



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 22, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

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

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Estimates for Manitoba Housing and Manitoba Urban Affairs.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table three reports; the first one, the Milk Prices Review Commission 1991-92 Annual Report; secondly, Manitoba Pork's Twenty-Eighth Annual Report 1992; and the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Manitoba, 38th Annual Progress Review.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the '93-94 Departmental Expenditure Estimates for Industry, Trade and Tourism.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 42—The Liquor Control Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), that Bill 42, The Liquor Control Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois, 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 would table the message.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Rossburn Elementary School thirty-three Grades 7 and 8 students under the direction of Mr. Grant Ross. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach).

Also this afternoon, from the Tyndall Park School we have twenty-five Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Mr. Collin Stark. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

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

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Hydro Workforce Reduction

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier.

Mr. Speaker, there are reports today we have heard for some time. Decisions are being made at Manitoba Hydro and by the government of Manitoba to deal with a so-called restructuring at Manitoba Hydro. We are aware of some 200 early retirements out of an eligibility of about 384, but there are other plans apparently in the works for a reduction in the workforce.

I would like to ask the minister today: What will be the actual reduction in the workforce announced by Hydro today, and how many of that workforce will be reduced through layoffs?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, as the member is aware, there has been a reduction in the demands for electricity nationally which has caused Manitoba Hydro, the board and management, to assess the corporation and the whole activity as it relates to the operation of Manitoba Hydro to make sure the rates which the users of hydro have to pay are kept to a minimum; in fact, no increase for this particular year.

As it relates to the detail, Mr. Speaker, I can inform the House that the board of directors and management are meeting with the head of the workforce, the representatives of the workforce, at Manitoba Hydro today and will be making a public release later on today as it relates to the management of Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, last week or the week before, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) released a document to the public of Manitoba, indicating in their so-called 10-point Framework for Economic Growth in Manitoba that jobs, particularly higher-skilled, higher-wage jobs, would be the No. 1 priority of the 10-point program for the provincial government.

I would like to ask the minister: Did he approve the plan that Manitoba Hydro will announce today, and is it consistent with the economic framework announced by the Premier to have jobs, high-quality jobs, as the No. 1 priority for the Manitoba economy?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, jobs are extremely important to the province of Manitoba, and part of the strategy is to make sure we have the energy source at the lowest cost possible for potential industries and for industries that drive our economy.

As part of the overall strategy, Hydro will play a major role, unlike the decision made by the New Democratic Party when they were in government, who, when faced with having to make some efficiency decisions as it related to the Manitoba Telephone System, put an employment program in Saudi Arabia using some \$27 million to create employment in another jurisdiction.

Mr. Doer: This is a very serious issue. The minister did not answer the question. I asked the question to the minister, did cabinet and the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro approve the plan that Manitoba Hydro will be announcing

today, and is it consistent with the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) policy, the so-called policy, that jobs would be the No. 1 priority, that high-paying, high-skilled jobs in Manitoba would be the No. 1 priority?

I would ask the minister again: Did he as minister responsible approve the plan which will be announced at Manitoba Hydro today?

* (1340)

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, Manitoba Hydro is operated by a board of directors and by management. I have been informed in a general way as to what is, in fact, taking place. It did not require legislative or Order-in-Council approval. It is a decision made by an appointed board and by management.

Our economic development plan, Mr. Speaker, is unlike the windshield-wiper approach of the Leader of the Opposition, when he referred in July of 1988 to how he was going to do everything to try to make sure the decision was made to continue on with Conawapa.

Then following that, in May of 1989, here is what he said, and I will quote directly: All of our supporters, meaning the NDP, believe in the priority of the environment over—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the minister perhaps did not hear the question. He certainly is not answering it, and our rules do indicate that while it is the prerogative of the minister not to answer a question, the comments should deal at least with the matter raised.

I would appreciate it, Mr. Speaker, if you would ask the minister to come to order and address the very serious question asked by the Leader of the Opposition about the jobs at Manitoba Hydro that are going to be lost today.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, I remind the honourable minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible and should not provoke debate.

Bill 47 Consultations

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, in 1985, the Pawley government appointed a landlord

and tenant review committee of which I was a tenant representative.

Security deposits held in trust were a major issue. Fortunately, that was addressed in The Residential Tenancies Act which received all-party support in this Legislature in 1990. Now, under Bill 47, the security deposit in trust provisions have been totally withdrawn.

I would like to ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs: Which tenant groups and which tenants did she consult before drafting this legislation?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to debating this with the member when we go to committee on this bill, because I think there is a great deal of detail we could go into, even if we were to take time to do it here now today.

I should also point out to the member something he knows very well because he was a member of that committee. One of the things tenants and landlords jointly requested was a compensation fund, which we have now set in place, which gives far greater protection to tenants than any trust account ever could, that virtually guarantees the return of a security deposit to tenants.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if she will admit that this is caving in to pressure from landlords because they want this money for their cash flow. They do not want to protect it for tenants.

This minister listened to landlords and not to tenants. Will she admit that?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, I find the member insulting and I do intend to discuss this. I will be giving second reading tomorrow. I will be outlining the rationale for these changes that are being brought forward.

We can debate them in committee. He is wrong, wrong, wrong.

Justification

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, in the past, this minister listened to the Real Estate Board and the professional property managers and withdrew Bill 42, and now, there has been no consultation, and the minister will not admit she has not consulted with tenants.

Can the minister tell us why she is doing this if she has not consulted with tenants and if this is not

going to protect tenants' security deposits? Why is this legislation necessary when it is not being asked for and when it previously provided protection for tenants?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I will be outlining in detail my remarks tomorrow to show how greater protection for tenants than has ever been in place in the history of this province before on this particular issue will be put in place.

Labour Adjustment Strategy Government Initiatives

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

The announcements of layoffs today, both at Manitoba Hydro and impending ones at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, are most unfortunate for those, of course, employed with those companies, but unfortunate for all Manitobans. We have heard of these layoffs far too often in the last few years.

My question for the minister: Given that some of these layoffs are simply unavoidable, that times change—and this is recognized in economic documents, one that this government put out 10 days ago. I want to cite back a statement from the Framework for Economic Growth: To minimize unemployment, the education and training system must ensure a good match between the workforce's job skills and job opportunities. This will entail shifting labour resources from declining industries to growth industries.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what is the labour adjustment plan of this government with respect to these two impending very large layoff announcements we have received today? How will the government be dealing with those large numbers of people to keep them in this province?

* (1345)

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, there are basically two questions, one referring to Manitoba Hydro. The member is referring to a comment made in the press which Manitoba Hydro board and management will be further expressing, after they meet with the representatives of the workers, with a further public explanation as to the details of that later on.

I want to assure members that Manitoba Hydro is working to manage this so there is the least impact as possible on the employees.

As far as the Flin Flon layoffs, again, Mr. Speaker—which are unfortunate, which we see taking place with HBM&S—when an orebody runs out, what has to happen is to make sure there are activities in place that will provide some future economic activity for those individuals.

It is unfortunate that the mining policies and the taxation of the previous administration in this province was not conducive for new discovery of orebodies, Mr. Speaker. I regret—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I am tired, and I am sure the laid-off workers in this province are tired, of the type of rhetoric and, quite frankly, bafflegab from this government about training and about labour adjustment.

They talk and talk and talk. What does it mean for the person who is laid off or going to be laid off in the ensuing weeks? Whether it is HBM&S or Manitoba Hydro, they are laid-off workers. The unemployment rates in this province are kept low because those people are leaving this province, and this government does nothing to keep them, Mr. Speaker.

How does this Deputy Premier, how does this government intend to retrain these people to get them back to work in this province, and how can they talk and talk and talk about this and cut the Labour Adjustment branch by \$25,000 this year?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the second opposition party was paying attention to what was going on—let me tell the member what this government is doing as far as the mining industry is concerned. [interjection] That is correct.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicates they voted against all these initiatives—a financial assistance program to prospectors to assist in their exploring for new mine bodies, a Mineral Exploration Incentive Program where there is a 25 percent grant provided for new companies looking to come to Manitoba, and which they voted against, a Mining Tax Exploration Incentive, voted against, and a new mine tax holiday, which allows a new mine to be established without having to pay tax until the capital investment is paid for, something he voted against, Mr. Speaker, and members of the

opposition voted against, new incentives to help new development in this province.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question for the Deputy Premier. I think it is all he can answer.

My question for the Deputy Premier: What is going to be available for retraining, to get people who are going to be laid off because of these layoffs and throughout this province, to get them back to work with dignity and with the least amount of economic stress as a result of these layoffs and these difficult times? What retraining is going to be available for those people?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, again, as it relates to Manitoba Hydro and the decisions the board and management will be making, I think one has to see the total package as it relates to those who are taking early retirement, those who are being re-employed within other operations of the corporation. The package will be released by the appropriate authority, the board and management, later on.

Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the mining sector, I believe the opportunities will lie in new developments of new orebodies within the private sector.

I am not sure what the member opposite is advocating. Is he advocating that taxpayers again move in and buy out depleted mines to create employment? I believe the responsible thing to do is to encourage the development of new mine opportunities to keep taxes low so investment will flow to this province and create the jobs that are essential for these people who are in need.

Northern Economic Development Government Initiatives

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, last November, when some 497 people received pending layoff notices, and again on Thursday, when some 133 people were called in to the offices at HBM&S and told they would be losing their jobs or be reassigned, the question in Flin Flon was, where is the government of Manitoba?

In 1988, this government announced it was going to create a Northern Economic Development Commission to develop alternatives and to help northern Manitoba communities diversify their economy.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Northern Affairs is: After five years and spending more than a million dollars on the Northern Economic Development Commission, can this minister indicate one single initiative that has come forward from that commission that is going to help the more than 600 people who are losing their jobs in Flin Flon—one single initiative?

* (1350)

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, as fair as I can muster for the member for Flin Flon, let me point out that under this administration, under Premier Filmon and this cabinet, this government committed some \$55 million to the upgrade of a smelter in Flin Flon which he could not get through his own cabinet or caucus.

There has been over \$200 million spent. I believe the maximum employment these past few months has been over a thousand construction workers onsite in Flin Flon, something the member never acknowledges, an environmental order which was on his government which it took us to deliver. I would think he would want to be fair.

As far as the shutdowns of the mines are concerned, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, this minister refuses to tell the truth. There never was any proposal for HBM&S on the government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Flin Flon did not have a point of order, but in stating his point of order, the honourable member did use some unparliamentary language. I would ask the honourable member for Flin Flon to withdraw, the honourable minister not telling the truth.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, out of respect for your office and your ruling, I will withdraw the words.

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

Flin Flon/Snow Lake, Manitoba Education and Training Initiatives

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the minister of course did not answer the question of what the government has done to help diversify the

economy after spending a million dollars on a Northern Economic Development Commission.

My question to the minister is: Given the government's rhetoric with respect to labour adjustment and education and training needs, can the minister indicate why, after eight months, after the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) attended a meeting in Snow Lake in November of last year, the government has not yet, to date, supported an education and training initiative put forward by the community of Snow Lake to help some of the 200 of the 600 people who are losing their jobs in that community?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate, as I said at the outset, that the former administration did everything to discourage—

Some Honourable Members: You are the former administration.

Mr. Downey: Well, if they want to get that way, Mr. Speaker, then it was the government in which Howard Pawley was the Premier and in which they were so proud to sit as members. The fact is there was nothing done to encourage mining activity coming into this province, so as a result, the orebodies are playing out.

Mr. Speaker, what we have done in the Snow Lake-Flin Flon area is invested with the Government of Canada and Saskatchewan under a new mapping program to identify new areas and new technology, to identify new orebodies so those jobs can be continued in those communities. That is what we are doing.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question again.

Mr. Speaker, more than 600 people are going to be laid off or are in the process of being laid off in Flin Flon and Snow Lake.

The question to the minister is: What is the minister going to do? What commitment is he going to make to the Community Improvement and Development Committee in Flin Flon, the Community Adjustment Committee in Snow Lake, after months and months of discussions?

What commitments is he going to make to ensure there are training and education opportunities for those who are laid off and there is an opportunity for economic diversification?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, as well as the extensive programming that has been put in place to find new orebodies and new activities, something else we have done is we have not raised the sales tax. We have not raised taxes on those people.

To assist in trying to create economic activity, we have maintained—in fact, not only maintained, we have lowered the personal income tax in this province so it, in fact, encourages people to come to this province and invest, unlike what is happening—and I will refer to a recent article about what the NDP government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister will sit down while the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne 417 is very clear: "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

I think the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) has violated that on all three counts, and I hate to say it, Mr. Speaker, but with the Deputy Premier continuing like this, I almost miss not having the Premier (Mr. Filmon) here.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, again I would remind the honourable minister, answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

* (1355)

Co-Management Agreements Government Action

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the economy of rural Manitoba has been dealt another serious blow with predictions of lower grain prices; this, along with failed negotiations at Repap and other promises of jobs in rural Manitoba. However, my constituency is facing another serious situation because of lack of action by this government.

I want to ask the Minister of Natural Resources why he is refusing to take action on co-management agreements with bands in the Swan River area when he has had requests from all bands. He has had requests from the fish

enhancement group to deal with this matter. Why is he refusing to take action on co-management?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the honourable member. I was assuming she was asking my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) about the sale of barley.

If she would be kind enough to repeat the question, I will answer.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Swan River, kindly repeat your question, please.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Natural Resources—now that he is listening—why he is refusing to take action on co-management agreements when he has had requests from bands in Swan River. He has had requests from the fish enhancement group. He attended meetings in Swan River last year where he knows this was a very important issue.

Why is he not taking any action on this matter?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I can report to the honourable member that meetings have been held pursuant to those initial meetings last fall. The Western Region Elk Management Board is active and meeting on a regular basis.

I can also indicate to her that, our good fortune, the elk populations are up in that area, but there are continuing difficulties with respect to bringing about the kind of agreements necessary for full co-management to exist, particularly with several of the aboriginal bands involved.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the minister that I am talking about management of other resources besides elk. I am talking about management of fish, and he knows this very well.

He has had letters just recently. The minister is saying negotiations have taken place, but I have talked to the bands at Pine Creek and Shoal River. I have a letter from the band at Pine Creek which indicates no negotiations have taken place, and all interested parties want negotiations.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem in sharing the very serious problem that we have, particularly in the area she alludes to there.

I will be more specific. Wellman Lake, supported not only by this department, supported by the fundraising efforts for the last three years by an enthusiastic group of local wildlife and fishing

associations which have stocked that lake, refrained from any fishing in that lake, now has an aboriginal band come with their nets three years later, to net out the lake. That creates serious problems.

My officers, to this date, have managed to negotiate an agreement, and I understand no actual netting has taken place in that particular lake. We are attempting to provide other lakes in the area where we would be prepared, as the Department of Natural Resources, to in fact encourage the particular aboriginal bands involved to adopt, if you like, as their lakes, to get involved in enhancement programs, but not to create the kind of confrontation that is currently going on.

But, Mr. Speaker, that is a very difficult question. That is a difficult question for management to resolve as to how we mutually share our resources and properly husband them.

Ms. Wowchuk: I recognize it is a difficult problem, and that is why I am asking the minister when he is going to deal with it. I recognize, since the fish enhancement group has put so much work into it, has put so much money into it, has established lakes with non-native species, that they want to protect those lakes.

When is the minister going to sit down with both sides and see which lakes are going to be protected and which lakes are going to be allowed to be netted out? When is he going to deal with the matter?

* (1400)

Mr. Enns: Not to be unfair at all but it would certainly help if her colleague the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) were to help this government and help Manitobans get to resolve these issues. This is when self-government with respect to aboriginal issues comes face to face with what we are dealing with.

I am asking Manitobans to pay \$2.50, an extra tax on all angling licences. We are stocking lakes with that. I am being served summonses, if you like, by some groups telling me they will not respect any of the regulations with respect to the natural resources.

Under those circumstances, it is very difficult to come to co-management. I want to assure the honourable member I am not giving up, that we have had some very successful arrangements where co-management does work, where we have

successfully, together with the whole community, Metis people, Status Indian people, white communities and anglers and sportsmen alike, co-managed a resource, but it is a painstakingly slow process, Mr. Speaker.

No-Fault Auto Insurance Tillinghast Report Release

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Minister for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

As part of the process of examining alternatives to the current system, the government, in addition to looking at pure no-fault, asked the Tillinghast consulting group to look at modifications to the tort system to address some of the problems with small claims and to see if they could not retain the access of individuals to personal consideration of their circumstances in more serious cases.

I would like to ask the acting minister why the corporation is refusing to release this report.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the Minister responsible for MPIC (Mr. Cummings).

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, before the government moves so quickly to deprive Manitobans of the benefits they currently receive under the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, we think it would be incumbent upon the government to bring forward that report so the public debate can be an informed one.

I would ask the minister today: Will he commit to the release of that report?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I will raise that question with the minister responsible, and if there is some reason why it cannot be done, we will clarify that. If there is no reason, I am sure the minister is prepared to table that document.

Cabinet Discussions

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), this is the second Tillinghast report. I will send him a copy.

Might I ask the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey): Was the information contained in this report discussed at cabinet when the decision was taken to move to a no-benefit system?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I am not going to give him a specific answer other than to just indicate there was an awful lot of discussion taking place on this side of government, in cabinet and with caucus, in terms of the decision that ultimately was made to proceed with the bill.

That discussion is still going to be available for the rest of Manitobans when the bill finally clears the House and gets into committee, where people can come forward and make their views known as well.

Independent Schools Funding Formula

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, On March 12, I asked the Minister of Education to justify the massive increases to the private school system over the past five years.

She answered, and I quote, Mr. Speaker: "The independent schools of this province in the funding announcement that was made this year received the same 2 percent reduction as all other schools." That is a quote from March 12, 1993, in this House.

Yesterday, the Minister of Education tabled a document in Estimates that shows a 12.3 percent increase, which is a blatant contradiction from the minister's statement of March 12.

Will the minister explain herself?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, allow me to instruct the member, inform the member. He did not understand what was tabled yesterday.

If he will look again at what was tabled, it was a comparison of funding for government fiscal year. The funding announcement deals with a school year. In comparing those figures, we are comparing the figures 1992-93 which include, if the member really understands, a portion of the funding for the school year as fiscal-year funding of even the year before.

So we were looking at proportionate funding over a series of a number of years. It is clear the member did not read what was given or perhaps, more importantly, just did not understand.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, there is a 12.3 percent increase any way you want to cut it. She has made an allowance for enrollment of 555 additional students.

I want to ask the Minister of Education: In light of the fact that public school enrollments have declined by nearly 5,000 students since this government came into office in 1988, I want to ask her whether she will now admit that her policies of massive increases to private schools are causing an enrollment shift from the public school system to the private school system, as is evident in her facts.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, again, I know we are discussing this point in the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training, and I will be happy to explain again to the member exactly how the funding school year versus fiscal year is listed on this sheet.

Let me speak to him now about enrollment. The enrollment in independent schools represents approximately 4.8 percent of the student population, and I would like to point out to him, with 4.8 percent of the student population, they receive only 2.5 percent of the funding available.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, the minister has provided us with information that shows \$22 million up from \$19 million the year before, a 12.3 percent increase and a shift in the population base.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister: In light of the fact that this opposition in 1990 moved a motion asking for an independent commission to be set up to study the impact of this minister's and this government's massive increases to private schools, and it was voted down by the Liberals and the Conservatives in this House, I want to ask the minister whether she will now agree to set up an independent commission to monitor and review the impact of these changes in student enrollment.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I know the party on the other side is not in full agreement. They are on the record as not being in full agreement. I do not know if the critic for Education is in fact reflecting his own position or the position of his party.

We on this side of the House have entered into a letter of comfort with the independent schools. Those independent schools are still only funded at a portion of the amount of money that is funded to the public schools. The independent schools in this province receive, per pupil, the same, minus 2 percent reduction.

Water Supply Irrigation Monitoring

Ms. Marianne Cerlill (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, the Assiniboine diversion which is planning to take 20 cubic feet per second from the Assiniboine River is subject to an environmental impact assessment, and then the water will be monitored.

Yet there are hundreds of cubic feet per second of water being diverted for irrigation from the river where there is no environmental assessment, where there is no monitoring, and this is not a sustainable use for our water supply, and it does not make sense.

I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources: Does the Minister of Natural Resources find it logical to monitor water for potable water use and not monitor water for the highest demand on the river which is the lowest priority for the water use in the province?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I believe the honourable member answered the question herself in the very last words of her question. Irrigation, under the policy currently being practised by this government, is placed in precisely that order, in the lowest of priority uses.

Should any of the other higher priority uses, such as domestic, residential or industrial, livestock or recreational use, be endangered, then those irrigation water supplies would be, in fact, cut off.

Ms. Cerlill: Mr. Speaker, the way this province is managing water resources does not reflect the priority use. Irrigation is the most unsustainable drain on water supplies.

Will the government move to begin to gauge irrigation water from rivers in Manitoba?

*(1410)

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I just think particularly, although it is understandable now in 1993 that this kind of generalized contempt for those very capable people—I just refute categorically that general contempt for the capable water managers of this province who have saved this city harmless from the devastating flood since time immemorial, who have provided water that would not be water in that Assiniboine River today, and provided a premier recreation area in the Lake of the Prairies where upwards of 3,000 sports anglers fish.

To simply say that is poor water management—to have brought into abundant agricultural production five and a half million acres of what was flood-prone Red River clay land—to call that poor management, no, I refute that argument totally.

Ms. Cerlill: Mr. Speaker, given that the Assiniboine South enhancement study recommends looking at gauging irrigation water, which is the largest drain on the Assiniboine River, why will this government not keep up with the times and start looking at gauging of irrigation water?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, let us put it officially on the record. The official opposition does not want to see job creation, wealth creation in rural Manitoba. The second opposition does not want to see it.

It is only the Conservative Party that has ever done any development in this province, whether it was the creation of universities, whether it was the creation of hospitals and medicare and whether it was the creation of our secondary school system.

An Honourable Member: Medicare too.

Mr. Enns: You bet. Walter Weir brought medicare into Manitoba. Duff Roblin brought the three universities into Manitoba and brought education . . . and a Conservative government brought the prosperity of our agricultural community to bear.

Mr. Speaker, let us have that understood while we have this controversy going on as to how best to allocate the water. Let the people of Manitoba and let rural Manitobans understand who their friends are.

Video Lottery Terminals Social Costs

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): It is unfortunate the minister cannot seem to get the former member for Portage la Prairie onside.

In any event, my question is for the Minister responsible for The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Mayor Susan Thompson indicated publicly yesterday she does not want the 1,800 planned VLT terminals in the city of Winnipeg until she knows what the social consequences are, what the downside of those are going to be, something this government cannot tell her.

My question for the minister: Why is this government proceeding blindly on its course

towards an addiction to gambling itself when those around them are saying, let us stop and think before we go down this road?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, there are many who are critical of some of the expansion that has happened in gaming in the province of Manitoba, but I do want to indicate that as a result of gaming activities, there has been a total of 2,900 full-time jobs generated by Manitoba Lotteries operations in the province of Manitoba.

Capital projects through Lotteries account for over 400 additional positions on a one-time basis as we have built the two new entertainment facilities in the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, the economic impacts of the dollars that those Manitobans win through Lotteries initiatives are spent back, enhancing Manitoba's economy. Every dollar that is generated through the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation is returned to our Manitoban community or to our Manitoba economy in some way.

So there are some positive benefits as a result of Lotteries activities in Manitoba.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, gambling is a tax on the poor, and it is through those revenues that this government is basing its economic plans for the province.

My question for the minister: Why is this government, through the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation, spending millions of dollars selling gambling to Manitobans, not to people from North Dakota or Ontario, but selling it to Manitobans, advertising to Manitobans to sell gambling to our own citizens?

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

Order, please. Time is extremely scarce here now.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We do know that Manitobans take \$300 million, their gaming dollars, across the border out of Manitoba every year, and we would like to keep some of that money right here in Manitoba so it can be recycled in the Manitoba economy and the Manitoba community in some fashion.

I do know from hearing reports from the new entertainment facility on Regent, Mr. Speaker, that,

indeed, there are people from Minnesota who travelled up this weekend to spend their dollars here in Manitoba.

So I believe they are going to be a positive tourist attraction for Manitoba, and we will attract tourist dollars to be spent here in Manitoba.

Mr. Edwards: These are not tourist dollars. These are Manitobans' dollars being spent, and they are a tax on the poor.

Now my question for the minister is, since this government has come into power, we have seen the slide—the Crystal Casino; then it opened Sundays; then we moved into VLTs; then we brought them into the city; now we have got the glitzy bingo halls. What is next? Where are we going with gambling in this province?

Can the minister tell us what is next? Where are these machines going to show up next?

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

Order, please. Does everybody have an answer? Order, please. I have recognized the honourable Madam Minister responsible for Manitoba Lotteries

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I can assure Manitobans that we are not going to follow the Liberal Party policy to establish four casinos on Hecla Island and around the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we have undertaken—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. What is going on back there?

The honourable member for St. James has asked a question. The honourable Madam Minister is attempting to answer it.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, we are not going to follow the New Brunswick Liberal policy, where they have video lottery terminals on every street corner, so those under 18 years of age can play.

Mr. Speaker, I understand from New Brunswick that indeed they are not looking at following Nova Scotia's policy, where they are pulling back video lottery terminals out of the 7-Elevens, where minors have access to gambling. We have a Liberal Party in New Brunswick which acts differently in government than this irresponsible opposition.

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

Committee Changes

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

Motion agreed to.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be amended as follows: Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), for Tuesday, June 22, for 7 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), for Thursday, June 24, 7 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Transcona (Mr. Reid) for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar); Broadway (Mr. Santos) for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie); Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), for Thursday, June 24, for 7 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Burrows (Mr. Martindale) for Broadway (Mr. Santos); Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) for Transcona (Mr. Reid); Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), for Friday, June 25, 1 p.m.

Motions agreed to.

Nonpolitical Statement

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): May I have leave, Mr. Speaker, to make a nonpolitical statement?

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

Mr. McAlpine: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tanya Dubnicoff for setting a world record on June 13, 1993, in the women's 500 metre time trial at the World Cup indoor cycling

competition in Valencia, Spain. Her time at 36.705 was the first world-record time that the 23-year-old Winnipegger has ever made.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the support of her parents, Jack and Carol Dubnicoff. Moral support is integral to the development of world-class athletes, and Tanya has come a long way in representing her country and province of Manitoba, since only starting cycling in May of 1990, to finishing sixth at the Olympic Games in Barcelona.

This has not been an easy road for Tanya, but she has overcome unbelievable odds from stressful training and conditioning, to the mental stress brought on by financial pressures that face our top athletes. Now, Tanya is on top of the world in her competition, but she still needs our support to stay there.

I would ask all members to join with me in congratulating Tanya, and wishing her well on future events.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before I move the motion to go into committee, I would like to announce that Bill 15, The Boxing and Wrestling Commission Act, I would like to add it to the list of bills being considered by the Standing Committee on Law Amendments for Thursday, June 24 at 7 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the members of the House whether there is a willingness to waive private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Leave is denied.

* (1420)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration of the Estimates of Education and Training.

When the committee last sat it had been considering item 5.(d)(1) on page 41 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Chairperson, when we were last together, I had agreed to table at the earliest possible time some information for the member.

First of all I have the support categorical base and supplementary including phase-in by division. Then I have information regarding the operating the base categorical total operating funding and phase-in on a school-year basis for the public schools.

Then I have information on the 1993-94 special requirement by division.

Then the member asked for any legislative initiatives from the Department of Education and Training that affect our legislation, and also he asked for the membership on all the boards and commissions from the Department of Education and Training.

This includes also, in the information that I am providing, information from advisory boards where there is membership from the universities as well, board of reference, board of teacher education and certification and so on.

I would like to table those now as well. I believe that completes everything that was asked yesterday.

* (1430)

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Just to clarify the sheet on a school-year basis as of June 2, 1993, this is for public schools only. It is the only one you gave us on a school-year basis, is it not?

Mrs. Vodrey: This is for public schools.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, and does this follow the same basic outline and categories as the FRAME Report does?

Mrs. Vodrey: The sheet that I have tabled is the support to schools, the FRAME Report list, the expenses.

Mr. Plohman: Did the minister not have this for the private schools as well? I had asked for both.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, yes, I do have another set of sheets I am prepared to table, and this is on the private schools, instructional services, special needs, curricular materials.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister explain the sheet categorical base supplementary support including phase-in at minus 1.5 percent? How does that relate to the minus 2 percent announced?

Mrs. Vodrey: The minus 1.5 percent is the program. The minus 2 includes capital and other, which would include support to Frontier School Division, support to institutional programs.

Mr. Plohman: The minister was also asked to provide an outline of those allowed to exceed the cap. Are we just to assume that if we were to look at the 1993-94 special requirement, on the percent change, those over 2 percent would give that to us?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, on the sheet that says special requirement '93-94, it shows in the first column, which says maximum, the amount to which school divisions could have increased, and beside it in the second column marked budget, you can see whether or not school divisions chose then to go to the maximum, or in the case of the second example on that sheet, you can see that they did not go to the maximum that they were able to go to with the 2 percent cap.

There are a number of divisions, which the member can see as he looks down the list, which did not use that full amount that they were able to through the 2 percent.

Mr. Plohman: Which divisions were allowed, due to unusual circumstances, whatever, to exceed the 2 percent cap? That is what I asked the minister for a list of.

Mrs. Vodrey: There were only two school divisions who had asked for an exception based on mistake. Those two school divisions were St. Vital and St. Boniface.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if I look at it, they both ended up with zero percent. That is the variation from the maximum. That is all that tells us. It does not mean that they did not increase their special levy by more than 2 percent— [interjection] I know it is a special requirement, but the special levy is the one that they can change in terms of the impact.

* (1440)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, for St. Vital in terms of the special levy there was a decrease in the special levy then of 0.1 percent.

Mr. Plohman: That is fine, but where do we see the manifestation of the exception because of mistake to the cap on the special requirement of 2 percent that was placed by the legislation, Bill 16?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the adjustment to the special requirement is now reflected then in that number that says maximum for the special requirement. Before the adjustment, before the petition based on mistake, St. Vital School Division's maximum would have been less than this amount. This amount now reflects the adjusted.

Mr. Plohman: On the special levy, I asked for the percentage local levy increase for each division. Where will I find that in these papers?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am prepared to table that. I will need to have copies made, however.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have received some information from the minister on private schools. Special needs programming or funding increased by 139 percent.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

What is the comparable figure for the public school system, and why is there such a large increase in the private school there versus the public school?

Mrs. Vodrey: At the time that the Letter of Comfort was signed with the independent schools, those schools did receive funding for low-incidence students of special needs; however, there never

had been included within their funding any ability to fund for the high-incidence-needs students.

The public schools, as the member knows, do receive funding for high-incidence-needs students, and independent schools certainly have high-incidence-needs students as well. So this was to correct that inequity and to allow for the funding by formula. There is a formula in the public school system, and there is also a formula in the independent school system to fund by formula for high-incidence-needs young people.

Mr. Plohman: Could the minister just explain again why that was overlooked before?

Mrs. Vodrey: At the time that the Letter of Comfort was signed, there was a change in the funding. In the public school system we moved away from funding what we had called high-incidence young people to Level I young people, but the independent schools over the course of time that the Letter of Comfort has been in effect have certainly been able to demonstrate that there are high incidence or Level I, as they are now called, young people within their schools.

Based on that demonstrated need, it was then determined that those young people would receive some funding. But again, I would stress that they received funding on a formula basis, as do the public schools.

Mr. Plohman: Well, so the minister is saying that 976,380 for the '93-94 school year corresponds to the Level I Special Needs allocation of 45 million for the public school system. We are talking about the same kinds of students there.

Mrs. Vodrey: That total amount that the member has spoken about also includes Level II and Level III needs, young people as well.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister break out the number of Level II and Level III students that we are talking about in private schools? Does she have it by school or just in total?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have and am prepared to table, but I will need to have copies made, the high- and low-incidence support for the '92-93 school year and the estimated number of pupils for '93-94 based on what the schools have told us, and then the member will see a final column which speaks about support for the fiscal year which, as I explained earlier, includes 30 percent of the funding for

'92-93, 70 percent of the funding for '93-94. I am prepared to table that.

Mr. Plohman: Is that then adjusted on the basis of actual as opposed to what the schools have projected? The minister said, based on the information the schools have provided. Is there someone who does an evaluation later on to ensure that it is only paid for students who meet the requirements?

* (1450)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the independent schools must use exactly the same rules of accountability as do the public schools. We set out the same FRAME accounting. We set out the same classifications for those schools, but as in all schools right now, they send us what their projected is and then we know when we actually are able to look and see the students who are enrolled we know in September. What we are operating on is an estimation, as we are operating on for all schools in Manitoba.

Mr. Plohman: Now this particular sheet gives the school-year basis, which the minister was, much to some of our amusement, attempting to tell some stories in the House that would leave a different impression.

Point of Order

Mrs. Vodrey: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would ask you to consider the member's words that the minister was telling stories. I would appreciate you looking at that as a point of order because, as I said, in clarifying in the House, the member himself was confused between fiscal year numbers and school years numbers. He was attempting to look at them one to another without understanding the difference.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): I would just point out that the minister did not have a point of order, it is a dispute of the facts, but I would caution all members in their choice of words and questioning of all honourable members.

* * *

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): The member for Dauphin, to continue with his questions.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think if anyone was confused it was the minister, and she still is.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): The member for Dauphin, to continue on his questioning.

Mr. Plohman: The minister has again put some information here that shows a 10.4 percent increase on a school-year basis. Now, is it the difference between the 12.3 percent and the 10.4 percent that the minister was trying to make her point about in the House? Does she think that that accurately would reflect the facts to the public?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, I think the member has been instructed to the point that now he has understood. I hope he understands now. I am prepared to certainly provide that instruction again.

The 10.4 percent, however, reflects the school year, and the 12.4 percent reflects the fiscal year.

Mr. Plohman: So you mean to say that the minister was making a point in front of the people of Manitoba today that the increase to the private school system this year was really 10.4 percent rather than a 2 percent decrease as she said on March 12. Let us get this straight for everyone to understand if the minister indeed understands it. I do not think she does. She uses different figures every time in an attempt to camouflage the issue.

Now, if it is a 10.4 percent increase to the private schools while public schools are getting a 0.2 percent decrease on a calendar year or something larger than that on a school-year basis, then let us compare apples with apples here and not try to leave the impression on the record, as she did on March 12, that the private schools were getting the same decrease that the public schools were getting.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, the member is so confused, that is all I can say. The students in the independent schools received the same minus 2 percent as did students in the public schools. I hope that he has understood that now. Per pupil, independent school students received the same two percent decrease as did the public schools.

The amount of increase, I know as he goes down the list he will see that school divisions have varying changes in their support.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

The announced minus 2 percent was for the global amount of money available for the school

year. The amount of that money that school divisions access is very much dependent upon their enrollment and other issues. Last night we spoke about Kelsey School Division receiving \$90,000 additional through a northern allowance.

So as school divisions put forward through the funding formula, then the amount of money that is available to them then flows, and it will vary by school division depending upon enrollment, depending upon the other issues.

So I would like to put on the record for the member again that the independent schools per pupil grant at the same minus 2 percent decrease as the public schools did.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister is still confused. She is not presenting all of the facts here to this committee. Now she has given us one sheet that says that on a year-over-year basis, private schools received 12.3 percent more over 1992-93. They received 12.3 percent more on a year-over-year basis. She has given us another sheet that says that on a school-year-over-school-year basis, they received 10.4 percent more.

Now we see an increase that is either 10.4 percent or 12.3, depending on whether you use school year or whether you use fiscal year or calendar year. So the fact is that there is that huge increase. I am asking the minister how she can rationalize that kind of statement with her statement in the House on March 12 that said that independent schools of this province, in the funding announcement that was made this year, received the same 2 percent reduction. On a per pupil basis, they may have, but we are talking about total dollars to those schools. Does the minister get it yet?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the member for Dauphin is all worked up in his confusion, so let me try and explain to him again.

* (1500)

The 12.4 percent is fiscal year, and as I explained to the member, in terms of the fiscal year—and perhaps you need to have a picture—in the fiscal year previously, the support was 59 percent and 63.5 percent for that year. Therefore, and in this year, it is 63.5 percent, 63.5 percent. So obviously, the amount would then reflect the variation in the proportionate amount of money that is available to students in the independent school

and the funding available to the independent school. So that is the first area of clarification.

The second area of clarification is when we look at school year, year over year. Within the school year, we are then looking at independent schools receiving 63.5 percent last year, 63.5 percent this year. Fiscally, it is different, school year by school year, that 63.5 percent portion. However, with that 63.5 percent, the independent schools did receive the same minus 2 percent as did the public schools.

So reflecting that minus 2 percent per pupil in 1992, the per pupil grant for independent schools was \$2,184; and in '93, the per pupil grant is \$2,141. That reflects the minus 2 percent. The increase overall is a reflection of increased enrollment and is also a correction for the enrollment last year and also includes the area that we have been just discussing. That is funding for special needs of high incidence young people who, in the past, did not receive any support.

I know the member thinks that the funding for special needs young people is important. This is now a correction.

Mr. Plohman: I am pleased that the minister has finally got down to the nuts and bolts of this in terms of the dollars. The bottom line is this government has increased, on a school-year-over-school-year basis, the funding to private schools by 10.4 percent. A comparative figure for the public school system during that same period of time is a negative number.

Can the minister give us the precise comparative number for the public school system on a school-year-over-school-year basis?

Mrs. Vodrey: The amount of money involved is slightly over \$2 million, and as the member knows—I know he has looked at the sheets that I have tabled today—he already has the information that he has just been asking for.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister gave us a sheet yesterday that provided a year-by-year basis decrease of 0.2 percent. Is that the figure that the minister is using?

Mrs. Vodrey: The member will find the information when he looks at the sheet that says, categorical base and supplementary including phase-in.

Mr. Plohman: Okay, so now the minister has a \$2-million increase for private schools. I explored

with her in Question Period the issue about a policy of this government impacting on enrollment shifts, and I asked her whether she would consider an independent committee to look at the impact of funding increases to the private school system as was moved during the course of amendments to the act in 1990.

My colleague the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), who was the Education critic, moved that a committee be set up to discuss or to study a number of aspects. One included enrollment in the public schools; one would consider local property taxes; the government funding of public schools; programming in public schools; and special needs and disadvantaged pupils.

He proposed that such a committee be made up of a representative from the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Union of Manitoba Municipalities.

This was voted down, as I indicated in the House, by the combined numbers of the Conservatives and the Liberals, who did not want to see this kind of committee set up to review the impact of public funding for private schools.

Unfortunately, we have seen this continue this year, even though the minister stood up in the House and left the impression that it was a reduction to the private schools, the same reduction as the public schools. She is technically correct on the basis of a per pupil basis, but she is not correct in terms of the global dollars. It is not even close. The increase is a massive increase once again to the private schools. I think that is something that the minister has to be prepared to say because the enrollment is shifting. That is my point.

We have other ministers sitting here still confused about this. The fact is there is a shift.

An Honourable Member: Why is it shifting?

Mr. Plohman: Yes, and the reason it is shifting is because of this government's undermining of the credibility of the public school system through massive underfunding as has occurred this year. This is what we have seen, an undermining of the public school system, a lack of commitment, instilling a feeling in the public that the public school system is not doing its job, a lack of confidence to shake the ground, the roots, of the public school system.

As long as this government is in place, that is what they are trying to do, and I would have to say it is working. People are leaving the public school system, and they are going to the private schools. It stands to reason, when you shake the confidence of the public in the public school system that is there for everyone, and when you make it easier for students to attend the private school system by upping the government support, of course, it is that much easier for people to send their kids to the private schools.

The members talk about choice, but they do not consider the impact that this is having on the public school system. I have shown and referred the minister to the FRAME Report, the document that she gave us yesterday that shows that over the last five years the enrollment in the public school system has dropped by nearly 5,000 students since 1987, when it was levelled off, was actually increasing between '86 and '87, and '85 and '86. Then starting in '88, it started dropping, and over the last five years it has dropped almost 5,000 students over that period of time.

Where are those students going? The minister projects for this year in her documents an increase of 552 students are projected, and there is an additional figure included in there for that. What we are seeing, of course, is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The government wants to undermine the public school system. They are improving the funding to the private school system and that of course is causing a lack of confidence in the public school system. That is what we have been saying all along.

You only look at the evidence; you look at the funding evidence; we see it this year again. We look at the crisis that this is causing in the public school system in this province, and the minister should be ashamed of herself for leading this kind of policy. It is a disgrace, because she is there to protect and enhance the public school system as the one that is available universally for all students in this province.

Some of the elite schools do not even accept all students. They do not want you if you cannot pass their entrance exams. The public school system takes everyone. They have to and that is what is important. I talked about the elite exclusionary schools that do exclude students based on the entrance exams.

So I am saying to the minister that their policies of underfunding the public school system, and overfunding and increasing the funding to the private school system, which they have done again this year, contrary to what the minister said in the House, are leading to a massive undermining of the public school system. That concerns us. I say this sincerely. Come on, John, come on this, forget it.

We are fed up with this government's lack of commitment to the public school system while the private school system is getting this kind of massive increase. Those remarks will stay on the record. I will not back from those in any way, shape or form. They are something this minister could listen to, take heed of and inform her colleagues that they have to stop this nonsense and these massive increases to the private school system at the expense of the public school system.

* (1510)

What do we have? Twenty-two million dollars that could be going to the public school system this year, \$22 million that could be going so that they could have gotten an inflationary increase this year. They did not get that. The reason they did not get it is because it is going to the elite schools of this province. I am and we are fed up with that. We want to ask the minister whether she is now prepared to put in place this commission to study the impact.

Let us take a look at what this is doing to the enrollment. Is this a factor in the fact that there have been 5,000 fewer students over the last five years in the public school system? Is it a factor? What is the impact of government policies on the enrollment in the private school system that it is increasing?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I would think that the member would be embarrassed to have put some of that information on the record. I think he would have been embarrassed with some of the faulty conclusions that he has drawn, but I do understand, when people get emotionally worked up and work themselves up into emotional kinds of frenzies, that certainly words come out perhaps not in the way that they intended them. So let me try and sort through some of the information that the member has put on the record and provide some clarification for that information.

First of all, the shift in the population in the public schools and the change in enrollment in the public

schools is approximately minus 0.1 percent. It is a very small change, a minus 0.1 percent. So that flies certainly in the face of the massive changes that the member is attempting to characterize. He is wrong. I would like to try and clarify for him the actual, and perhaps that will reduce his level of excitement.

I would also like to say that the trend and increasing enrollment in the independent schools began in approximately 1981-82. Now, as I think about who was in government in and around that time with the continued increase, it seems to me that the movement in the increase in the independent schools certainly was a factor when my honourable friend's party was in power. There certainly was a shift towards independent schools at that time. So I thought it would be very important to note that he is trying to make a case for a shift in the past few years, to in fact give him more historical information and to help him correct his faulty perceptions.

I then would like to say he has somehow suggested that all of the school divisions in the public school system have received a decrease and that is not true. There are nine school divisions who in fact have received an increase. There are certainly ways for school divisions to receive an increase. It may be through the enrollment, it may be through the modifications which were made to the school funding formula to assist school divisions who are northern and remote or who have other special kinds of needs. So I think that is the third point to be corrected.

Let me also make sure it is on the record that the funding to independent schools was frozen this year, that there was a clause in the Letter of Comfort. For the member's information, the independent schools are funded at 63.5 percent of what the per pupil grant is or the funding for the public school system, and that they received no capital support at all. So the amount of money for the education for those students in independent schools then does not come from the government of Manitoba or other taxpayers in Manitoba. It comes from support that those young people receive through a church or through their own families or through some other community types of support. So let the member not leave on the record information that seems to indicate that it is the taxpayers of Manitoba who are wholly supporting students in independent schools.

Then the fifth point that the member raised was one of public schools accepting all students and some independent schools not accepting all students. Let me remind the member that within the public school system there certainly are programs which require a competition for entry. I point him to the program, the course of study such as the International Baccalaureate which, again, offered in the public school system, not available to all students who are within the public school system by any means. Students compete for those places. So there certainly is programming, courses of studies, that are available supported by taxpayer dollars. This seems to be the member's point, where it is supported by taxpayer dollars, is it open for everyone? The member knows very well that is not the case.

Then let me also remind the member that when his government had this particular debate around independent schools that it certainly was a member of the cabinet at that time who said that the NDP's government refusal to provide fair funding to independent schools was "unconscionable and hypocritical," and that within his own caucus there is obviously not agreement upon how the funding to independent schools should be dealt with.

In fact I think that when we were out speaking together one evening he also referenced some information relating to that. So what I would like to put on the record in response to his information is again information regarding the shift, minus 0.1 percent, that the shift in population to independent schools certainly was evident as a long-term trend from the time that my honourable friend was in government and also sat at the cabinet table, I believe. I understand, as we look back on the funding that was provided to private schools during the NDP administration, that the funding to private schools during the NDP administration tripled.

I wonder if the honourable member has actually heard that. So, very interesting behaviour, and then what the member is saying—somehow there seems to be an inconsistency.

Mr. Plozman: Well, the minister did not cap the number of students that she would fund in elite schools for this year. So naturally, as more and more students attend the elite schools and other private schools, there are going to be additional dollars going to those schools.

* (1520)

The minister was very evasive in the House about dealing straight on with the issue in terms of the amount of money and the increase that she was providing to the private and elite schools. I simply wanted her to provide a direct answer on exactly what her government is doing with public money for private schools. She has not been as forthcoming on this as she could have been. That is why we are pursuing it here.

Now, as far as what previous governments' positions are on private schools, it has always been an issue that has a lot of debate. The minister talked about her position, about previous governments' positions. If we look at the Assiniboine diversion, I think if we were to poll all of our members, if that is relevant, we would find that all of the members do not support it either. But the government's position is official position and that is the one they carry forward.

In this case, we have an official position of this government which is to greatly enhance the funding to private schools to 80 percent of the public school system over a couple of years, supported by the Liberals. That is having an impact. I am asking the minister whether she will not acknowledge that as you increase the funding to the private schools that there is bound to be an impact on the enrollment and a shift.

While she is dealing with that, she might want to put alongside of the increase that took place to private schools during the previous NDP government, that she said was a factor of three, what the increase has been over the last five years by this government.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I think that it is very important to draw some further comparisons. When the member's party was in government there was a great deal of disagreement around funding for independent schools.

As a matter of fact, a minister in the government at that time said we are supposed to have freedom in this country. There are some people who cannot attend any other schools. There was certainly a strong support.

Then I would say to the member that during the time that the NDP government was in power, in seven years they tripled the funding to independent schools, tripled it—

An Honourable Member: You said that before, and what did you say about yours?

Mrs. Vodrey: —and in five years, yes, our government has, according to an agreement. The difference is that we came forward with a Letter of Comfort, which provided a process in which to provide that funding, and that funding has doubled in the past five years, which is different than the tripling of the NDP. So I find it hard to understand when the member is putting forward some complaints, considering some of the record of his government.

May I also say, Mr. Deputy Chair—and this is another very important point—with the funding to independent schools that this government has provided, we have also introduced legislation to hold the independent schools accountable for the money that they spend. They now must meet the criterion. I think that also is a very important point, because when money is being used, and taxpayer money is being spent, there must be some way to see that the criteria is met. That is exactly what has happened.

Mr. Plohman: Well, the minister should put all the facts on the table. She knows there were previous agreements that the government has had with private schools, but we certainly were not going to 80 percent of the funding of the public school system that this government is moving toward very quickly, which has dwarfed the increases to the public school system. She cannot get away from that.

As irrelevant as these other comments are, they are interesting that she puts on this historical information, but the fact is we are dealing with the here and now and the impact on funding. She has to also remember that during those years, funding to the public school system was certainly not ever reduced, which this government is doing now. Historically, we have never had a flat reduction in the funding to the public schools. So the minister is using a two-edged sword here to accomplish her ends.

If she wants to compare increases to the private schools over that period of time, she also has to consider what was happening with the public school system. There was a generous and solid support for the public school system during that time, which is a far cry from what this government is doing during this particular time.

The minister's policies, when combined, are devastating for the public school system. That is

the point that has to be made here. That is what the minister is going to be held accountable for in the next election. That is what the people of Manitoba are going to want to know.

I hope that the minister will give straight answers to questions about the amount of money that has gone to the private schools, because when I asked in the House today, anyone listening to the minister's answer would assume that there was a 2 percent decrease to the private schools this year, when in fact we have established that on a school-year-over-school-year basis, a 10.4 percent increase, as compared to a 1.5 percent decrease to the public schools—period, paragraph.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: (d)(1) Operating Grants \$573,684,700—pass; (2) Phase-In Support Grants \$5,911,600—pass; (3) General Support Grants \$18,500,000—pass.

(e) Other Grants \$1,756,000—pass.

(f) Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund \$44,458,900.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just a question about the impact of the government's shortened workweek on the pensions of teachers. Could the minister indicate how this is going to impact on the final averaging for teachers under the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund?

Mrs. Vodrey: Using an annual salary rate of \$48,647.96, if a person were to retire in this year, the effect would be \$4.81 monthly. If a person were to retire in the year 2000, 2001, the effect would be \$2.91 monthly.

Mr. Plohman: So the minister is saying there is \$4.81 monthly on an average pension. Is that what she said in terms of, what, are we talking about 20 or 30 years experience at Class 4 or what are we dealing with here?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, yes, that would be an average teacher with full years of experience and at an average salary.

Mr. Plohman: I take it from the minister's use of those figures that she feels it is rather a small figure, and therefore not something that she feels any need to make any special provisions for in Bill 22.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, all sectors would have a similar effect or the same kind of effect. This is not specifically focused on teachers.

Mr. Plozman: Well, nor did I say it was specifically focused on teachers, but I am asking about teachers in this particular case. If I were to dare to ask about the civil service here, now, can you imagine the minister's response? This is not the right department or the right minister. So I am asking about teachers here, that is a given, and the impact is almost \$5 a month for 12 months a year. That is 60 dollars a year, and over 10 years that is \$600. Yes, it does not seem like a huge amount relative to the overall pension, but it is a significant cost. It is a cost over a long period of time of a one-time event that the government is engaged in this year and next year for a two-year period. It is affecting the long term.

* (1530)

I asked the minister whether in fact there has been any consideration by her department with regard to teachers to put forward a suggestion that there be no negative impact on the pensions as a result of the shortened workweek that is being proposed under Bill 22.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the average monthly pension for a teacher is \$1,706, and with the work week reduction we are looking at a reduction of approximately \$4 a month from that. Again, I understand the effect is on individuals at the moment. It will not have an effect certainly after seven years, and I mention that as the member was looking at ten-year periods. I would remind him of the range of time where there may be an effect and the effect on the total pension.

Mr. Plozman: Well, the reason I was raising this was on the principle that pensions should be protected, that if there were future decisions such as this, they would also impact and would be cumulative. So if there was a policy established by this government that pensions would not be impacted, then of course that might prevail as long as this government is in office.

Hopefully, there will not be another opportunity to introduce a similar bill to Bill 22 in the future by this government, but in any event it is important to establish that principle, and it is the principle I am asking the minister about, whether she is as comfortable and supportive of a decision that would not only cut wages this time but would impact on pensions over the longer term. The minister can comment on that if she wishes.

I wanted to also ask her whether the retirement fund is in a sound financial position at the present time. Is there any unfunded liability for the pension fund? Is there a surplus, and is there any plan to redirect some of the surplus if there is that?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I would like to inform the member that, yes, the fund is sound, and there is some unfunded liability. The government has undertaken to meet the requirements to match the teacher's contribution. Also in the area of surplus, the member asked about a surplus. Yes, there is some surplus. No, we have no plans whatsoever to redirect that surplus.

Mr. Plozman: Just to clarify then, the minister first said there is an unfunded liability, then she said there is a surplus, and I do not know how there can be both. I mean, either there is a liability that the contributions are not meeting the payouts for that 50 percent of teachers' salaries contributions make, or they are meeting it over the long term. Is it actuarially sound I guess is what I am asking.

Mrs. Vodrey: The Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund is actuarially sound. The Teachers' Retirement Fund portion, the teachers' contribution, does have a surplus. In terms of the government side by accounting, some governments do state a liability for the government's share in that they pay as they go.

Pension payments are charged to the provinces as incurred. No provision is made by the province to set aside money, for example, the fund for future pension costs of current working teachers. While teachers earn their pension entitlement throughout their working lives, the province does not provide matching contributions but instead elects to deal with these costs when the teachers actually retire and start to draw their pension.

As a result of this policy, it is estimated that there is then the unfunded liability for the provincial share of the teachers' pensions.

Mr. Plozman: So this is not a fully funded pension, but as the minister says, the government's share is paid out as it is required to pay the pensions of the retired teachers.

This figure represented in this appropriation, is that the figure that is in the fund or is that the figure that the government is paying out for its obligations? We could assume that the fund itself also has about \$44,458,000 plus a little bit on the surplus here. So we are talking a total expenditure

for pensions at the present time of about \$89 million a year. The minister can tell me if that is correct. Also, how much of a surplus from the teachers' contributions is in the fund as well, over and above that?

* (1540)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the amount listed in the appropriation is the government's share in terms of the payout for the pension. Government pays approximately 51 percent of the pension. Therefore, the member's numbers were fairly accurate, but they may have been more 50-50, and he just needs to recognize government pays 51 percent.

Apart from that, in terms of the surplus amount, the surplus amount from the teachers side is an actuarial amount. We do not have the exact figure. The estimated amount is approximately \$20 million.

Mr. Plohan: Well, that is why I asked the question earlier. I did not know the exact figure, but it seemed to me that there was a surplus. Has there been any request by the teachers to negotiate increased benefits as a result of what is an actuarial surplus?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that there is a new actuarial review of the pension fund that will be reporting in some months from now, and in addition, there has been some discussion with government regarding the best—be able to maximize the return, but I am not able at this time to tell the member any more details about that discussion, and there have been no decisions made.

Mr. Plohan: Just to finish this questioning, I guess I just wanted to know from the minister whether she has any aversion or any policy aversion to actually negotiating changes in benefits as a result of actuarial surpluses, or is the policy that there will be no additional benefits regardless of whether teachers are actually contributing more than is required to meet their obligations?

Mrs. Vodrey: From government's position, we would want to be careful not to negotiate something which required an increase in the government contribution side.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): If I understood the minister's response to an earlier question of the member for Dauphin about the losses that teachers would incur as a result of the impact of the wage restraint bill, the minister said it would be about four

dollars and some cents per month and that this would end that teachers more than seven years in the plan would experience no impact at all, is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: Not teachers seven years in the plan but teachers who retire after this seven years, because it is based on the best seven years earning.

Mr. Alcock: Yes, I probably spoke that poorly, so that a teacher who is, say, 10 years from retirement is going to feel no impact as a result of this change.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, as the member knows, a great deal will depend upon the salary range of the individuals within that time and if there were any changes to the salary, because the pension is on the best seven years.

The information that I have is that someone retiring in about the year 2001, the effect may be, all things remaining the same, approximately \$2.91 per month.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, and subsequent to that then.

Mrs. Vodrey: I do not have figures for that, but it would continue to drop and would eventually work its way to then a zero point.

Mr. Alcock: So that the greatest impact of this change is going to fall on those teachers who are retiring this year or next year and within the first, say, five years.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the impact will be felt on those people retiring within the next approximately five years, and as I said, with the average monthly pension being about \$1,709, the effect is slightly more than \$4 monthly.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, given that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has made much of this Bill 22 being an attempt to be fair to all people, was there any work done to try to eliminate this difference in the pensions, to try to offset the changes introduced by Bill 22?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, we certainly did look at any effect that any reductions of any kind would have and we looked across all sectors that would be affected. In the sector that affects teachers, again we looked at it and we saw that the amount according to the monthly pension would be considered somewhat minimal, so we tried to make sure that the effects would be not extremely large on any individual.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Deputy Chair, so the fact that there was a difference between older teachers and younger teachers was noted, you did some analysis as to what it might take to correct that, and yet then decided as a matter of policy that it was not a significant amount of money, therefore you would not attempt to correct this imbalance.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, we did, as I said to the member, look into this. We looked into it carefully. We did look into the effects. We saw that the effects were very small, considerably on the teachers, and we were also really making every effort that we could to also look at a way to maintain employment while reaching a reduction.

Mr. Alcock: Sorry, perhaps the minister could explain that last remark about how correcting the imbalance between older and younger workers would affect employment.

Mrs. Vodrey: Employers were looking at a way in terms of looking at some way to deal with their employees, and government had said that we were not looking at a rollback. So employers would have had to have made some decisions then regarding laying off of employees. This provided a way to maintain employment for employees and, though there is a slight reduction in the pension area, it does allow for, we believe, more continued employment.

* (1550)

Mr. Alcock: Yes, I did not think that we were redebating Bill 22. I thought we were talking about teachers' pensions. In this particular case, in addition to the reduction in income that each teacher is going to suffer, older teachers are going to feel the impact more because of this peculiar impact within the pension system.

I had understood, or I guess I had thought, given the statement from the Minister of Finance, that they were going to attempt to be fair in the application of Bill 22, and it clearly is not fair that older teachers would bear more of the cost than younger teachers. But I understand from the minister that has been studied, that has been examined, that has been thought about, and they have decided to take no action.

Were there any discussions with the teachers, who share in half of the costs of maintaining this, about using some of that surplus to buy up the benefits of the older teachers or to supplement the

benefits of the older teachers so that they felt none of this impact?

Mrs. Vodrey: As I said to the member, we did look at this carefully. We made as many considerations as we believed possible. We have had no representation from the teachers to look at the use of surplus. Therefore, the use of surplus has not been considered.

Mr. Alcock: Have there been discussions—you note that a portion of this plan, 51 percent, is unfunded because of the policy decision of the government to be self-insuring, if you like, on that. The Minister of Finance has been under some criticism about the extent of the unfunded pension liabilities that exist in the province. There have been suggestions at times that there might be an attempt to deal with this. Has there been any action taken or any examination of what it would take to move this toward a fully funded plan?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, again, just to review, the 51 percent is the government contribution, but I know that the member has looked at pensions across Canada. He would know that this is not an unusual way in terms of the funding of pensions, and governments fund their own pension plans in the same way.

Mr. Alcock: Yes, it certainly is not inconsistent with practice in other governments. However, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) will tell you, he has been criticized several times over the years—and not just this Minister of Finance, the previous Minister of Finance—about the existence of unfunded pension liabilities.

In fact, the current Finance minister when he was Finance critic used to roundly criticize the former government for the existence of unfunded pension plans. With some of the changes in the public service accounting rules, there has been a suggestion that they move to correct this. All I asked was, has there been any examination of what it would take to move this to a funded plan, to step back from this policy?

Mrs. Vodrey: Some of the details the member is asking would be best addressed to my colleague the Minister of Finance. I know that he would like to do that when those Estimates come up.

Mr. Alcock: I have no objection to doing that when we get to the Department of Finance. It seems odd to me that the minister would be responsible for this. It does appear in this Estimates and I had not

thought I was getting into contentious areas when I began to raise this. I simply wanted to know whether or not this had been discussed within the department and whether or not there was a plan, however long term, in place to deal with this. I am, frankly, a little surprised that it is news to you.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: 5.(f) Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund \$44,458,900—pass.

Resolution 16.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$647,834,300 for Education and Training for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1994—pass.

6. Support to Community Colleges (a) Colleges Secretariat (1) Salaries \$187,800.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, during some earlier discussions on policy we touched on the area of the community colleges. The member asked for some information on enrollment trends and the effect of annual program—any program reductions on enrollment. I am pleased to provide the information, and in addition to information on enrollments, I have information on new or expanded program initiatives also included.

Ms. Jean Frlesen (Wolseley): I see that the minister does not have the presidents of the community colleges here. I wonder if she would like to explain what her position is on that. In earlier years the presidents have been here. The minister is obviously choosing not to have them here this time. Could she explain what she considers to be the relationship between her department and the presidents?

Mrs. Vodrey: As the member knows, the community colleges have now moved to governance. They operate with their boards of governors and therefore would not be expected to attend the Estimates of the Department of Education. The presidents of the universities do not attend the Estimates of the Department of Education, and this year the presidents of the colleges would not be attending.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, but the director of the Universities Grants Commission does attend. There is an intermediate body which does distribute the funds of the universities, so the situation is not quite comparable in terms of the distribution and responsibility lines of the government. So again, would the minister like to perhaps give some additional indication of how she regards the

relationship between the government and the community colleges as being different from that as between the university and the government?

* (1600)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, let me take a moment to introduce Mr. Rick Dedi who is the acting director of the Colleges Secretariat. He is the person who is here today as the representatives of the Universities Grants Commission would also be here to assist in information relating to the universities. Mr. Dedi is here today to assist with information that the member may ask about the colleges.

Ms. Frlesen: Does Mr. Dedi have an appointed board which he consults on the distribution of monies as the Universities Grants Commission does?

Mrs. Vodrey: I will just provide a little background. As the member knows, we have incorporated the three individual community colleges, and we chose not to incorporate them as a single entity under a single board of governors. We felt that it was important to ensure that the needs of Manitoba's regions, in north, rural and urban Manitoba could be reflected in college decision making and program delivery.

The colleges are funded in a new way, beginning this fiscal year, also. Colleges are funded by an annual grant from the Department of Education and Training. This grant represents approximately 60 percent of college revenues. Unlike previous years, colleges are now able to collect their own revenues. The colleges' boards of governors will report to the minister on an annual basis.

Ms. Frlesen: But the issue I am pursuing at the moment is the relationship between the government and the community colleges as symbolized or perhaps represented here in Estimates today. This is a departure from the past. The situation is not exactly parallel to the universities. The question I asked was whether Mr. Dedi had a similar body to that of the executive director of the Universities Grants Commission.

All of the monies, as I understand it, are given directly—those which are not revenue—all of the grant money from the government is given directly to the community colleges, and the distribution over the three community colleges is decided by the minister rather than by the Grants Commission, an intermediate body. So there is a difference. Again,

I put the question to the minister: Why has she chosen not to have the presidents of the community colleges here, because they do receive a direct appropriation from the minister, directly determined by the minister vis-à-vis appropriations to other colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Let me start by saying that the presidents of the colleges are now not the employees of government. That is one of the main reasons that they are not present today.

(Mrs. Shirley Render, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

In terms of the Colleges Secretariat, the Secretariat is charged with the responsibility "to support the development and the effectiveness of the Manitoba community college system"; "to support the community colleges in their delivery of a quality, comprehensive and community-responsive program of education and skills training to meet the needs of adult Manitobans and also the Manitoba labour market"; and also "to assist the community colleges to operate as a coordinated element of the provincial, social and economic development policy."

In terms of the funding that the member has spoken about specifically, in '93-94 fiscal year, the department, through the Colleges Secretariat, will ensure that there is development and implementation of a college grants funding formula for implementation in the '94-95 budget cycle and "the development and implementation of a results-based accountability framework which includes legislative requirements and guidelines for: i) program evaluation and review; ii) annual reports and audited financial statements; iii) published annual academic reports; iv) the planning cycle (annual budget submissions and review, program approval, multi-year operating and capital planning); and v) periodic/five-year organizational and institutional review."

Ms. Frlesen: Madam Acting Deputy Chair, what I am trying to do is to establish the new relationship between government and the colleges. The minister said that the presidents are not employees of the government; hence, they should not be here. I am wondering how she would compare them to the chairs or directors of Crown corporations, of Hydro or Telephone, for example, that also have boards. I am asking this. I do not know whether they appear at Estimates or not, and I am

wondering what the parallel relationship is here. I am trying to fit this into a structure of accountability in government.

Mrs. Vodrey: Maybe I could go through, then, for the member what boards are required to do and what the accountability for boards is, and also what the minister retains power to do, and that may assist in looking at what the relationship is in terms of the colleges.

The boards are required to evaluate programs regularly. They are required to make an annual academic report. They are required to develop and submit multiyear plans. They are required to conduct organizational and operational reviews at least every five years, and they are required to submit an annual budget for ministerial review and approval. That is different from the universities that operate through the Universities Grants Commission. They are also required to submit an annual report and audited financial statements and to appoint an independent auditor.

In the area of accountability, the minister appoints a person or a committee to review and evaluate a college program or service. The minister appoints a person or a committee to review and evaluate the college mandate and appoints a person or committee to examine and inspect the financial condition or management and operation of a college and assess college records and documents.

In the area of policy co-ordination, the minister retains the power to designate the region in which programs are delivered and designate provincial-wide program mandates, to designate campus locations and range of campus programs, and to establish post-secondary education and training guidelines, including program evaluation guidelines, but boards may recommend the establishment, transfer or the cancellation of any college service or programs. The minister is required to establish in the policy co-ordination area the Colleges Advisory Board and to advise on college-relating matters.

* (1610)

The college president serves as a nonvoting, ex-officio member of the board. The boards of governors hire college presidents on renewal term contracts, and the term of the contract may be no more than five years. The college president is the chief executive officer of the college.

I have already provided information to the member on exactly what the role of Colleges Secretariat is in the previous answer, and Colleges Advisory Board, as I have said, is to advise the minister on college-related policies and concerns. This Colleges Advisory Board is comprised of the chairpersons of the boards of each college, college presidents, the deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister responsible for colleges.

The Colleges Act ensures that community colleges remain accountable to government and to the public. The task, now that the colleges have moved to governance, is to build upon the framework that has been provided by the act to ensure that the community colleges remain an integral part of the province's response to the needs of students and employers and also the economic and social development goals of Manitobans.

I did read into the record as well in an answer previously exactly what the next step will be then, now to build upon The Colleges Act, what the department through the Colleges Secretariat will do in the coming year.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Ms. Frlesen: I am looking for the place of the Colleges Secretariat and the role of the minister within the structure of government and the Legislature. It seems to me that, as she has outlined it, the role of the boards and of the presidents are very similar. The closest thing I can find are the Crown corporations. Those Crown corporations do come before the Legislature in the form of a legislative committee with their presidents and chairs.

I wonder if the minister has given any consideration to an education committee that would have the opportunity to examine the chairs and presidents of the colleges.

Mrs. Vodrey: The Colleges Act requires that the annual report be tabled in the Legislature and then I am sure the members may wish to ask questions based on the annual report.

Ms. Frlesen: Has the minister given consideration to an annual public meeting, such as is held by Hydro, for example, of each college?

Mrs. Vodrey: The colleges themselves and their boards of governors may wish to begin to hold such meetings, certainly within their community and within their area.

Ms. Frlesen: Does the minister have any concerns about public availability and public accessibility to such institutions which are receiving such a large proportion of their money directly from government funds?

Mrs. Vodrey: As I said, the community colleges are set up with boards that are of a regional nature, but the board meetings of the community colleges are public meetings. I am advised that the boards may go into in-camera session for personnel matters, but their board meetings are public, and they also have representation from the public on the boards. That is a different way of operating than the universities and also the Crown corporations.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is there a requirement or is there a practice or precedent now established whereby the dates and times and places of those board meetings are given in notice to the public?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the act requires that the colleges hold a public meeting one time monthly. They are required to post the dates of those meetings in advance.

I am informed that some of the colleges are, in fact, meeting outside of the college place, in communities, in an effort to make the business of the college more accessible.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the whole thrust of the government's policy in post-secondary education—I am looking at this from a secretariat perspective and the development of policy, which I assume remains, overall, in the hands of the minister—the overall thrust has been towards market-driven training, and it is my impression that what we have lost, in that sense, are two things: we have not made any progress in Manitoba in the attraction of the community colleges for sequential students, and, hence, for a broader post-secondary type of education at the community colleges; and second of all, what we have lost is at the other end, and that is the Adult Basic Education people, for whom the market really has very little demand until, in fact, they are literate and numerate.

Obviously, the whole idea of market-driven training, I think, is one that comes very much from the ideology of this particular government, but I want to look at the impact it has had and is having upon the community colleges, and so I wonder if the minister could tell us whether, in fact, I am right.

Is it true that the market-driven training thrust has led to a reduction of Adult Basic Education spaces, which seems to be indicated by a number of the statistics that she gave us today—or the enrollment figures?

* (1620)

Mrs. Vodrey: The member began her question with policy co-ordination, and I would just like to say that we recognize too, and it is important to note, that the colleges will continue to be an integrated part of Manitoba's emerging Advanced Education and Skills Training system. The policy co-ordination through the Advanced Education and Skills Training Division and the Colleges Advisory Board, which I have spoken about this afternoon, will assist the colleges to operate in what we believe will be a flexible and also an accountable system within the provincial education and training system.

Again, the Colleges Advisory Board is established under the act, and it brings together senior ministerial staff, college board chairpersons, college presidents, to discuss the issues of interest to the colleges and also the provincial education and training system. The first meeting of this co-ordinating and also consultative body will be held this fall.

The member then asked about the Adult Basic Education, and I would remind her that the federal government has reduced the funding for Adult Basic Education. So, with that reduction, we spoke earlier about the fact that the colleges may now, through their ability to negotiate with the federal government, be able to look at reinstating some of that funding for Adult Basic Education, but we as a government are certainly committed to improvements and supports and the delivery of Adult Basic Education over the long term. We recognize that high school completion is an important element for the person's further skills training. As I spoke earlier at another time, our department is working at a more co-ordinated policy for adult basic education and high school completion.

Then the member spoke about sequential student enrollment, and we are looking to pay increased attention to sequential student enrollment. We expect that there will be evidence of that effort over the next two or three years. The colleges themselves and their boards of governors

certainly see the possibilities of the high school-college articulation with local school divisions. There is a potential of partnership among colleges and high schools and business and labour, and that certainly has needed a greater attention for some time. In another way as well, we are looking through the high school system to enlarge the profile and enhance the profile of the community colleges to make sure that they become a relevant choice for young people to consider, those young people who would become sequential students.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, the minister again has spoken about the federal role in the reduction of Adult Basic Education, but these people are Manitobans without education. This government has moved to a policy of market-driven education. The market has no need for people who are not literate and are not numerate.

That is the basic argument that I am making. Where is the responsibility of a Minister of Education for people who are without education and for whom the market has no need? It seems to me that the minister is essentially, by absolute policy means and policy direction, abandoning those people for whom the market has no need.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, we have had a portion of this discussion during the Estimates process in the past few weeks. At that time we spoke about the efforts of this government to look at a more co-ordinated policy for the delivery of Adult Basic Education. We cannot simply look at Adult Basic Education in kind of a piecemeal fashion.

In addition to that, I would say to the member, we cannot ignore the role of the federal government and their reduction in the support. The Province of Manitoba cannot continue to pick up where the federal government had previously provided funding and now has decided to withdraw that funding.

I just would like to pick up on the sequential students in that I would like to say that approximately 37.24 percent of students enrolled in the day programs at the community colleges are, in fact, sequential students.

So I would not want to leave on the record any sense that sequential students have been completely overlooked in favour of market driven,

because that, in fact, is not the case. The numbers certainly do not bear that out.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, does the minister have any sense of what the provincial need is for adult basic education? Has she done a needs study? Has she done anything in the labour force analysis section of her department which might give us an indication of what the needs are in the community of Manitoba?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, as I have said, we are doing an Adult Basic Education policy review. It is a question that we take very seriously, so, as I was saying, the department's Adult Education Policy Development Committee is exploring all forms of the ABE programming for the non-sequential students 18 years of age and older.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, due to the low-level noise in the committee room, I did not quite hear all the minister's response, but what I did hear I did not think answered the question of need. It looked at programming rather than an establishment of need. I may not have heard everything, but did the minister look through her labour force policy at the needs of Manitobans?

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

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, in talking about the department's Adult Education Policy Development Committee, yes, they are looking at programming, but as they look at that programming, they will also be looking at areas of need.

I remind the member of the people who presently sit on that committee representing Adult Education and Skills Training. We have people from the Literacy area. I can provide the member with the names; I did at an earlier time. We also have people representing the Program Development and Support Services Division. That is our K-12 side. We have two representatives from that side; people representing Administration and Finance; people representing the Bureau, Planning and Policy Development and also Internal Audit.

* (1630)

As I have said, the members have had two meetings to date. Actually, they would have had three meetings as of today. They are consulting with key players in Adult Basic Education and Literacy to determine the extent of existing provision and to ascertain their views on the type of

articulated adult education that the province might move towards developing.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, can we go back to the sequential student issue? What I am trying to establish is that, in fact, the province's thrust in market-driven training may not be to the best advantage of, particularly, substantial sections of Manitobans.

The sequential students, the minister says, are 37.24 percent of the day students of the community colleges. Could she give me a breakdown of that in terms of each college—that is, what proportion of students in each college are sequential students?

What I am also interested in, if the staff wanted to take it at the same time, is how that has changed. The Morrow (phonetic) report, the STAC report, at the beginning of this government's term, recommended very strongly the increase in the number of sequential students. The minister, in both of the last Estimates processes, has argued, yes, this is important, and they are working on it. So I think what we are looking for here is not so much the absolute numbers, but we are looking for the change. We are looking for evidence of change and expansion of those sequential students.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, we are working on the percentages of sequential students at each of the colleges now, but just to go back to the whole issue of sequential students, we have spoken in the Estimates last year and Estimates this year about the importance of sequential students. I have spoken about an action which has already taken place.

There is action in the K-12 system whereby we are, first of all, wanting to make the role of the community colleges much more visible and to make sure that students are fully aware of what is offered through the community colleges so that, as students are making their choices, the community colleges are certainly a choice that they would consider.

The community colleges are at all of the career symposiums that are offered. They certainly bring demonstrations of the kinds of programming that they offer. Those career symposiums are targeted primarily at young people in the high school years and their parents so that these considerations are available to them.

We have also recognized the need for articulation between some of the high school programming and some of the community colleges programming. In an earlier answer today, I spoke about how we are looking to try and address that articulation and try and form a much stronger partnership between the K-12 side, particularly the high school years, and the community colleges so that there is an acceptance of some of the training which is done in K-12 and that can be applied in the community colleges.

The community colleges themselves are doing other kinds of work within their own community to make sure that they have acquainted their communities and the sequential students, potential sequential students, within their communities with the kinds of programming available, but it may take two to three years. I said that in an earlier answer, for us to really look at the noticeable kinds of changes and numbers in terms of the sequential students.

At Assiniboine Community College, the percentage of sequential students, and we are looking at the age range approximately 15 through 24 years being a fairly broad age range, of 23 percent; at Keewatin Community College, we have approximately 35 percent of students sequential; and at Red River Community College, the percentage is 35.02 percent of students who are sequential.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, the staff, I assume, are still looking for the change, and I recognize that these things do take time, but I am also going from the minister's own report of the STAC committee which did draw this to the attention of the government as one of the most significant areas for changes in the community colleges. It seems to me that what we have seen since that STAC report has been a continued reduction of significant areas of the community colleges, and so it would be welcome news if indeed there had been some increase in the sequential students.

But I do want to comment that the definition of sequential students here is, as the minister said, very broad; 15-24 age group is the Statistics Canada reporting range. I think it is far too broad an age range, in fact, for the kinds of questions that we need to ask about the transition from secondary to post-secondary education, or, indeed, about labour and work statistics as well. The sequential

student, then, in the department's terms, does not—and I am asking the question: Has never meant those who proceed from Grade 12?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, first of all, to those students who would go into community colleges directly from Grade 12, there is no information on high school leavers and specifically where those high school students attend. That is true for all across the country, that that information has not been available.

The age range is the only way that we can, in fact, look at whether students may be sequential and attribute that age range to people who have finished high school or most recently finished high school, depending upon the age in many provinces across Canada, too, where there is a different age range.

I just would like to correct for the record Red River Community College's statistics. I beg your pardon; there was a mistake in the addition. The amount is not 35 percent, but the number is 41 percent. So, for Red River Community College, 41 percent would be sequential students falling into that age range.

As a comparison, I have information from '91-92, '92-93, and I recognize that is not a very long historical comparison; however, it will provide us with some data. I can look at the diploma program specifically, the two-year diploma program, which seems to appeal to sequential students, and the level of participation has remained fairly constant. I would say constant as opposed to the reduction that the member had wondered if that had occurred.

* (1640)

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Assiniboine Community College—I beg your pardon, Mr. Deputy Chair, the information I have is actually based on the average age of students, which does show that most of those students, in fact, go into the diploma program. We do not have any statistics with us today that would provide the information of actual enrollment comparisons.

Ms. Frlesen: Is it possible to have that provided at a later time, perhaps, with as much historical trends as the department has available?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, we could try to have that information available for Thursday's sitting.

Ms. Friesen: In the steps that the department is taking to encourage sequential students, are they assuming an overall—presumably, if some of the students respond to this and if it is as successful as the minister, I am sure, hopes—are we looking at an overall expansion of the capacity of the colleges, or does the minister in the long term look at maintaining the same college capacity? Perhaps, in answering the question, we might have an understanding of whether, in fact, the minister believes the colleges are operating at capacity in terms of students at the moment.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the issue, again, of sequential students has been an issue for some time. It has certainly been an issue over a number of years and a long number of years.

We are in the process of seeking to make some changes and developing some inroads into the area of sequential students. As I have said, the increased attention to this enrollment will be evident in the next two to three years as the colleges' boards of governors expand the possibilities of high school/college articulation with the local school divisions.

That is something now that the boards of governors are able to do directly and to provide direction to make sure that it occurs. There is a potential of partnerships among colleges, high schools, businesses and labour over the next few years.

The increased capacity is another area of importance. It will partly depend upon resources and funding. However, we do believe that we can make some significant progress. We can make that progress by seeking to use the resources better and also to provide some greater attention to some specific educational and training needs of young Manitobans.

So we will be looking at this whole issue in an integrated way. We will be seeking information and have provided information in the Estimates process on the labour market. We will be looking to see the information as well that the college boards of governors are able to provide as they look at the decision around courses and their recommendations.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, as the minister moves to encourage the expansion of sequential students attending community colleges, I ask again, is this a recognition that the college system

must expand to meet that capacity or is the minister's policy, in fact, to rearrange the proportions and to maintain the capacity that the colleges have now?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I cannot say at this moment that there is an intention to expand in the colleges. As the member knows, to commit to a specific expansion would certainly require additional resources, but what I can say is what I have been saying from the beginning, and that is that we have to look at the potential of partnerships among the colleges, with high schools, business, industry and labour. We have to look at those partnerships through the governance model.

We will have to see, as the governance model enters into its first full year, how the partnerships have progressed and exactly what the demands are, and what resources then are available.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chair, I have a series of other questions on programs and on financing, but I think this line deals with policy, governance, and so I would be prepared to pass this line I think.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was interested in some of the minister's remarks about the new relationships here with the colleges. Is it expected then that, given the absence of a representative from the colleges at this process, the Colleges Secretariat will be answering all of the questions?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, because under the new relationship the presidents would not be expected to be here, so with the acting director of the Colleges Secretariat and the staff here from the Advanced Education and Skills Training branch, then we will be looking to answer the questions that are put forward.

Mr. Alcock: Then is it anticipated, and I may have misunderstood the response to one of the questions from the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), that there would be no point—like, this is not a like a Crown corporation in the sense that the college presidents will not come forward to any committee of the Legislature to answer questions on their annual report, something that the presidents of the universities do not do at the present time. I am assuming that is a similar policy with the colleges.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the college presidents would not be coming forward, certainly, at this time to committee, but what is different for

the colleges is, as I said to the member for Wolseley, colleges do hold open board meetings. That is what is required by the act on behalf of the colleges. That is somewhat different from the way the universities operate. For these open board meetings the date is required to be posted in advance. So there would be a way for the public to be very well informed in terms of the business of the community colleges. In addition, the colleges will also table an annual report in the Legislature which will provide some formal documentation of what they have been doing in the past year.

* (1650)

Mr. Alcock: The universities also table an annual report in the Legislature. Is it the intention to see the relationship with the colleges evolve towards a similar kind of relationship that the universities now enjoy where the Colleges Secretariat begins to function more and more as that—what would we say?—stopping point or that resting point between the two, the government and the colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, no, they really are two different models.

Mr. Alcock: So then the funding that is granted to the various colleges is as a result of budget proposals that have been put forward by them, and each one has been considered separately by the government as opposed to the government considering only the lump sum of money that it is prepared to fund?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, for the colleges, the colleges will submit their budgets to government, and the powers of the minister under the act are that the minister then will approve and has the power also to amend annual college budgets. The minister also has the ability to make grants to colleges and to, as I said, other areas determine the geographic program mandates and so on, but in the area of budget that is submitted to the minister.

Mr. Alcock: I recall, though, the discussion last year about the Universities Grants Commission in which the minister had indicated that the government, the minister, never reviewed the individual budget submissions, that those were held, as it were, in some other location and the government was not privy to that, that the government made a policy decision about the size of the grant it was going to make to universities and then the Universities Grants Commission then

made the decision how it was going to be apportioned among the universities in response to the submissions and their analysis of needs, et cetera.

But with the colleges, if I understand the minister right, it is different. It will not function that way. The individual requests will come directly to the minister; they will be policy decisions of the government as opposed to an arm's-length body such as the Universities Grants Commission.

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, in relation to the universities, the universities submit their budget to the Universities Grants Commission. Government decides on behalf of universities the amount of money available. Universities Grants Commission then determines, based on the budgets put forward by the universities, how that money is allocated.

In terms of the colleges, the colleges will submit their budgets to government, specifically to the minister, and with that submission, then government will look at approving the budget or will have the power to amend the budget of the colleges.

Mr. Alcock: So then, the Secretariat really is no different than any other branch of government. It simply is like within a department you have branches that are responsible for all sorts of things.

Mrs. Vodrey: The Colleges Secretariat is, in fact, a branch of government, but its responsibility is to liaise with the colleges.

Mr. Alcock: I guess what I am looking for, there is no intervening role. It is like the daycare secretariat deals with the daycare system. The Colleges Secretariat deals with colleges, child welfare with child welfare. I mean, it has no special authority over and above that of any other branch.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, that is correct.

Mr. Alcock: In the past, before the colleges had their boards of directors and their ability to hire their chief operating officer and all that sort of thing, Government Services provided the support services to colleges, and I am assuming that is still the case. My question is: Who does Government Services report to?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, at the time of transfer, all employees were employees of the Department of Education and Training.

In November 1992, 75 employees of the Department of Government Services were

transferred to the Department of Education and Training. These employees were those who were responsible for building cleaning, grounds keeping, security, parking services at the community colleges' facilities. When the colleges went into governance, those employees were then transferred from the civil service to the employing authority of the boards of governors of the colleges at their incorporation.

Mr. Alcock: Would this encompass all Government Services employees who were formerly responsible for the maintenance at the colleges, the buildings and grounds?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, no, it is the employees who were responsible for the work that I described in terms of building cleaning, grounds keeping and so on, with one exception. At ACC, parking and security is still done by the Department of Government Services under contract, but those people who worked for the Department of Government Services and look after the plant and facilities are still employees of the Department of Government Services.

Mr. Alcock: Well, we can come back to that parking and security at ACC that is delivered under contract by the Department of Government Services to the board and governance and employing authority of Assiniboine Community College. Would I be correct in assuming that these are powerhouse personnel, operating engineers and that sort of thing, who have remained with Government Services?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, yes, the people who remained with the Department of Government Services would be employees who looked after the plant facilities, such as powerhouse people.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour being 5 p.m., and time for private members' hour, committee rise.

HEALTH

* (1430)

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Health. We are on item 4. Provincial Mental Health Services, page 80 of the Estimates manual.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, can the minister give me a status report on the extended care forensic psychiatric facility that had been scheduled for Selkirk?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): We are still in the process of planning around the forensic possibilities in the Selkirk Mental Health Centre.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate whether or not that facility is in the five-year capital projects plan for Manitoba Health?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, that is what I just indicated, that we are in the planning stages of the forensic capacity, Selkirk being part of that planning process.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, we had touched upon child and adolescent services and preventative services last night. I want to touch upon one specific area and one specific subgroup. That is youth suicide and, more specifically, aboriginal youth suicide.

I am wondering if the minister might outline what initiatives have been taken to deal with the mental health, particularly the high rate of aboriginal youth suicide?

Mr. Orchard: Specific to aboriginal and the confounding problem of suicide, we, upon invitation, have staff attend at the various native communities—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. I wonder if the individuals carrying on private conversations might do so in the loge or just outside the Chamber. The honourable member for Kildonan is experiencing difficulty in hearing the minister's response.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Orchard: As I was indicating to my honourable friend, where the council or administration of one of the bands will ask my Mental Health Division staff for assistance in terms of a suicide problem on reserve, my staff will assist them in areas of program discussion, and advice on training and recognition of the problem in a number of initiatives and issues.

Mr. Chomiak: Can the minister give us an update on the status of the registered psychiatric nurse and the agreement entered into between the province and the psychiatric nurses in terms of the

expanded program and the process that they are in?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the project now is, I guess, two years old now, is it not? Yes, I am informed that the proposal for the baccalaureate training program is now under consideration by the Board of Governors at the Brandon University, to receive their input into how that course can be incorporated as part of Brandon University's curriculum.

I would anticipate that, following that, there will be other decisions at the Board of Governors level at Brandon University, the Universities Grants Commission, and those are yet to be proposed and considered. In general terms, we are on target in terms of the advancement of the baccalaureate program: we have identified what; now we are identifying how.

Mr. Chomlak: Does the minister have any projections in terms of the requirements in the province for registered psychiatric nurses over the next few years in terms of where and how they will be employed?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we do not have absolute numbers, but we do have indication of opportunity, or increased opportunity. That is currently occurring both in Brandon and in Winnipeg, as the system shifts focus.

I think my honorable friend would understand that in these circumstances there is a significant amount of redeployment of registered psychiatric nurses from institutional employment to community-based employment, where they choose that career path.

In the northern region and Thompson region, as we advance their reform initiatives in mental health, we would expect that there will be some additional staffing resource as part of that in those communities.

* (1440)

It would be fair to say that a significant portion of those new opportunities in Norman in northern Manitoba would be requiring the professional training of registered psychiatric nurses.

So we think the opportunities are there and today, as the system is shifting, we think that they will be sustained as opportunities. Hence the desire some two and a half years ago to embark on consolidation of the psychiatric nursing training

program in Manitoba and the advancement of consideration and implementation of baccalaureate training.

Mr. Chomlak: There has been some criticism with respect to consumer involvement, consumer empowerment with respect to the mental health reforms. I am aware of numerous committees and numerous inputs by consumers and others in the mental health field.

I wonder if the minister could outline or try to isolate for us some of the initiatives that deal with direct consumer involvement in terms of the provision of mental health services in the province?

Mr. Orchard: I think my honourable friend would clearly recognize the part of the discussion last evening. For instance, on the safe house, centred around its sponsorship by self-help organizations who have probably as much consumer and family of consumer presence as any other organization that we deal with, and that is a pretty significant new initiative.

The initiative itself of increased support of funding for the self-help groups is an indication of consumers being given a larger opportunity to assist other Manitobans who are suffering from the same illness.

But, first and foremost, let me go right back to square one, because I think one of the reasons that we are able to move and significantly shift the mental health system in Manitoba has been the opportunity for consumer groups and families of consumers to be part of the planning process of reform and change from the very first initiative.

I might possibly be slightly off in my year, but I think it was in June of 1989 or May of 1989 that I had the opportunity to fly with staff—the session was on—to Dauphin. The occasion in Dauphin was, I think it is fair to say, a very happy occasion, because that occasion that I was up to announce was the establishment of the first Regional Mental Health Council in the province.

The composure of that Mental Health Council was departmental staff, yes, professional caregivers, yes, but for the first time in the history of Manitoba, consumers and families of consumers were a very integral and significant part of that.

That, followed by the creation of similar regional mental health councils in every other region of the province of Manitoba with the same opportunity and actually required consumer and family member

of consumer's membership on those mental health councils, regionally.

Subsequent to that of course was the provincial mental health advisory council. It was made up of regional council representation, and again professional representation, professional caregiver organization representation. That is not accurate. It was not professional caregivers organization representation, but we tried to provide a balance of membership on the provincial advisory council reflective of the many disciplines that provide Mental Health Services, but they were not mandated to represent their respective professional organizations at the council and a significant component of family members and consumers.

Now, that has since been, I think at the provincial level, expanded by five or six, I believe, to further advance consumer input into decision making. [interjection] Yes. I, from time to time, have been aware of criticism, not only by consumers but by others in terms of the process in mental health reform. I accept those criticisms as part of a healthy questioning process of change.

But the criticisms would be more directed and more—I do not know what word to use here but—focused and pointed if in fact we had ignored the consumer's voice which we have not done, or if we had attempted to create one plan centrally out of Winnipeg without necessarily considering the sensitivities of needs in the various regions of the province.

Criticism is also—my honourable friend will be well aware because his confreres in the official opposition have been sometimes on both sides of it. Sometimes they say we are not moving fast enough; all we are doing is studying. Then, if we make decisions they say, well, we are moving too fast.

But on balance I am very proud of the individuals who have given incredible amounts of their personal time with no monetary reward, only the personal satisfaction of being part of the process of change.

I am very proud of the professional leadership of my Assistant Deputy Minister, Reg Toews, and his staff over at the Mental Health Division. I am very proud of the people who have focused their good will and their intelligence on making Mental Health Service deliveries more balanced and in the long

run more accessible and sustainable in Manitoba and better for the individuals who require that care. Key and important to that whole process has been the input from consumers and family members of consumers.

Mr. Chomlak: Yesterday, we talked about the matrix that had been forwarded to the minister's office from the Canadian Mental Health Association dated June 11 that was directed to the minister and both opposition parties with respect to attempting to build on the base-line that had been developed in this area previously in order to inform the public as to where developments are.

I am wondering how the minister suggests we go about ensuring that this matrix, this information, is provided so that we can have an accurate understanding of the changes in Mental Health and the related effects they are having on both caregivers' expenditures and consumers.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I want to confess to my honourable friend that I have not had the opportunity to go through the proposal for establishment of baseline data, et cetera. So I cannot give my honourable friend specifics as to this proposal. We will, hopefully, do that over the course of the next number of weeks with the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend where we are attempting to take the system in terms of analysis on what has actually happened and transpired as we shift the system. We have been working with the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation that has probably the best ability to establish the baseline data, I think, which is what, if I understand the process here, the Canadian Mental Health Association is wishing to establish. That discussion is well in process with the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation.

* (1450)

The expectation is, Mr. Acting Chair, that as the time clock ticks in terms of the reform, we will be able to use their analysis on the baseline and forward into the reform process to demonstrate how the shifts in service from institution to community have affected service delivery, how they have enhanced it, where there appears to be weaknesses in the process that need remedy. I think we are probably embarked on already a process that will—it may not be identical to the process that is suggested in this letter from the

Canadian Mental Health Association, but I think it is fair to say that their goals of development of information are not inconsistent with our goals. I think that in the near future what we will have is an opportunity for staff from the Mental Health Division to sit down with staff of the Canadian Mental Health Association to, if you will, attempt to marry the strengths of each process so that we both end up with a satisfactory ability to monitor the process of mental health reform, the shift from institution to community, and whether the expectations on service delivery are, indeed, being met, exceeded, or not met and requiring some refocusing of efforts.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will accept that from the minister. I think that does make some sense.

One of the reasons that I do not intend to get into a lot of specifics in terms of the future of mental health reform is in anticipation that this matrix will be filled up and will provide that data in any event. I also recognize that it will entail a fair amount of staff time in order to do so.

What I am hearing from the minister is that basically there is a commitment for the department to sit down with the Canadian Mental Health Association in order to determine this data, and that, of course, we in the opposition would have access either through the department or through the minister's office of the results of this data. Is that a fair summation of the minister's comments?

Mr. Orchard: I do not think that is too far off the mark.

We collaborate with the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation in terms of their publication of any of the documents of areas of study that they have undertaken. It was both on the acute care side and in terms of the mental health side our intention to have a reasonable or a quite sophisticated ability to monitor the service delivery and the change impact on the health care system.

I do not have any difficulty, at this time next year, should all of us be here, in walking through some of the year-over-year changes in service delivery and some of the new service delivery statistics that we think we will have in abundant quantity this time next year after approximately 10-12 months experience with the shift from institution to community.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, my final—I think it is my final or next-to-final question in this

general round—is just a general question in terms of the total appropriation. That is, the announcement on March 17 talked about \$4 million in funding announced for new and expanded programs. Of course, these expenditures are not reflected in the year-to-year differences in the appropriations between last year and this year.

One would assume that there are savings in the institutions as a result of the bed closures. I wonder if the minister might elaborate as to where that \$4 million, that increased expenditure, exists in these particular appropriations.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the concept in terms of the process is bridge funding to establish the community-based services, and then a reallocation of the institutional budgets to further the community-based services as the institution is wound down.

So what you are seeing in terms of the reallocation is an internal reallocation of budget from institution to community-based services. That represents \$4 million in the Winnipeg region.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, in terms of the total expenditure, \$44 million, where is that internal shift in terms of this total appropriation insofar as the Adult Mental Health Services, for example, is down by about \$300,000 this year. The appropriation to both Brandon and Selkirk are down. I understand what the minister is saying, but I do not see it in terms of the numbers.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, this is part of the Treasury Board's requirement in printing Estimates. Some of the budgetary shifts in terms of acute care hospital budgets are in Appropriation 21.7, the Hospital line. As we struck the budget this year we were still funding, for instance, Misericordia, the 21 beds, St. Boniface, the 24 beds.

When we print next year's Estimates it will reflect the year and shift out. But that is the source of revenue. So that the money is coming from Appropriation 21.7 over to the Mental Health Division, but it is still accounted for at the time we developed the Estimates, because it was still part of the institutional budget lines, the hospital budget lines in particular.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Acting Chairperson, is there any projection from the department for next year, when some of these bed closures have taken effect, as to what the

percentage would be of community-based mental health services, percentage of the budget versus institutional? Is there a sense of whether there will be much of a change?

* (1500)

Mr. Orchard: That is one of the areas that after the experience of year one that we will be able to share the shift in terms of percentage. It is not as clear-cut as one might expect, because I know we have used a 90 percent figure, that 90 percent of our mental health services are provided on the institutional line.

I would suspect that in arriving at that figure we have taken the global budget, Hospitals, even though that may have included the outpatient services, for instance, at Misericordia Hospital. It was a service based out of an institution, but it was still an outpatient community-based service, yet was included in.

In the shifts we are making, those shifts are moving 80 percent towards community-based services and the remaining 20 percent will facilitate reconfigured institutional services, be it, for instance, acute care psychiatric capacity at Portage Hospital, Dauphin, The Pas, Thompson and Brandon. Those are replacement acute psychiatric capability so that the shift from institution 100 percent is split out 80 percent community, 20 percent in alternate institutional care, if that helps my honourable friend.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just a couple more issues. In the discussion last evening in committee, the minister spoke about prevention, and really, this particular branch of Mental Health Services does not deal with primary prevention at all.

My question would be, however, is there any relationship between this branch and the Health and Wellness branch? Is there any type of primary prevention, in other words, health promotion of mental health, any of that done somewhere throughout the department?

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

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am only hoping that my honourable friend the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) catches that car on his way home.

The question posed is an appropriate one and I indicated earlier, I think it was last evening when we were discussing the topic about prevention education—now I do not want to get hung up on primary education versus—but let me explain where I think we have some pretty significant partners in the education program.

As I explained last evening, the self-help groups are very active working with school divisions, upon invitation, working in public meeting venues, working with various groups to bring a greater level of understanding of the illness entity that they deal with, whether it be schizophrenia or depression, manic depression.

Well, okay, I am doing it now. We will be providing the three self-help groups, Schizophrenia Society of Manitoba, the Depression-Manic Depression association and the Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba with \$30,000 funding support each, a total of \$90,000, to undertake a public education program on behalf of their respective organizations.

I simply cannot think of a more direct primary education or first-hand education prevention initiative. Again, I reiterate that I have been very, very impressed with really the tireless service these self-help groups put in. They all run on very tight budgets, and they just work incredibly effectively and incredibly well and incredibly long hours, and we are trying to assist their continuation in that regard with modest funds as we are able to make them available. We think they are one of our best "investments" in terms of mental health reform, and we think that this investment of an additional \$90,000, with the three self-help groups, in terms of a support for a public education program, will be a good investment in future understanding and prevention.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, do any of the staff in this division specifically deal with women's mental health issues or mental health as it affects women?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the division has been working with Healthy Public Policy in developing program initiatives and policy guidelines, and has been working, I guess, with Health and Welfare Canada in this regard as well.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, does this branch fund the women's post-treatment

centre—provide funding? The minister indicated that it was the AFM that provided funding there.

Just one other area. Does this branch have any statistics on ritual abuse in Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairperson, that is one area that I think we have taken some fairly significant leadership role within the division. We are just trying to come close to determining the date, but it was about 15 months ago that Leanne Boyd from the Mental Health Division, supported by a couple of other individuals within the division, sponsored a day-and-a-half, two-day workshop on ritual abuse. They had individuals from, I believe, Denver and British Columbia in as presenters at the workshop, and you know it was not the risk—we discussed this quite openly because it had never been done before to hold a workshop on ritual abuse. Automatically, you run the risk that, should you hold one, there would be those who might report the conclusion that Manitoba is rampant with ritual abuse and, therefore, we had to have this workshop. That was not the case. It was deemed to be an appropriate issue to try to bring some expertise around so that we would be able to recognize early signs if they present themselves.

*(1510)

Present at the workshop were a substantial number of individuals from the education community, from the law enforcement community, Family Services and the funded agencies of Family Services. By all reports that I recall from that workshop, it was very well received and subsequent to that the division has had a number of individual profession workshops, if you will. The Winnipeg City Police is one, apparently several others and there seems to be some recollection that included physicians in terms of recognition of early signs, et cetera.

I think that we have been able to be very proactive in this regard, and I think that has been helpful to professionals from a number of backgrounds, education and law enforcement, et cetera.

Ms. Gray: Do we have any statistics though of incidents of ritual abuse? Do you have anything like that?

Mr. Orchard: No, not statistics that we can put a degree of integrity around. I think my honourable friend appreciates that that is a very, very difficult area to assess and to come to grips with and that

makes it a very complex area. That is why the division decided to bring in some of the experts who had knowledge and the ability to help us, if you will, using an old agricultural phrase, to separate the wheat from the chaff, because it is a serious issue and you cannot take it lightly. You have to recognize what you are dealing with there or else you may end up making inappropriate interventions and that was the attempt of Workshop No. 1 and subsequent follow-up.

Ms. Gray: I thank the minister for that information. There was a program at Mount Carmel Clinic, or there may still be, that dealt with immigrants from other countries or refugees in particular, and it was a type of mental health counselling service. I do not recall the name of it. It was moved over to Mount Carmel I believe. Is that project still continuing and is the funding in place?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, it is.

Ms. Gray: Was there not an evaluation being done on that particular project in terms of the viability and if it should continue on; and, if so, what did that evaluation find?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, there was an evaluation component which was completed, and we are into ongoing discussions around that evaluation of some of the observations, recommendations that have been made which shall be built into any continuation of the program.

Ms. Gray: Just to clarify though, that program will continue for the remainder of the fiscal year? The minister is nodding in the affirmative. Thank you.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Penner): 21.4 Provincial Mental Health Services, 4.(a) Administration (1) Salaries \$399,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$168,200—pass.

4.(b) Chief Provincial Psychiatrist (1) Salaries \$177,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$37,700—pass.

4.(c) Adult Mental Health Services (1) Salaries \$1,070,800—pass.

Ms. Gray: Just a question here, under Adult Mental Health Services, the administrative support, again the ratio between that and the professional, technical and managerial is about seven to 16 which is a fairly good ratio of administrative staff to professional staff. I am really asking these questions throughout the directorate levels because the ratios seem to be quite high compared

to other areas of the department. I am wondering if the minister might be able to explain that.

Mr. Orchard: I will have my senior staff explain that.

I am trying to go through some of the information that was asked for the other day. I have the Mental Health Services division flow chart. I think it was asked for yesterday.

In terms of the Mobile Crisis unit, this announcement, I will distribute it to my honourable friends. Effective May 22, 1993, the Salvation Army's Mobile Crisis unit may be accessed by calling two numbers, 946-9109 or 946-9113, and the hours of operation are 4 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday; and Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 24-hour service. Full coverage will be available whenever government offices are closed. It talks about the kind of services provided. I will provide a copy of that for both my honourable friends.

I have statistics for the time period, now, I do not know how we end up with May 18, 1993, to May 31, 1993, when it says effective May 22, but here are the statistics. There were 96 responses in that period of time, and the days of the week which produced the most referrals were May 23, a Sunday; May 26, a Wednesday; May 21, a Friday; May 24, a Monday; and May 28, a Friday. Ninety-six calls in total. That is for the Mobile Crisis Team. Now that would be the expanded unit.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

I also have the June statistics because appreciate the start-up was some 12 days in May. There were a total of 474 calls and referrals that were dealt with by the Mobile Crisis Team in June. That is June 1 to June 21, so that is a three-week period of time.

One of the questions that came up is whether emergency departments are involved. Of the 474, 10 of those were emergency department visits—[interjection] I am sorry? [interjection] That may well be, but at any rate, a fairly significant level of activity on the Mobile Crisis Team.

There was a question on housing units. There is a commitment for Winnipeg Housing Authority for access to 20 subsidized rental units ranging from bachelor to three bedrooms. We think this resource will allow the program to provide appropriate accommodation to approximately 65 individuals at no additional cost to the department.

The cost of these units if rented in the open market would be substantial. So that is a fairly good collaboration between the two to help in the provision of additional services.

The Crisis Stabilization Unit, for May 1 to May 31, for the month of May, average daily census was 12.5, average length of stay 5.6 days. The breakdown on admissions: there were 71 admissions—37 female, 33 male. There were 120 referrals: 63 female, 57 male. There were a total of 283 drop-in clients and 204 crisis calls, the crisis calls being handled by the Mobile Crisis Team. The average length of stay, 5.6 days.

I think if I can give this copy of that to each of my honourable friends and I think I have given—yes, that is the Mobile Crisis Team. If it would suit my honourable friends, rather than me read this document out, this is the Intensive Case Management Client Selection Criteria and Target Population, Entrance Criteria, Exclusion Criteria, Referral Procedure, Intake Procedure, Client Acceptance, Refusals, Transfers, the basic operation of the Intensive Case Management, when he returns, I will have a copy of this developed and made available to my honourable friends.

* (1520)

If that concludes the Estimates of Mental Health, I want to just thank both my honourable friends. There are all too many areas where we tend to disagree on process and initiative. In Mental Health, we seems to have reached a consensus that we have got a process underway in Manitoba that is the right thing to do. It has been supported by both opposition parties for a substantial period of time. I think that, Madam Chair, has led in no small way to everyone getting around the issue of change.

I thank my honourable friends for their support, their participation and debate and their suggestions that they have made over the course of a fairly substantial time of planning around Mental Health Reform. I think it has been good for those citizens of Manitoba that they can see legislators coming to grips realistically with the challenge of change and make things happen in a co-operative and almost a nonpartisan way. I think that is a very refreshing approach that Manitobans have seen happen here. I think not only do they support the general tenure of the changes, but I think they support all of those

who have been part of it, including both opposition parties. So I thank them for their support.

Madam Chairperson: 4.(c) Adult Mental Health Services (1) Salaries \$1,070,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,489,300—pass; (3) External Agencies \$2,453,200—pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (\$477,600)—pass.

4.(d) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (1) Salaries \$1,014,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$155,100—pass.

4.(e) Brandon Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries \$19,444,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,877,700—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (\$2,644,100)—pass.

4.(f) Selkirk Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries \$15,378,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,546,000—pass.

Resolution 21.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$44,090,800 for Health, Provincial Mental Health Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1994.

Item 5. Health Services.

Mr. Orchard: I am wondering if my honourable friend, while waiting on staff to come in—yesterday I indicated that there was a question on respite care and I have information that I would like to share with my honourable friends. In the respite care and personal care homes, the statistics I have start in 1989-90. The total number of admissions were 897 in 1989-90, increasing to 925 '90-91, to 934 in '91-92, to 1,038 in '92-93, and we are projecting 1,122 for this fiscal year.

I would like to break that down in terms of days of care, rural and Winnipeg. For '89-90, I will tell you what, well, no, I think it works to flow it across the fiscal year. For '89-90 rural days of care were 4,116. There were 9,077 in Winnipeg for '89-90. For '90-91, rural days of care were 4,625; Winnipeg 9,099. In '91-92 rural days of care, 4,539, that is down slightly, but the Winnipeg figure was up for '91-92 at 9,227. In '92-93 in rural Manitoba, a fairly significant increase, 5,510 days of care and a fairly significant increase in the Winnipeg side to 9,814.

We expect this year that we will have 5,693 days of care in rural Manitoba and 11,098 in the city of Winnipeg, both of them up again.

The number of homes providing respite care have increased from 34 in 1989-90 to 48 homes this year. The growth is 34 in '89-90, 42 in '90-91, 43 in both '91-92 and '92-93 and then the increase this year to 48 homes. The total number of individuals served in 1989-90 was 534, increasing to 565 in '90-91.

I will give you the average age. The average age in '89-90 was 77.9. The 565 individuals served in '90-91, the average age was 79. It dipped slightly in '91-92 to 552 individuals served; 79.5 was the average age. There were 632 individuals served in '92-93, average age 79; and we project that this year there will be 680 individuals served, average age 79 plus.

The total number of beds dedicated to respite care—would my honourable friend want the breakdown of rural versus urban or total? [interjection] Okay. Total beds in '89-90 was 50 growing to 55 beds in '90-91; 60 beds '91-92; 61 beds '92-93 growing to 66 beds in '93-94 is our projection of service use.

Madam Chairperson: Item 5.(a) Administration.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, my first just overall question, I am assuming that we will get to the figures on hospital expenditures when we get to appropriation 7 under Health Insurance Fund rather than dealing with it under this appropriation. Is that the normal procedure for Health Estimates?

* (1530)

Mr. Orchard: Yes, 21.7 is where we can talk hospital budgets, personal care home budgets and the other insured service provision. Here we can discuss the various responsibilities under the guidance of my associate deputy minister, Mr. Frank DeCock. I do not know whether you have had the opportunity to meet him. You have now, if you have not before. We can deal with the various areas in terms of program policy and administrative staff support and then move to the areas where, I think probably if I can speculate, we may well end up with most of the discussion in terms of the insured benefits area and the Health Services Insurance Fund area.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for the direction in that regard.

My initial question deals with community health centres. Can the minister indicate how many community health centres are presently in operation in Manitoba, urban and rural, and what

the funding arrangements are with respect to those community health centres?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, there are 14 community health centres in total, seven in rural Manitoba and seven in Winnipeg, 14 in total.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister please provide us a list of those 14 centres?

Mr. Orchard: I will read them out to my honourable friend because there is no separate list. They are part of our hospital funding conciliation. I will give the rural ones first. Churchill Health Centre, Fisher Medical Centre, Hamiota Health Centre, the Lac du Bonnet Health Centre, Leaf Rapids Health Centre, Lynn Lake Medical Clinic, the Seven Regions Health Centre are the rural health centres.

The Health Action Centre, the Hope Centre, Klinik, Nor'west Co-operative, the Occupational Health Centre, Village Clinic, and Women's Health centre are the seven Winnipeg health centres.

Mr. Chomlak: Will the minister provide us with the overall funding to each of those centres, both last year and this year?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, we have not in the course of Estimates given individual facility budgets out. Given that I am a constant adherent to tradition in the House, I certainly would not want to set a precedent in that regard.

Mr. Chomlak: As part of the minister's reform we have heard that there will be some major expansions at some community health centres. Can the minister outline for us what those expansion plans are? I am specifically now thinking of the urban centres. What expansions will take place at each of them? For a start, can the minister outline what plans are in mind for each of the expansions at each of those seven urban centres?

Mr. Orchard: Just in thinking the answer that I would provide to my honourable friend, it occurred to me that we missed one of our urban centres, Mount Carmel Clinic. The staff is at fault here. They did not have it highlighted for me. It is not my fault. Is that not what you are supposed to do?

An Honourable Member: Except it adds up to 15 now, does it not?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, but that is what happens when you add one to 14. That is the reason why it came to mind very quickly that we had not included

Mount Carmel Clinic in terms of the urban health centres.

We have gone through some controversy, as one of our media reporters would say, over the one initiative in terms of Street LINKS which was jointly provided on a two-year trial basis through the City of Winnipeg. In attempting to assure ourselves the continuation of that service, we did end up with a working relationship with Mount Carmel Clinic, whereby they are the provider of that prevention education service in the community.

There were many reasons for that decision, not the least of which was an ability of Mount Carmel Clinic to provide a more economic delivery vehicle than other sponsors considered. I have to tell my honourable friend that was before we tabled the Health Action Plan. Previous to that, Mount Carmel had become the facilitator of the reinstated power service delivery, and there was a reasonable opportunity here to further advance the community-based initiatives and to build upon the good working relationship that Mount Carmel has traditionally built up over a number of years with other organizations in the community, served both informal and formal relationships. We were able to really lever a fairly substantial and significant amount of support through their previous working arrangements with other community-based service deliverers and organizations in the area to make a, in essence, very excellent—it is not called Street LINKS—but under a new name basically the same service, and it is working quite well.

* (1540)

Similarly, we are working with them and on this initiative I would beg my honourable friend the time to wait till we get to the Hospital line in the section, but, in essence, we are moving some of the emergency service from the Health Sciences Centre to the Health Action Centre, to use the Health Action Centre to deliver primary care for the catchment area.

We expect that to be on line July 1, 1993. I could provide my honourable friend with some broader details on that and maybe if he had questions on that initiative, if I could not answer them with staff that are here today, certainly when we get to that line I would have his questions and would be able to provide answers.

The basic premise that we are trying to follow here, and I want to caution my honourable friend on

this, community health centres by definition can mean almost anything to anyone. By name they bring up program imagery or program understanding that can vary and vary fairly significantly depending on who you are talking to. Certainly, the community health centre concept, as envisioned by some of the urban providers, is significantly different than the community health centres outside of Winnipeg, because the community health centres outside of Winnipeg are often affiliated with acute care hospitals, for instance.

Our approach and our philosophy is where we believe there is an appropriate opportunity for an enhanced service delivery scope at a community health centre, we will work diligently with that organization to see whether we can make arrangements for that additional or new service delivery. It does not in any way or shape or fashion confer on the community health centres an automatic in for funding, if you will. They have to prove and go through the rigours of budget analysis, service delivery analysis, outcome analysis just like any other organization does.

I make no apologies for that kind of rigorous investigation because anything less would diminish the valuable role that community health centres can play in many aspects, and I think it is fair to say a growing number of aspects of care which would be community based.

Mr. Chomlak: I wonder if the minister could outline for me the plans for the Health Action Centre in terms of the anticipated volumes, the anticipated staffing in terms of the various shifts that are taking place, as well as the proposed catchment area, the base area for the Health Action Centre.

Mr. Orchard: I do not have that detail with me today but, having accepted the question, will provide that at the next time we meet.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for that. Could the minister outline whether there are any departmental plans with respect to the Hope clinic and its delivery of service?

Mr. Orchard: There are no changes anticipated there in this year's budget.

Mr. Chomlak: How about Nor'West? Can the minister give me a specific response with respect to Nor'West?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, to avoid going through each one of them, the balance of the Winnipeg community health centres will maintain their current service delivery profiles. I have singled out and dealt with Health Action Centre and Mount Carmel Clinic, because over this current fiscal year we anticipate some additional service provision for them, and I used the example of Mount Carmel in terms of some of the additional service provision that they have undertaken.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate whether or not there are any departmental reviews going on at present with respect to proposals from any one of these particular centres for major expansions or major changes in initiative that the minister can reveal?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I am informed that none of them have a major program expansion proposal before the ministry.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate whether or not some of the proposals emanating from Misericordia Hospital with respect to providing a more community-based role in the community are being reviewed by this branch of the department and what the status is of that particular review?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I indicate to my honourable friend that, yes, Misericordia Hospital has done a lot of internal thinking and planning and has adopted a vision of the future that includes a pretty significant and increased presence in the community with community-based services being a focus of expansion. That proposal is being reviewed internally. No decisions have been made that would be part of announcements this year, but clearly as a hospital organization, Misericordia is certainly taking a look at a potential area that they believe is an opportunity.

In general terms, let me indicate to my honourable friend that I welcome that kind of initiative, because I think it will be valuable to work through with Misericordia and the ministry. I think in broad terms, and I say this endorsing the concept without giving any indication as to what its status of approval in part or a whole might be, but conceptually it is certainly putting the focus in terms of reaching into the community with an array of community-based services.

Let me tell my honourable friend why I am quite intrigued with this. It was just a year ago—and I will

apologize if I am stating the case other than what it was presented. I am assuming my honourable friend believes that is a fairly reasonable initiative that Misericordia has got forward, and we agree on that point. It was last year when we started the reform process. Before the document came down, there were some of the rumours floating around about hospitals planning outpatient services and community-based services out of hospitals.

My honourable friend might recall some of the concerns about having community mental health workers stationed, as we discussed earlier on, in mental health at the psych health building. At the time there was a concern that you could not have community-based services if they were attached to an institution. I think that my honourable friend's advancement and questioning of the Misericordia proposal has crossed that bridge. I am not unfairly stating his predecessor's position on it, but I detected some distinct concern that you could not have true community-based services if they were attached in any way, shape or form to an institution.

* (1550)

We have always been very open on this issue, but we only put one criterion on the institution. We have got guidelines for service provision in community-based care. Anyone who brings a new community-based proposal to government and it is approved has to follow the program delivery and the funding guidelines as set down by government.

That same general rule of thumb applies to the institutions if they wish to move towards the provision of community-based care. As bluntly put as I can make it, we are not in the business of transferring an institutional-cost structure to community-based services. That would defeat the whole purpose.

Yet we are not saying that institutions cannot undertake an enlightened role of community-based service provision. That is why, within the ministry, we are working through the Misericordia proposal, because I think Misericordia is probably the first of our major hospitals to really put their minds around really a new thinking process in terms of the future direction of their care organization.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister table for us those guidelines for community-based services and program guidelines that he made reference to?

Mr. Orchard: No, I cannot, but they follow, for instance in Continuing Care, the basic guidelines that my honourable friend was reading from the other day. That is the kind of program format in terms of community-based services that we attempt to guide the process of new program development around.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I appreciate that we will be dealing in detail with the provision of services by the Health Action Centre at some future date, but I am just curious in terms of the conceptual genesis of it. Was the initiative from the Health Action Centre or was it from the Health Sciences Centre or was it from the ministry in terms of the development of that particular community-based service?

Mr. Orchard: In this case, from the ministry.

Mr. Chomlak: I note that we have moved to seven rural health centres. With respect to what is now developing in rural Manitoba in terms of the minister's health reform, can the minister indicate whether or not the seven health centres are serving as a prototype for communities or are one of a type of service that will be offered or how they fit in with the general conceptual planning in rural Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: In part, Madam Chair, and that is very much dependent on the service model and the effectiveness with which they approach the service delivery, so that I think there has been a reasonable experience in rural Manitoba, but I want to remind my honourable friend that in general the health centres in rural Manitoba—this is not an accurate generalization but I think—have been serving a single community, by and large, and the opportunity that we are attempting to facilitate in advance throughout rural Manitoba is a collaboration between communities around the concept of service provision, and a consolidation where possible of services, administration, finance, purchasing, other areas that at first blush make common sense, and to conceptualize health care delivery in a new format. That new format, there is an opportunity to tailor that, if you will, with some sensitivity to the needs of the region served.

Mr. Chomlak: I certainly would have the impression that the ministry would be attempting to encourage the development of community health centres, community clinic concepts, and I am wondering what initiatives are being undertaken by

the ministry to foster those developments in the larger context of the minister's health reform?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, it is exactly along that line that communities have the ability to move if they believe that is an appropriate alternate form of service delivery organization. Let me deal with an issue that often is affiliated or associated, not exclusively but often, with community health centres and that is of salaried physicians. I mean, we have not exclusively proffered the salaried physician initiative only to community health centres. It is to the option of any of our hospital districts or hospital boards in the province. It is most often, I think, utilized in the community health centres, although not exclusively.

There are instances of fee for service at community health centres. I believe, if my memory serves me correct, I think Mount Carmel has a physician on fee for service. Am I not correct there? It is a different sort of an arrangement which probably in essence accomplishes the same, but we have made that flexible policy option available to all rural communities in terms of their planning for recruitment or retention around physician resource.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, in this particular section of the department with the health reform that is occurring, I understand that the process is established so that there are a lot of committees that are dealing with various issues related to changes. Does the minister have an organizational chart of those committees that would give us a bit of an idea of what some of those committees are?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, if we have it here, we will provide that to my honourable friend. If we do not, we will make sure it is available when next we meet.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is part of this change or transition from institutional to community and looking at refining what hospitals do, is there any group that is specifically looking at preventative programming?

* (1600)

Mr. Orchard: If I go back to the Healthy Public Policy area, that is where we have the greatest focus in terms of wellness and prevention initiatives.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is the responsibility of this area to work with the various hospitals and ensure that where there are changes

in staffing or where there are layoffs that in fact some type of worker adjustment programs kick in? Is that part of the responsibility of this part of the department?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, no, in terms of our presence in the Workforce Adjustment, it is on the committee that we have talked about 10 days back or two weeks ago. With health reform under the directorship of Bernard Blais, we have seconded an individual from the Civil Service Commission, who is our representative on the Workforce Adjustment Committee on behalf of Manitoba Health.

Ms. Gray: Does the minister have any further information today about where that committee is at in terms of looking at a number of changes? One would be the layoffs of LPNs at St. Boniface; another would be any staff changes necessary at Misericordia with the closing of the psychiatric beds. There are a number of changes that are going on. Does the minister have any further information as to what types of retraining programs or possible job opportunities might be available for these staff?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I know that I wanted to get confirmation because this question was posed the other night in terms of the LPN issue at St. Boniface. We will attempt to have the information for Thursday next, but I was just discussing with my associate deputy minister the discussions I had with St. Boniface. I cannot indicate this with complete accuracy, but I do not know why else I would recall it if it was not part of the discussions around the announcement earlier—I think it was last week. I am quite sure that within the St. Boniface organization, in collaboration with the Workforce Adjustment Committee, St. Boniface was—and the phraseology sticks in my mind—a refresher course for LPNs so that they could be redeployed within. I will check that phraseology for my honourable friend. As well, there were a number, to the maximum class size, of acceptance into the diploma RN course.

In addition to that, the Workforce Adjustment Committee seeks and facilitates several other things: redeployment into new job opportunities, some of which, of course, have been filled with the commissioning of the additional beds at Concordia and some additional hirings at Municipal and Deer Lodge.

But I would suspect that the committee would be involved in terms of assisting individuals to apply for positions that we expect will be coming up later on this year when the 240 new personal care home beds are commissioned and staffed this fall, the two new personal care homes in the northeast quadrant of the city.

In addition to that, as I explained some time ago when we discussed this issue, part of the committee membership is a representative from the Department of Labour and a representative from the federal government. The obvious relationship there is to assure ourselves that, where we can, we access federal retraining programs and support.

All of those are initiatives that are focused on all individuals who unfortunately may be subject to layoff, not only in the process of downsizing our teaching hospitals but in other initiatives that are occurring across the system.

With the combination of management plus union leadership there, we think we have got most of the players at the table to exercise opportunities of redeployment as well as retraining and new job opportunities elsewhere in the system.

Ms. Gray: The staff whose jobs will change, or they might be laid off as a result of changes, let us say the closing of the psychiatric beds at Misericordia, is the management of the hospital aware who those staff are, No. 1? Secondly, if they are, is there any type of co-ordination in place so that should jobs come up in community health that those people might be put on re-employment lists for those jobs?

Mr. Orchard: The answer to all aspects of that question is yes. The management at Misericordia certainly are aware of the individuals. Now, I think my honourable friend will appreciate that there is a bumping process within each of the institutions as enabled by the union contract.

So after that process, then the individuals subject to layoff are identified and known to management, and within the hospitals I think it is fair to say that they undertake redeployment efforts. In terms of a relationship with ourselves, yes. In terms of our filling of vacancies within our community service system, we maintain access to the individuals that have been laid off, potentially in Misericordia and elsewhere in the acute care system.

Two criteria: First of all, we have our own redeployment list internally that is guiding us

according to our master agreement with the MGEU which is our first search, if you will, for a fit of a laid-off employee to an opening or a vacancy. Then, of course, if that fails, we have explored the redeployment list from our hospitals, and we have had some success in placing a few individuals within the department.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, changing streams a little bit, this section also deals with Ambulance Services. Is this the section that deals with standards for ambulance services, whether it is equipment, staff, et cetera? Yes, the answer is yes.

I understand obviously within the city of Winnipeg the ambulance services are provided by the City of Winnipeg. I understand, though, that there were some vehicles that were purchased in the last couple of years, a different type of ambulance, a smaller ambulance, and I had heard, and the minister can clarify for me or correct me, that these ambulances did not meet provincial standards but that the city was allowed to keep them and use them for a period of some five years when the contract would be up again. Does the minister have any information on that?

* (1610)

Mr. Orchard: If I can recall the issue, I think that goes back about three and a half years ago with the old miniambulance debate I think is where it was at. Now I will have to seek confirmation, but I do not think the miniambulance configuration is in service with the City of Winnipeg now.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, there are some ambulances that are in service now. I do not know if they are referred to as miniambulances or not, but they are a smaller version. In fact, I know the ambulance drivers and even some of the nursing staff have a lot of difficulties with them, and depending on the nature of the transfer, particularly if it is a transfer from institution to institution or the type of request for the ambulance, the staff will even say do not bother sending this type of ambulance because it is not that useful. This is some information I had received from some people in the constituency, who had expressed concern. So I was wondering if the minister had any further information about these vehicles, and if in fact they actually met provincial standards.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I am going to have to seek that advice from our director of ambulance

division and provide that information next time we meet.

Ms. Gray: Has the department done any costing or analysis with some of the changes or potential changes in emergency departments and changing of some services from hospital to hospital, what some of the incurred costs have been for the ambulances, particularly for transfers? For example, a CAT scan, you may be in a particular hospital but the CAT scan that you would be required to use as a patient would be in another hospital, and therefore if you needed to be transferred, depending on your condition, you would be transferred by ambulance. Has there been any costing done or analysis of sort of what some of those costs are?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, the policy remains that interfacility transfers of patients are paid for out of the in-globe budget of the originating facility. That is not only applicable to urban hospitals, that is applicable across the system and has been the circumstance, I guess, I am not sure, for a number of years at least.

Ms. Gray: I just wondered if there were any increase, or if your ministry would know this, in costs for those interfacility transfers, particularly for instance for CAT scans, because some hospitals do not have access to the CAT scans that are there.

Mr. Orchard: Yes. That is a cost experienced by the facilities in terms of if there is the requirement of an inpatient individual needing a CAT scan in a hospital that does not have an approved installation of CAT scan, they pay for the ambulance, the hospital transfer costs. They would also, I think, pay for the transfer of costs, for instance, to access the MRI imaging at St. Boniface.

Ms. Gray: In the area under Salaries where it talks about two managerial SYs and six professional, just for my information, could the minister tell me who the people are currently occupying those six SYs?

Mr. Orchard: The two managerial positions are occupied by Mr. DeCock and monsieur vacant, whatever. The second position is not filled.

Ms. Gray: What about the six professional/technical? What positions are those, and what do they do?

Mr. Orchard: In terms of Admin Support, Melody Ebbitt; Frank DeCock is indicated in terms of one of

the managerial positions. There is a vacancy in Professional/Technical. In terms of Administrative Support, Jeannie Raymond, Roger Jamieson, Francis Blackmon, and the vacancy in the managerial position that I referred to earlier.

In terms of Professional/Technical staff, Donald Krack, Maureen Latocki, and I think that is it. Yes, that completes the list.

Ms. Gray: Under Other Expenditures there is a grant for \$6,800. Can the minister tell us what that is?

Mr. Orchard: Can we come back to that and provide that information at a later date?

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister provide us with an up-to-date list of members of the Manitoba Health Board?

Mr. Orchard: My Deputy Minister Frank Maynard is on the board. It is chaired by Gail Roth. Other members of the board include Bob Filuk, Terry Babock, Bob Vanderwater, and George Bass.

* (1620)

Mr. Chomlak: Is this the body that will be the appeal board for those patients who are disputing the particular rate increases of the nursing homes?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, Madam Chair. We intend to use the Manitoba Health Board with the membership as named to handle appeals in terms of the means-tested personal care home per diem program that hopefully we will have ready for discussion before we complete Estimates.

Mr. Chomlak: I have some questions on the Gretchen case. I assume I can pose them at this. The first question is, has the minister had a chance to review the situation with respect to the Gretchens?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, I have had an opportunity to review the status.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate whether or not he anticipates exercising some kind of discretion or decision-making power in order to allow the child in without the requirement of a bond?

Mr. Orchard: The decision stands as indicated to the family. I am informed that the current status is, the family, as my honourable friend is aware, is disputing, if you will, the \$300,000 figure as assessed by our medical experts basis the medical report on the individual they received. The family is indicating some concerns over that, and they are

being asked to share with us the additional information and differing information. When we receive that, the decision of the size of the letter of credit will be reviewed. If there are changed circumstances in terms of increased or decreased expectation of medical need, there could be either an increase or decrease in terms of the letter of credit that is provided.

At this time I am advised that no new information has been received which would cause the professionals making that advice to the ministry change their current suggestion in terms of \$300,000 by letter of credit. It would be a process of reviewing any additional information before any change either up or down would be contemplated.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister outline for me what the policy is with respect to the posting of bonds, as a start?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chairperson, as I understand the policy, where an individual is deemed by Immigration Canada to be medically inadmissible, almost all circumstances no waiver is granted, so that the process of immigration simply does not proceed.

In circumstances where for compassionate grounds generally involved around, I think, primarily family reunification, waivers of that medical inadmissibility can be agreed to by the federal immigration authorities.

In those cases prior to 1975, a physician did the assessment based on known medical condition and medical assessment and would recommend to the then Manitoba Health Services Commission the size of an irrevocable letter of credit which would be required to facilitate the completion of immigration of that medically inadmissible individual.

Since 1975, that process has been part of the Manitoba Health Services Commission's responsibility and has been undertaken by our medical assessors based on consultation of the medical diagnosis as provided by Immigration Canada. Where they do not have internal expertise sufficient to make a judgment call on what size the letter of credit should be, what dollar value the letter of credit should be, they seek outside advice from specialists as required.

It is a professional recommendation which is provided to the ministry and in some 75 cases since 1975 has been the circumstances under which the waiver by the Immigration department of

Canada has been granted for those deemed to be medically inadmissible.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate whether there were any cases when the bond provision was not required of those 75?

Mr. Orchard: My understanding is that there were 75 waivers of exemptions on medical admissibility granted on the condition that the sponsoring family provide the irrevocable letter of credit to the ministry. There were no exceptions to that case, to my knowledge.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister indicate when he was aware that the family was informed that they would have to provide the irrevocable letter of credit?

Mr. Orchard: Staff in my office were advised that this was the assessment made, and that in all likelihood it would become a public issue, last week.

Mr. Chomlak: Can the minister definitively tell me when the family was informed by Health Services that they would be required to post an irrevocable letter of credit?

Mr. Orchard: We will provide that information. We think it was June 16, but we will confirm that date.

Madam Chairperson: 5.(a) Administration (1) Salaries \$680,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$121,000—pass.

5.(b) Hospitals and Community Health Services (1) Salaries \$31,517,800. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, one of the questions that I have in this area is, could the minister tell us, within the regional services throughout the province, have there been any staff layoffs in the past year?

* (1630)

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I am advised no.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, were there not some mental health staff that were laid off in Winnipeg region?

Mr. Orchard: No, my honourable friend is correct. I think around December there were two individuals who were laid off who were involved with orders of supervision.

Ms. Gray: Have either one of those individuals been hired back? I know they were put on redeployment lists.

Mr. Orchard: We do not have that detail here, so if my honourable friend would permit us to check that and we will provide that information Thursday.

Ms. Gray: Is there any other intended layoffs because of changes in program structure that may be occurring this year in the regions?

Mr. Orchard: Again, no, there are no planned layoffs. There are a couple of areas under discussion that we do not know how will end up being resolved in terms of program delivery. At this stage we do not anticipate layoffs. I should not even have said that because my honourable friend is going to ask where and what and why and how. But you know that we keep these things as closely hidden secrets as we can.

What we are doing is we are doing some investigation around some of the program areas, and we are in discussion with some of the community health centres in terms of a service provision working relationship. It is in preliminary discussion stages and we do not know how it will end up, but announcements will be made in due course, but we are in the middle of discussions right now.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, specifically looking at Winnipeg region, while we are on the subject, can the minister give us an update on any details on the movement of putting home care and mental health staff back into the community of St. Boniface?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I have constantly promised my honourable friend the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) an answer on this, and I am embarrassed every time it comes up because we have not resolved the issue. My understanding of where some of the discussion is around this is a little bit of a—how do I put this nicely so that it does not sound as if we are having an internal battle?

But Family Services is involved, Health is involved and, of course, Government Services, and we are into a discussion over how much office space is needed, like square-footage size, physical size. My understanding is that we are into that discussion because it is considered, or one of the considerations is whether we need individual offices for people who work in the community or whether there can be a sharing of common office

space, because most of the work is done outside, and to my chagrin I cannot give my honourable friend a resolution and a pathway of resolution.

However, I renewed just today. Although I was not anticipating the question this afternoon during Question Period, today I looked at my honourable friend, behind my honourable friend and realized that it was some two or three weeks ago that I had indicated I would get him information on the status that he had requested, and went in the office just prior to Estimates. I again sought out the information, and was basically given the kind of information I just shared with my honourable friend. Hopefully we will be able to resolve this issue in the near future.

Ms. Gray: My understanding was that the problem with locking at any type of new space or relocation of staff in Winnipeg region, particularly going back to St. Boniface, was related to the fact that the entire redefined space project for Winnipeg region staff was bogged down in the Department of Health because Government Services has decreed that they would not consider selling 189 Evanson as a building because it was not profitable for them to do so, and that there would have to be a total renovation of 189 Evanson, which meant that there would have to be staff being willing to relocate to 189. Some of the suggestions for staff moving in there were places such as Eaton Place, potentially 831—not 831 Portage, what was the old MHSC building—that there was some talk about changing the staff that would be possibly at 189 Evanson and that there were some staff in the department who said that they would not consider moving into 189 so that the project was at a halt. Now is that impasse no longer there?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I must admit I am listening very attentively, because that is a dynamic on the issue that had not been shared with myself. However, I value my honourable friend's observations on this, and I will attempt to determine as soon as a little bit of free time comes up post Estimates to move on the resolution of that issue.

* (1640)

Ms. Gray: Rather than spending more time in Estimates on that issue, I would be quite prepared to talk to the minister about the issue of space in Winnipeg Region at any time outside of Estimates.

I have a question in relation to SYs in Winnipeg Region in particular. It was related to delivery of

Public Health programs, specifically the home economics portion of the program. I am wondering if the minister could tell me currently how many SYs are there in Winnipeg Region that are occupied by home economists, and are there any vacancies?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, there are seven SYs and a current vacancy of one.

Ms. Gray: How long has that position been vacant?

Mr. Orchard: We do not have that detail here, so we will provide that Thursday next.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I think if I am correct that position has been vacant for quite a while, although I am not sure. Are there plans to fill that vacancy with a home economist, or are there plans to do other things with that SY?

Mr. Orchard: Can I provide my honourable friend with that kind of detail Thursday along with the length of time that it had been vacant, et cetera, and any status in terms of recruitment to fill?

Ms. Gray: Has the Department of Health, Ministry of Health, entered into any agreements with the federal government in relation to the cost-sharing agreement that was available in relation to expansion of French Language Services?—it was the Canada-Manitoba agreement. Has the Ministry of Health—do they have any projects on the go in relation to that agreement?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, Madam Chair, we have recently—recently meaning, I guess, in the last six months—established the French Language Services Secretariat out of St. Boniface Hospital to serve the French language health facilities in Manitoba. I believe, if my memory serves me correct, there are four positions, and there is a rural affiliation with a co-ordinator home-based in Notre Dame de Lourdes to provide the rural facility co-ordination.

If we can find it this afternoon, I will provide my honourable friend with the budgetary commitment, but it is part of the federal-provincial Secretary of State cost-shared proposal, and it is being shared 50-50 with the federal government.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, in regard to French Language Services, has the ministry, outside of institutions—has regional services anywhere in the province entered into any agreements?

Mr. Orchard: No, not in terms of regional services. The initiative has been on the institutional side with—and I am stuck for the individual's name who undertook the report that led to the creation of the French Language Services Secretariat; it was the Gauthier report. The total annualized commitment is \$298,000. On an annualized basis it is a \$298,000 program which is cost shared with the federal government. As I indicated, the central office or the head office, if that is the way to put it, the main operating location is St. Boniface General Hospital, with the rural co-ordination taking place with staff at Notre Dame de Lourdes.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, has the minister's department or ministry thought—and I know that they are looking at this in the Department of Labour and I recognize that the ministry is undergoing a major health reform right now—but is there any thought to changing some of the rules and regulations in regard to the budgets and the budgets that each of the regions receive, even the directorates, for that matter, and allowing regions more global budgets so they have more flexibility in terms of how they spend that money. For instance, I think you might find that some regions, if they could spend some capital dollars on equipment, such as computers, PCs, et cetera, some technological advances, that some of those dollars might be very well used, but in fact regions do not have any of that authority to make those decisions. Any thoughts to looking at changing those kinds of rules and regulations?

Mr. Orchard: Well, in part, we are considering that. Not to date in terms of the flexibility my honourable friend is proposing around the global budget, but we are looking at the initiative around investment in communications technology, computer technology. In particular, to be specific, we are looking at the opportunity that some of the laptops might have in terms of making an office mobile, i.e., take it with you in terms of rather than return to the office.

* (1650)

Now, if I remember correctly, we have that initiative that we want to have some sense around it within the next three or four months. Within this fiscal year, we hope to be able to, not completely resolve it, at least take some progress towards the computer side of what my honourable friend is saying. On the larger issue of a more global

budgeting responsibility, no, we are not in this fiscal year undertaking that sort of flexibility.

I say that with full qualification of this year, because we are very much open to looking at greater empowerment around budget across the system. I mean, that is the major compelling motivation behind Total Quality Management or continuous quality improvement, if you want to be very blunt about it, and that is part of investigation. But I confess to my honourable friend, probably should not, we have a significant number of change initiatives before staff of the ministry, and we are not venturing into some of the areas just yet such as my honourable friend just referred to.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, in regard to the public health services that are delivered in the regions, are there any target populations, i.e., is there more emphasis placed on servicing people from lower socioeconomic status, or what exactly is the target groups for public health programs?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, yes, in terms of public health nursing, we attempt to focus efforts on higher-risk populations. That has been a direction that is not new of recent. I guess I can only say to my honourable friend that as we gain more experience with health reform, I think you will see probably an increased effort at targeting of programs, No. 1; and No. 2, we got into a discussion maybe last week on low-birthweight babies with a recent report from the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation.

Clearly, in terms of the presentation, I was immediately intrigued as to whether we could target and focus our resources on the lower socioeconomic group which appeared to be ones that maybe we would have a more productive outcome in terms of a focused program delivery. Now that requires sophistication of database marrying so that you can actually determine who might be an appropriate candidate for targeted or focused resource dedication.

So I can indicate to my honourable friend that certainly within the ministry there is interest in pursuing that, although it will be—I think my honourable friend could well appreciate—maybe not as expeditious a process as one might wish to have happen. I am assuming my honourable friend thinks that is an appropriate direction to go to. I just made that automatic assumption.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, not necessarily. I think it is important that we do target some programs for that group, but I also believe that there is a lot of health promotion that needs to be done with the general population.

When the minister was mentioning earlier on about a couple of programs that the department was looking at, at possibly having other agencies or groups deliver those services, I certainly do not have a problem with that. I do not think we need to increase our government if a community group can do it better.

I would ask the minister—and the reason I say, not necessarily targeting low income, it is quite interesting. Again this is anecdotal, but when you listen to people who have children in school and who live in areas such as Charleswood and Tuxedo and North Kildonan, areas which one might think would be supposedly middle income to upper income, and chances are they are, but when you hear some of the stories about the poor nutrition that a lot of these children have in these schools that have families of higher income, one really questions whether in fact we should be doing a better job. We need to be doing a better job with just education in general, regardless of the income.

That is where I think that some of your organizations, your professional organizations, whether they are nurses or home economists or doctors, if there can be more work done on behalf of the ministry basically just to do some co-ordination, get some projects going, I would think that you could get some of those organizations who would be prepared to probably—they might be able to get some federal funding. Maybe even with a little bit of funding, they probably would be able to have some of their professional people in the association do some volunteer, if we can say, work and do some pilot projects in the communities in the area of nutrition and health promotion, because I would suggest that although the higher economic levels maybe the education is there, I do not think the education is necessarily there in the area of nutrition and health promotion, because I would suggest that, although in the higher economic levels maybe the education is there, I do not think the education is necessarily there in the area of nutrition. Although we are teaching the kids in schools, it is the parents who are still feeding the children. We may want to target lower socioeconomic classes, which I think is

fine for our government programs, but there also needs to be another way of reaching the other part of the population.

To me, I do not necessarily think government should be delivering the service, but I would hope that government could be initiating some of the co-ordination and maybe getting some other groups and organizations to look at what could be done in the communities.

I just wondered if the regions, or Community Health Services, even in their committee looking at prevention, have got to a point yet where they are starting to look at not just what needs to be delivered in terms of education, but who are the deliverers going to be and how is it going to be done?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Chair, I am intrigued with this discussion, because it really presents a confounding perception around where government ought to probably focus resource. I mean it is not an area that normally one would consider as being a real target and I am intrigued, and I would like to further explore, because I guess I do not see that in the same regard as my honourable friend does.

I am not engaging in debate or anything. That is not what has been brought to me as an opportunity or a potential for focusing nutrition or other health

promotion education programs. Particularly on the nutrition side, we often are reminded or given that the lower income groups are the ones that would benefit the most from target input, and I think generally that is probably accurate.

My honourable friend is saying that there may well be other groups that ought not to be left out. Now that brings quite an intriguing and challenging identification process and who ought to be the facilitator in that case. I am not sure whether we have got sophistication in terms of our regional services to identify that on our own. Does that then become a reasonable exercise in collaboration with the school system and teachers? I mean, I think we are almost closed, but I am intrigued with my honourable friend's observations and would want to pursue this next time we meet, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [agreed]

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 22, 1993

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees		Labour Adjustment Strategy Edwards; Downey	4576
Committee of Supply Dacquay	4574	Northern Economic Development Storie; Downey; Speaker's Ruling	4577
Tabling of Reports		Flin Flon/Snow Lake, Manitoba Storie; Downey	4578
Supplementary Information: Housing; Urban Affairs Ernst	4574	Co-Management Agreements Wowchuk; Enns	4579
Annual Reports: Milk Prices Review Commission; Manitoba Pork; University of Manitoba Faculty of Agriculture Findlay	4574	No-Fault Auto Insurance Alcock; Driedger	4580
Estimates: Industry, Trade and Tourism Stefanson	4574	Independent Schools Plohman; Vodrey	4581
Introduction of Bills		Water Supply Cerilli; Enns	4582
Bill 42, Liquor Control Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act McIntosh	4574	Video Lottery Terminals Edwards; Mitchelson	4582
Oral Questions		Nonpolitical Statement	
Manitoba Hydro Doer; Downey	4574	World Cup Indoor Cycling Competition McAlpine	4584
Bill 47 Martindale; McIntosh	4575		
		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
		Committee of Supply	
		Education and Training	4585
		Health	4604