report is that, on the one hand, it acknowledges the voice of the many Winnipeggers who emphasize the importance of community participation and political accountability in municipal affairs; on the other hand, the report followed the minister's corporate agenda recommending measures to reduce both participation and accountability with large wards, optional community committees, the deletion of the RAG groups and a diminished role for elected officials on boards and commissions.

My question for the minister is: Could he indicate how, in his review of the report, he will resolve these apparent inconsistencies?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, the position of the government will be made known in hopefully a very short period of time. What was presented yesterday was the report of the committee, that committee that we asked to go out and make recommendations to us. Whether we accept any or all of their recommendations remains to be seen and we will, in due course, table the bill in the House presenting the position of the government.

Wards Boundary Review Committee Background Research

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my second question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

He knows that for some time I have been concerned about the absence of a clear research base for this particular ministerial review. I would like to table pages 19 and 25 from the report and to ask the minister to take another look at these. Table 1 does not recognize either the role of metropolitan

government in Ontario nor the significance of double member constituencies. Table 2 deals with comparative salaries of councillors using material from '84, '88 and '91 when a few phone calls would have given us comparable data.

Would the minister undertake to reconsider the flimsy research base of this report and to correct such areas of misleading information?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): As I have indicated on a number of occasions, the report is just that—a report. We may or may not accept any or all of the recommendations. The position of the government will be made known in due course.

City Council Reduction Government Position

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Given that even the Eldon Ross report recognizes that with larger sizes of wards, election expenses and the cost of larger campaigns should be a major concern for the government, will the minister undertake to review this matter and to ensure in his new legislation that corporate financial support will not determine the outcome of Winnipeg elections?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have said we will be reviewing the report in detail.

Claro Paqueo Homeland Realty Agreements

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, the current investigations into immigration consulting present an opportunity to raise awareness and to do something about the longstanding problems in Canadian immigration systems. We know that there are many irregularities in the Claro Paqueo case, and today, for the first time, we are made aware that there is some money that has gone missing.

My question for the Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs is: Given Claro Paqueo's disregard for the regulations of The Real Estate Broker's Act, the fact that his bond was only \$20,000 and that Mr. Yang lost \$55,000, can the minister tell the House how many other deals involving Homeland Realty there are in Manitoba?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot. The matter is under investigation by the Manitoba Securities Commission which will be

holding a hearing on June 5. At that time, details of the investigation will be brought forward for discussion and decision. I await their investigation and that hearing which is open to the public.

* (1430)

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, for the same minister: Can the minister confirm that one of the conditions contained in the offer to purchase is that Mr. Yang obtained landed immigrant status and if that condition was written into the offer for purchase of any other Homeland Realty agreements?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, I repeat, this matter is under investigation by the Manitoba Securities Commission. As minister responsible for the Manitoba Securities Commission, it would be very inappropriate for me to be making comment on cases that are currently under investigation and awaiting hearing. I do not wish to pre-empt, prejudice or interfere with, in any way, that investigation.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Addresses for Papers and Orders for Return will be held another day.

I would ask, Mr. Speaker, whether there is a willingness of the House to waive private members' hour and to consider bills till six o'clock tonight.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Is there leave? No, leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, would you call the bills in the following order: Second readings Bills 4, 50 and 49, and then adjourned debate Bills 41, 42, 38, 44 and 43.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 4—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 4, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of the House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to present to the House Bill 4, amendments to The Health Services Insurance Act.

The act which provides the legislative basis for the operations of the Manitoba Health Services Commission received Royal Assent on July 21, 1970. Since that time, various amendments have been made to the act as conditions changed within the health system and the community it served.

It has been some time now since the act was amended, Mr. Speaker. The bill now before honourable members contains a number of housekeeping items such as definition and redefinition of terms to bring the wording of the act into line with other relative legislation.

Other minor amendments are aimed at improving the administrative process of the work of the commission and in other cases, simply providing legislative authority for administrative practices which have developed over the past number of years. I will elaborate on those later in my remarks, Mr. Speaker.

Other amendments are more substantive in nature, Mr. Speaker, and I would draw the attention of honourable members to a few of them. At the present time, the Manitoba Health Services Commission has the authority to inspect the books, accounts and records of hospitals and personal care homes. An amendment is proposed that would extend this provision to include those professional health care practitioners who receive payment from the Manitoba Health Services Commission. This amendment is simply, we believe, a good business practice which will provide the necessary checks and balances and give greater accountability to the taxpayer in the expenditure of public funds.

In addition, this amendment to allow access to books, accounts, et cetera, of medical practitioners will bring our legislation and our ability, via the legislation, in line with practices in other provinces such as Alberta, Ontario and Newfoundland who do currently have those provisions within their respective insurance acts.

Mr. Speaker, under The Health Services Insurance Act there is currently a provision for a medical review committee. That committee is authorized to review the present and past practice of a medical practitioner to determine if the individual's practice pattern differed significantly from that practice pattern of an average similar

medical practice. If so, that committee has the authority to investigate and, if necessary, assess and issue an order for the recovery of any overpayment that may have occurred.

The make-up of that committee under the current legislation allows for representation from the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba and the Manitoba Medical Association. Recent years, however, have seen a circumstance develop where the MMA has chosen not to be represented at these medical review committee hearings and they have had fairly substantive reasons around their nonparticipation which this legislation is designed to resolve.

What will happen, Mr. Speaker, with the amendment once passed is there will be a distinction made within the legislation between the review process and the judicial process, if you will. By judicial process, I mean the assessment of levies requiring repayment by practitioners. This is a change that was requested by the Manitoba Medical Association and which has been incorporated in this legislation. As I said, the medical review committee's mandate under the present act includes both the investigative process and the assessment recovery process, the judicial part of their operations as enacted in the current legislation.

Now this is the very issue that has caused the MMA some concern and, in fact, is probably the major contributing factor to their nonparticipation at medical review committee hearings. We do not think that is appropriate that they would not be part of that, and we have accepted their concerns and incorporated them into the proposed amendment, which does separate those two functions. I am advised that both the Manitoba Medical Association and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba are supportive of this amendment.

I would remind the honourable members that the make-up of this committee allows for the review of practice of medical professionals by fellow medical professionals but, as well, with the Manitoba Health Services Commission representation present, provides a balance by having nonmedical people also there on behalf of the commission.

A new and very important section is also proposed which will provide the commission with the authority and mechanism to recover monies paid out inappropriately, for example, when payment is

claimed for services not provided; another example, when a practitioner misrepresents to the commission the nature or the extent of the services provided and, hence, has overbilled the commission and the taxpayers; when an individual misrepresents the nature or the extent of the service to the commission; when the service provided is not an insured benefit; when an individual is not insured at the time of service delivery.

A housekeeping amendment is proposed that will authorize the board of the Manitoba Health Services Commission to make regulations respecting the designation of institutions which are not hospitals, but institutions which provide treatment of injury or disease.

For example, Mr. Speaker, these facilities would include the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, Mount Carmel Clinic, health centres, Clinic, the Manitoba Cardiac Institute and others. Although we have over the years funded, for instance, the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, in reality there was not an ability to do that by legislation, and that is one of those amendments that I mentioned earlier that is part of this legislation, which bring into legislation established management practices that have grown up over the years.

Mr. Speaker, it is generally acknowledged that the proliferation of private diagnostic laboratories could lead to the unnecessary duplication of diagnostic services and expenses for the provision of those diagnostic services to the health care system and to the people of Manitoba.

An amendment is proposed in this bill for the licensing and operation of diagnostic laboratories, which will strengthen and clarify the existing act. It will aid in avoiding the proliferation of private diagnostic laboratories by spelling out the requirements for approval to operate such facilities. This amendment also provides for the inspection of records and equipment of such laboratories which submit claims to the commission.

* (1440)

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

This provision to inspect and audit should assist in the earlier detection of inappropriate billing practices by laboratories and, hence, the inappropriate use of public funds. When that happens, I think one can draw the very easy conclusion by those inappropriate billings and use

of service that, in fact, the health care budget is, in effect, not providing service to individuals if the money is being wasted or inappropriately spent.

In addition, Mr. Acting Speaker, approval is required to enlarge, to relocate or to establish a branch laboratory or specimen collection centre. Some of the considerations which will be taken into account before such approval is granted include the number of centres currently operating in a given geographic area of the province, the tests and classes of tests already performed in that same geographic area of the province or region of the province, and information regarding the utilization of existing facilities and their capacity to handle increased volume should increased capacity be necessary.

In general, Mr. Acting Speaker, as I have illustrated, this bill proposes amendments which, while co-operating with professional health care organizations, will improve the administrative efficiency and effectiveness of the Manitoba Health Services Commission and strengthen its authority to protect the public interest as it carries out its services to the people of Manitoba.

I think it is important to point out that these amendments will allow us, where inappropriate billings and, in fact, wrong billings have been made to the Manitoba Health Services Commission for either services performed or alleged to be performed or laboratory testing procedures—where they have been billed in an inappropriate manner, it allows us the ability to recover those on behalf of the taxpayers.

We have had some experiences in the past, in the very recent past, within the last three years, that have shown that we need these improved and more up-to-date provisions within the Manitoba Health Services Commission through the act that we are now amending.

I simply reiterate to my honourable friends that these provisions will help us to provide the quality health care that Manitobans wish to have amid the very, very difficult challenge fiscally that we face in this province and that, indeed, the nation faces and all provincial jurisdictions face in the provision of health care.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I simply close by saying that I would ask my honourable friends' co-operation to move this bill on to committee. At committee stage, staff will be available to answer any detailed

questions honourable members might have regarding the bill and its mandated provisions.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 50—The Liquor Control Amendment Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move that Bill—

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Speaker, I declare a conflict of interest on this bill as per our rules and regulations. I will be withdrawing from debate and votes on this particular bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Thank you.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that Bill 50, The Liquor Control Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Acting Speaker, the bill amending The Liquor Control Act contains a number of technical and operational amendments, as well as amendments that are designed to stimulate the hospitality industry and the tourism industry in Manitoba.

Among the amendments which can be described as technical in nature is the removal of all references in the act to the position of chief inspector, as this position has been incorporated with an existing position at the Liquor Control Commission. References to a chairman or vice-chairman have also been struck from the act, and the nongender titles of chairperson and vice-chairperson have been substituted. This technical amendment is designed to bring the act up to date with more acceptable terminology.

In order to provide continuity with other Crown corporations and government agencies in the province, the title used for the chief executive officer

of the Liquor Control Commission has been changed from general manager to president and CEO. There are also technical amendments contained within this bill which provide for the delineation of certain responsibilities of the board of commissioners to the president and CEO. These changes have been made so that the president may exercise the powers of the commission with respect to day-to-day administrative functions at the commission.

Currently, Section 20 of the act requires the Licensing Board to make recommendations to the board of commissioners for approval of liquor licences. An amendment is proposed to make the decisions of the Licensing Board final. The board of commissioners would continue to hear appeals to those decisions. Previously, the board of commissioners, Mr. Acting Speaker, was hearing appeals on decisions that the board itself had made. This amendment corrects this inappropriate situation.

In view of the amendment that makes the decisions of the Licensing Board final, a provision has been added to require the Licensing Board to designate a panel of three of its members to hear applications from their beginning to their conclusion. This ensures that licensees will be treated fairly by having the same panel members hear all the evidence and render a decision.

* (1450)

The requirement that a hotel must be registered to allow licences to be issued within the building has been deleted. This amendment will allow a restaurant to be licensed even if it is connected or included within an unregistered hotel. However, this amendment will not allow for room service or mini-bars without registration. Previously, if a hotel did not qualify for registration, it could not offer licensed dining facilities to its guests.

A provision has also been made in these amendments to allow a dining room licence for a restaurant in a hotel to be issued to a person other than the owner of the hotel who holds the beverage room licence. By removing this restriction, food service in hotels can be provided by restaurant chains or franchise operators. This will allow the hotel operator to rent the restaurant facility to a restaurateur who can enhance food services in the community at little or no cost to the hotel owner.

Section 178, referring to the concept of limited-life hotels, has been deleted from the act, as there are no limited-life hotels left in the province and, hence, the legislation is archaic.

From time to time, the commission has had inquiries about the idea of auctions for rare and expensive liquor products. A subsection has been added to allow the commission to conduct or permit others to conduct such an auction. The commission would only issue special permits authorizing these auctions to registered, nonprofit organizations. This would prevent a person from engaging in the business of auctioning liquor for profit, but would allow a charity, for example, to hold such an auction to generate funds for its cause.

At present, the act provides that foreign manufacturers of spirits, wine and beer may have a direct, indirect or contingent interest in the ownership or management of a licensed operation, but domestic suppliers may not. An amendment is proposed which would eliminate this discriminatory provision and allow domestic manufacturers the same opportunity. The commission will set a policy to ensure that licensees in which a manufacturer has an interest are obliged to offer a variety of products for manufacturers other than the owner and, of course, the commission would continue to ensure that the involvement of the manufacturers would not cause a licensee to discourage the sale or consumption of the products of other manufacturers. This amendment allows our local Canadian suppliers to operate on a level playing field with foreign suppliers.

As you are aware, there are a number of festivals and community events that contribute to the tourism industry in this province, and the hospitality industry in Manitoba is supported by strong, worthwhile associations that guide and assist their members.

I propose a number of amendments which are designed to augment these industries. In most cases, groups who organize weekend-long events such as festivals, community fairs, baseball tournaments, et cetera, do not have the facilities to cool beer from Saturday to Sunday when the beer will be sold. I propose an amendment which will, upon authorization by the commission, allow prepaid orders for beer to be delivered from a hotel beer vendor to designated occasional permit function locations on a Sunday. The event organizers will benefit by the service and hotels will benefit by not having to deal with beer which may

have been improperly stored prior to its being returned.

At the present time, a cabaret licensee may not serve liquor prior to 5 p.m. daily. An amendment is proposed which would allow cabarets to be open and serve liquor with food during the lunchtime hours of 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This will provide another option for the consumer and will as well enhance the food service opportunities in cabarets.

At the present time, Thanksgiving Day is defined as a holiday in the act and liquor service is not permitted in any licenced establishment with the exception of dining rooms, spectator activities or transportation licenced premises. An amendment is proposed which would make Thanksgiving Day a regular day of business for all classes of licence. The request to have this secular holiday excluded from the list of days on which liquor service is prohibited has been a request made for many years by all aspects of our hospitality industry.

To allow tourists and business people the opportunity to consume alcohol without having a meal on a Sunday, I propose an amendment which would allow cocktail lounges in restaurants and hotels to operate as usual unless it was Easter Sunday or another holiday defined under the act. Service of liquor on Sunday in cocktail lounges will remove what is often thought to be an antiquated provision, particularly by out-of-province visitors who are able to experience this service in other jurisdictions. Manitobans are no exception to the country-wide phenomenon that is seeing huge numbers of people crossing the border into the U.S. to take advantage of the economic and social amenities being offered to them there.

I feel it is incumbent upon us to take some steps that will inspire Manitobans to be boosters of our own hospitality industry, and the removal of the restriction against having a drink in a lounge on a Sunday is one of those positive steps that we can take to become more competitive, not only with the United States but also with other provinces in Canada. This amendment is merely an extension of existing Sunday service which is currently allowed under all classes of licence other than beverage rooms and cabarets. For example, a person can currently purchase a drink on a Sunday at curling clubs, golf clubs, Sunday Jets games or Blue Bomber games, beer gardens at summer festivals, the racetrack, the Concert Hall, theatres, sports clubs and facilities, private clubs such as the

Irish club or at an exhibition at the Keystone Centre. We are hardly breaking new ground with this amendment.

This amendment will make it possible for dining room patrons to have a quiet drink while waiting for a table to be free in the dining room. It will enable businesspeople who arrive in town on a Sunday evening for a Monday morning meeting to get together in the lounge with others who may be in town for the same meeting rather than to have to meet in the hotel rooms themselves or in the dining room when they may not wish to purchase a meal. This will enable tourists who may come to Manitoba for a long weekend to have a relaxing drink after a day of sightseeing, shopping, skiing or some other form of recreation. It is vital that our standards of service be of international quality as we seek to expand our tourism industry. This amendment is an opportunity to enhance those standards.

I was most interested in the results of a survey done in British Columbia, Mr. Acting Speaker, which showed that in that province, which has the most liberal drinking laws in the country, there has been a steady decline in impaired drinking incidences since the open liquor laws were introduced. There has been a similar decline in impaired drinking charges in Manitoba since we introduced the toughest drinking and driving laws in the country. Responsible attitudes towards liquor and an increased public education have led to a better understanding that, while one is allowed to drink, one is not allowed to drink and drive.

The provincial government has done much over the past few years, Mr. Acting Speaker, to assist small rural hotels. The most significant of these changes has been the low-volume allowance beer discount system which was updated in 1990 to give the highest discount rate to the smallest hotels.

Under this revised system, a small rural hotel beer vendor who purchased \$100,000 of domestic beer would receive a \$12,000 discount. This move provided beer vendors annual savings in increased discounts of approximately \$1.2 million. In 1990, as well, we reduced supplementary licence fees from 12 percent to 7 percent and followed this with a further reduction to 2 percent in January 1991. This represented an annualized cost saving to the industry of \$3.2 million.

Since August 1989, the government has passed through, without mark up, supplier price increases

on spirits. Of course, we also increased the border levies on casual importations over nine litres. The commission estimates that an additional six million litres of beer would be sold through the provincial retail system because of this move, with 90 percent of these sales being through hotels.

Our toll-free phone-in service has saved long distance charges for rural licensees. We have eliminated the bar category brand spirits representation system, so that licensees may purchase more than 20 percent of any one bar brand. Again in 1990, the commission offered for sale several flavours of malt coolers additional to the product lines of hotel beer vendors.

I appreciate the fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, that hotels with beverage rooms would like to have these current amendments to further allow Sunday opening of beverage rooms. I appreciate, as well, that cabarets would like the same opportunity.

In response to those who feel that this legislation has not gone far enough, I would point out that there are some who feel that it goes too far, and it is my firm opinion that the majority of citizens feel that this amendment strikes the appropriate balance between those who advocate total Sunday abstention and those who advocate wide-open Sunday drinking.

As a point of interest, there are only two areas in Canada which will have more restrictive Sunday drinking laws than Manitoba after this amendment passes, those two areas being the Northwest Territories and Prince Edward Island. Four other provinces will have similar legislation to ours and five, including the Yukon, will be more permissive than we are.

I believe that we do not live in a vacuum, Mr. Acting Speaker, and as people travel back and forth across this continent, they will expect to find a similar degree of service. If we wish to remain competitive, we must adjust to meet those expectations which are in keeping with a vibrant hospitality industry.

* (1500)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe this particular proposed amendment to The Liquor Control Act is appropriate for our province at this stage in its history. Besides stimulating the hospitality and tourism industry and providing better service to the consumer, Sunday service has a very real potential

to create more jobs for those who work in restaurants and hotels which have cocktail lounges.

The creation of jobs for our citizens, while not the primary focus of this amendment, is a most welcome side effect of what I believe to be sensible and realistic legislation. It is a side effect which should not be overlooked, Mr. Acting Speaker, because it has significance for our province.

I ask for the support of the Assembly for this bill, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak at this time.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that debate on this bill be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 49—The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), be now read a second time and be referred to committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Acting Speaker, as we move, it is my pleasure this afternoon to speak to Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act. We are committed to providing an education program in Manitoba which is based on the principles of excellence, equity, openness and responsiveness. We are also committed to the principles of choice and relevance and integration and accountability.

The bill which we have before us today will enable our community colleges to achieve these educational principles for the benefit of all Manitobans. In Manitoba we have experienced some fundamental changes in terms of our economic, social and cultural dynamics. There have been significant changes to our demographic characteristics as well. As we move through the 1990s and into the next century, our community colleges will have to work co-operatively with government and the private sector, labour and other training institutions to ensure that our human resources are developed to their fullest potential.

Our colleges must work in partnership with the community to ensure that they deliver the educational programs which Manitobans need in the mobile, competitive, global marketplace that we now live.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this bill provides for the incorporation of our community colleges, each with a board of governors representing the community which it serves. Each board will have between 10 and 12 members including student and employee representatives, and all will be operating at arm's length from government. As the governing authority of the college, the board will have control over the college's financial affairs and its human resources. The boards will have the responsibility of the students as well. They will have the responsibility of including the power of establishment of admissions requirements and the responsibility to grant certificates and diplomas.

The boards will be able to enter into contracts and agreements and, with the approval of the minister and Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, establish short-term and long-term financial programs, including the ability to borrow funds. The boards will also be responsible to the community, the students, the staff and to government.

Annual budgets will be submitted to the minister for approval or amendment. Annual reports reflecting the colleges' academic performance will also be published for the information of all Manitobans.

The act also addresses the need for regular reviews and audits of the colleges financial and academic programs. As well, the colleges will report, through the minister, to members of this Legislature.

While the boards will ensure that colleges meet the needs of their communities, the Minister of Education and Training will ensure that our post-secondary education system grows and develops in an orderly fashion. The minister will be responsible for approving or amending annual budgets, determining geographic and program mandates of the college, establishing post-secondary education policies and ensuring that reviews of the colleges' operations are undertaken.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we are all well aware of the value of the 1,200 college instructors and support staff who will become employees of the incorporated

colleges. The act makes special provision to ensure that their valuable insights and concerns are made available to the directors of the college.

College councils, with significant employee as well as student representation, will provide advice to the boards. This, Mr. Acting Speaker, we believe is important in terms of ensuring that there is a voice by those who work and those who receive the services of the colleges.

Mr. Acting Speaker, by strengthening our partnership with the students, employees, the private sector, the general community and labour, we will be better able to deliver the programs, to develop the new skills and lifelong learning needs of Manitobans.

In managing and conducting the colleges' affairs, the boards of directors will have the authority to be flexible, responsive and innovative in providing the program needs by students and labour market and the business and industry community.

The colleges will make efficient and effective use of their resources as the market becomes more competitive for adult and post-secondary education and training services.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe The Colleges Act which we have before us today provides an excellent balance of flexibility and accountability. The colleges will be accountable to the community and the clients they serve and they will be responsible to the government, which provides annual funds for their operation.

In return, Mr. Acting Speaker, the colleges will have the mandate and authority to meet those responsibilities and expectations and the flexibility to meet the needs of their students and the community.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this is something that has been overdue for sometime. Most of the provinces in this country have already moved to a college governance system within their jurisdictions. I think it is high time that we in Manitoba moved to make sure that students within this province were able to avail themselves of the opportunities of education that they really require to be productive citizens in our province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this matter has been discussed thoroughly with the communities throughout this province, with the northern communities, with the rural communities and indeed with our urban communities. We have already in

place a transition team made up of the various representatives, both from the community colleges and from the community at large, business and labour, to ensure all of the issues that may be outstanding are going to be addressed before the colleges receive their full autonomy and their full separation from government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, to close, I would simply like to say that I am proud to sponsor Bill 49, and I look forward to further examination of its details in committee. Thank you very much.

* (1510)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Acting Speaker, never in the history of this House have I heard such wonderful rhetoric about education when there is absolutely no substance to any words used by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

Mr. Acting Speaker, he talks about excellence. The individual who has just cut 87 staff members at Red River Community College speaks about excellence. He speaks about equity when he has cut programs at Keewatin Community College and Assiniboine Community College, which is going to force our young people to leave their northern and rural communities and move to Winnipeg, because they cannot access that program in their local community.

An Honourable Member: That is not equity.

Mrs. Carstairs: That is not equity, Mr. Acting Speaker. He talks about openness. Well, it is very interesting to see a definition of openness from this minister because, in fact, it is the minister who will be responsible for appointing every single member of the trustees of each one of these governing bodies. Of that 12 that he is going to appoint, of course, only one is going to be a student and only one is going to be an employee. So the participation of those most affected by the decisions made by the boards of these colleges will be virtually unheard, because there is no openness when you are one of 12, because there is not the opportunity to have your voice heard.

He used the word "choice" in his opening remarks today about a bill which does not, indeed, result in additional choice being made available to those who would choose to attend these universities because it is this same minister who, through college cuts, has limited the choice available to students who

would apply to go on to post-secondary education in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Liberal Party will not be supporting The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act, and we will not be supporting this act for a number of reasons. First and foremost, there has been little thought, I believe, given to the effect that this will have on a lack of co-ordination in programming throughout our community colleges. I believe that there needs to be more of a hands-on relationship in terms of the local community and more arm's length from the government of the province of Manitoba but, when you establish an act in which the budgets are all approved and changed by the Minister of Education, then one must question the arm's length relationship which is supposed to be established here.

Secondly, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that the concept of having an independent board for each one of the community colleges will not, in the long term, lead to the kind of orderly growth that the minister addresses in his own remarks this afternoon. One of the difficulties that we have seen with our universities is that because they are autonomous, because they have their own boards, there is often a great deal of competition as each one wants to have that particular program located at their institution. The University of Winnipeg wants to offer the program. The University of Manitoba wants to offer the program. The university of Brandon wants to offer the program. The Collège Saint-Boniface would like to offer the program. The result is that, instead of working through a situation in which, with limited dollars, we can make the best program available in one or two, at the very most, institutions; we have them all competing for the prize money.

I believe that is also what is going to happen with the choice that the minister has made which is to establish an independent board of governors for each community college. I believe it would have been better to have established a province-wide board which would make decisions in light of the following criteria. Where is the best location to put this program? What is the most appropriate location in terms of the skill being taught?

It would appear to me that if we are looking at broadening our mining programs, for example, that one would examine very carefully the location of that training program in the North where the majority of mining activity takes place. When we are looking

for an agricultural component in a community college, one would look to Assiniboine Community College in Brandon which already has an expertise and where there would be a student body ready, willing and more than able to access that particular programming.

If, however, we have three different boards of governors, we are in serious danger of making that turf warfare far too dominant in future decisions made about the community college educational system in the province of Manitoba.

The community colleges in Manitoba have done an excellent job of educating young people in the province of Manitoba. They are, however, very small in relationship to other provinces. Manitoba, traditionally, educates as many students per capita at our university level as most other provinces in the nation. That is not true, however, for the number of students we educate within our community colleges. We have for a long time produced inadequate numbers of students and graduates at the community college level.

The community college system has been hampered in its growth by a variety of governments of the day, but no government has limited its growth to the degree that they were limited in this fiscal year. The community colleges in the province of Manitoba were, in fact, struck a very heavy blow. While we saw our universities receive increases on an average of 3.3 percent, every single one of our community colleges received substantial cuts in their overall funding, 7 percent, 5 percent from last year's budget to this year's budget. That will, indeed, mean, Mr. Acting Speaker, that fewer students will be trained in 1991-92 than were trained this year in the academic year 1990-1991.

It is somewhat depressing to me that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) would try and go on the offensive with respect to governance while, at the same time, he was gutting the community college system, and that he would also go about it in the manner to which he has in The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act. Not only are we concerned that there will be three boards, when we believe there should be one board. We are also concerned about the composition of those boards. There will be 12 board members, all appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, which means in essence by the Minister of Education. There will be only one student, but that student will not be elected by the student body; and there will be one employee, but it

would appear that individual is also not going to be appointed by the employee association.

Neither one of those two, for some reason known only to the Minister of Education, can serve as the chairperson or the vice-chairperson of the board of governors. They have been excluded, which, I think, works to their disadvantage and makes them somehow, or rather not quite equal in their membership of this board.

In addition, the presidents of the colleges will not be members of the board unless it is so determined by the Minister of Education. This is a very strange situation. I do not know of an academic institution that has a board of governors that does not make the president of that academic institution an automatic member of the board of governors. In addition, the board may formulate a budget; the board, much to my surprise, can even go in debt; but the board must submit its budget to the Minister of Education for approval or amendment, which, of course, does not lead to genuine autonomy.

* (1520)

In addition, the presidents of these institutions cannot be appointed by the board, which would at least give them some sense of their own autonomy, without, again, approval of the minister. One questions how that will differ from the present situation in the Province of Manitoba in which the Minister of Education appoints the presidents of the community colleges. So we have a bill which seems to have some substance but which, when one reads it in some detail, seems to include the direct participation of the Minister of Education on any decision of real importance in terms of the governance of these particular colleges.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to some of the rhetoric which I have already put on the record with respect to the minister's comments a few minutes ago, he also made the comment which perhaps I found the most outstanding of all. He made the comment and I will quote as much as I can because I was copying down the notes. He says he wants to make sure that the community college system grows in an orderly fashion. Well, I would like to challenge the Minister of Education as to how he thinks community colleges can grow in an orderly fashion when he has decided unilaterally that they will not grow in any fashion whatsoever. In fact, they will decrease in the academic year 1991-1992.

He also indicated, of course, that he wanted to put on the record the value that he placed on the 1,200 instructors at the community college level. One wonders how much value the 98 who received lay-off notices at Red River Community College felt the minister had placed on them. Presumably they were not considered of much value to the Minister of Education, since they were summarily dismissed by that same Minister of Education.

He talks also about the partnership which he wants to develop between labour and business and government and the community colleges. Well, that is very interesting, Mr. Acting Speaker, because we could not find those partnerships in the Estimates process. In fact, about the only partnership we could discover in the Estimates process was closing the programs in community colleges to force students to take those programs in private vocational colleges in the province of Manitoba.

When I specifically asked what the costs to the student would be of their being forced to take programs outside of the community colleges, the answer I got from the Minister of Education was he did not know. It would be logical therefore to assume that he did not particularly care as long as they were no longer his responsibility and he could force those young people to find their educational opportunities elsewhere.

It is interesting that they are so interested in the private training opportunities available in the province of Manitoba, because there is one significant difference between private training and public training through our community colleges. That is that there is always an auditing function that goes on of the programs offered. That auditing function not only has been going on by the Department of Education and now will continue through this legislation, but the auditing function will be prescribed in law in this very act that the minister introduces.

There is no auditing function about the quality of programming available in the vocational training programs. There is no auditing program of Success Business College. Nobody goes in from the Department of Education and says, what kind of equipment do you use, what kind of training program are you presenting? There is no auditing at all. That is one of the strengths of the community college system.

The minister said in the Estimates process that programs had to be constantly evaluated, programs have to be constantly rewritten so you are always offering programs which are up to date. Well, no one disagrees with that statement. In fact, that is exactly what should be going on in every single community college in the province of Manitoba. They should constantly be re-evaluating. They should be constantly challenging whether this program is valuable or that program is not valuable, whether this one is attracting students, whether that one is not attracting students.

If it is necessary for us to do that at the community college level, then we should be doing it in all educational institutions in the province of Manitoba. Unfortunately, we do not do that in private vocational colleges, but the Minister of Education is forcing more and more of our students to look toward those programs. Indeed, one of his very criteria for cutting programs was: Was that program available elsewhere? When he made his announcements in the Estimates process and told us exactly what programs were available, it was amazing how often a private vocational college came up as the alternative choice now open to the young people of the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if students wish to attend a private vocational college, then the attitude unfortunately has been, let the buyer beware, but a student who completes their high school education and enters into our community colleges should be given some guarantee of excellence in their programming, and there are only two ways to guarantee that excellence. You guarantee that excellence by ensuring that the instructor who is teaching that program has the qualifications necessary, and you guarantee that excellence by ensuring that there are adequate dollars so that the materials that are used in that curriculum are such that the child can, in fact, achieve the results that he or she needs to achieve.

What we have seen under this government has been a total lack of commitment to our post-secondary education students who wish to attend community colleges, and it is therefore sad and somewhat depressing that the only thing that the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) can do for the community colleges in the province of Manitoba is to submit a bill called The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act, surrounded with rhetoric when, in fact, everything that he is

doing in the province with regard to our community colleges is weakening the system, is making less equity, is creating fewer choices, is making the programs less relevant to the needs of the 21st Century; and his rhetoric will not respond, tragically, to the needs of the young people in the province of Manitoba.

I would like to conclude, Mr. Acting Speaker, with a reminder to each of the MLAs in this room that Manitoba does not have an enviable record with regard to post-secondary education. National studies show that Manitoba sends, per capita, the fewest number of students on to post-secondary educational institutions. The province of Nova Scotia is able to send 21 percent of its students on to post-secondary education. The province of Manitoba sends only 14.7 percent of our students on a per capita basis to post-secondary education institutions.

* (1530)

The tragedy of that is we are not going to be ready for the 21st Century, and the decisions made by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) with respect to the community college system will not enhance those opportunities. They have detracted from those opportunities, and nothing in this bill will make those opportunities more available. Indeed, they may, as was described to me by some teachers attending the community colleges conference this week in the province of Manitoba from across Canada—indicated to me that in Nova Scotia, they are very concerned about the number of governing bodies that they have in their community colleges and the lack of clear direction, the lack of a uniform body establishing goals and objectives necessary for them to meet the 21st Century. When they are already doing a far better job than we are, I cannot understand why we are taking a step that has been judged by many to be a regressive concept of the governance of community colleges. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise to discuss Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act.

I am sorry to say by way of prologue, my initial statement, that any initiative of this government in terms of education I simply do not trust in the first instance because I do not have any faith in this administration and its capacity to deliver either

legislation or structure or process that will improve education in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am sorry to have to say that, but I am afraid it is a reality. Actions of this government that we have seen since it has been elected in the majority situation have demonstrated that it is not education that is a priority. It is, in fact, their overriding obsession, their only obsession, with the debt and the management of the deficit that dictates every single decision and every single move that has been taken in any area, despite the rhetoric to the contrary that somehow education is a priority of this government and this administration.

This government has moved more to privatization in the area of education than any other area or any other field of activity in this administration. This is another example of privatization through the back door by this government, Mr. Acting Speaker. They have done it in every other component of education, be it their assistance to private schools, be it their private enterprise training, be it their collaboration with the federal government to totally privatize workplace job training. This is another example of it. There is no justification, no need cited in any reports that we have seen that would dictate that this necessarily has to be done, this course of action has to be followed. It has been recommended by their business community friends and their business community friends alone. That is the only justification given. We hear rhetoric to the contrary that somehow it is going to create greater partnerships or improve education. There are no substantive findings that indicate that. There are no studies that have been tabled.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have asked on several occasions for the minister to table the advisory committee report. He has refused to. I sent him letters and asked him to table it, and he has refused to. I asked him in the last Estimates process and he refused to. I asked him in Estimates this time and he refused to. Why, Mr. Speaker? Clearly, or it must be taken by lack of action in this area, that they are afraid to because the justification for what they are doing in this bill, Bill 49, will not stand up to serious debate.

A rather philosophical concern with this general bill, Mr. Speaker, is that all aspects and all components of government training and government education are now under the general

philosophy of market driven. Market driven runs every single activity entered into by this government, be it its private training, be it its Workforce 2000, be it community colleges, be it its initiatives at the university level.

There is no denying, Mr. Speaker, that there has to be more market-driven training. There is no question that studies and demographics dictate that, but when every component of your education system is totally geared towards market-driven activities, then you have serious, serious problems. That is what we see in this government. That is what we see in this bill. That is what we see in every single aspect of education and education training and education philosophy of this government. We have seen it at the university level. We have even seen it at the minister's talk at the public school level; there has to be more market-driven activities. Now we see it, totally, in this particular bill and this particular act.

I want to reiterate that we are not saying that there is not a place for market-driven training and market-driven activities. There is no question, but when the federal government is totally dominated by that concept, and you have a provincial government totally dominated by that concept, then the whole philosophy of education and flexibility, in fact, gets lost.

In fact, this minister argues that the act will provide more flexibility. I dare say it will be less flexibility by virtue of their total obsession with market-driven training. The danger of that, in our opinion, is that when all of your education system and your education mode moves towards market-driven training, we know what happens in the marketplace. Ten years or 15 years down the road we will have, who knows, let me pull a hypothetical figure out of the air, we will have 100,000 widget makers trained in Manitoba when there is no longer a need for widget makers.

That is what happens in the marketplace and that is what happens when it is totally market driven. The marketplace says yes, some of you die by the wayside. When all of your activities are market driven, when they are all geared towards that marketplace, when it is all, I dare suggest, short term economic, the results, not only to the education system but the results to the employees or the workers or the citizens of this country, can be devastating. That is what will happen when this

government proceeds on its obsession towards market-driven training.

Where is the education philosophy in this particular bill? I have had occasion to peruse and to draft legislation that deals with corporate models and this bill reads just like the corporate model of any corporate entity. Yes, I agree it has become—they have set up a body corporate, nothing in this bill about education-purposes goals. That is because the government's total mind set in this bill and in its general education philosophy is towards the corporate private sector approach.

Let us just call it what it is. It is a privatization, Mr. Speaker, of the community college system. That is what it is. That is what this bill is and this bill is a corporate structure. I have reviewed it in that regard and it reads like a statute that has been drafted for any corporate entity that this government is involved with. In fact, I dare say if you were to look through this bill, it reads like many of the statutes that I have had occasion to review. I know it does, in fact, because I have reviewed many of those statutes. The government says that this somehow will save costs and be more flexible. One of our major, major concerns is it will do neither.

Our other major concern is the way the board structure has been set up. The Lieutenant-Governor by Order-in-Council will appoint all board members. Yes, there will be a representative from the student body and yes, there will be a representative from the employees, whatever form or organization those employees may take. I dare say, given the experience of this government with other boards and agencies, we can well predict who will completely dominate membership of these boards. It will be the same groups, the same individuals who dominate the other boards appointed by this government, which will be the same narrow-minded, single-minded approach of this government to training and to education.

I am very concerned with the criteria that have been put forward for the selection and the representation by board members, Mr. Speaker. There is no criterion that really mandates board members to be representative of the community, and that is a major concern, because I am convinced—and I have to back that up with my experience on other boards, what we saw happening at the Universities Grants Commission, the recent appointment of the student

representative to the Universities Grants Commission, and what we have seen on other boards in other areas. I am very concerned.

* (1540)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the honourable member, but I am sure the honourable member would like to join with me and the other members of the Assembly in recognizing the presence here this afternoon of Mr. Bob Simpson, the MLA for York North, from the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon, sir.

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Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Kildonan.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, so given my experience of observing this government in this House, I have no confidence whatsoever that the board will not be anything but a reflection of, not only the philosophy, but one would dare say, the political membership of members opposite. That will seriously jeopardize the direction of the boards for these various bodies.

The act reads, Mr. Speaker, in a very schizophrenic manner. While the minister indicates that somehow these boards will be autonomous or not autonomous, the minister does retain a fair amount of power and a fair amount of direction. I guess it leads me—when I read the act, I am not quite certain what their intentions are other than knowing what the philosophical basis is for this particular act.

When I read this act, I wonder why they could not achieve what they are attempting to achieve through some form, albeit a changed one, of the existing structure—the structure that has served the students of Manitoba well, Mr. Speaker. They could, through administrative means, have achieved the same ends. That is the interesting point, because most of the reasons cited for this act are genuinely administrative by the minister, in terms of any documentation that I have seen.

They could have achieved the same ends through some kind of administrative change, from allowing the presidents of the universities to manage as presidents manage. It did not have to go to the

extent that they have of imposing a new structure, a new private structure, on the existing system. They could have achieved the same ends, but they chose not to do so. They chose to go the way, they will cite, of most other jurisdictions in the country.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the experiences of most other jurisdictions in the country have not necessarily always been positive with respect to this model of operation. In fact, I am advised that even at a recent Tory convention in Alberta, there was a great demand for a change to the patronage appointments of boards on the Alberta community colleges because of the way they were functioning.

The experience from Saskatchewan of the way labour relations have been handled and the way that people have been dealt with, real human beings, under their board governance system, would indicate that this government and this minister should take a step back and perhaps re-examine what they are doing and why they are doing it.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with a made-in-Manitoba solution. There is nothing wrong with a variation of the system we presently have in place, albeit allowing more flexibility for the various presidents of the community colleges to function and to do what presidents and managers are to do, and that is basically to manage within an administrative mode. That is an administrative decision, and they can do that.

There is nothing in this bill that effectively is going to educate the students of Manitoba any greater or that is going to really, by virtue of the way I read it, provide any more flexibility than could be achieved through another form, an approved form of administration and relationship between the Department of Education and the various community colleges.

There are a number of reasons, Mr. Speaker, why I do not trust the initiatives of the government in this particular bill or, as I indicated earlier, in any education initiative that they undertook. I would like to illustrate why that is the case, because it is not purely a philosophical, in fact it is not a philosophical or a political decision on my part.

It is the way that this process has been brought about. It is the way this bill has been introduced. It is the whole process that was followed. I cited earlier the fact that the minister has refused to table the report that indicated why college governance was being established.

That raises a question in my mind and, if that was not enough, the initiatives of this government in having programs cut and having people fired prior to the introduction of a system that somehow is supposed to provide economy, that is going to allow this system to do that and make its own decision, leads me to suspect the government's motives in this particular legislation.

If in fact the government was truly desiring to do what the minister has indicated they are doing, they would have left those decisions ultimately to the new board they are setting up, but they did not. They made these decisions prior to the tabling of this legislation, prior to the establishment of these boards. That causes me to be suspicious, highly suspicious of the government's motives, which is why I indicated initially in my comments that I do not trust this initiative at all.

Mr. Speaker, last Estimates process, the ones most recently concluded, and the ones prior to that, I raised with the minister two fundamental issues respecting the employees of the institutions, their pension rights and their status in terms of their collective agreement and their bargaining unit.

The minister had no answers for me last Estimates, nor did he have answers in his most recent Estimates, nor are there any answers in this bill. We are talking about thousands of people, we are talking about their lives, we are talking about their livelihood, we are talking about their future—no answers, no answers from this government, no answers from this minister.

That is not the way to deal with people; that is not the way to treat people. If you wish to demonstrate good will, if your intentions truly are in the best interests of all those concerned, then your actions should so demonstrate, but that is not the case—no word about what is going to happen to the pension rights, no word about what is going to happen to their collective bargaining rights and, on top of all that, we have seen literally hundreds of people let go, literally hundreds of students losing the right to take programs at these community colleges. So I think that we on this side of the House have very good cause for being suspicious of the government's actions and intentions in dealing with this particular bill, Bill 49.

Mr. Speaker, fundamentally in education, where we are in this province, be it in the public education system, the university system, the college system

or any other form of training, the fundamental issue, of course, is funding. We are aware, and we have made reference on numerous occasions, that the province is in a very serious fiscal financial position. There is no question about that.

This government campaigned on an issue of education, a No. 1 priority. I have heard it virtually every day in this House since we have been elected, and yet what they did to the community college system in the last budget clearly demonstrated that they—is a clear demonstration to me—have other intentions with respect to the community college system that do not reflect the minister's comments when he introduced this bill for second reading.

I truly believe their intention is to privatize as much of the system as they can, be it private training or the community college system, and to take as much out of the public sector, in terms of education, as is possible. You do that by starving the system financially, by putting in place this private structure and by cutting and slashing of the infrastructure and of the system.

You know, Mr. Speaker, they talk about efficiencies in the private sector and they talk about how this will be more flexible. I just want to relate a specific instance and a specific program at Red River Community College that really shows what this government's true intentions are in terms of education. It is the ESL program.

They talk about operating more efficiently, they talk about catering to the demands of the public and meeting those needs, and yet what they have done with the ESL is totally contrary. There is a waiting list of 200 students to get into ESL, Red River. What did this government do? It cut half of the programs, it laid off half of the teachers and that somehow was more efficient and where are the alternatives?

* (1550)

They say, well, the alternative is in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 in terms of their ESL, a program that was able to be saved only by the fact that the public lobbied and finally convinced the government that the program should continue, but having said that, they say, well, the alternative is to go to ESL, to Winnipeg School Division No. 1 where, in fact, there is a line-up as well.

Mr. Speaker, their actions demonstrate some other kind of motive, an ulterior motive, but certainly not a motive that is designed to better educate the people of Manitoba. ESL, to me, typifies, in very

graphic form, this government's attitude toward education. Fundamentally, what I believe they are trying to do is funnel ESL into private sector training and get it right out of the public sector, like they are trying to do almost all other aspects of education.

I think that is what is happening with ESL, because ESL private training institutions are going to be springing up and are springing up in the city. That is what is going to continue, and they are giving money to private companies to do ESL training on the job where people already have jobs, as opposed to those who do not have jobs and who are waiting and trying to get into programs like Red River. That is the tragedy of what they have done and that is the real human effect of their initiatives.

Another reason that I do not trust the initiatives in this particular bill is there was no real consultation with the communities and with people prior to the introduction of this bill. When the Yukon introduced a governance or college model, as I understand it, they carried out systematic and complete consultations—but not this government. They undertook a study, a private study, that they still will not table and reveal in this Legislature, and then they have introduced legislation. It kind of reminds me of what is happening in education finance in the public school sector and other areas, but I will diverge if I get into that.

So we really do not know what the public wants. We do know there is a problem. We do know there is a need for change. We do know that this government has introduced a bill, based on their study, that has been called for by, as far as I can see, their friends in the business community. I am not discounting the advice of their friends in the business community. What I am discounting is the fact that seems to be the only people who they are listening to with respect to this kind of legislation.

I have indicated earlier that the problem is that this government seems to be gearing towards total market-driven philosophy in all areas of education. They have done it at the high school model; they have done it at the university level; and now they are doing it completely and totally at the community college level. The result will be a one-sided approach to education and an approach that does not include any valid approach to education or any education philosophy.

What is the philosophy behind education? Why should we be training people? What should we be

training people to do? Are any of these questions answered in this bill? No. All we hear is market-driven courses. All we hear is governance that somehow will be more flexible. They keep demanding it is more flexible. They keep saying it is more flexible, but I do not see any indication in this bill that it will be flexible at all. Where is the education mandate in here? Where is the education philosophy in here? It is nonexistent.

Mr. Speaker, there is an incredible series of outstanding questions with respect to this bill as it relates to education, as it relates to community college governance. How will this attract, for example, more high school students to go into the community college system? Are there any answers for that? This purportedly is one of the major deficiencies in our system. We have to attract more high school students into the system. Fair enough. How does this particular model do that? It does not.

Why and how can the system be more responsive? Why would this be any more responsive than a system that is better administrated than one we have now? How is this more responsive? Why is it more flexible to have an additional body, an additional board, an additional decision-making body between the minister, the department, the college and the students? How does that contribute to more flexibility and a better system?

Why is there so much discussion surrounding this particular bill and the needs of business and not a discussion about the needs of the most important people involved in this decision, the students? Where are the students? Where is the involvement of the students, or where is the involvement of labour? Where is the involvement of the present education community that are involved in this, Mr. Speaker? They are not existent.

Mr. Speaker, will full-time staff become part-time staff under this kind of legislation like has happened in other jurisdictions? More fundamental, in returning to the rights of people and the very real issues affecting people, the thousands that are affected by this, will they even have collective bargaining rights? What will be the form those will take? If one had a serious conspiracy approach to this legislation, one would think that this might be an attempt to get rid of the MGEA as a bargaining unit, and I know it has been suggested.

What about other rights of the individuals, Mr. Speaker?—staying on that point just for a moment. I have asked the minister, two Estimates processes now: What about pensions? What about severance pay? What about sick leave? What about long-term disability? What about dental plans? What about vacations? What about job security? What about relocation expenses? What about holidays? What about career options? What about group life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment? What about insurance? What about ambulance and semi-private hospital plan? What about extended health benefits plan? What about Blue Cross? What about seniority? What about education leave?

These are real flesh-and-blood issues that affect the thousands of people who are involved, who are employed by this. Is any care taken to discuss these with—is there any indication in this bill that, in fact, these matters will be dealt with prior to putting in place this privatization of community colleges? There is not, Mr. Speaker. These are real issues affecting real people, and it is something that this government fails over and over again to take cognizance of.

They cut ESL programs for whatever means they decide and they forget about the couple of hundred students on the waiting list, about the couple of hundred students that planned to take it next year. What about those human beings? What about their right to work? What about the contribution they have made to education in the last many years? Of course, fundamentally the real issue is education and the entire education philosophy and how it affects the community colleges.

Mr. Speaker, this act, and the actions of this government indicate clearly that this government has no approach to education, has no philosophy vis-a-vis education, except for the overriding Tory sort of dominated thinking about market-driven training—everything for the marketplace. The marketplace will decide everything. -(interjection)- If the member had been listening earlier, he would have heard me—and, in fact, perhaps I will repeat some of my comments for his own edification. There is nothing wrong with marketplace training, but when every aspect of your education system is dominated by market training, then you have a serious problem, and the member ought to know that.

The federal government in all of its initiatives, the provincial government in all of its training sectors including its work in the high school public school system is moving totally toward market driven. The result will be, as I indicated earlier, 20,000 or 50,000 unemployed widget makers because the marketplace said 10 years ago we needed widget makers, and they will be sitting doing nothing.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is what the minister indicated earlier. We need more variety, and the problem is we do not have variety by virtue of this particular bill. We will have 10 or 12 Tory appointees on the board of directors doing the same thing that the Tory appointees are doing at Workforce 2000, doing the same thing the Tory appointees are doing in the federal government in their work training place, doing the same thing the Tory appointees are doing in Universities Grants Commission. There will probably be no flexibility whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, if the government wanted this to be truly reflective of the community, they would have put it in the act. While there is provision in the act and I know I cannot deal with specifics, there is no intention in this act to mandate, and I underline the word "mandate," diversity in terms of the appointments to the board of directors.

* (1600)

Mr. Speaker, of course, as I indicated earlier, funding is all important in terms of any education initiatives that one takes place. I have roundly criticized the minister in all areas of education, because almost everyone of the initiatives announced—many called for by us on this side of the House—and none of them contain the essential funding arrangements necessary to put the system in place.

We have seen over and over again that a minister will announce policy, but there will be no funding arrangement in place. Mr. Speaker, with respect to this act, the failing is that prior to the introduction of this act there was a devastating cut in the funding to community colleges. There is no mention of any kind of funding levels, albeit allowing the community colleges a set of some kind of trust arrangements to raise their own funds, something that we would like to query the minister on when we have the opportunity to deal with clause by clause in the Committee of the Whole.

So, Mr. Speaker, we see major difficulties in this act by this government. The minister said constantly that throwing money at solutions, and education will not necessarily provide solutions, but cutting back money and firing people prior to introducing new changes certainly does not do any better.

As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, there are alternatives that could be entered into. Since the major reasons given for introducing this legislation are administrative, certainly measures could be put in place of an administrative nature that would allow for the same end result that the minister says he is trying to achieve without this radical change that will affect so many people's lives, that will affect the future of so many students in this province and that puts the livelihood and the experience of many Manitoba educators and Manitoba students in jeopardy.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, you did not have to reinvent the wheel in order to achieve the ends that you so desired, unless as I suspect, the real agenda is to continue this government's overriding goal of privatization of the public education system in this province. Clearly, we have seen in every education initiative undertaken by this government a move towards privatization of the education system, be it the public education system, be it at the university level, be it now at community colleges, and I suspect that is the real goal of - (interjection) - I appreciate the comments from the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns).

Mr. Speaker, I am asking the government to reconsider this bill, to reconsider these initiatives, to release the report, to open up the whole concept to public discussion, to involve not just their blue chip committee and friends, but to allow educators, to allow students, to allow all members of the public and the community of Manitoba to be involved in the decision-making process.

If they must persist in this action, to look at alternatives that could be achieved without this particular legislation, but if they are persisting, to at least come to some kind of arrangement with all of those involved prior to the implementation of this legislation, to satisfy their concerns, to look after their rights so that they are not in limbo for months and indeed years while they try to determine what is happening, to put in place an arrangement so if they are going to have boards they are truly

representative, to give some indication as to what is happening.

Above all, to provide a proper funding arrangement, something that members on the other side, and I have quoted this House at least a dozen times comments of the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) with respect to community college education funding. I have quoted at least a dozen times his deploring initiatives of the previous government with respect to college funding, and at least the funding by the previous administration was at least advancing not retrenching, which is something we have seen in this particular budget. Cuts of millions and millions of dollars. At least provide adequate funding to this the present college system or any college system that they are going to incorporate.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that we will do our utmost to try to have the government review its ill-conceived actions and to proceed in a proper fashion to deal with, if they have an administrative problem, to deal with it in an administrative sense and not jeopardize career livelihood and students and many others and as well to make the proper decision from an education standpoint, not from a one-sided philosophical standpoint and view. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 41—The Public Schools Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), Bill 41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur des écoles publiques, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am going to deal in my remarks today with Bill 41, but also touch briefly on Bill 42 because, in fact, these bills work together. You have to amend Bill 41 to change The Public Schools Act and then you have to amend Bill 42 in order to change The Public Schools Finance Board,

but the purpose of the acts is identical. They just need to go through two bills in their change process.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 41 addresses a myriad of education issues, but I think that it is fair to say that the most important aspect of this bill is to do what the Provincial Auditor recommended several years ago. What the Provincial Auditor did at that particular point in time was to say that the Public School Finance Board had responsibility for activities that were being, in fact, totally looked after by the Department of Education, and in order to ensure appropriate accountability, it was time to return those functions to the Department of Education. In that we have absolutely no objection.

We think that the Provincial Auditor was correct in identifying the needs for proper accountability and that is why we will support that aspect of both the amendments to Bill 41, which is The Public Schools Act itself, thereby giving the Minister of Education those powers. We will also support in its entirety Bill 42 which takes from the Public Schools Finance Board the powers it has now bequeathed to the Department of Education.

However, there are also some sections of Bill 41 which cause us some problems and if we can, quite frankly, deal with those things either through the minister's statements in closing the bill debate or in the committee stage, I think that quite frankly we can find our way to support Bill 41 as well.

However, I wish to address some of those issues above and beyond the Auditor's recommendations which are found in Bill 41. For example, the bill certainly makes the legal authority possible now to establish the Boundaries Review Commission. We are very much in favour of a Boundaries Review Commission. It has been too many decades since school division boundaries have been reviewed in the province of Manitoba. I have been advocating that review since 1986 and therefore this bill, in this section which gives the legislative authority to the province to put into place such a commission, is welcome by the members of the Liberal Party who sit in this House. We look forward to a review commission which will, indeed, be as broadly based as possible.

*(1610)

Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns because in the past I do not think the Minister of Education has put into place the kind of broad-ranging review that I think is necessary. He has, for example, set into

place something which was not necessary by law, a committee which is going to review legislation with respect to the public school system, and that review process is going to begin some time later this spring or early in the fall.

I spent some time in Estimates debating with the Minister of Education that particular commission, and I was somewhat disturbed that there was not a representation on that commission of someone who is only a parent. It is true there were many on the commission who were parents, but there were many who were not. There was no one on that commission who did not have another vested interest in education. In other words they were a principal or they were a teacher or they were a trustee.

I wanted somebody on that commission who quite frankly could relate to the parent who appeared before them without any knowledge of the educational system, because I frequently get complaints from parents, and I am sure many of the members of the government do as well, who say, I do not know how the system works.

I think they need to have somebody on that commission who also does not know how the system works so that person can, in the writing and drafting of a report, keep saying, yes, but that does not make sense to parents who do not have a detailed knowledge about education.

I am hoping that the Boundaries Review Commission, which has been given the legal authority, will indeed contain such a representative or more than one who can advocate on behalf of parents and therefore children from their very special perspective.

In addition, I am very concerned about a provision in this bill, subsection 43(2.1), which addresses the whole transportation issue. Now we presently in the province of Manitoba have a very broadly based review on transportation. I cannot understand why the minister wants this change at this particular point in time when his own committee has yet to report about transportation. Yet it indicates that the school board can enter into a contract with "any person."

Now the commission which is presently evaluating transportation in the province of Manitoba is looking at the whole issue of contracting out. What this seems to permit in its amendment to The Public Schools Act is the ability to contract out

before we have heard from the review commission that is investigating contracting out.

My party would be very reluctant to give school divisions this power at this particular point in time before we have seen the final review of this report until we have seen whether contracting out is considered to be a viable option. I have grave concerns about contracting out of school busing and the lack of control that school divisions will then have over private individuals providing that busing to students in any one school division.

Mr. Speaker, we will find it necessary, if the minister does not himself delete this portion from the bill, to introduce an amendment which would delete this portion from the bill.

On the other hand, subsection 48.1 is one that we welcome very much. It expands the right of teachers in the province of Manitoba to take part in elections, to receive leaves of absence and to be reinstated by their employers, something which we think is long overdue and has been open to civil servants for some time. We think that is a positive move and hopefully will give a direction to those employers in the private sector who, to this point in time, have been in some circumstances very reluctant to guarantee any re-employment to their employees when they have indicated that they would wish to have a leave of absence in order to participate in the democratic process.

Regulations for grants from private schools, Section 60, which will provide some uniformity and fairness to the system, we are indeed in favour of those particular changes and will therefore support that particular section of the bill.

There has been a definition change with regard to support grants in the legislation. It is something which causes us some concern, but we think the minister can quite frankly address those concerns in the committee stage. We just want him to be on notice that we will be asking questions in more detail than is found in the bill as to exactly what will be the effect of those definition changes on the grants presently given by the Department of Education.

We welcome the increased accountability. We refer to Section 173, for example, as the St. James-Assiniboia clause in our caucus, because we believe that it is just that kind of accountability that was obviously lacking that, hopefully, this section of the bill will seek to redress and will bring into being appropriate procedures which will make

sure that the Province of Manitoba is given accurate recording of the number of students who are enrolled in schools and, therefore, will receive their fair share of government revenues in terms of support to education.

We have a question with respect to Section 176, and that is that the current act deals with school division appeals of Public Schools Finance Board decisions. Our question is, that if we are only referring here to appeals based on operating grants and now those operating grants will be looked after exclusively by the Department of Education, we wonder why the removal of the appeal procedure to the Public Schools Finance Board was not replaced with some form of appeal procedure to the Department of Education. If it was adequate and is deemed necessary to have that in place for the Public Schools Finance Board, why is it not adequately necessary for it also to be in place for the Department of Education which will be then given those additional powers?

Mr. Speaker, we ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) to consider the suggestions and problems and concerns that we have raised in this debate, and we believe and hope that they can be adequately resolved so that this bill can go to committee in a very short period of time. I think that most of the questions can be addressed either through correspondence directly between the critics and the Minister of Education or, certainly, in the committee stage of this bill. My party will not be putting up any further speakers on either Bills 41 or 42 and would welcome it going to the committee stage with due dispatch.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Bill 42—The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach), Bill 42, The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission des finances des écoles publiques, standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune, standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk).

Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Also standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin, who has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to continue my remarks on this bill. It will take about 15 minutes or so for the Minister of Health's (Mr. Orchard) edification. He was not here to hear my remarks last time. I should really give him a brief review of major points. I know he did comment on the speech, and he was very pleased with it, so I am very happy I have met the first test. It is always important for me to utilize the member for Morden, I guess it is—

An Honourable Member: Pembina.

Mr. Plohman: —Pembina, insofar as—I always get mixed up where he is twinning that highway there, because if you can pass his test, it is certainly an important one. I always look for his support on my speeches. It is extremely important to me.

Insofar as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), he has introduced this bill, and I pointed out during the first portion of my speech, the numerous errors and inconsistencies in his dissertation before this House.

* (1620)

I wanted to just continue briefly the remarks I was making about the section dealing with joint management in the department, of being a very important development and, of course, one that our government had supported with Native people and certainly one of the finer examples of management of our wildlife and, of course, we are speaking about wildlife management areas.

The minister talked about this as being all inclusive, one of the most inclusive terms, the wildlife management area. He did not describe what he meant by inclusive. The fact is that many other designations are much more restrictive such as a wildlife refuge area, ecological reserves. These are areas that are designated with very

restricted activities that can be allowed. At the same time wildlife management areas up to this point in time have been largely restricted as well, although there have been examples of limited development taking place and licences given for that purpose and regulations made from time to time for that purpose.

However, what the minister is doing in this case is asking the Legislature to give him sweeping powers to make rather significant decisions. If we look at the one example that is on the books at this time, and that is the Oak Hammock development by Ducks Unlimited, rather significant decisions about other uses for wildlife management areas than was intended when they were so designated, ones that could in fact threaten their very existence as wildlife management areas and in this case Oak Hammock, one of the finest in North America for wild game, particularly birds, and one that we all feel very proud of and we would not want to see threatened. I do not even think the government would, and yet in the interests of development they are prepared to frequently look the other way even if it means threatening the environment. That is what could very well be the case in this particular instance.

As a matter of fact, when I suggested to the minister that what he should have in this act is a requirement that before the minister can make a decision about a development in a wildlife management area, in the broad terminology that is used in this act, before the minister considers something appropriate which is all that he has to do to make the designation, he would have to first have it reviewed extensively through an environment procedure and that should be noted in this act. They may argue, the government, that in some instances this would be automatic under The Environment Act, but the important thing here is to clearly outline which act takes precedent and that the minister's decisions could not be made in absence of that, that he could simply not go ahead with the stroke of a pen and allow some major developments, such as the Oak Hammock development, without first having had the environmental review.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): You can trust us in the Legislature.

Mr. Plohman: Now, the member for Pembina, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), talks about trusting the minister. We know that ministers come and go. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) talked

about himself as being, his words were, this little Mennonite minister, as if somehow that meant that we were supposed to trust him to the nth degree with this decision. -(interjection)- I think there is a conflict of interest now for the other members speaking here.

The thing is, what the minister was trying to do is to leave the impression that he would never do anything that we could possibly disagree with, anybody could possibly disagree with, that would be harmful, that he should have our full trust. Well, I want to tell you that I think it is better to be enshrined in legislation, and our party feels strongly that this should be enshrined in legislation that there is a requirement for exhaustive environmental hearings in major developments such as this and that they be independent and fair hearings and not conducted in the way the Clean Environment Commission conducted this hearing.

Now the minister, in the last sitting when we were discussing this bill, said, all the hearings took place on this one. Yes, there was a hearing; yes, there were representations made, but no, there was not any heed given to those presentations in terms of the final decision. As a matter of fact, it was not a unanimous decision by the Clean Environment Commission.

There were a lot of concerns raised about the decision that was ultimately made by the chairperson in terms of breaking a tie. There was concern about the fact that a major report that was commissioned was totally ignored by the Clean Environment Commission, the Bovey report, which was as I understand most extensive and which outlined a number of major legitimate concerns, but was done too late for it to be included in the initial considerations of the Clean Environment Commission. These were ignored. This report was ignored by the Clean Environment Commission even though it brought to light a number of serious concerns about the potential long-term impacts of this development. I do not think that means that there was a fair-minded analysis and decision that was made.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Did they get a licence?

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Plohma: The Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) asked, did they get a licence? Yes, that is the point. They got a licence even though there

were serious concerns made and there were differences of opinions, serious ones, in the Clean Environment Commission itself on the decision.

So the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) realizes that there has to be, in order to satisfy the concerns of the public, an independent analysis done, certainly, so that it can be above question that the government has not interfered politically in the decisions that were made. Now, I am not suggesting that the -(interjection)- Well, the Minister of Highways talks about coming from me. I was one of the fairest Highways ministers in terms of not considering the politics of providing Highways projects in all areas of this province. I certainly do not see that in this minister's Highways program. We have, Mr. Acting Speaker, undertaken major projects throughout the province regardless of how the people voted. We did not follow the doctrine of the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), and when he says that the -(interjection)- Well, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) knows that.

When we began the fine work towards Beausejour, the twinning of 44, all on the basis of the traffic counts and on the requirements to prevent accidents and the conditions that exist on the highways in that area, it was very unsafe. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) knows that they are very unsafe, and he has been dragging his feet getting the job done there. I have been going up to Beausejour, and I have relatives there, and the work is not getting done, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is very, very slow. As a matter of fact, I was disappointed in this budget in that in the Highways program there was not more for 44 in that program.

I am diverting a bit from the major issues that are before us in this bill, Mr. Acting Speaker. I am supposed to be dealing with Bill 38, and I want to conclude my remarks which will—my time will be running out in about five or so minutes—to just emphasize some of the major points that I believe must be considered when a bill such as this is brought before the House. That is, what is missing by the minister is that what he is doing here is bringing a bill to satisfy one particular project. He admitted in his remarks earlier that, when there was a need for some other use in a wildlife management area, regulations could, in fact, be brought in and were brought in by successive ministers and were not challenged over the past 10 years. He gave examples. So, in fact, if there was a minor development, fine.

In this case, because it is so major and broad in nature, the minister is asking for sweeping powers that I do not even think the former Minister of Natural Resources would have resorted to. He would not have asked the Legislature. He would not have been that bold as this Minister of Natural Resources to ask for these kinds of sweeping powers that would give the minister the right by himself to, in fact, allow major construction projects in wildlife management areas in this province—unheard of in previous times, this kind of sweeping power to the Minister of Natural Resources without any reference to environmental controls, to independent analysis, and in full revelation of the denial of information that came forward which raised legitimate concerns about this development.

* (1630)

Therefore, I think that the minister should be prepared to, in fact, seek amendments to this bill as he goes to the committee to respond to the concerns that are raised, which undoubtedly will be raised, Mr. Acting Speaker. We have no doubt that there will be many concerns raised by groups when they come before the legislative committee dealing with this bill. They will bring a great deal of wisdom for the minister even as those people who came before the Clean Environment Commission and spoke but were not listened to. They once again will bring those arguments forward. There is no doubt in my mind that they will do that.

They will express forcefully and emphatically the concerns of the environmental conscience of our province. At that time, the minister would be well advised to temper the sweeping powers somewhat so that, in the future, major developments that do take place will automatically have to be referenced to an environmental process that would be seen as fair and unbiased.

The minister may perceive himself as being fair and unbiased, but we have seen examples where he and his colleagues have, indeed, not always been completely fair and unbiased. As a matter of fact -(interjection)- Now, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) may dispute that, but he has to remember that he is under the influence of members like the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), for example, who is one of the -(interjection)- the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) as well—most obvious examples of allowing political colouring of his thinking to get in the way

with the decisions that are made, to colour and paint the process of decision making.

You know, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) may very well want to make his decisions in an unbiased way, but he has to realize that he is putting it in the hands, as well, of those colleagues who have demonstrated in this House a total disregard for the objective needs of the people. Instead, to make decisions based strictly on the colour of the voting card and the signs, Mr. Acting Speaker, and on the colour of the signs that they have put up in election time—certainly the way people vote, as the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) said so clearly and regrettably in this House, regrettably for all of us, I think, and many of his colleagues, that they would, in fact, hear their colleague say that in this House, I say, let us temper this. Let us call a spade a spade.

What the Minister of Natural Resources should be doing is bringing in a new act calling it the Oak Hammock Ducks Unlimited facility act, so that, in fact, he would be upfront and open and above board with the people of Manitoba as to precisely what he wants to do, rather than giving himself the power for all kinds of these decisions in the future that may be even more sweeping than the one at Oak Hammock, in terms of its impact and potential impact on the migratory birds which are so important.

I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, those are important points that this minister has to watch for as he listens to the people and hears what they have to say and amends his thinking and that of his colleagues, hopefully, in the hearing process that will take place. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order. As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk).

Mr. Plohma: I just want leave that the bill remain standing, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Are we agreed that the bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River? -(interjection)- Bill 38, yes.

Bill 44—The Public Utilities Board Amendment Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of

Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Bill 44, The Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Régie des services publics), is it agreed that this will remain standing in the name of the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton)?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Agreed.

Bill 43—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), Bill 43, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail), standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Stand? Is there leave? Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Government House Leader, what are your intentions now, sir?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, would you call the remainder of the bills, starting from the beginning of the Order Paper, please?

Bill 5—The Mental Health Amendment Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), Bill 5, The Mental Health Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale), standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Agreed.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Acting Speaker, I wish to speak to Bill 5. I take the opportunity to speak on this bill because it gives me a chance to address some of the issues and concerns of programs and services. Whether we are talking about mental health or education, social services or policing programs or whatever, the fact remains that the level of accessibility to programs and services in the North and rural areas just does not compare with the level of programs and services that are available in the South. Whether you are looking at education, for example, research material being

available in the North, it is just not there. Whether you are looking at mental health, which is what I want to speak on this afternoon.

I received some correspondence from some members of the Canadian Mental Health Association here in Manitoba, but I guess it depends on how the term mental health or mental illness is defined.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, they gave us, just as they did to the Deputy Minister of Health some time in the fall, I believe, or last summer, the fact that mental health affects more Canadians every year than all other health problems combined, including cancer, AIDS and heart disease. Again, that depends on the way the term "mental illness" is defined, but that is what was given to us by the members of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

* (1640)

I just wanted to start off by saying, Mr. Acting Speaker, that when I was chief I used to, on a regular basis, come across situations where we seemed to be running into a dead-end wall when it came to trying to access services and programs, such as mental health. Just from my band alone I will give you an example. We had four members of our band whose families became so frustrated with the system that they came to a chief and council meeting one time and literally pleaded and begged our council to do something in terms of trying to access services for their family members.

As it turned out, unfortunately in the end we lost two of those band members by way of them committing suicide. It was not until after about three months of going from one office to another that I was able to eventually bring the two remaining ones to the South in order for them to get some treatment and counselling.

Also those were members of our band, but I also have some information here that was written by another constituent of mine in town where she was trying to describe to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health in August of 1990—I am using her terms now—the deplorable shemozzle of mental health care in the North, particularly in The Pas. She was particularly reciting a recent incident that—using her words—left her in such a state as to almost require care for herself because she was trying to look after and care for one of her family members.

Her issue at the time was that when she was trying to get her son admitted to the hospital there were some problems because there was only the hospital there, there were no mental health workers, there were no programs and services for this person to go to. In the end, she brought him to the hospital a total of six times. Each time he went to the hospital, this person was given some medication to at least calm him down for the moment or for a short while. Then she goes on to describe her last trip into the hospital, where her son again became very ill. Later, by a psychiatrist, it was identified that the reason her son became so violently ill in the hospital on the last visit was probably a reaction to the medication that this person was receiving each time that he visited the local hospital.

Her concern, and I think the concern of everybody in the North and in the rural area, is that the emergency medical doctor on call suggested, and they are still suggesting today, that in a larger facility such as those that will be available in the South, like in Winnipeg, this person would definitely have been admitted to some kind of facility, whether it was a medical hospital or some other facility. She went on to explain that the Emergency Measures Organization generally is allowed to admit patients in the out-patient department until the doctor arrives in the morning.

I mean, these are the kind of services that are just not there in the North. As well, there was an attending doctor at that time who saw a need for admittance, but he was turned down because, like I said, there were no facilities for this particular person.

Then she went on to point out that, if something was not done very quickly, she was going to do something—whatever she was going to do. She also gave us a list of recommendations in order of priority. I think the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) probably has those in his files somewhere—and this coming from a person who could not be more qualified than anybody, counselling the community, having raised a family member who had this illness.

Anyway, one of her recommendations, which I happen to agree with, is a 24-hour crisis response team, possibly a mobile unit, that will respond to the problems or crises in the community first and foremost, and then counselling in an office as a second priority.

This could easily be accomplished by housing the existing provincial mental health workers, if we had any, with psychiatric training along with an additional maybe two, three staff people in the hospital. These individuals would receive training in community response and possibly a change of attitude towards priorities in mental health care. They would also have experience in child and adolescent psychology.

The structure of the hospital probably would require some minor redesign or addition to the facility. Also, the designated hospital beds would have to be—some beds would have to be designated along with some psychiatric nursing capability. It probably would require, again, some redesigning of the facility in a minor way.

The other recommendation that came forth was an on-site psychiatrist or trained psychiatric nursing assessment team, or both, or counsel at the very least by telephone or, as is starting to be done in education, by TV, access to major hospitals in the city.

The other recommendation that was brought forth was that housing be provided for anywhere from six to eight individuals with some staff operating 24 hours a day, along with a day work program.

* (1650)

This, then, would not seem to us to be a tremendous cost to improve the situation from the level of the quality of service that is there now, the accessibility, the kinds of programs and services that are available. Even if we were to do only those four items it would improve the situation immensely, because when you go from zero to one it is an improvement.

In order that everything runs smoothly, a co-ordinated mental health system is, as I suggested, imperative in the North, not having to come to Winnipeg every time there is a problem. Then we would also have to have the ability to co-ordinate the transfer from hospital to community, looking after doctor appointments, for example, looking after medication requirements, housing requirements, and so on. For example, groups or individuals would help to prevent a vicious circle of continuous hospital submissions.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that one case that I just recited, again, unfortunately, last summer the same person, just like those two band members whom I just talked about, the same person ended up

committing suicide, a very, very tragic situation. That is the reality of our situation in the North. Services are just not available and—

An Honourable Member: Mr. Acting Speaker, could we get a little bit of order in here?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order.

Mr. Lathlin: I have another case where another constituent is talking about—by the way, the individual who I am talking about is a volunteer board member of the Canadian Mental Health Association here in Manitoba—the reason he became involved in the Canadian Mental Health Association was again because of his personal experiences with the way his son became ill and, in the end, ended up committing suicide. I do not think people commit suicide because they are mentally ill. I think people commit suicide because in the end they lose—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. Might I ask all members if they want to carry on a conversation besides the honourable member speaking, that they do so in the loges or outside of the Chamber, please. Thank you.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Speaker, as I was saying, people generally do not commit suicide because they are mentally ill. I think people end up committing suicide because there is just a lack of facilities, lack of programs and services and, in the end, not only the individual loses hope but also the whole family begins to—support begins to disintegrate because of the frustration that sets in after having to live with a situation like that.

I know, I personally would not want to be in a situation like that although, as I told this Chamber, I have had experience dealing with the governments and trying to assist individuals to get some kind of attention from professionals, and so on, getting them admitted to facilities here in the South. So I think, generally, people want to live to be successful, to enjoy life; but then after years of frustration and degradation and isolation, people begin to lose hope.

This constituent that I am talking about, part of the problem was, to get help meant that the family would have to leave the community. Each time the family left the community, of course, connections with family, friends and the community, in general, are disconnected and the continuing relationships are severed, and people begin to feel they are living on their own. That is why they begin to lose hope.

I think people with mental health problems often do not get credit for what they can do. The problem seems to be that nobody really listens to them. I know that was the case in the examples that I just recited here, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I think if we could have more programs and services being made available to northern communities and in the rural areas, then we would find our communities becoming more stabilized in the sense that they would feel comfortable that those programs and services are indeed available right within the community. It is not a pleasant situation when you have to go into a house because family members have come in to ask you for your assistance and having to deal with a death that has just occurred because of suicide.

Before concluding, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to say that although consultation I understand has not been completed we would generally support the bill as far as it goes.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please.

Mr. Lathlin: In concluding, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would just like to reiterate and re-emphasize that I think the government would have to come up with programs and services that—

Point of Order

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): A point of order, Mr. Acting Speaker, there is a lot of noise in the Chamber. I am sitting right beneath the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), and I cannot hear what he is saying because members are shouting at each other across the floor. Could they not have the simple courtesy to listen to their own members, if not members on the other side of the House, to what is being said in the Chamber?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Thank you very much. I remind all members that if you have conversation to carry on, would you please use the loges or the outside chambers that the debate may continue. Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Lathlin: Finally, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would also like to say one more thing before closing and that is to mention the myth that mentally ill people belong in institutions. I do not want to create the impression here that every time somebody becomes ill that we admit that person into a facility.

* (1700)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. When this bill is again before the House, the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) will have 17 minutes remaining in his speech.

The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for private members' hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Res. 20—Community-Based Out-Patient Clinics

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), that

WHEREAS the province cannot support the current rate of expenditures for our health care system; and

WHEREAS inefficient allocation of acute care beds has resulted in waiting lists of several months; and

WHEREAS waiting lists for surgeries have resulted in proliferation of private surgical clinics which further fragments our health care system and is resulting in a two-tiered system of health care delivery; and

WHEREAS many procedures done within hospitals could be undertaken by community-based out-patient clinics; and

WHEREAS studies have revealed that out-patient community clinics are a cost-efficient alternative to costly institutional care; and

WHEREAS community-based out-patient clinics would relieve some of the stress on acute care beds; and

WHEREAS community-based care is an effective means of delivering quality health care.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Health to refocus the health care system in Manitoba away from expensive institutional care to community-based health support services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Minister of Health to develop and present to the Legislature an action program for the establishment of community-based clinics to reduce the pressure on the hospitals and emergency departments and ensure quality care by utilizing existing resources in Manitoba.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am very happy to present this resolution on behalf of my caucus. I want to re-emphasize that in 1988 during the election campaign we had one of our election promises, and that was to establish the community-based clinics, and we want to continue to follow that route.

I would outline why I think the community-based clinics are one of the most effective ways and why I think that the community-based clinics are one of the health care deliveries more for the future.

I would start by saying that we were in fact very pleased that on May 7 in fact the St. Boniface Hospital, along with the Department of Health, has established two programs. That is one of the right ways of doing things, and we applaud the minister for taking such a step and adopting some of our proposals.

I think that will be cost effective, would save us money in the long run, will establish some basis of how we can develop the community-based clinic concept. Because the concept is so flexible and it depends upon the province, the province depends upon the community needs, there is not such a fixed model, a model has to be developed in Manitoba. I think these two programs will help us to reach that goal.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we all know in this House, and the people of Manitoba know that we are having a difficult time to continue to keep of the cost in health care and that will go along with—it does not matter which government is in power, especially with the federal government's behaviour and their action not to have the equalization payments and not to have a commitment to continue to even support the spirit of the Canada Health Act. We are at a stage that it will be very difficult for governments to continue to provide the health care we need today.

I think it is incumbent upon the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and his department to develop a plan for the future. That is why for the last three years we have provided him with good ideas, good initiatives, and we have applauded whenever there have been good steps taken. That is why we want to start by saying that these two programs at the St. Boniface Hospital will help in that direction.

I just want to go into some of the other things, just outline some of the deficiencies that we have now

today. We have problems in terms of the waiting list for many surgical procedures and that waiting list continues to grow in spite of the increase in funding. Funding has been provided at a reasonable level for the last three years but ultimately, because the need of the community is growing, we have increases in the demand, we have a fear for legal suers, different techniques are coming, so the cost is going up. To continue to supply that kind of service, we have to have new ways but the ill effects of the short-term problem, because of the federal government's cut in funding, we are already seeing it.

We have waiting lists, as I outlined, in many procedures. Some of the services—when people cannot wait, they go south of the border and some of the out-patient clinics have come out in Winnipeg. The outpatient clinics like the eye clinic in Brandon and we see one in Winnipeg, that is the end result of the deficiency in the health care system. What health care has done, they have created a two-way system already, one for the people who can pay a thousand dollars, get your cataract done as early as possible, others have to wait if they do not have funds. Basically, the system is already falling apart.

The effects are not felt right now to the general public at large because I think people have developed their perception that we do not have very good services so they are willing to wait. How long can they wait, that is the question. That is going to get worse every year, so that is why even though this government can survive for another three years and continue to meet the demands for health care, ultimately the next government will have a difficult time if we do not have new ways of developing the health care system. That is why it is very essential to have the community-based health care. The community-based health care, as I said earlier, the definition is very variable. That is why a Manitoba model will be important.

I just want to go back. For example, we have about 12 percent of Manitoba's population which is above the age of 65 or so. Their needs are going to increase as the time passes by. Now we have about a 12- to 14-month waiting period for hip surgery. We have almost a similar period for some cardiac surgery and some of the other invasive procedures. Because we do not have adequate funds, the money is not being channeled where it should be. Most of the funds are going into institutional care, which is a very, very expensive way of providing a health care system.

I would rather have a system where you can, at least, save a lot of money if you have community-based care, and an individual can go into out-patient surgery, get the surgery done, go home and then see the doctor or another part of the system, because physicians will be just part of the community care. There will be nurses, physiotherapists, social workers, community workers, volunteers so everything can be provided under one roof under the direction of one person in connection with the community hospital. Things can be much improved.

* (1710)

I think that is much needed right now but, to establish that, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would have difficulty, because the funds are not there. So they have to trim somewhere and see that researchers are not required in institutions, and shift the money to the community-based care, because we understand the money has to come from somewhere. We do not have any extra funds, so they will need bridge money for the short term. I think it is going to be very difficult to see which services are not being used in the hospitals so that they can transfer money from the hospitals and then go to the community clinics, because I think it would be dishonest for us to criticize or ask for something when we are going to criticize other departments that are going to make the changes.

So we will encourage him to come up with a plan and see which services they can reduce, which services can be reduced in institutions, so that we can have the community-based care. Community-based care will be inexpensive, as compared to the hospital, and the good effects will come immediately. There is no question about that, because if the hospital beds are not being used, which is very expensive—as I was stating earlier, it costs about \$500, even more in some cases. It depends upon the circumstances. Funds can be used in a very proper way.

We must have a plan and, from our party's point of view, we will support any positive action. If that means that for the short term, we will have some difficulty, we will still support that aspect. I think it is very, very important, and we want to make it very clear, because we do not want to make a noise for something. When they are going to make some changes, we have to be responsible.

I just wanted to touch one aspect that really troubles me. The federal government, especially the Honourable Mr. Epp, said the answer to our health care problem is to charge the fees for the services. To charge a fee for the services to the system will be very expensive, will hurt average Canadians. What Mr. Epp wants is for the average person to be a doctor and they should decide which is an emergency and which is not.

What he has done with his statement—he probably did not think of what he was doing, because if you delay the services for the emergency, it is going to cost you money in the long run. We need innovative ways. We need the new ways of doing things, and I think we have a good way of doing things. We have good hospital working conditions but, with the change in the times, we have to have it balanced. The balance with the institutional care and the community-based care has to be established. I think it will be appreciated probably in five to 10 years time, if things are done now. I think that it is extremely crucial for this ministry to establish some plans.

I just wanted to touch another base. I was visiting the USSR, and I was able to visit many hospitals. It is amazing to see how medicine is done in Moscow or Leningrad or some other towns. They have the same kind of medical way of delivery, and they have socialized medicine, but they do not have the kind of things we have in Canada. They do not have all the sophisticated techniques, but they still continue to provide very good services.

One of their models is a community-based model where they have clinics for each and every category. They put all their resources together, and they make use of each and every person on the team, that is the nurses, physiotherapist, doctors. I was amazed to see even the army personnel there playing a role in a medical hospital, which is just a way of saying that we should learn from some other parts of the world how they are doing things.

Certainly, our health care is probably the best in the world. We can make it even better but we have to have a plan. So to preserve the health care and to preserve the health care for the future we must have different ways of doing things, and that is why we think the community-based clinics are one of the ways to save our health care in the future.

That community-based care could be expanded in many ways. Basically, they could have a good

correlation with the day hospital and with the community hospital, a good correlation with the home care services and also, a special relationship with the community groups, which will be playing a very important role and could establish and could work as an independent body to monitor and manage those community clinics.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) yesterday was very much interested to see how the health care is functioning, but now he does not want to listen to any of the good things. I think it is amazing that—especially the NDP should pay some attention, because they are the ones who always make noise that the health care is falling apart and we should have positive ideas and learn from others if we do not know what we are doing ourselves.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will end by saying that we should encourage the minister to follow our proposal, and we will definitely applaud him for his two programs in St. Boniface Hospital that may form the basis for the establishment of community clinics.

As I have seen for the last three years, we always bring these things in the private members' hour and time is passed and somebody brings an amendment, so basically we end up wasting one hour. So I would like to see some positive result out of this resolution today.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is certainly my privilege to join in this debate, and I think the first WHEREAS sums up the Liberal and Conservative jargon here. They are using the new jargon that somehow the health care system is unaffordable as it exists today, that there is waste of money in the health care system, that the Canadian health care system, which is the best in the world, is somehow inefficient and throwing money away.

I want to say that we in the New Democratic Party have always supported steps that would be taken to increase efficiency of the health care system. However, let us not get caught in the kind of jargon that is there in the first WHEREAS and which epitomizes the kind of thinking of Tory and Liberal Parties across this country, that somehow our system is not affordable.

We have one of the most efficient health care systems in the world. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) knows that if you go

to the U.S. and compare their model with ours, the costs in the private health care system in the U.S.—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I will not remind the honourable members in this Chamber again. I expect some decorum. I would ask members if they have things to discuss, please do so outside of these Chambers. Thank you.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Speaker, I appreciate your comments insofar as the members paying attention in this House. This is a very serious matter, and I think it is important to bring to the attention of not only the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), but also the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because I find in many cases their actions in government, the Liberal governments at the national level and the Conservative governments at the national level, have not kept pace, have not funded the health care system.

I know the member for The Maples has his heart in the right place and he is getting very sensitive about this, but I am not talking about him in particular. I am talking about the Liberal Party and the Liberal position, the position of his Leader, so the member for The Maples should not get downhearted about this situation.

I want to put this in context to the member for The Maples. The fact is that we do need to make some changes and to make our health care system more efficient. The community health clinic option is certainly one that we have to endorse and implement in this province and other provinces. So we are not disagreeing with the member, but what we are dealing with here, and I think we have to look at that agenda, is one that was pointed out by my colleagues in this House when we see where the western provinces, the western Finance ministers, the western ministers of Health, the leaders, the Premiers from across western Canada, when they talk about going on their own and the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon) talking about supporting a system which would see a health care system financed by the provinces because in fact the province of Manitoba will be totally unable to—

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) will have an opportunity to debate this resolution. There is all kinds of time here this afternoon, and I would

appreciate some courtesy to the honourable member for Dauphin, who is attempting to put his remarks on the record.

* (1720)

Mr. Plohman: Once again I appreciate your intervention. This is, as I indicated, a matter that concerns all of us. The health care system, as I have said, and we agree on this side of the House and one that our forefathers and our party, our leaders of yesteryear were instrumental in bringing to this country a universal health care system first begun by Tommy Douglas, the Premier of Saskatchewan in Saskatchewan—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will also have an opportunity to participate in this debate. The honourable member for Dauphin has the floor.

Mr. Plohman: Certainly, therefore, we come with a great deal of historical support to the universal health care system in this country that we are proud of, but we have seen it disintegrating under the policies of the Liberals and Conservatives in this country, unfortunately. We cannot disassociate ourselves with that fact.

The members of the Liberal Party, provincially, have to recognize that is a historical fact, that the Liberals in the government under Trudeau, on the national level, had reduced their commitment to health care in this country down from the 50-50 partnership that we began with to 40 percent and now, under the Conservatives, lower, approaching 30 percent of the funding being paid by the national government. That in itself is a travesty.

This Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has done little to defend the universal health care system. This kind of resolution, certainly—when one puts into the resolution a WHEREAS that says that our current system is unaffordable, it plays into the hands of the Conservative governments across this country and their agenda. Their jargon is designed to eliminate universality and to use other terms that are affordability, efficiency and responsibility, and so on, to camouflage their true agenda which is to eliminate the universality of our health care system in this country, one that we are so proud of.

So that is why I began with those negative comments, and the member for Maples (Mr. Cheema) took exception to them by his actions here. I understand that, because he in fact, I believe, wants to preserve our universal health care

system and ensure that it is maintained for our children and grandchildren in this province and country. I want to indicate that the route that is being taken by Liberal and Conservative governments in this country is certainly going to not be one that preserves our universality of our health care system. We are going to see more and more undercutting of the foundations of the health care system which will lead to user fees, the kinds of things advocated by many Conservatives and Liberals—user fees even for hospital stays.

The Leader of the third party, campaigning in 1988, talked about these kinds of things, about closing personal care beds, about charging for toothpaste and mouthwash and other things—her foot in the door, her foot in the door towards a user fee system in this province. We were very concerned about what kind of direction the Liberal Party was prepared to take with regard to health care had they formed government in this province. We know, as well, that this Conservative government is not any way different than its national Conservative government in philosophy, and they will, over a period of time, undermine the health care system to the extent that, in fact, we will no longer have the universal system that we have in this country.

There have been many comparisons made with the United States, with the costs as a percentage of the gross domestic product in the United States. The costs are, in fact, much higher in the private health care system than they are here in Canada. The public health care system is much more efficient and less costly for the taxpayers of this country as a whole than the U.S. system is for those who pay in the U.S. In fact, there the distribution of cost is such that very few end up paying the large amount of the cost, but overall the cost as a percentage of the gross domestic product are lower in Canada under the public system. So let us not get caught up in this argument that somehow our system is not affordable. What we need is fair sharing of the costs, of the burden. That is what we do not have in this country right now.

We do not have an equitable system of cost-sharing, because the federal government is not living by its historic obligation, which is to equalize education and health care costs and services across this country. In fact, what they are doing by cutting back their share, they are putting a greater and greater burden on those provinces who do not

have the financial ability to fund the costs associated with health care and education and others.

So Manitoba, being one of those provinces which would be commonly known as one of the smaller provinces in this country in terms of our financial ability, is going to have a much more difficult time financing the health care system and maintaining it as we have been used to seeing it in this country, in this province, over the years and as we have been so proud.

We now are faced with that kind of a situation, and I think it is, clearly I think my party and caucus agree, the crisis that we see in health care comes about largely as a result of the lack of commitment to a universal health care system by Conservative and Liberal governments in this country.

Now, having said that, insofar as this resolution is concerned, the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) is quite correct that the reliance on institutional care is one of the reasons for the high costs in health care. There is no doubt about that. I have prefaced those remarks by saying it is still affordable and it will remain affordable if the cost-sharing is done in a fair way, but there are always ways to improve and make the system more efficient and certainly make it less reliant on institutional care and the high cost of institutional care.

We want to see that happen if for no other reason than to take away one of the major excuses by the Liberals and Conservatives, particularly the Conservatives in this country at the present time, for destroying this system by ensuring that in fact there is a responsible attitude toward our health care system so we do not take it for granted and, in fact, it will be retained by future generations for the benefit of all Manitobans and all Canadians.

I know that there is inefficient use of acute care beds. It bothers me that as many beds as there are available in the hospitals, they seem always to be filled. I once insinuated in a letter to the editor in Dauphin that perhaps doctors were responsible for filling these beds because it resulted in financial benefits for doctors to keep the beds full, to a certain extent. They did not like that very much. They took issue with that and, as a matter of fact, I can understand why they would take issue. It is quite a strong statement to say, that would be their motivation. I am not making that statement today,

that this is their motivation, but I can say that there is no deterrent to filling those hospital beds.

In many cases, at the present time, because of underfunding in other areas, be it personal care beds, for example, many of our acute care beds are occupied by elderly people who have been panelled and should possibly be in personal care homes and there are no beds available so they are in the more costly acute care beds occupying them and in so doing are using space that could be used by people who genuinely would need those acute care beds.

So that of course is one fundamental problem and it comes as a result of underfunding of lower cost beds by this present government in terms of personal care beds.

As well, there is a need to establish out-patient surgery in this province, certainly to a greater degree than it is at present. I know that in many cases this is being done at the present time. Patients are going in for operations such as appendix removal, for example, and being sent home the same day to recuperate at home. This type of thing is done too, I understand, on an extensive basis in the U.S. and in other countries where some of the clinics are used, community-based clinics, but it is not being done as quickly as it probably should be—moving to that kind of approach here in Canada, in Manitoba.

* (1730)

While we were in government, formerly, we had a fund that was set up under Wilson Parasiuk as the Minister of Health, some \$40 million that was to fund projects of an innovative nature focusing on prevention. That fund was unfortunately cut by this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) when he became the Minister of Health in this Conservative government. It was abolished. The member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) was probably very aware that fund was put in place prior to the fall of the budget and, consequently, the government in 1988. Unfortunately, I believe that has set back the cause of preventative health care in this province by some four years, because this government has not moved in that direction.

They say they are continuing to fund. Yet, we see bed closures all around us on a more frequent basis than ever before, on a temporary basis in many cases, but certainly we see the closures and the inability to deal with the needs of acute care patients in this province and at a very costly level of service

to those patients. We have to have a greater degree of emphasis being placed in this area by this Minister of Health and by this government.

When this member for The Maples and the caucus of the Liberal Party brought forward this resolution, certainly, they have identified an area that must be addressed by this minister and one that we need to push the minister towards. Anything that can do that will be positive for this province, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate having my opportunity to make some comments on this resolution. However, I want to emphasize that indeed the costs of the medicare system in this country are not near what they are in many other countries.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Thank you to the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) for the applause. I knew he was a gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to this resolution, and I want to indicate to my honourable friend that I am going to propose some modest amendments to it. I have to tell you that, in listening to the member for Dauphin, again, my honourable friend the member for Dauphin has demonstrated his ignorance of two things: his ignorance of where the health care system is going and what this government has done over the past three years to improve the health care system in Manitoba but, secondly, his ignorance of how poorly managed, how badly policy driven the health care system was under the NDP when he was part of the decision making in cabinet with Howard Pawley.

Mr. Speaker, they did not, and I try to be as kind as I can, because I have a great deal of respect for the former minister of Health under the New Democrats, but the New Democrats, as we have come to know them famous for, we know that they talk an awful good story, but they deliver very, very little. They talk, but they do not deliver.

That was the point I made yesterday with the Native community. The New Democrats in the Native community have promised them the world for years and have delivered nothing for the Native community. The member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) was a minister in government and delivered nothing for the Native community. Yet they talk a

great story, they promise the Native community the world and they do it for the obvious result of getting the Native community to vote for them. The results for the Native community are very, very, very disappointing. The leadership in the Native community, two chiefs who are currently in this House, have let their people down by living with the NDP philosophy: Promise and talk a good story and deliver nothing. They have let their people down by telling them to vote NDP at every election. Disgraceful, but very real.

Again, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) demonstrates his ignorance of health care, as he demonstrated his ignorance of mental health when he spoke to Bill 5 some several weeks ago. Mr. Speaker, the member for Dauphin says that we have a very efficient health care system. What my honourable friend is talking about is the cost of administration of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, which, in terms of its level of funding, has one of the lowest administrative costs. I just want my honourable friend the member for Dauphin to know that we spend the second highest per capita in the world for health care. Only the United States spends more. They spent in 1988, the last numbers I have, over \$2,000 per capita. We spend the second highest in the world at \$1,550 in 1988 dollars. We spend an enormous amount of money on our health care system.

The point that my honourable friend the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) has been attempting to say, and I have to give him credit for at least being honest, and not trying to say to the people of Manitoba that he has all the answers and can promise them all the answers. He recognizes on behalf of his party that we have a very serious and difficult challenge in front of us. He is not leaving the impression, that should they be elected they are instantly going to solve all the problems. That is the hypocrisy of the New Democratic Party. They are going to try to leave the impression with the people of Manitoba that only they have the answers and that somehow, magically, they are going to be able to find literally billions of dollars to spend on health in Manitoba. They will not have it. They did not have it when they were government; they will not have it should they ever be government again. What they are telling the people of Manitoba is not accurate. The hope they are holding out for the people of Manitoba is false hope, Mr. Speaker.

I want to deal with some of the issues that my honourable friend the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) raised in his resolution. You know, there is talk about the use of acute care beds and waiting lists within the resolution. Mr. Speaker, I do not think that there is anybody in the health care system today who does not say we have certainly enough, and probably a lot would say we have a surplus, of acute care beds in our health care system today.

One of the difficulties that we have in the utilization of those acute care beds is their utilization by panelled patients waiting for placement in a personal care home.

Mr. Speaker, that difficulty has been exacerbated by decisions by the previous government because this government, when we came into office in May of 1988, inherited a frozen capital budget. It had been frozen for not quite the previous year. It was never announced as being frozen, but it was frozen and projects which would have been coming on stream now were never approved by the previous government. They were deliberately frozen in an effort to contain costs. -(interjection)-

My honourable friend from Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) laughs about that, but that is because he is ignorant and does not want to tell Manitobans the truth about what they did in government. That has caused some of the difficulties. Now, we are working our way through that with approvals of construction of new personal care home capacity. We have reacted and worked toward solution on the Extended Treatment Bed Review.

* (1740)

Mr. Speaker, the waiting list issue—I want to deal with that one because that is a very interesting concept. One has to appreciate that there is only one group of individuals who create the waiting lists, and those are the physicians who put patients on the waiting lists for various procedures.

You know there was the issue on open heart surgery, and I want to deal with that issue just briefly. The waiting lists have grown over the last number of years since the inception of the program. They have grown for two reasons, firstly, because the procedure of open heart surgery is now much safer for all involved so that now you have potential candidates for open heart surgery who never would have been placed on the waiting list just ten short years ago. I am talking about Manitobans who have other illnesses, other disabilities and other health

problems, who were considered too high risk to undergo the procedure just ten short years ago. Those individuals are now on the waiting list.

Every single year, Mr. Speaker, we have done more open heart surgery procedures, more of the restorative procedures noninvasive, or not as invasive as open heart surgery with the catheterization procedures. We have invested more money in the capability of carrying out those procedures and have done more every year, yet the waiting list grows.

Now is that an indication that we should continue to spend more money? That is the proposition that is put to us by many of the practitioners, and I can understand that. That is the way they care for their patients. That is the way they derive their income.

I just want to share with my honourable friends a couple of points that I want them to ponder. In European countries, some European countries perform as few as 300 by-pass surgery procedures per million population. We currently perform approximately 600 open heart surgery procedures per million in Manitoba, and in the Mayo Clinic, in the area around the Mayo Clinic in the United States, in Rochester County, the figure goes up to 1,200 open heart procedures per million people. One has to ask the question, and you can ask it two ways, and I will flip the question for you. One can draw from those figures that in the European country only doing 300, that they are twice as healthy as we are in Manitoba and four times as healthy as those citizens around the Mayo Clinic in the county of Rochester in Minnesota.

Does that make sense? Of course, it does not make sense. Now you could flip it, and you could say because they have more open heart procedures done in Rochester County, 1,200 per million population, one could conclude that they are four times as healthy as those Europeans and twice as healthy as us. Again, that is wrong. That is not true. What those statistics point out to you is that where you have an open system, like the United States, the physicians, the practitioners will drive the procedures.

The question has to be posed, is the health status improved by doing 1,200 open heart procedures per million population? Is the health status significantly improved over the European country that only does 300? I cannot answer that, Mr. Speaker, but let me tell you it is a fundamental question which must be

answered, because the requests for open heart surgery drive our budget significantly. It is one of the most expensive procedures we do and, if we are undertaking them inappropriately in Manitoba, then we are denying resources to other areas of the health care system including community-based services that all of us agree should happen.

So what are we doing to come around that issue? That is why we have the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation—to study those very issues, to guide us with research data and factually based conclusions to guide us in our policy. I want to share with my honourable friends one example—tonsillectomies.

Tonsillectomies in this province were undertaken approximately 1985 and prior at a significantly greater rate—I was going to say double, but I am not quite sure of my figures on that. Tonsillectomies were undertaken at a significantly higher rate in Manitoba than in neighbouring provinces. Now one has to ask the question: Were Manitoba's children who were having their tonsils surgically removed—not a pleasant procedure—more unhealthy than those same children in neighbouring provinces? No, Mr. Speaker, not so, absolutely not so.

There is no factual base to say that our children were more unhealthy. When that statistic was revealed through the analysis that is done by the Roos's, who are now in the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, when that information came out, do you know what happened to tonsillectomies in Manitoba? We immediately went down to the same number of procedures per 1,000 children as were in the neighbouring provinces. Now did that mean that our children were, all of a sudden, less unhealthy in Manitoba because we did fewer tonsillectomies? Of course it did not. But, again, I remind you that tonsillectomies were a source of income for a given class of practitioner.

So that is why we need to have the information from the Centre of Health Policy and Evaluation, to guide us in where we are spending our money most effectively to improve the health status of Manitobans, not merely to provide income or operational budgets to major hospitals and institutions. We have to have as our bottom line mandate the improved health status of Manitobans. That is where we are coming from.

Mr. Speaker, how much more time do I have, because I do not want to miss the opportunity to—

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister has one and a half minutes remaining.

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Speaker, then I am going to have to curtail my remarks.

I would like to move, seconded by my honourable friend the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst),

THAT the resolution be amended by removing all of the words after the first WHEREAS and replacing them with the following:

Health expenditures have increased by 178 percent from 1979-80 to 1989-90 while the population grew by 6 percent; and

WHEREAS continuation of this expenditure growth will cause serious fiscal challenges to future governments; and

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba has prioritized health care with a 5.3 percent increase in spending for 1991-92; and

WHEREAS all provinces are challenged to manage tax dollars wisely in the provision of health care services; and

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba has established the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation to provide well-researched and data-based conclusions for future policy decisions; and

WHEREAS initiatives of this and past governments, such as not-for-admission surgery and other noninstitutional programs, have proven both cost effective and able to deliver quality patient care.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly do urge the Minister of Health to continue such progressive initiatives as the St. Boniface Hospital "Free Standing Out-Patient Centre Feasibility Study"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly approach reform and change in the health care system from a creative, co-operative, nonpartisan fashion for the patient's sake.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak on some of the amendments the Minister of Health has brought forward. We did outline some of the positive things that have been done. I made it very

clear that some of the positive suggestions being followed by the Minister of Health—but it is becoming almost, you know, a habit in this House that you bring forward a very positive proposal and after 45 minutes of talking to each other and basically removing everything else, saying that only the Minister of Health or his department knows the best. I think it is completely nonsense in terms of the waste of the House's time.

* (1750)

I am really amazed that the Minister of Health—we have tried with his department in a most nonpolitical fashion—that any member in this House would make such fun of a very important aspect. I think it is making, basically, fun of the whole thing, but we are not going to go into attitude problems and the personal stuff. I think we are going to continue to applaud him when he is doing the best things, but I take exception to the whole way of doing the business in this House.

We are talking about a specific proposal. I did not bring this forward just to create the whole policy. We do not have all the answers. What we are asking him is to work on a specific proposal, that is for the community-based health care clinics. We are asking to have the Manitoba model, and the Manitoba model can be based on some of the programs they have started. Basically, just to expect that the member of a third party or a second party would bring all the answers is complete nonsense. We have brought forward a very decent proposition which could be improved. I am not saying we could have the best answer but to have something positive. We made it very clear that when we are going to move the funds from institutional care, we will have some difficulty, but we will support him in that direction. If he is going to make fun of all this thing, I think it is a wastage of time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I too wanted to say a few words on the resolution that the member for The Maples has brought forward.

One of the first things that happens on the resolution is in terms of the first WHEREAS. It recognizes the fact the health care department has, in fact, the greatest growth in terms of government expenditure over the past number of years. We have to recognize that what we have to start doing, or at least acknowledging what we have to start

doing, is start spending money in our health care system smarter.

We are not the only political party nor is the Conservative Party the only political party, even the New Democratic Party in Ontario is doing the very same thing. The New Democratic Party is now looking at the concept of user fees. This is something that the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) likely did not know about, but that particular party is doing—

An Honourable Member: What are you looking at? Are you going to put it on the record for Bob Rae? Why do you not let him speak for himself? Go right to him.

Mr. Lamoureux: If Mr. Bob Rae wants to come here and defend his position to the NDP caucus, well, let him do that, but in fact one of his ministers did say that they were looking at user fees.

Mr. Speaker, the time to act is, in fact, now. We have a resolution that talks about health care delivery and how we can start spending money smarter. That means that we have to start looking at community-based out-patient clinics, which would relieve a lot of stress from the hospitals that we now have in place, in terms of overcrowding of the acute health care beds, as the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) has pointed out, and accurately has pointed out.

I can recall conversations that I have had with nurses who have talked about that particular problem, that, in fact, there are seniors who can be relocated out of hospitals. That would free up more beds. Then, by freeing up more beds, we will be making our health care that much more accessible to more Manitobans.

The direction that we currently see the government going in is towards a two-tier health care system. That has been demonstrated with some of the clinics that we have seen. Whether it is for eye surgery or others, we are in a situation in which if you can afford to be able to go to these private entrepreneurs, if you will, you can get the surgery that is needed. If you do not have the money, then you have to go on a waiting list and might not ever get the opportunity to get what it is that you need to be done.

Mr. Speaker, that, I believe, is a move in the wrong direction. In fact, the universal health care program

we have in Canada is something that is worth protecting.

Mr. Speaker, I have consulted with my constituents on the whole question of health care, and it is by far the greatest concern that they have. Time after time, we find out that health care is the No. 1 priority for Manitobans. It would be the responsible thing to do, for the government to acknowledge that, and not only by standing up during Budget Debate and Throne Speech Debate and say this is in fact what they are doing for health care, when we know that in some instances we have seen the Minister of Health underspend in his health care budget.

Mr. Speaker, that does cause us to be somewhat concerned in the sense that if you are allocating out funds or you make commitments whether it is in the Budget Debate or throne speech or during the Estimates, that you have to fulfill those commitments. This government and in particular this minister, the current Minister of Health, has not met all of the obligations that he had set forth in previous statements.

Mr. Speaker, it is completely consistent with the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema). The member for The Maples has on different occasions talked about the underspending in the health care department. The Minister of Health is, I am sure, well aware of that because I sat through some of the Estimates where I heard him ask the questions about underspending. So has the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), because we are very concerned with the way our health care is going, not only in the province of Manitoba but also in Canada.

We have to start to look at the whole issue of health care in a more apolitical way, if you will, to ensure that the best thing is done for the patient's sake. That is, of course, that we stop pretending that we have all of the ideas and know everything when it comes to solving health care problems. I believe that the member for The Maples through the Liberal Party has done an excellent job in bringing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Inkster will have nine minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, May 29, 1991

CONTENTS

Matter of Privilege

Conduct of Minister of Education
Carstairs
Manness
Ashton
Lamoureux

2656
2656
2657
2657

School of Psychiatric Nursing
Dewar; Orchard

2664

Selkirk Mental Health Centre
Dewar; Orchard

2664

Child Care Centres
Edwards; Gilleshammer; Filmon

2665

City Council Reduction
Friesen; Ernst

2666

Claro Paqueo
Cerilli; McIntosh

2666

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Salvation Army Grace General Hospital
Incorporation Amendment Act
Edwards

2658

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Tabling of Reports

Annual Report,
Clean Environment Commission
Cummings

2658

Second Readings

Bill 4, Health Services Insurance
Amendment Act
Orchard

2667

Bill 50, Liquor Control Amendment Act
McIntosh

2669

Bill 49, Colleges and Consequential
Amendments Act

Derkach
Carstairs
Chomiak

2672
2674
2677

Introduction of Bills

Bill 63, Northern Affairs
Amendment Act
Downey

2658

Bill 64, Energy Rate Stabilization
Repeal Act
Manness

2658

Bill 66, Winnipeg Canoe Club
Incorporation Amendment Act
Render

2658

Debate on Second Readings

Bill 41, Public Schools Amendment Act (2)
Carstairs

2683

Bill 38, Wildlife Amendment Act
Plohman

2686

Bill 5, Mental Health Amendment Act
Lathlin

2689

Oral Questions

Civil Servants
Doer; Filmon

2659

Immigration Consultants
Doer; Filmon

2659

Abuse Treatment Programs
Barrett; Gilleshammer

2660

Knowles Centre Inc.
Barrett; Gilleshammer

2660

Cartwright, Manitoba
Carstairs; Derkach; Storie

2661

Private Members' Business

Proposed Resolutions

Res. 20, Community Based
Out-Patient Clinics

Cheema
Plohman
Orchard
Lamoureux

2692
2694
2697
2700