



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 28, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

* * *

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

The Brandon General Hospital is the major health care institution for southwestern Manitoba; and

The citizens of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba are deeply concerned and disturbed about the downsizing of the hospital and view it as

a threat to the quality of health care in the region; and

The Manitoba government has chosen not to review the current budget to ensure that cutbacks to vital services do not occur; and

The administration of the hospital has been forced to take drastic measures including the elimination of the Palliative Care Unit and gynecological wards, along with the layoff of over 30 staff, mainly licensed practical nurses, to cope with a funding shortfall of over \$1.3 million; and

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to revert to presenting petitions? [Agreed]

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Jim Ball, Darcy Kernel, Darlene Teeple and others requesting the government consider reviewing its funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

* (1335)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 92—The Provincial Auditor's Amendment Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 92, The Provincial Auditor's Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le vérificateur provincial), be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, je tiens à vous signaler la présence, dans la galerie publique,

de quarante étudiants de les onzième et douzième années de l'école de Grandview, sous la direction de Melody Cazakoff. Cette institution est située dans la circonscription du député de Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

[Translation]

I would like to indicate the presence in the public gallery of 40 students of Grade 11 and Grade 12 from Grandview School, under the direction of Melody Cazakoff. This school is located in the constituency of the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

[English]

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Port of Churchill
Season Statistics**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions the Port of Churchill and the status of our grain industry has been raised in this Chamber. Two weeks ago, some of us had the opportunity to attend meetings in the Port of Churchill and met with the people of Churchill community.

Many were very, very cautiously optimistic when they had heard word that at that time there was going to be a major grain sale to the Soviet Union, and perhaps they could take advantage of the sale and take advantage of the words that the Premier uttered in the House on May 12, where he said that he was dealing with the Russian Embassy; he had met with the minister responsible for the Wheat Board; he had shared correspondence and he had written directly to the chief commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board on the Port of Churchill—all efforts that we support.

Since that time, unfortunately for Canadian grain farmers and for people at the port, we have heard that there are no confirmed sales that were in the media. We have heard that there are tremendous problems with ships and payments and with the new Russia republic, Mr. Speaker. We are left without any specific advice on how many ships will be going to the Port of Churchill this year, and how much tonnage will go through the Port of Churchill.

I would like to ask the Premier, in light of the fact that he has been in touch with so many of these people who are intricately involved in the Port of

Churchill, how many ships and how many tons do we expect to go through the Port of Churchill in the 1992 shipping season?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have been working as have people of all political stripes. I know that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and his colleagues expressed great optimism when some of them returned from an all-party delegation to Ottawa, along with the Port of Churchill people. The optimism was that they were given a good hearing, that people there appeared to be sympathetic to the cause and to the proposal that they put forward.

I was pleased when I received support from my colleagues the western Premiers 10 days ago, and certainly those people did indicate that they supported Manitoba in its efforts to have grain shipped through the Port of Churchill this year and beyond and to have a strong federal commitment to that.

* (1340)

Having said all of that, we have no specific or definitive word, any more so than the Leader of the Opposition does, but we continue to be very, very energetically pursuing the interests of having the Port of Churchill operate as much as possible to optimum capacity, and I have written directly to the head of the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Hehn. The Minister of Transportation (Mr. Driedger) has likewise pursued and lobbied the Wheat Board and others, federal counterparts. We will continue all those efforts to the end result that we hope will be that there will be grain shipped through the Port of Churchill and that there will be efficient and effective use of that port this year.

**Port of Churchill
Rail Line Usage**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): The shipments to the Port of Churchill were close to the break-even point in the '80s. Many of the years in the '80s were close to the 650,000 tons necessary to keep the Port of Churchill viable. The Port of Churchill, we believe, is one of the great assets of Manitoba. To have a seaport in a prairie province, I think, is a tremendous asset. Unfortunately, the vision of that asset has never been realized to our full potential in this province and in this country. The shipments are declining radically, Mr. Speaker. In 1988 there was only one ship in the Port of Churchill, and again, from '90 and '91, it is declining a

tremendous amount, well below the 650,000 tons that is necessary to develop that kind of support.

We continually hear from the Canadian Wheat Board and from ministers responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board that the rail line cannot support the hopper cars to the Port of Churchill, yet all the evidence is contrary. All the evidence is that oil tankers and other cars, cement cars, have gone on that rail line up to Gillam and up to Churchill, and they could withstand and maintain hopper cars to the Port of Churchill.

I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier has received any assurances from CN and the minister responsible for the Wheat Board to change their policy on hopper cars and go to the modern hopper cars for the Port of Churchill, thus again guaranteeing some economic benefits to the people of Manitoba and the Port of Churchill.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, we have continually brought forward the position that we feel, our government feels, my staff people feel, that we should be able to have hopper cars going all the way to Churchill, because we have had hopper cars going all the way to Limestone. The line that is going from Gillam to Churchill actually is a more stable line than the one on this side of it. We have continually put that position forward. We have not been able to get that kind of commitment from CN.

I want to indicate also that the stabilization of the rail line itself is something that we have done some experimental work on. Some tests have been done on it. A fair amount of money has been expended on it. We feel the cost that CN is putting forward in terms of that rail line stabilization is excessive, because we have figures that we are putting forward to the federal government that are substantially less. We hope that kind of thing will ultimately resolve the issue about whether we can use hopper cars all the way down to Churchill.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments - Russian Republic

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Again, there are no ships guaranteed for the 1992 shipping year. This tonnage has dropped from '86 and '87 where it was close to 600,000 tons now to a point where it is almost one-third of that, Mr. Speaker. Things are very, very tough for the people of the Port of Churchill without that transportation port.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has indicated that he will be meeting with the president of the Russian republic in a month dealing with the shipment of grain to the Russian republic and the sale of grain that is pending, the entanglement on the shipping issues and the credit issues with Russia.

The Premier, of course, has a strong interest in these discussions, both in terms of the farmers of western Canada and Manitoba and in terms of the people of Churchill. I would ask: Has the Premier been in contact with the Prime Minister on this issue? What assurances has he received from the Prime Minister about both shipping and the sale to the Russian republic?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I have, on numerous occasions in the past, expressed continued interest and support for the Port of Churchill and support for the continued federal presence and involvement. I have expressed that to many, many people at the federal level including the Prime Minister.

* (1345)

The member might well know that the Port of Churchill was one of the matters that we put into our agreement with the Russian federation last year in September, the agreement that we signed when we were in Russia. We have since had follow-up correspondence from the Russians to say that they continue to be supportive of the use of the Port of Churchill. That is the matter that continues.

Agricultural Industry Net Farm Income

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, last week, during the Estimates, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) painted a rosy picture of a future for agriculture here in Manitoba. He said farmers were tired of doom and gloom and they wanted to hear some positive news. Unfortunately, the latest Statistics Canada figures show that the Minister of Finance's rosy forecasts for the net farm income for 1991 were as wrong as he has been with the forecasts on the economy in all of the other areas in Manitoba.

The March budget forecast net farm income for 1991, Mr. Speaker, was at \$303 million and the final figures now come in at \$191 million. That is a full 37 percent drop in income. How can the Minister of Finance explain this discrepancy? How can he feel that farmers can have any faith in his forecast for the

improvement in the next year that he is forecasting in his budget?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, without accepting any element of the numbers just presented by the member, I know one thing, there is always a change in methodologies as between the presentation of certain numbers, and certainly net farm income stats are one element.

I will take the question as notice, and I will attempt to provide a greater detailed answer to the member another day.

Mr. Plohman: The minister should understand his own numbers, Mr. Speaker. How can the Minister of Finance claim the major improvement that he has in his last budget, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has supported for 1992, when Statistics Canada shows that Manitoba agriculture had the largest decline in the first quarter in realized net cash receipts, a 7.5 percent decline, the biggest decline of any province in Canada, 10 out of 10? How can this minister claim improvements in his budget for 1992?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I have some numbers. I do not know whether the member will accept them or not, but I know in 1991 over '90, that there was an increase in farm cash receipts of .4 of 1 percent, roughly around \$8 million, from a \$1.97-billion increase to \$1.98 billion.

As far as the first quarter, January-March numbers, Mr. Speaker, in terms of 1991, there seems to be an increase yet again of another 0.4 percent—not robust, not like we would like to see, but certainly steady increases. Again, I am talking the data source being Statistics Canada.

Agriculture Ministers' Meeting Agenda

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the minister is ignoring the question which dealt with the first quarter of '92, showing a 7.5 percent decrease for Manitoba, the largest decrease in Canada, in cash receipts.

Will the Minister of Agriculture now acknowledge that agriculture is far from out of the crisis that we have been facing over the last number of years, and will he put the issues of federal offloading and agriculture and the need for further federal aid in agriculture at the top of the agenda when the Ministers of Agriculture next meet with the federal minister?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the economic situation of agriculture in Manitoba and western Canada is always on our agenda. Certainly the member likes to promote the figures of doom and gloom, but I would like to put some more figures on the record, that the 1991 realized net income in Manitoba over 1990 was up 23 percent, the second highest increase in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member to accept my figures because I have accepted his. There seems to be some question as to the authenticity of both the figures that we received a few months ago from Statistics Canada and the figures we are now getting, which seem to come from Agriculture Canada. They show various figures for incomes and expenses, so the realized net income actually varies by \$100 million for 1991.

I find that variance quite unacceptable, and as of today, I have written a letter to the federal Minister of Agriculture to explain the discrepancies of the figures they put out most recently versus the figures that were put out some months ago, and to explain the methodologies of why they are so different, because they are very different, and they are very unacceptable in that fashion.

* (1350)

Communications Initiative Research and Development Funding

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

The federal government has just announced a \$40-million initiative on communications, research and development that will be spent across the country, and I would like to ask the minister: How much of that \$40 million will be spent here in Manitoba?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The preliminary indications are that some \$2.5 million of that will be spent in western Canada, and a detailed breakdown as to provinces has not been provided at this time.

Telecommunications Laboratory Government Discussions

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Well, Mr. Speaker, the preliminary indication is that none of it will be spent here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, for 18 months, TR labs of Edmonton has had a proposal to establish a joint business, university and government research initiative here in Manitoba—for 18 months.

Can the minister tell us when that initiative will begin?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I indicated that we received notification of this contract yesterday in terms of the \$40 million. I do want to clarify that \$2.5 million is in western Canada, and there is the possibility of some of it being provided within Manitoba.

So the answer is not necessarily zero in terms of the provision for Manitoba, but we certainly find the overall allocation in terms of the vast majority, the 37.5 to eastern Canada and the province of Quebec, as being unacceptable.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, the \$2.5 million is to the Banff Centre which is not as yet in Manitoba.

I would like to ask the minister about the telecommunications research lab which for 18 months has had a proposal before this minister's department to establish a research unit here in Manitoba. The university is enthusiastic. MTS, in Hansard, is enthusiastic. The federal government is even offering to support this initiative.

Why has this minister's department taken some 18 months to reach a decision, and have they reached a decision?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, no decision has been reached. We are currently in the midst of negotiations on a western economic partnership agreement with the federal government as it relates to communications, a \$10-million five-year agreement.

Once again, I have to clarify what the honourable member suggested. While we realize that the allocation is going to the Banff Centre, the \$2.5 million, the early indications are that there still is an opportunity for some of that to work its way into Manitoba. So that final analysis and that final decision is not complete, Mr. Speaker, but the most important aspect of it is in terms of the overall allocation. We are not satisfied, and we will be pursuing it with the federal government.

Foreign Domestic Workers Investigations

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, the federal Conservative government and this Conservative government, by not advocating on their behalf, have not only ignored the recommendation of foreign domestic workers when they ask that the live-in requirement be eliminated from the program when the government considered changing the program, but we have now been told that these women are being investigated and even interrogated by Immigration officials. They are being informed that because they are no longer officially part of the program, they have to go back to their country of origin.

My question is for the minister responsible for the Citizenship division. Does the minister have any information with regard to this apparent crackdown on domestic workers in Manitoba? Can she explain why these women are being treated in this fashion when they are here under the—

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

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no information, and I am sure there are no provincial officials who are terrorizing any immigrants. I would be very surprised if they were.

If there is some detail or if in fact there are people who are being terrorized in our province, I might ask the critic to provide that information on a detailed basis with some names and some background, and we will certainly look into it.

* (1355)

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, we have been asking the minister to get involved in this issue. I would ask the minister if she will ensure that women who are here under the previous program, but have an agreement in their contract to live out, are not going to be questioned and investigated and be threatened with the possibility of being forced to leave the country.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, I have met with the organizations that represent domestic workers. I have been at events in the community and have expressed my concern that no country should be discriminated against and how we value domestic workers here in our province. I would not tolerate any intimidation by officials of the provincial government, or indeed no one should be intimidated in this province. I

indicated earlier and offered to the critic that if she had detailed information and names and background, we would certainly look into it.

Ms. Cerilli: We are asking if the minister would advocate on behalf of people who are living in Manitoba.

I am going to table a letter which shows that one domestic worker is being told that she may as well leave the country, because she has not fulfilled the live-in requirement. I would ask the minister to ensure by contacting the federal government that, if federal immigration officials are going to have time to investigate domestic workers, they also have time to ensure that these women, if they are not employed in the program, have assistance in finding employment so that they may remain in the country.

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: I look forward to seeing the documentation that is being provided today in the House, and I will look into the matter.

Manitoba Housing Authority Service to Seniors

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Housing.

Because of actions taken by this government to shut down housing authorities, housing services, particularly in rural Manitoba, are in complete disarray. There is confusion, reduced services, and there are also increased costs for our seniors.

Recently, in response to a question for the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the minister said things were going according to schedule. I want to ask the minister, if this is the schedule and this is what he had planned for the program, to have this confusion. Will he admit that his plan has failed and, will he look at ways of giving better service for our seniors, particularly in rural Manitoba?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I totally reject the preamble and the assertions of the member for Swan River. She knows not of what she speaks.

Mr. Speaker, we implemented on May 1, the full operations of the Manitoba Housing Authority. Already we have saved a significant amount of money over what was expended previously under the former local housing authorities. We intend to save a great deal more.

Ms. Wowchuk: Well, I guess if saving money is more important than seniors—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Staffing

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I would like to ask the minister why the office in Roblin has not been filled, has not been staffed, and in fact, one office person has quit there, and there are only temporary people working.

Why have the local people from Dauphin and Swan River not been offered jobs at that office?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, those people were invited to make application for jobs in those offices. In fact, in one case, we had a person from Swan River actually decline to take the job, even though it was offered to that person.

So, Mr. Speaker, because local applications from within housing authorities have been exhausted, we are now in a public advertising mode. We have, in fact, a week ago last Saturday, published advertisements both in Winnipeg and local newspapers. We are receiving those applications and the appropriate process for filling those positions in those communities will be followed.

Service to Seniors

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the services for the seniors are very serious, and I want to ask the minister if he will admit that there is a problem, and if he will give special consideration to the seniors who live in such communities as Ethelbert, Grandview, Pine River, Camperville, where they do not have the services. There is confusion; there is nobody in the community now who is going to look at them. They have to pay long-distance costs—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1400)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, the communities to which the member refers, I will investigate the specifics. The question of local representation is there. They will have on-site management in those projects.

If there is some confusion—and there may well be, because when you change systems, when you change from one system to another there is, generally speaking, the odd glitch that occurs or in fact some confusion in the minds of the tenants. It

is anticipated, that within the next month tenant relations officers will be visiting those projects and discussing the matter with the seniors to ensure that they understand the process and understand what is now taking place and where they have the opportunity of calling.

If they have to make a phone call to an office, each one of those offices has a 1-800 phone number. There is no cost to call that office.

Foreign Domestic Workers Deportation Intervention

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Last night, I was informed that there were a number of domestics who in fact were put in a situation in which we believe that the provincial government might be of some assistance, where they came to Canada as a live-in domestic but for whatever reasons were not actually living with the employers. So there is some miscommunication.

I would ask if the government would in fact look into it and possibly negotiate on behalf of some of these individuals to see if we can resolve the matter, so that the individuals are not in fact deported.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I believe I have already answered that question. I asked the NDP critic for that information. I would ask the Liberals to provide that same information so it can be looked into.

Foreign Domestic Workers' Program Minister's Correspondence Request

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): The minister made a commitment to do what she can to preserve the foreign domestic program, and has mentioned on numerous occasions that she has met and discussed with different organizations. We have asked the minister, and I would ask the minister today: Would she table any correspondence that she has had with her federal counterparts dealing with the domestic program?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): I have indicated on many occasions that we, in this province, will not tolerate any country being discriminated against in allowing those who are eligible to come here to work, whether it be in the domestic worker field or

any other area. We will continue to maintain that stance, and we will continue to work on behalf of those who are here and who are coming to our province.

Multicultural Legislation Introduction

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, this government has promised The Multicultural Act. I will ask the minister: Is the minister going to live up to the promise of this government and introduce a multicultural act, as per the Throne Speech Debate, in this session, yes or no?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, The Multicultural Act will be introduced very soon.

Child Guidance Clinic Government Position

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Winnipeg's Child Guidance Clinic, which provides services to virtually all children in the city of Winnipeg for diagnostic treatment and guidance of children, is respected as unique in North America. However, as of today or recently, almost all school divisions outside of Winnipeg No. 1 have indicated their intention to pull out of the clinic or seriously alter the arrangement with the clinic.

I am asking the Minister of Education what the government's position is with respect to the provision of services by Child Guidance Clinic, since a pullout or change will seriously alter the provision of services to special needs kids.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey), I will take the question as notice.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is: Since the government sets the standards by which students are provided these services, will the government categorically outline and state what their position is in this regard?

Mr. Manness: Again, Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice on behalf of the minister.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, will the government provide at least the mediation role to try to bring the parties together to try to ensure that the operation of the Child Guidance Clinic, as it is recognized in North America, can continue?

Mr. Manness: A similar response, Mr. Speaker.

Home Care Program Licensed Practical Nurses' Role

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Home care is a major aspect of community-based health and absolutely essential to the reform process. In order to meet the very high expectation we have all placed on home care, we must start working now to improve the skills of home care workers. The community-based care demands more skills from these workers.

Does the minister agree that we should be moving towards having more LPN nurses in the field of home care because of the new expectations and new responsibility under the new health care plan?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I would anticipate that as the Home Care Program provides a greater degree of service that is currently available in our acute care hospitals, either through delay or replacement of admission to acute care hospitals or on the early discharge side, that the nursing professionals, including the LPNs but also the registered nursing profession, will probably fit a significant portion of that increased responsibility in the Continuing Care Program. Also though, Sir, I think it is fair to say that we see an enhanced role for the occupational and physiotherapies as well in terms of an enhanced role for continuing care.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health tell us if he has discussed this issue with the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) to make arrangements for the LPN programs to be updated so that the home care needs can be met?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, as my honourable friend knows, there is a significant expectation on training and retraining in terms of the reform proposal to shift resources and people needing care away from the institution, the high-cost institution of community-based care. In the process of establishing training and retraining, those issues we expect would be addressed.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate to my honourable friend that our training programs do have significant maturity right now in terms of ability to train individuals to deliver services in the home through the Continuing Care Program. Whether the retraining and training requirements would lead to

an enhancement of those programs, I am certainly open to that kind of suggestion and discussion.

Licensed Practical Nursing Educational Opportunities

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, in view of the minister's own reply, can the minister tell us now—or will he agree to maintain the existing program for LPNs until the long-term planning under the new health care reform can take place, because we are going to have a moratorium on one training facility and they are going to close St. Boniface Hospital? We must have a correct answer from the minister or a response.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Well, Mr. Speaker, the issue of training and numbers of trained graduates in the LPN has been discussed now for several months, and part and parcel of the solution to removal or to deal with the issue of the moratorium on training at Red River Community College centres in a significant way on the survey of our employers in the province, in terms of them giving us their best guess of what their future needs in terms of nursing professionals will be. That will help to guide the training in LPNs as well as our other nursing professionals.

Economic Growth Consumer Confidence

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, although retail sales were up in January and February of this year over last year, figures now available from Statistics Canada show that there has been a decline in the province of Manitoba for the month of March of this year compared to last year. In fact, Manitoba was the only province in western Canada to experience a decline in retail sales. In fact, retail sales in March were lower than they were in 1989, and when you take inflation into account, retail sales are definitely lower than they were before this government took office.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: How can the minister be so confident in our economic growth prospects when consumer spending in this province is floundering?

* (1410)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I had numbers to respond to that. I will try from memory to recall. January to March, first

quarter, 1992 versus forecast, I believe we are up 6 percent over forecast in retail sales tax revenue.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I will share with you and the House that the month of April numbers are in, and retail sales tax actual receipts are some 12 percent above forecast, which says amongst other things, that the consumer confidence with respect to purchasing, although it has not come back to where we wish it were, there is a foundation taking place. Indeed there is an understanding at least that this recession is wearing its way through, and there is a confidence building. I would think that all members would take some satisfaction in that.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Thank you to the minister for the information, and we would like to assume that confidence is coming back, but there are other signs of weakness. My question, therefore, to the Minister of Finance: Will the Minister of Finance not acknowledge that we are still really in the economic doldrums, when we look at other current economic indicators? Manufacturing shipments are still declining. Employment and manufacturing have declined. Housing starts are a fraction of what they were in 1988 before this government took office. My question—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Leonard Evans: My question to the minister is: Will this minister acknowledge that today, after four years being in government, five budgets, with Manitoba's economy—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am having great difficulty. The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) is making an awful lot of noise. I am having great difficulty in hearing.

Now, has the honourable member for Brandon East put his question, because I could not hear? I did not hear the honourable member's question.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Will this Minister of Finance acknowledge that the Manitoba economy is still stagnating after four years in government and five budgets?

Mr. Speaker: Okay, I heard that.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I just flipped to my page on retail sales. Then I heard "housing starts" come up, and I flipped over to it. The member is all over the place. The member is having a hard time developing any coherence in his question.

Mr. Speaker, let me say with respect to retail sales: On an unadjusted basis for the first quarter of 1992, Manitoba retail sales were up 3.1 percent—tied for B.C. for fourth best across Canada. I would have to think that given the fact that our income levels have not grown maybe consistently with the national average, as indeed it has been pointed out by members from across the way on a daily basis, he would take some considerable glee, as I do, of the fact that we rank that high with respect to retail sales.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to how the economy is doing in Manitoba, as the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has said several times this week, we are—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the Leader of the Opposition wants to go, but he is giddyapping and he is roaring. I do not know what his problem is, but obviously he has some difficulty. His main difficulty is, he is in control of a fractured caucus, and they do not know what it is they want. That is his problem.

As far as the economy of the province, Mr. Speaker, it is progressing, it is proceeding along the path that is laid out in the budgets over the last two years.

Manufacturing Industry

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Will the minister concede that a very important industry, which is manufacturing, there is no sign of a turnaround in our manufacturing industry, given the decline in 1990, 1991 and continuing the decline in 1992? There are no signs of improvement. Will the minister concede that our manufacturing industry is declining?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): As far as the value of manufacturing shipments, I understand, by latest ranking, we are still fifth. We are more or less, on the most part, at the national average. Our basic sectors within manufacturing are restructuring at this point in time.

I have an opportunity to talk to our manufacturers on a weekly basis. They are telling me that their costs are coming more in line on a weekly basis in a competitive sense with what it is they have to meet as their competition into U.S. markets.

Mr. Speaker, the restructuring that all of us know that has to go on is occurring, and indeed, if the member will just bear with the economic activity over the course of the next number of months, he will see

that the budgetary matters and the budgetary issues, all of which he has voted against over the last five budgets, are beginning to pay their dividends. No doubt, that is why Manitoba has indicated the forecast of leading Canada in economic growth over the course of the next two or three years.

Manitoba Housing Authority Clarification

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, in answer to a question, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) just said that the worker in Swan River was offered the job. That is not true. The worker from Swan River was told that he did not have enough experience, even though he was one of the most experienced people in rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, if the member is rising on a point of personal privilege, which is her right to do, then I would ask that she do so, she signify or otherwise withdraw, because she is making a very curious allegation, a spurious allegation, and I ask her to withdraw it.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear. The member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) is asking a question. The minister earlier put information on the record that was not true which he has subsequently checked. I believe she is giving him the opportunity to admit to the fact he made a mistake and clear up the record in terms of what is happening in his department. It is very clearly a question that is in order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable government House leader does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now I would ask the honourable member for Swan River to kindly put your question now, please.

Ms. Wowchuk: Will the Minister of Housing admit that he made a mistake; a job was not offered to the person from Swan River, and there is no toll-free number to phone into the Dauphin office?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure which employee the member

refers to. I am advised there were four or five employees at the Dauphin Housing Authority. One of those employees, who applied for a clerk's job in Roblin, I am advised, was offered the job and subsequently declined. I do not have the name here. I will be prepared to provide that name to the member for Swan River after Question Period.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, to the question of toll-free lines, if they are not in place, they soon will be in place in those offices.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Wellington—one very short question.

Children's Residential Facilities Curriculum Committee

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, on April 30, the Minister of Family Services tabled or shared with us a government response to the independent review of reporting procedures in children's residential facilities. One of the major immediate items in the recommendations that were going to be undertaken immediately was the establishment of a residential care curriculum committee. The residential care curriculum committee needed to be in place before—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Kindly put your question now, please.

Ms. Barrett: Can the Minister of Family Services tell the House one month after this immediate committee was to be put in place, a committee that reflects on six major recommendations, what the status of that committee is?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the working committee that was struck is composed of a number of individuals from the Department of Family Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and others who are part of this working group. My understanding is that they will be having their first meeting on June 4.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.
*(1420)

Nonpolitical Statement

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Yes, Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [Agreed]

I rise today to congratulate an outstanding young man from my constituency who attends Ecole St. Germain Elementary School. Travis Piché is a

seven-year-old Grade 1 student who placed second at the National Chess Championships held in Montreal on May 17 and 18.

This National Chess competition includes players from Grades 1 through 12 from across Canada. Travis was the only Grade 1 student from Manitoba to compete at the national level. He has been playing chess for approximately two years, and in this year's competitions he placed first at the school level, first at both the regional and provincial levels, thus qualifying him for this national competition.

His second place success at the national level was another first for a Manitoban. Travis has become the only Manitoban to bring home a National Chess trophy.

I would ask all honourable members to join with me today in congratulating Travis. This is truly an outstanding achievement for an exceptional young Manitoban. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before we move into Committee of Supply, I wonder if there is a disposition to waive private members' hour today.

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

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Disallowed.

Mr. Manness: I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), 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 Agriculture, and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

AGRICULTURE

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 the Department of Agriculture.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4.(d) Soils and Crops Branch on page 16 of the Estimates book.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would like to just remind the minister that there were some documents asked for over the last couple of sessions, some dealing with decentralization and some documents from MACC, in terms of detail in the budget. As we noted, the detail was not sufficient in the Supplementary Estimates information, and that was going to be provided.

So I just remind the minister of those two at least. There may be others. I have not had a chance to read through all of the Hansard for the Estimates that we have had so far, but I believe there are a number.

In addition to that, I wanted to ask the minister about a letter dated May 14 that he received from Mr. Neil Knight of Power Rich Corporation dealing with the news release that was put out by Mr. John Ewanek. Was that dealt with here? Okay, I will not ask the minister to repeat everything he said the other day, but I just want to ask him whether in fact the gist of the arguments made about micronutrients is basically factual, as the minister sees it, and whether he has met with Mr. Knight to resolve this concern that he has expressed here.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Staff have talked with Mr. Knight and are prepared to meet with him to review any information he might have to substantiate his point that soils in Manitoba need micronutrients.

Basically our position is that micronutrients undoubtedly are needed in some soils for some crops but certainly not for all soils and all crops, and soil test analysis is obviously the best way to determine if there is need, and if that is not satisfactory, then plant tissue analysis can also be used.

The general scientific information available would indicate that certainly in some cases there is undoubtedly some need in some crops but not for every crop and all soils in the province, but staff will further discuss with the individual information he has to support his case.

Mr. Plohman: In that regard, is it the minister's practice and the department's to take it upon themselves to attempt to discredit new companies that are bringing in products that are not necessarily conventional? I see this as being a very strongly worded document, this news release, that reflects directly on Power Rich and maybe perhaps some other companies in the same business that have not been established for the length of time that conventional fertilizer companies have been.

I do not know that it is practice of government to intervene except when occasionally police might warn that there are organizations around that are doing something illegal or maybe taking advantage of old people, trying to get them to take their money out of the bank, things like that, and there are public warnings issued. But I find this rather surprising that the government would take it upon themselves to attempt almost directly to discredit what is happening with regard to new fertilizer techniques and approaches for farmers.

It would seem to me that it would be incumbent upon the farmers who are thinking about buying that to consult with their Ag rep and other specialists to determine whether they feel it is necessary for them to purchase it, but to make this kind of a blanket statement seems to me an interference in the marketplace.

* (1430)

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the individual who wrote the news release was thinking of several products when he wrote it. Power Rich seems to think it is aimed at them, but they were not mentioned in the news release. No finger was pointed at them. They have taken it upon themselves to think that they are the identified party. Truly that is not the case.

It was simply a matter of, as I think the member indicated the other day, that it is important that farmers be kept informed, and that is all that was being done, inform farmers to evaluate the products, look at the costs, look at their needs and make an informed decision.

If more information is needed, generally, prompt the person to speak to a specialist or an ag rep, but simply to inform people, be aware that relative to your analysis, look at the cost, look at the need. If you are not sure of your need, soil analysis would be appropriate, but it was not intended in any way to discredit any particular products, just a general warning that scientific information is generated for

all kinds of input units that farmers use, and that a farmer making a decision should call for all the information he can come up with.

Mr. Plohman: I am concerned about this, and I do not want to take a great deal of time on it, but I think it is important. The minister has access to staff in terms of, perhaps, the names. There cannot be a long list of other companies besides Power Rich that are operating in Manitoba that this could possibly have been targeted at in terms of alerting the potential customers of those products, those being the farmers.

Who else is in this business in Manitoba, and what other products are we talking about here?

Mr. Findlay: The reason that the press release was written was more or less because producers had been asking staff about a variety of products that were advertised. I am not going to name any other names, but there are other units on the market that farmers have had concerns about and asked questions of. The purpose was to make more farmers aware, to ask questions and evaluate the pros and cons, the relative costs and probable benefits of using anything of this nature.

Mr. Plohman: I think I would feel more comfortable with what the minister is saying if the wording in the news release was not so blatant: Farmers should be cautious of new fertilizers that boast unusually high yields or claim to improve the soil environment.

It really is attacking the advertising of whoever the companies that are being targeted here, or individuals. It seems to me—and you could go on and on in the news release—that it was quite aggressive. I do not know whether the minister has taken any action to caution his staff to avoid making these kinds of statements, but I think this has gone too far. I say that for the record at this point, and perhaps we will have a chance to pursue that further at some point in the future.

Mr. Findlay: I would ask the member if he is now saying that if somebody makes claims that cannot be substantiated by scientific evidence, if that is okay that they make those claims, the farmers, and we do not respond. Is that what he is saying?

Mr. Plohman: I think the minister has to take the onus upon himself to ensure that what he is claiming and what his staff are claiming is accurate rather than making statements which cast aspersions and reflect on a firm or an individual. The minister is quite correct; he did not target any particular firm,

but nor did he rule out any particular products or firms. Right? So what we have here then is a general broad-brush approach which casts aspersions on anyone in that field.

I think that is regrettable, and I think, quite clearly, this has gone too far. The minister is now, by his last question, saying that he does not consider anything in this news release as being too aggressive in this area. Then I have to take issue with him on that.

I think that there are statements in there that can be construed as something that interferes in the marketing of legitimate companies. If the minister has specific companies' products that he thinks the scientific evidence does not support, then he should say that specifically but not make these general statements that cast aspersions on all the products. I think that is what this does—and on the firm itself.

Mr. Findlay: Well, I think the member answered his own comments by saying that nobody was identified in the news release. So it is not casting aspersions on anyone, but it is making farmers aware to ask the appropriate questions and ask for information that can prove the claims that are being made in any advertisement.

I think it is just good common consumer sense to approach products like that, ask for the evidence to prove the scientific information. I would ask if there has been any valid scientific analysis done of the products that are being sold.

That is all that is being pursued here. I think it is only valid, in terms of protecting the farmer, to make him aware that sometimes people do make claims, and if they make claims, just ask them for the scientific backup to the claim.

Mr. Plohman: I agree that the interests of farmers have to be protected and, of course, have to be balanced with the interests of the particular company; in this particular case, one that has taken issue with what has been said here, but when the minister allows his staff to make these kinds of sweeping statements, which can be very destructive to the potential business of a company such as this, surely he would have had first required the proof from his staff. The analysis should have been done.

* (1440)

The onus is on the government and the minister and his department. Before making those statements, would it not have been better to call them in and say: Look, our evidence shows that

what you are saying is wrong, is misleading; you are making claims you cannot substantiate; we want to hear if you can, because if you do not, we are going to be making some public statements about this to protect the public interest.

Did the minister do that before he made these statements?

Mr. Findlay: I guess it is fair to say that the products of this general nature have been on the market for a period of time, and we have been continually expecting to see some scientific information to validate the substantial way the claims that they want to make year in and year out. The university scientists have commented in a similar direction. As I said in the first answer, that the staff are in the process of setting up a meeting with the individual involved, and I think it is imperative at that meeting that the request be made for valid scientific information. It seems that there are testimonials being made, but that is not valid scientific information. I think in the interests of protecting producers we want to pursue the justified scientific information that the individual can provide. I think that is good for all that that be pursued.

Mr. Plohman: I agree that this should have been pursued, particularly if it has been on the market for some years. I would have thought that the minister would have had his staff or the university would have undertaken some study on this to do some analysis. It could not be that expensive to do it. The damage is now done, quite possibly, because there were some fairly negative stories, the Country Guide that included it, The Co-operator, as a result of that news release. So when the minister's department produces a news release, it gets taken seriously and undoubtedly was meant to be taken seriously.

The fact is that the damage could be somewhat irreversible in terms of its impact for some time to come in terms of the cost to the company and employees and economic activity in the province. Now, if they are ripping off farmers, I think that the first thing that the department should have done, and the minister making that decision, is said, well, what is your evidence? Where is your scientific evidence to prove that these guys are making claims that are not true? If he would have had that kind of evidence, then perhaps making this kind of a statement after a statement to the company, telling them of what was intended, and that might have been a legitimate action.

I am just saying that the minister went too far without first making sure that study was done. He has access to the scientist who could quite quickly put together a very detailed response to the product and thus proving scientifically that it does not, that it cannot substantiate the claims that are being made. But the minister has not said that he has actually done that—a study. He said there have been concerns by comments made by the University of Manitoba, comments made by maybe others in his department and so on, but he has never actually done a study to get the definitive analysis before he made the public statement which is now irreversible. That is all I am saying to the minister. I think he should not allow or at least at this point should have learned something from this and say, look, in the future we are going to have to have that data beforehand.

Mr. Findlay: Anytime a company puts a product on the market, whether it is a pesticide or a fertilizer, they are required to do efficacy studies to back up the claims that they are going to make. It is important that everybody that puts a product on the market do his efficacy studies. If the companies involved—how many products we are talking about?—I am not sure. If they have efficacy studies to prove their claims, I would think they would bring it forward very quickly to say that the statements went too far because this is the evidence we have.

This might be fair to say, we are trying to flush out that information if it exists. If it does not exist, then I think it is time that they take their products to an Agriculture Canada Research Station or the University of Manitoba and have it included in a bona fide scientific experiment that compared the performance of that versus conventional products or no products. I think that analysis needs to be done for the good of the companies wanting to sell the products, for the good of the farmer who is buying it, and that is what we are trying to see happen. So far we are not aware that there is any scientific evidence on the record, and if it is, we are certainly looking for it to be brought forward. The purpose of the meeting is to put that point across very clearly.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, would it not have been more orthodox to have said to the company, you had better have the scientific information? We want it or else we are going to have to go with a public statement, rather than just make the public statements and say that was a way

of flushing them out. That is not the minister's role to be flushing in that respect. I think you would be asking them for the scientific information. Failure to get it would then warrant further action. The minister could—that is what I am saying—alert them that if they do not provide that kind of scientific information, he is going to have to take further steps. Did he do that? Did he write to them and say we need to have, we demand to see, the scientific evidence to support your claims? If we do not get it, we are going to have to take further public action. Did they do that?

* (1450)

Mr. Findlay: As I said earlier, it is not the department's job, has not been in the past, is not in the future, to test every product. Our job is to test whether micronutrients, as in this case, are needed by crops. As I said earlier, there are certain conditions and certain micronutrients needed for crops of certain soils, like copper on organic soils. It is known that is a needed micronutrient. Also known in the majority of instances, the majority of crops grown in Manitoba, there is little or no need. That is the kind of information that the university is generating and that the department is generating so that we have an idea of whether micronutrients are needed.

It is the job and the responsibility of the advocate to do the appropriate efficacy analysis to support his product. That is what he should be promoting, the efficacy information that he has generated in a balanced, scientific approach.

Mr. Plohman: Well, we will see where this develops, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I believe the minister has not made the case that he should not have put this out before taking intermediate steps, and making statements like "dubious products" and "beware of sales pitches." It all leaves the impression that there are finaglers out there, that there are crooks out there basically trying to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers. They were very strong statements. Every fertilizer company then could perhaps be accused of that, or anybody who sells anything could be accused of that. I do not think that is warranted until intermediate steps have been taken, and we will see what happens on that.

I wanted to get the minister's just brief outline of the soil testing lab. We had quite a discussion on the privatization that took place last year, in terms of the number of tests, the kind of tests, the price,

the costs, and whether they were able to be done in Manitoba or elsewhere, the cost to farmers and the usage. Can the minister give us any statistical information on the operation of the lab in private hands, in terms of usage, price, and the nature of tests being done in Manitoba and employment levels at the facility? Perhaps that is something that the minister could provide in a written form, if he does not have it at his fingertips, in terms of the tests that are being provided, the numbers, statistical comparisons between this past year and the year previous, a couple of years previous perhaps, and the costs. If we could get that information in written form, we could pursue a couple of other areas there and then move on.

Mr. Findlay: The last year that the provincial lab operated, they did 7,450 samples. Last fall, the fall of '91, Norwest was operating a lab that did 4,250. Now, one could say, well, that is a big reduction. It is not a fair comparison, because the fall of 1991 was a very short fall.

It froze up on the 19th of October, which meant we lost two weeks in the fall, which undoubtedly is the time when a lot of people do their soil sampling. So sampling was not done to the extent that would be called normal from the fall of 1991.

The Norwest Lab has offered additional services that farmers want. They have offered them free sample drying, whereas previously, the provincial lab had required that farmers dry the sample before it was sent in, or if farmers did not send it in dry, they would charge \$2 for drying it, but the Norwest Lab is free sample drying. They offer free courier delivery to the lab, and they have offered faster turnaround time for samples that have been submitted to the lab.

The lab is just getting itself started. Prior to the privatization of the lab, we believe that we were losing about 50 percent of the business to American labs. We would expect Norwest to be aggressively attempting to recapture the business that has been going to American labs.

The sample costs for nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and sulfur, the province was charging \$20 a sample, plus drying costs. Norwest is charging \$26. For a complete with micronutrients, the province was charging \$37. Norwest is charging \$43.

The employment component in the feed and soil lab, when the province was operating it, there were

19 full-time staff. Norwest now has 16.75 full-time staff.

Mr. Plohman: I did not know he was finished, but if he is, can he indicate whether they are in the same facility now, and if not, where they are located and what equipment they took over from the province and what the exchange price was there for the equipment?

Mr. Findlay: The feed test lab had been in the Ag Services Complex when the government owned it, and the soil test lab was in the Ellis Building at the University of Manitoba Soil Science department. The soil lab has been moved to the Ag Services Complex, so both the soil and feed labs are together now in the Ag Services Complex. The equipment that the province owned was sold for \$300,000. The university equipment that they had in the Soils Lab was retained by the university.

Mr. Plohman: Just to refresh my memory on this, I believe there was a new piece of equipment purchased just a year or two previous that enabled the lab to perform dry testing, as opposed to the wet mix testing, that this was a much faster procedure, and that this had been purchased by the government only a few years before, I believe it was when Leonard Harapiak was the minister.

* (1500)

My understanding is that this was about a million dollar piece of equipment. [interjection] Well, this is an expensive piece of equipment, and I think that it is important that we know what was sold for \$300,000. So if the minister disagrees with that, maybe he can give us a rundown of the equipment that was sold. [interjection] No, I do not need the wheelbarrows and shovels. The minister knows what I am talking about. The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) would probably give wheelbarrows and shovels. I want the major pieces of equipment.

Mr. Findlay: I can assure the member, he is way out in his million-dollar figure for the NIR computer and printer, NIR 6250. Staff will get the exact figure, but they believe it is in the category of tens of thousands as opposed to a million, so we are substantively different.

But it is an important piece of equipment that the lab can use to attract business, particularly for feed analysis, from other jurisdictions. It is a good piece of equipment. It is reliable. It was purchased initially to do that sort of thing, and it is a good

addition for the lab in terms of giving high quality service.

Mr. Plohman: I will ask the minister to provide a list of equipment that was sold for the \$300,000 in written form. If he will agree to that, I will move on to other issues.

Mr. Findlay: We indicated to the member the other day, we would give him some information on decentralization regarding MACC and some budgetary costs regarding MACC, associated with decentralization. So I will pass this information out now, and the additional information on the sales to Norwest Labs, we will get that list for the member later.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister indicate whether he can have that list to me prior to Monday's sitting or during Monday's sitting prior to the close of the Estimates?

Mr. Findlay: I could answer the question if he will tell me when Estimates close for Agriculture.

Mr. Plohman: Well, it is not really difficult to figure out. Monday we start at 1:30 p.m., we have Question Period, and then at 2:30 p.m., we get to Estimates, and we go to five o'clock. Can the minister have that information prior to five o'clock on Monday?

Mr. Findlay: Yes.

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the number of 46.7 staff, how is that consistent with the previous three to five years in numbers in the Soils and Crops Branch?

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

Mr. Findlay: Two years ago, we downsized by four staff positions. Last year, we downsized by two staff positions, but these reductions were in the soil survey area.

Mr. Connery: How many positions are currently vacant, out of the 46?

Mr. Findlay: Three vacancies at this time.

Mr. Connery: What positions are they in?

Mr. Findlay: Of the three positions, the first one is a northern horticulturist who resigned about a month ago. The second one is a Chief of Soil and Water Management which is presently being advertised, and the third vacancy that exists at this time is a Chief of Land Planning.

Mr. Connery: Are there any plans to cut other positions in the future?

Mr. Findlay: Well, we are dealing with the '92-93 budget right now. There are no more reductions in this budget, and the next budget, that process has not started at this time.

Mr. Connery: Soils and Crops Branch has been moved to Carman, and are they going to be doing field testing at Carman, the provincial department?

Mr. Findlay: The member asks about field testing in the Carman area. We will undoubtedly be working with the university in some fashion. They are in the process of moving their site to Carman, which will be a good opportunity for the department to work very closely with the university.

The department has a number of sites for testing around the province, variety testing plots. There are nine of them for field crops and two for forages, plus a wide variety of additional demonstration plots on various crops throughout the province.

Mr. Connery: In their work with the University of Manitoba at Carman, will there be irrigation trials and crops that will be under irrigation?

Mr. Findlay: At this time, decisions have not been finalized as to what work the university will do at the Carman site. We would expect it will be at least two years before they have the site fully ready to have their plots out there. Whether there will or there will not be irrigation studies done, we cannot comment at this time. Obviously, it is something there for consideration by them.

Mr. Connery: Depending on the site they would choose, is the minister aware that Natural Resources has quit issuing licences for irrigation out of the 'boine or Stephenfield? At this point, they have refused some licences. There could be a problem if there were to be tests that required irrigation, or crops that required irrigation, that there might not be irrigation available, or they would have to have preferential licensing to be able to irrigate.

I guess the point that I make is that they did have one testing station in Portage which the university left, not totally on their own problems, part of it with the city administration that was a little dogmatic, but I think there has been a move for some time maybe to move to Carman with the Soils.

I do not know what influence there was to encourage that movement, but with the university going to Carman and the government going to Carman, there seems to be some sort of dovetailing,

and there is some concern in our area that this testing station was moved out of the Portage area.

* (1510)

I do have some concern that this happened, and I guess maybe it is one area of rural Manitoba versus the other, but unless we lose our water through diversification of it to other areas, Portage did have the types of soils that we could irrigate and irrigation available for them. So I am somewhat concerned that the testing that the university might do in conjunction with the province might be more field-related, rather than horticultural-related crops.

Can the minister tell me where we are going with our horticultural crops, and basically in Soils and Crops—this is where horticulture is—where we are going, what thrust, what emphasis the department is putting on it because it is one of the diversification crops that, I think, if we can expand the markets, if we can bring in additional processing into this area—and at some point in time, I believe very strongly that water is going to become a bigger issue in the States, and there might be some opportunities for us to get into more processing because we do have a lot of water.

There is a lot of water going down the Assiniboine, for instance, during the spring months. About 90 percent of it goes down. I guess as a government, if we had the vision to build some retention capacity, we could irrigate a lot of land that is currently in grain that is having trouble being sold, but maybe we could see some great economic thrust for the province.

In the short run and in the long run, maybe something very massive for us, and rather than importing our processed food from the United States, maybe we could be shipping some of our food down to them.

At the same time, I would hope the minister and this government would resist strongly any move to export any great volumes of commercial water outside of the Canadian borders.

Mr. Findlay: There is no question that the future of Manitoba agriculture will continue to lie in the direction of diversifying into commodities for which there is an economic return at the farm gate directly from the consumer. There is no question that there is tremendous opportunity of value adding those basic food commodities to increase the value and create the jobs of processing right here in the province of Manitoba. Then it becomes a question

of accessing market, and clearly a lot of that market will have to be outside of Manitoba and some of it certainly to the south.

As the member well knows, we have had some significant harassments at the U.S. border, unacceptable reasons holding loads up for inspection, stopping more loads than would be deemed appropriate and holding them up waiting for the results of the inspections.

Those are some of the problems we have with horticultural products moving south. Certainly McCain's and Carnation in terms of processing potatoes, very significant players, have expanded. We certainly expect them to expand some more. We are very interested in the use of water to have a better guarantee of production, no matter what the type of year is, regarding drought. Woodstone Foods in Portage, again, another good processor.

We have certainly worked closely with the industry and with Western Diversification in a study that was done not too long ago in the potato industry, so we are doing all we can to be sure that the industry has an opportunity to grow.

It sometimes gets discouraging when you see the kind of border harassment that was created, is still being created, for vegetables going into the Minneapolis market. We have done some studies and integrated pest management. Some specific grants had been made working with the vegetable industry to, again, find ways and means to increase production without having to use more and more chemicals. We have been finding other more cost-efficient ways to control pests.

I guess, in the vegetable industry, the horticultural industry, clearly water is a very, very big issue. I think it is imperative that agriculture have access to enough water to be able to continue to grow and expand, both in terms of basic production and in terms of processing.

In a lot of the area of southern and south-central Manitoba, it is my belief that there is basically enough water there over the course of 12 months, if properly managed over the course of that 12 months by appropriate impounding, rather than letting it disappear in the spring, and then go looking for it in the middle of the summer. The appropriate irrigation could be done, but it takes a significant management approach. I think it is fair to say that we would like to see that process unfold in a positive sense for sourcing water for that area.

The member made some mention of exporting water. Well, in agriculture, we are not interested in exporting water. We are interested in exporting the commodity grown in our land by the use of that water. There might be some water in those plants we export, but that is the way I want to see it exported.

Through the Soils and Crops Branch, the Marketing Branch and our limited resources, we are doing what we can and working with the industry. I guess it is fair to say, I am pleased with the progress made over the last 10 years, and I look forward to further progress in this direction.

It is interesting to note that the assistant commissioner of Agriculture from Minnesota was up here, oh, three or four or five months ago and was wondering how we could be in the vegetable business competing with them. They are taking note of the fact that we are here, and we are becoming a competitor to them. So I think our story of a reasonable amount of success is pretty good.

Mr. Connery: A couple of points the minister commented on, besides the third one, which is the reason we can compete is the quality of the growers we have in Manitoba.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the residue testing that the Americans are doing on our crops—and it is nontariff barrier methods that they are using to discourage us from exporting, which means that we have to be good. If we were not competitive and if we did not have the quality, they would not worry about us because we would not be going into those markets.

I would ask the minister to monitor this very closely and to give the growers every bit of assistance, even if it means retaliation. Just say to the Americans, if you test 5 percent of our loads, we will test 5 percent of your loads coming in. I can assure you that the southern states growers will be up lynching the American inspector very quickly, because that would tie up their industry tremendously.

I think we need that sort of assistance to be able to assure ourselves of that market. The Minneapolis-St. Paul market is a larger market than the three prairie provinces put together, and it is closer to us than any market in Alberta. So the opportunities there are vast. I think we have the ability to produce, and as we expand and maybe more growers come in, I think that we can get into that market much stronger.

The other one is the water that the minister said is so vital to many of our crops, especially horticulture, but we see irrigation used in other crops. I would ask the minister, if he is interested, to comment on some sort of retention capabilities on the Assiniboine or one of the major tributaries of the Assiniboine, so that indeed we could divert water to the Pembina Valley and not see the Pembina Valley and the Assiniboine River people fighting over water, when in reality, as the minister said, there is more than ample water, but it all flows down in about a six-week period.

* (1520)

If we had more retention capabilities, we could divert water, and as the minister well knows, we could see flourishing activity in a greater area of southern Manitoba which would enhance our job creation, would enhance the economic activity of Winnipeg tremendously because everything goes through Winnipeg. When it happens in rural Manitoba, it funnels in or out through Winnipeg. What is the minister's opinion on some retention capabilities on the Assiniboine River?

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

Mr. Findlay: The member is probably aware of the fact that there is a grant in place right now from Rural Development to the Central Plains Task Force to look at the management of the water along the whole Assiniboine River. As I said earlier, my own personal feeling is that there is enough water in the region over the course of 12 months to adequately satisfy a lot more need than is presently being satisfied.

There needs to come out of that study, or any other analysis that can be done, some kind of pros and cons regarding various types of water retention, whether we are talking a big dam here, a big dam there or whether we are talking numerous small retention units on the main rivers or on the tributaries to control the release of water down the tributaries or down the river over the course of the summer, so that the right amount of water is in the right place at the right time for all the users, whether it is for domestic, or municipal, or for irrigation or whatever it is for.

There certainly is an analysis going on right now by the Agassiz irrigators association trying to come up with ways and means of managing the water in the Pembina Valley area. They are probably going to bring forth some proposals as to how it could be

managed properly to achieve some degree of irrigation in there over time.

There are a lot of studies going on, and as the Minister of Agriculture, I strongly promote the use of water for agricultural production, because it is our limiting factor in many regions of the province. If you cannot manage the water in a fashion to promote increased agricultural production, I think it is imperative, as a small province wanting to grow economically and in terms of jobs, that we must do it.

I am not a proponent of any one particular way, but I am a proponent of all the players coming to the table and negotiating the best approach for all concerned, so that nobody is disadvantaged by somebody else's access to water.

I believe there is enough water. Certainly, we have the capacity to manage it, so that all concerned have a reasonable access to water to do what they can do to promote the agricultural economy in this province.

Mr. Connery: I appreciate the fact that the minister would have some difficulty in saying yes or no to specifics, and I appreciate that. That is more of a caucus decision, or of cabinet.

I see the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) here, who comes from the Pembina region. I hope through him and yourself and other people that we can convince the provincial government to look at greater water retention and not let it all run through into the Nelson River prematurely.

The study that the Central Plains Water Task Force is doing is not one really to do with dams; it is whether or not there is enough water to allow for the diversion into the Pembina Valley without water retention. At a scoping meeting on Tuesday night, we tried to have that to be included in the discussion and also to have the Clean Environment Commission, when that meeting is finally convened, also look at: If there is not enough water, then what is the way to do it?

I hate to be fighting with friends over water, and yet a wise old sage said: Water is not to be drank; it is to be fought over. [interjection]

Unfortunately, that—Mark Twain, oh, great. See? That shows you the university education versus somebody who got behind the plow too early. Nevertheless, it is true. We fight over water very quickly, and it is so precious that is why it happens.

Those of us on the Assiniboine going through 1988 and '89 are absolutely convinced that there is not enough water to do a diversion even though it is 20 cfs. There could be 150 running down the Assiniboine, and you think it is not very much, but even with 150 cfs, it is pretty difficult to get the water out of a big, wide river. There is not enough there to work at.

So even PFRA, in 1989, were bulldozing and digging to try to get the water to their pumping stations on the Allum, La Salle and Mill Creek, because the pumps were shutting off on low flows. The water was not getting there. Growers were digging holes in the bottom of the Assiniboine, digging channels to their pumps, because there was not enough water for them to be able to pump.

So even right now, without a diversion of any additional water, there is a shortage of water on the Assiniboine under severe conditions. That is the only time you have to be concerned, is when it is under severe conditions.

So I hope that we would see this government move in what I would consider the logical way. As I have mentioned before, and I would like to put on the record, in today's dollars, the Red River Floodway, part of the Shellmouth and part of the Portage diversion would be somewhere around \$300 million. If we take a look at rural Manitoba being 40 percent of the population, in realistic terms, we could spend \$200 million on rural Manitoba to do the reverse, to provide water.

Of course, in the '50s and '60s, the regime at that time was to get rid of water—we had too much—although they said, for \$9 million, they could have built, instead of doing the Portage diversion, the Holland dam in the early '60s; \$9 million was a lot of money then, but it is pretty small potatoes today. That is what happens if we do not have water. We have small potatoes.

So I really do encourage the minister to support us in our thrust and not have farmers fighting over water. We are concerned that as the Assiniboine River is low, we will see greater movement out of the Assiniboine Delta Aquifer, which is under Carberry, because it is what really supplies anywhere from 150 to 250 cfs into the Assiniboine River. After the water leaves Brandon, it is pretty low, but we pick up that sort of volume at Portage, which indicates that is the volume being supplied by the Assiniboine Delta Aquifer.

We have to also be cautious that we do not use the Shellmouth as a reservoir and forget about the original intent, for flood protection, and then cause damage to those people close to Russell or just downstream from the Shellmouth dam and cause them extra problems. As the minister might know, this year—and I do not criticize—the department officials of Natural Resources released a large volume of water out of the Shellmouth because the snow was on the ground, the snow pack was there, and had we had a normal melt, there would have been a lot of water running into the Shellmouth. As it turned out, at three and four degrees a day, the water melted very slowly and soaked in.

Now, they did have the other stroke of luck that there was a late snow which then added to the water and allowed the Shellmouth to be—seeing as it is within two and a half feet of being full at this point.

All I am saying in this case is that we are dealing with best guess, and that is not being critical of people. They have to best guess, but we cannot forecast the weather accurately, so we have to be very careful what we do.

* (1530)

One other area that comes under, I am not sure if it is Soils and Crops, but to do with labour and the Labour department—the labour side deals with our sector, so I guess it can appropriately be discussed here.

Ken Martens and Morris Deveson have been involved with us in our labour negotiations and working with the federal government in developing adequate labour source. Now, I do not know how busy those two gentlemen have been with other things, but today our labour situation in dealing with the federal government is chaotic, disastrous and just a mess. The federal bureaucrats have been, in my estimation, absolutely irresponsible in their approach.

We are talking about free trade with Mexico, and horticulture is one of the crops that will be affected first, yet they are trying to force wages up at high rates, faster than what is in the real world, more or less dictatorially doing this, putting severe restrictions on us in some of the dealings, and also with our day haul.

There is a large day haul from some of the Indian reserves to work in the vegetable fields, and there are some pretty good sources of labour from these Indian reserves. The federal government in the

past has put in a day haul program to pay for the busing. The employees had to pay part of it, but it was the federal government and employees that funded it. Now the federal government is saying, we are phasing this out, and if you, the farmers, do not pick up the slack over the next three years and pay for the federal share of the busing, then there will not be a busing program.

Well, there is only so much money in growing a crop, and we have to be more competitive with Mexico. It gets to the point where any money we might make will be paid in busing, so we might as well eliminate that crop. That leaves workers sitting on the reserve, drawing, now, welfare, instead of working and paying income tax, UIC and CPP benefits. So we do not see the value of the federal government, in their wisdom—orstupidity, whichever it is—that they are really affecting anything of an economic benefit for themselves.

But it is the continuous offloading, whether it be on the provincial government or whether it be on individual businesses, that is the problem we are having. The federal bureaucrats whom we have to deal with in Winnipeg are just absolutely impossible to talk to. It is their way or the highway. There is no way of even negotiating with them.

We might be forced this year to look to other sources of labour than what we had. That is unfortunate because we have had people working with us for many, many years. They, because of their distance from their work, which is about an hour and 15 minutes drive, cannot afford to pay for it, and the growers cannot afford to pay for it all alone. So we are caught in a Catch-22 in this situation.

I would hope that the minister, through his department, through Morris Deveson and Ken Martens, might get back and get seriously involved and try to get some resolve to the problem. This situation is coming up very quickly, where we will be needing these employees. Some of them are coming in now for the asparagus cut, but the big numbers come in when the other crops start to be harvested.

We will see a lot of Manitobans not working if some of these crops are cut out. Because of the economy, at some point in time, we grow it at least to break even, and preferably make a profit. But if you cannot do that, then you might as well eliminate that crop and eliminate the labour. So I would hope that the minister would be in touch with his

personnel and get them actively involved again to try to resolve the impasse that we think is there.

Mr. Findlay: Well, certainly, over the past period of time, officials have attempted to discuss with federal officials the situation as it was unfolding and the federal attempt to withdraw from the day haul program and changing some of the wage schedules that were being proposed from the federal government. We have written letters to federal ministers. We have not had what we would call adequate response from either of those two avenues at this point in time.

I can assure the member, we will continue to attempt to negotiate a better response from the federal people who tend to want to continually withdraw and have the grower or the employee paying the bills. I can assure him that we understand the problem. It is not a new problem, it has been ongoing, it is not getting any better.

We would hope that the objective has always been, you grow these crops, you create jobs. I would like to see the jobs filled by Manitobans to the best of our ability. I know that a lot of Mexican labour is used, too. It is good labour, it can be brought in and effectively get the job done. I am sure that they like the income they receive at the same time. We are aware of it and continue to work on it. We are not in control of it, and the federal response has not been very adequate at this point in time.

Mr. Connery: Just as a final comment, and maybe I do not know if the minister has shared some of this information with some of the staff, but I know staff read Hansard. Very quickly the other people know if I have made comment or not. It is all over the province, but that is good. If they are reading it, I would hope they would understand—and this is typical of the vegetable industry, so it is not our farm in particular, but I cannot talk about other people's business—on our farm we have a payroll projected for this year of \$1,100,000 from less than a section of land.

When you take a look at what we could do from an economic factor if we had more acres of land, instead of grain, growing diversified crops. There are a lot of others that do not have the same impact, but we are going to the extreme. Besides the income tax and the CPP and those sorts of taxes that are collected, \$300,000 off less than a section of land in terms that go to governments in one form or another. Those are very significant numbers,

and I use these numbers to indicate to staff that this industry and industries coming down the ladder all have a tremendous economic impact, so when we diversify out of the grains, that we get into something that creates a major, major economic activity, great labour people.

In the vegetable industry, it is not just strictly summer. We employ at least 30 people, 35 people year-round when you are packing and shipping all winter, so it is not just those temporary three-month jobs that everybody talks about. Some of them are, but there are some very long-term jobs. I would hope the department and the minister and the government would speed up or put more pressure or pay more attention to the diversification side of any crop that will return more income to the province through better value, and also to see if we cannot move to more processing of these crops, rather than shipping them out in the raw form, that they be shipped out in a processed form.

One of our growers in Portage has been shipping carrots through the year to Texas and they would pay a premium for the carrots because of the quality. These are people who are in the little carrot-stick business, the little pieces that people eat raw, and of course the flavour is so prominent in the raw form, you can really tell the difference. The carrot quality is so much better in Manitoba than Texas carrots that they would ship them from Manitoba to Texas when they have lots of carrots for their specialty markets. Those are the sorts of things that I think in conjunction with the Marketing Branch that we can develop a lot more markets out of there. I appreciate a lot of the things the minister has done for us and has reacted, and yet at the same time I am still soliciting a little more action where it is possible.

Mr. Findlay: Well, there is no question that there is always more to be done. I believe there is great opportunity in the vegetable horticulture area in this province. We have the soil, we have the climate, we certainly have the expertise on the part of growers. We have many quality products that we produce and learned how to produce and they increase the processing of them here in the province, and the success that has been had in the Minneapolis market has not been by chance or by luck. It has been because a quality product was put in there.

The other situation, of course, is timeliness. The buyer wants it there when he ordered it there, and if it is held up for two days or six days at the border,

that harasses the ability of the Manitoba grower to supply a market on a timely basis with a quality product. He has met one criterion, but he has been forced to fail in the other, so it is a substantive problem, but I do think that some of those problems are resolvable over time, and we will keep up the pressure. I can assure the member that I have raised this cross-border harassment on vegetables and pork at numerous federal ministers' meetings and everybody agrees, but the follow-up action through the Minister of Trade is not as strong as I would like to see happen.

* (1540)

We have also negotiated directly with the Minister of Trade, and they are not giving the kind of attention to the resolution I would like to see happen. So we will continue to work on it and, as I say, we constantly talk about the quality products that we produce and we do not bow our heads when talking about competing with anybody. We can do it very, very well. Just give us a level playing field and we will do very well.

The question of water and allowing the producers to have access to reasonably priced water is critical to our survival in the future, and it kind of appalls me at times when I see people that object to the proper management of water just for the sake of objecting. It is not going to be constructive for the province or the citizens of this province to not look at the use of water in a more objective and responsible fashion than what I hear coming from some quarters in this province at this time.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 2.(d) Soils and Crops Branch: (1) Salaries, \$1,984,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$682,800—pass.

2.(e) Technical Services and Training Branch.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in Salaries, the reason is given for the reduction of six head office, engineering, for various services which can be provided by the private sector. Can the minister indicate in what way is the private sector, and if it has been successful in having the private sector providing these services?

Mr. Findlay: A year ago in the last budget we reduced our staff component by five engineering positions. They left our employ in about December, I believe—October of '91, and in the past we have had employees who have moved from the department into the private sector. When we are

talking about drafting plans for buildings, whether it was hog barns or chicken barns, I mean, that has always been available in the private sector. Like, Lewis and Hodgins are two of the former staff members who are in the private sector now and doing a very good job. At least, they got their training with us and going out and using that training to earn a pretty good living, but we still have five engineers in the employ of the department, four in the regions and one in head office, doing this specific engineering work that the department needs. So the positions that we basically reduced are ones where the private sector has been performing in the past and continues to perform. Some of our employees are in that private sector performing those tasks.

Mr. Gaudry: You are saying that the five who were laid off or let go last October of '91 have taken jobs in the private sector or have gone themselves into the business of supplying this kind of services in the community?

Mr. Findlay: I am just saying that there are two people in particular we can think of who have gone over time. The five positions we removed, I can maybe get some clarification as to where they are at this time.

Of the five we referred to, the chief engineer is now relocated with the Department of Highways. Two technicians are both placed in other government departments. One position was vacant because the person who was in that position had gone to work with Hydro prior to the elimination of that position, and secondly, another one resigned and is working with private industry, and that is Mr. Booy.

Mr. Gaudry: Of the 33 staff that you have left in the department, were there any of those who were decentralized in your program of decentralization?

Mr. Findlay: In terms of the positions the member is referring to, none were decentralized in the past year, but we are in the process of moving three positions to Carman.

Mr. Gaudry: Have these employees agreed to relocate in Carman, or will you be looking at them being transferred to another department?

Mr. Findlay: Of the three, one position is vacant, one has agreed to go, and one has been redeployed to another government department.

Mr. Gaudry: The position that is vacant at this time, is it being advertised?

Mr. Findlay: It is not advertised at this time.

Mr. Gaudry: The one that is from the vacant position, has he been transferred to another department or has he quit?

Mr. Findlay: The position is vacant because of retirement about a year and a half ago.

Mr. Gaudry: You will be filling the vacancy very shortly or in the near future?

Mr. Findlay: We will be determining that in due course.

Mr. Gaudry: The other reduction of one entomology position, you are saying that the entomology unit will merge with the Soils and Crops Branch on June 15, 1992. What was the purpose of merging entomology with Soils and Crops?

Mr. Findlay: It was just deemed appropriate, that it would be more efficient to have all the pest control related people in one department, and it is more efficient for producers to communicate with those people, all in one branch of the department.

Mr. Gaudry: Yes, what happened to this one employee? Was he transferred to another department, or was he laid off with a severance package?

Mr. Findlay: He was offered another comparable position in Gladstone which he has turned down, and he is now on the Redeployment List.

Mr. Gaudry: Yes, in the Grants/Transfer Payments, there is a decrease of \$20,000. Is this because you foresee fewer requests in regard to grants and transfer payments?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, of the approximately \$20,000 reduction—I think it is \$19,000 to be exact that the member is talking about—\$14,000 is a reduction to PAMI, Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, and there was a \$5,000 reduction to agricultural society fairs. The money was transferred from a grant to a nongrant category but still used for agricultural societies.

* (1550)

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 4.(e) Technical Services and Training Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,466,300.

Mr. Plohman: There are a lot of issues that we have to go into, other areas. I note the member has asked, I understand, from talking to my colleagues, about the six head office engineering positions that

have been eliminated here, and that is the reason for the staff reduction, the primary reason.

Is there any further reduction planned in the engineering section, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, no additional reductions are planned at this time.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 4.(e) Technical Services and Training Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,466,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$958,900—pass; (3) Agricultural Societies \$421,200.

Mr. Plohman: Just a question. Are there any changes in there? I see the total dollars are the same. Have there been any reclassifications of grants within that or juggling, or is it basically that all ag societies are receiving the same amount that they did in the previous year?

Mr. Findlay: Agricultural Societies grants cover building grants which each ag society applies for. It usually runs around \$110,000. Fairs, prize money is usually around \$230,000; Keystone agriculture recreation centre in Brandon, around \$75,000; judges' grants, 4-H dinner club activities and memberships, Manitoba Light Horse Association, Agricultural Hall of Fame and other activities.

It is quite a long list. We can supply the member with the list of the various expenditures in all those categories totalling \$421,200.

Mr. Plohman: I was not thinking about the categories as much as the list of the societies that receive grants under this section and the total amounts that, say, the Dauphin Ag Society or the Grandview-Gilbert Plains ag society and so on.

I do not feel the minister, unless he insists on it, has to read these into the record. It is simply a matter of having that sheet with those, if it comes in a nice package, of a sheet which lists all of the societies which receive grants.

Mr. Findlay: Are you referring to building grants or fair grants or judges' grants? I will remind the member, there are a lot of ag societies, a lot of different grants. It varies from year to year, depending what they apply for, particularly in the building grant or what they qualify on a judges' grant, depending on what kind of prizes they offer in their fair book, so it varies.

Mr. Plohman: If the minister could just give us a list of all of the ag societies and the amount they will receive in '92.

Mr. Findlay: Okay, the list in '92. I guess it is fair to say that building grants have been decided, but for the prize money it will not be determined until after they have sent in their information, after the fair is held this summer. It will not be available for many months, so to clarify what the member would like.

Mr. Plohman: I would like to see all of the total grant that they get this year. If the minister cannot give us all of that at this time, then we will get it at a later time when it is completed. I would like it also compared with '91, so it would be clear as to whether '91 and '92 have any changes.

Mr. Findlay: Okay, basic, the total is the same for the two years, but we will break it down in what categories and what we can give, what is available at this time for the '92-93 years. Is that what you would like?

Mr. Plohman: Yes, compared to '91-92.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 4.(e) Technical Services and Training Branch: (3) Agricultural Societies \$421,200—pass.

4.(f) Marketing Branch: (1) Salaries \$368,300.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the minister has indicated a number of initiatives in this area in the additional information that has been provided, and of course we could go into all of those. I note it identifies an initiative to provide assistance in marketing activities in conjunction with marketing boards, producer associations and agriculture and food industries. I would like the minister to have an opportunity to elaborate on the action that he took with regard to the producers of potatoes for processing.

I understand the manufacturing producers, some 120 or so, had undertaken a vote I believe two years ago, perhaps it was February of '89. I think the minister mentioned that date in the House. They wanted to form an organization to deal specifically with the establishment of their agreement with such companies as McCain's and Carnation and so on. The information that I have received is that they had voted 68 percent in favour of having that. The minister refused to establish that mechanism. He calls it a price-setting mechanism. I alluded to it being somewhat in the form of a marketing board in that it had the function of negotiating as a collective

for the organizations. However, the minister may choose to call it something else and that is fine.

The principle is what I am concerned about, and I understand that 68 percent voted in favour. This minister did not approve of that agency being established, instead chose to—I understand here from the companies that were involved and perhaps assisted in some negotiations. In any event he says that they arrived at an agreement that was the best that they had up to that point and he feels quite successful about it, but that was not the point I was raising. I am sure the minister will elaborate on that aspect of it.

The point that we were raising was why the minister did not respond in a positive way to a democratic decision that was made by the producers of potatoes for processing?

* (1600)

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the potato industry in this province has grown very, very well over many years. There are people who produce for the table market and they are under the Vegetable Producers' Marketing Board. Processing potatoes that are grown under contract are not covered by the Vegetable Producers' Marketing Board, but any potatoes that are not grown under contract for processing tend to technically fall under the jurisdiction of the marketing board.

Processing potato producers have developed an industry over many, many years. Keystone vegetable association has been their spokesperson and has each year negotiated the contracts for the producers with the two processors, McCain's and Carnation.

I talked earlier about growth in this industry and water being one of the critical limiting factors. We have had growth, and I would like to see more growth. We have a world-renowned potato French fry produced in Manitoba, something to do with the climate and the soil and so on that gives it the special flavour, and we have been very successful in that regard. We have seen growth in the processing of potatoes here in the province. We have seen growth in production.

There was a point in time when there was a fair bit of frustration between the Keystone vegetable association and the processors with regard to prices and timing of setting that contract each year, somewhat similar I guess to the sugar beet growers

association in negotiating, on behalf of their growers, a contract with the one processor in this province. Negotiations always get fairly intense as the growing season gets closer and closer.

When the processors had to vote, that was because they were frustrated with the ability to finalize negotiations to their satisfaction. I had numerous meetings involving the growers and the processors, trying to get them to come together across the table so that they could both agree that the best contract was struck for both parties.

I did not think that a marketing board was a magical answer for either side, and as a result of that prolonged discussion over several months they did strike a two-year contract. That two-year contract is now up, and they have struck an additional one-year contract, to my understanding, to the satisfactions of all parties involved.

My interest in looking at it is to be sure that the two sides can effectively and properly negotiate with each other to the satisfaction of all concerned, and for me the satisfaction is to see the industry grow in terms of more production and more processing.

As a result of that discussion I think some of the antagonism that did exist between the processors and the growers association was reduced substantially, and at the end of the day there was no longer a need to, as far as I am aware, set up a marketing board for that process or price-setting structure because they effectively accomplished it in a negotiating process and have continued to be able to do that since that was done.

What the vote did was bring the issue to a head, and I intervened as an intermediary attempting to have a negotiated resolution so both sides understood each other. I think I was successful in doing that because, as I said, a two-year contract was struck and now a subsequent one-year contract has been struck and the industry continues to grow.

I will have to acknowledge there was considerable frustration there. We did the best we could to resolve it through a negotiation with all parties around the table, putting all the facts out on the table. I think the growers are satisfied in that process that the processors backed off some of their very strong demands that they had put forward initially. I think the discussion came to a reasonable, responsible conclusion for all concerned.

Mr. Plohman: Is the minister suggesting that had he agreed to the democratic decision of the

producers that would have led to further antagonism as opposed to a mechanism that could have worked quite nicely for the producers?

Mr. Findlay: My sense is that there was frustration between the two sides because maybe they had not talked things out adequately and properly. I had a sense that, if the marketing board was put in and the processors got upset with that, instead of expanding their processing here in the province, they may end up actually reducing it. We wanted to see the industry grow. I want to see more and more acres of processing potatoes in this province, because we have the producers, we have the soil, we have the climate and we have the water, over the Assiniboine Delta Aquifer in particular, in order to do this.

I was very clearly convinced that the heavy-handed approach would not lead to any positive expansion of that industry in the future, either in production or processing.

Mr. Plohman: Is the minister saying that the companies told him that they would cut back in their presence in the province of Manitoba, if he agreed to this mechanism?

Mr. Findlay: They did not tell me that, but that was the tone of the discussions in the early stages. We had the major players here from eastern Canada on several occasions. Several letters were written back and forth, and I think some of their strong demands or heavy-handed situations that they might have had on the table initially were withdrawn, reduced and modified to such that the growers felt that they could effectively negotiate across the table as relative equals for the two-year contract that was put in place and for the subsequent one-year contract.

And I say, it is no different than the sugar beet growers association negotiating for their growers with one processing company. I think, for the good of all involved, and its potential expansion and continued expansion of the industry, the right resolution was obtained, without one side feeling that the other side harmed them in an ongoing fashion.

Mr. Plohman: From the minister's perspective, I guess he feels the right decision was made because it was the one that he favoured.

I do not know how the minister could say that there could be a reduction in the presence—I mean the minister has made some pretty strong points about the uniqueness of Manitoba's climate and soils, soil

conditions, whatever it is that results in such good quality potatoes—water, soil, environment, climate—particularly for fries, I guess. Manitoba has that, and that would not be taken away because there was a marketing board set up for these producers.

The desire of McCain's and Carnation to continue to operate and expand in Manitoba is because they can make money doing it, not because they just love Manitoba, or because it is a nice place to live or to work or to establish. I believe we had something they wanted, and the minister can refute that if he wishes. I would like to hear him do so as to whether there was any real threat of a reduction in their presence. As a matter of fact, it is something that would have grown in Manitoba regardless of whether the producers had been able to get together in a stronger collective position for negotiating their contracts.

* (1610)

Mr. Findlay: It is my feeling that the producers have a strong negotiating position with the companies on an ongoing basis. We formalized that in a more positive sense than existed before the several months of negotiations commenced. Maybe that member would like to try, but you cannot force a processor to open his doors and operate here if he chooses not to. Even if he operates here, you cannot force him to buy Manitoba potatoes, and they were trucking in Alberta potatoes.

You cannot force things. The world just does not operate that way. Maybe his ideology is that you can force people; mine is not. You negotiate something that both sides can live with, and then there is harmony and then there is growth. That is the only way you are going to see development in this province. That is the way agriculture has been developed for many, many years, and it is a positive thing to see our commodities processed here. If you are going to start forcing people, you are going to end up with less activity here in terms of jobs, I can guarantee the member.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the reason the minister says he can guarantee it is—he is saying that these letters, which he has not tabled for our information, or shared publicly, were worded as such, and I am not going to ask him to table them now either. But I think it would be very interesting to see what the companies were saying in terms of the response to what the producers were wanting at that time. It would be something the minister

probably would be well advised to share if he wanted to make his position clear. I think what we are simply saying is that the producers would deserve or need an equal playing field with the companies. That is all they were asking. They were not trying to antagonize by having that vote.

The minister seems to construe that as antagonizing the companies and trying to shove something down their throat or force or dictate. I do not know why he arrives at that kind of an interpretation of them forming a board that would negotiate on their behalf. I cannot understand the minister saying that. He characterizes it as dictation and forcing these companies in a certain way. I think it simply would have meant that they would have been able to negotiate from a level playing field, from a position of strength. That was what they were looking for at that time.

As the minister understands it, what exactly were they asking for, and how did they intend to accomplish it with the results of their vote? What did they want to see happen as opposed to what the minister says is now happening?

Just before the minister answers, I understand they wanted a contract, like the sugar beet producers, before they plant. They wanted an early contract so they knew exactly what their contracts were ahead of time. Is that essentially what they wanted?

Mr. Findlay: Essentially what they wanted was a contract signed by a specified date or a process negotiation to go through various stages by specified dates, which has been accomplished.

Mr. Plohman: How was this accomplished, and how would it have been accomplished? How was it accomplished by the method that the minister preferred, since it has been accomplished, versus what would have been the established procedure under what the producers were asking for at the time? What is the difference?

Mr. Findlay: I can tell the member that there has been, I guess, confrontational situations happening in other jurisdictions. Alberta, we think it might have been in 1986 when the sugar beet company just shut her down for a year, and growers just had no place to sell their sugar beets. Obviously, they could not grow sugar beets in that year. The member might think he could force the company to stay open. It is just not something that can be done.

The same confrontational situations have evolved in Ontario in various ways. I do not know the specific dates that the member is asking for. If he wants, I can go back two or three years ago and get the specific dates he is looking for, but I can say the process that is now ongoing is being done in a much less confrontational atmosphere than existed at the time, and growers wanted to get into that less confrontational environment.

They felt that they were not going to get it unless they had the price-setting mechanism, the guidelines and an ultimate arbitration process at the end of the period unless certain things were not done. What we found was a mechanism where both parties could effectively negotiate across the table. On that basis, I am quite confident the industry can and will grow, whether we are talking potatoes or whether we are talking milk or whether we are talking hogs.

I have constantly worked with both sides in disputes and said that we have to be a partnership and work together, because the producer needs a processor and the processor absolutely needs a producer. If one party thinks he can operate without the other, then they are sadly mistaken. It is to neither side's advantage to get into a long prolonged harangue, that you better sit down and be able to negotiate your differences and have confidence in each other across the table. I have done that on numerous occasions with numerous commodities and, in every case, I think it is fair to report that we achieved success in terms of getting people to work in a much more conciliatory atmosphere on an ongoing basis. I think that is structurally sound for the industry as a whole.

I can go on and say, and as another example, it is unfolding in Ontario right now in eggs under CEMA. Our Ontario government is wanting to withdraw from the surplus removal program, because they decided it is not in their best interest to live with the agreement. So you can put a marketing board in place and have everything legally set up and then one player decides, oh, it is not in my advantage anymore. I am just going to pull out of certain components of the agreement.

So there is a legal challenge going on right now—CEMA charging Ontario with not abiding by the agreement, and Manitoba is going to support CEMA. If Ontario gets away with what they want to do and not fund the surplus removal program, that hurts Manitoba producers very, very significantly,

because a lot of our eggs go into the breaker market and not used for the table market.

So there is no way you can write everything in law and make everything work, but if you negotiate on an ongoing basis where there is a more co-operative attitude between the two sides, you can and will see things grow and prosper. That is the attitude that I prefer all the time. I do not believe in this heavy-handed jackboot approach that the member for Dauphin seems to think will work.

Mr. Plohman: You seem to have been in deep thought, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, on that. You did not even know that he had finished speaking.

The minister is talking about heavy-handed. I do not think he should equate collectivism when individuals get together to negotiate with a larger partner—if the minister wants to call it that—across the table, that because they take collective action that in any way means they are intimidated. That is an established procedure and legal procedure in Canada in labour, and it is similar in marketing boards.

* (1620)

I guess we get to some of the minister's hangups with marketing boards coming through now as he talks about this. I think that is really what we have been pointing to right from the beginning. I have always said the minister has some hangups with marketing boards. He does not truly support the concept, because if he felt comfortable with it, he would not have these hangups. So we have argued about this, and the minister will have a chance to rebut this.

We have had some difficulties with the minister's position with regard to GATT talks and his position with how he responded to the milk producers' petition or letter that they wanted the ministers to sign at the ministerial meeting regarding the support that they were asking for which all the provinces signed except Manitoba and Alberta. So when we go and we see an instance like this, then we have to wonder especially when the minister starts describing it in terms of a heavy-handed approach and dictating one to the other. That is not what was the case here.

What was proposed, as I understand it from the minister, was a legal arrangement whereby both sides would have to negotiate to certain deadlines. I think that is fine. They both can adhere to those

deadlines or those guidelines, and they do not have to sign any particular agreement. It does not dictate the conditions or what they have to agree to. It just says there are certain dates by which certain decisions have to be made. So I think the minister has simply rejected a formal procedure, and probably because of that vote, the companies involved decided, hey, we had better start to negotiate a little more straightforwardly with these producers because they are going to get together, and they did vote. So the minister bought them time by not going forward with this.

But, of course, with that idea over their head, now realizing the farmers who did vote in favour of a marketing board, perhaps that had more of an incentive for them to negotiate than any other single thing that happened at that time, because they know that may come up again if they are intransigent in their approach, or if they are not fair in their approach with the producers. So I think, in a way, even though the minister did not approve of the mechanism and the marketing board for the producers processing potatoes, they did accomplish some of their goals just by having the vote, ironically.

I am hopeful that this is not indicative of the minister's suspicion about marketing boards, because he certainly put on the record today that he is suspicious about how that procedure works, and he cited some examples, I guess, that he would say would be evidence that kind of legally binding arrangement just will not work, and he cited an example in Ontario, and perhaps one other.

Yes, there are always going to be cases where things are not working as smoothly, but look at the situation that existed here where the farmers also felt that they were not getting a fair deal prior to that vote. So the minister can cite all the examples he wants, but generally speaking, it is an accepted method of operation for producers in Canada, and it has served them well. I reject the minister's suspicion of the motives of producers under those circumstances when they do take that kind of collective action.

While the minister is seeking information on the answer to the question, I thought he could also maybe, just as a final question on this issue, let the committee know: How much of the potatoes that are processed by McCain's and Carnation in Manitoba now, are brought in from outside the

province versus what percentage were being trucked in prior to, say, '89?

Mr. Findlay: The member takes great liberty in the way he addresses things. At no time, today or anytime in the last three years, did I say anything about not approving the fact they had a vote.

I mean, he has taken great liberty trying to manipulate and twist what people say, and that is why confrontations occur, because of the approaches that member takes on a continuous basis. He always likes to manipulate and twist, to try to create controversy where controversy does not exist. It is a very significant misrepresentation of the facts when he does that sort of thing. I just really rather reject the way he approaches things.

In one thing, he is right. In that, if the processors do not negotiate in good faith, yes, the process can get started back up again. That is always available. But I point out to him what happened in Ontario, for one specific reason. The member says I do not support marketing boards; that is utterly ridiculous. Canada, Manitoba, all the provinces across this country, all the governments supported a balanced position in GATT, always have, never deviated from that. That member would like to twist the balance to his favour, but we believe in the balanced position for all producers in trade negotiations.

The reason I raise the Ontario situation is because, clearly, the Manitoba government, this Minister of Agriculture, has joined with the Natural Product Marketing Council, and the Egg Producers' Marketing Board of this province to legally challenge Ontario for what they are doing, because they are violating the agreement. I think that speaks fairly loudly that I support the marketing board and the principles that are in the Marketing Board agreement.

I do not support what Ontario is doing, trying to destroy the egg marketing board and the Canadian egg marketing agency. That is what they are trying to do. Because they have a greedy approach to how they now want to interpret things for themselves. They do not respect the agreement that was signed some several years ago for the good of the egg industry in this country.

The Minister of Agriculture in this province is on the side of CEMA suing the province of Ontario.

Mr. Plohman: I have another question, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. The question that I put on the record—the minister had not consulted with his staff

on it—but it was dealing with the amount of produce that was trucked in from outside the province for processing prior to '89 and since then and at this time, percentage-wise perhaps.

Mr. Findlay: We do not have specific figures at this time, but my understanding is that none was trucked in last year because it was a good production year. Generally what happens is in a poor production year, if they have sales for more French fries than what they can produce from Manitoba potatoes, they will truck it in. But we understand due to a good crop last year that did not happen.

That is why irrigation is so important to the potato industry, because the processor wants to make sales contracts, then he wants to have the product come in the front door on a timely basis, and without irrigation you cannot really guarantee that commodity coming in the front door. That is why irrigation is so critical and it is so important, to stabilize the production for all concerned, both the producer and the processor.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, while the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) is getting his bearings, I want to just follow up on that a little further. I am sorry, Ed.

The issue of irrigation, we met with the potato producers I believe two years ago when they were making proposals for further irrigation. What has developed there in terms of the expansion plans with Carnation and McCain's for Manitoba? Do they feel they can get a reliable supply at a much higher level than is currently the case, and are they in the process of making serious plans to expand their operations here in the province?

* (1630)

Mr. Findlay: The member talks about expanded processing capability. Carnation has gone through an expansion in recent years, and I am not aware that either has announced additional expansion. I do understand that Carnation is not operating at full capacity, and it is their desire to increase the acreage to achieve closer to 100 percent of their full capacity.

There would be around 40,000 acres in potatoes in the province but, as I said earlier, both processors are very eager to see more irrigation water made available to the producers so that the stability of the product coming in the door and the quality would be much more consistent, because, naturally, the quality of the product that they produce is dependent

on the quality of potatoes that they are purchasing from producers.

Mr. Connery: Just a comment, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think it was in January when Al Gascoigne, retired, who had been the director of the branch for I do not know how many years—could the minister tell me how long he was director and who is the director now?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Gascoigne retired at the end of December. He had been director of the Marketing Branch since 1977. Lasby Lowes is now the acting director. The position is being advertised.

Mr. Connery: I guess, as a producer and one who went on a lot of junkets and did a lot of things with Al Gascoigne—we have gone to Denver and Los Angeles, Minneapolis, attempting to sell Manitoba produce. I think that, as far as the industry goes and our industry, we would like to thank Al for all of the years of good work that he has done for us and wish him well in his retirement.

He retired very quietly. He did not want any fanfare and any to-do, but I think recognition should be given to Al for the years of dedication and the hard work that he did. He was a very pleasant person to work with. I enjoyed working with Al, and all of the times that he was there in the department—Burt Waters, who was also with the department and then went with the egg marketing board. So I think a word of congratulations and thanks to Al would be in order from the industry, and wish him well in his retirement.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Findlay: I certainly thank the member for those comments, because, clearly, he did do a good job. Sometimes we do not pay enough attention to how other people look at our staff. I could say, in Al's case, with many missions that came in here, particularly out of the southeast Asia area, mostly Japan, they had a tremendous level of respect for Al. Although he never really learned their customs or spoke their language, they had a respect for him that is hard to put into words.

I will tell the member, we did have a small retirement luncheon for him in the building here, with maybe about 10 or 15 people involved. He did not want any more involved because he wanted to retire quietly, but I also tell the member, he is now on contract with the department for a period of time, still working with the Japanese market for the

department as we move to fill the position on a permanent basis.

Mr. Gaudry: In the Activity Identification, it says: "Initiate, organize and participate in outgoing and incoming trade missions." It is anticipated for 25 foreign missions in 1992-93. Can the minister tell us how many were held in '91-92 and give us a brief outline of the results of these missions?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in '91-92 there were a total of 41 incoming trade missions hosted by the department, 10 from Japan, two from the Philippines, three from Mexico, two from Malaysia, one from China, one from Brazil, one from Britain, four from Thailand, two from Czechoslovakia, one from Korea, one from Romania, two from the U.S.A., one from Bulgaria, one from Italy, one from Algeria, one from Iran, two from Hong Kong, one from Egypt, one from Germany, one from Hungary and one from Morocco.

It is fair to say that the purpose of these incoming missions is to try to stimulate people to do business, buying food commodities in the province of Manitoba. Certainly a lot of them were interested in the Canadian Wheat Board. A lot of them were interested in pork, turkey, honey, pheasants, beef, chicken, buckwheat, breeding stock. Whether it is Burns or Schneider's or whether it is Western Beef, they do negotiate contracts and do make sales into these countries on an ongoing basis, but we try to, in the incoming missions, work as closely as we can with the people to make them feel comfortable about the quality of the product and the reliability of being able to supply the product they want to buy.

We also had seven outgoing trade missions, three to the United States, one to Japan, two to Mexico and one to Costa Rica. In comparison to probably other provinces, our involvement here is small, but I think it is important that we continue to do what we can in this direction to keep the door open for our various people in the processing and wholesaling area to do business.

As I said, I could give you the list of some of the things we sell; it is a pretty long list. Through the private trade, certainly lots of canola is continually sold to Japan, and we are working on many of the newer and smaller commodities, trying to access markets in those countries. It is always reassuring to hear them talk about what they think about us, because it is generally very positive. We tend to take a lot of the things we do for granted, and they see it as our having done a very good job, and

having a lot of confidence that we will continue to do that, in terms of the quality of the products, cleanliness, safety of our food products and our grading standards, grading reliability, shipment after shipment.

Mr. Gaudry: You say you have had 41 incoming, and this year you are anticipating 25. Why the reduction?

Mr. Findlay: You never know for sure. It is not a specific figure. That is just a ballpark figure. We cannot determine who is coming or how often they are coming, but if it is less than 40, I would be surprised.

Mr. Gaudry: Yes, and in activities again, it says to respond to enquiries for information and availability of Manitoba grown and processed agricultural and food commodities. What kind of enquiries come out in regard to availability, and what are the responses to these requests?

* (1640)

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, a lot of the incoming missions are coming here for the first time to see what we have. Staff take them around to the various processors, introduce them to various producer organizations, whether it is breeding swine, or whether it is pork or turkey or pheasant, or whether they are interested in canola or whatever it is. Some of it is repeat trips just to come and check us out.

One mission that comes in every year is the buckwheat millers' association from Japan, coming to inspect the crop, just to see it in the field and investigate it and just feel comfortable that we have produced the same crop. The Grain Commission supplies them with the various statistics that they want, and the Grain Commission goes over to Japan every year with technical information on the buckwheat crop, protein level, bushel weight, moisture level. They require a lot of information. They want a lot of detail, specifics, much more so than the average Canadian or North American buyer. What they are looking for is having some confidence that we are producing consistent quality commodities, whatever it is, and that we really do want to do business with them. They are quite outward-going in terms of coming to find out what they want to know.

Mr. Gaudry: Yes, in the provision of assistance and the development of new food products and processing methods, in '91-92 again, were there

any new plants or new development of new food products or new processing methods here in Manitoba or Winnipeg?

Mr. Findlay: Certainly, I would have to say one of the bigger areas of ongoing interest in terms of new processing is fresh chilled pork. The Japanese market, when I was over there in 1989, they were talking about fresh chilled pork. It seemed to be something they were interested in. Let me tell you, I went back in the fall of 1991 and that was the way they wanted it. They no longer cared to buy frozen pork and have it thaw on the shelf and then the water sitting in the bottom of the package. You know, over there they want to make everything look beautiful in the process of presentation of their food. So the United States and Denmark and Taiwan have been putting fresh chilled pork into the Japanese market. So you have a fresh meat commodity sitting on the shelves as opposed to a frozen one, and one does not look very good beside the other. The frozen one does not look very good beside the fresh.

There are two technologies. One is cryovacing and the other is—I just cannot think of what it is, but cryovacing is the best technology that allows you to maintain shelf life for four pork cuts for 42 to 50 days if properly done and transported in containers where it is climate controlled, the temperature does not fluctuate more than one or two degrees centigrade all the way between here and the dock in Japan.

We have been promoting the processors in Manitoba to look at putting that technology into their facilities. It is my hope that they will soon be able to have that technology at their disposal so that they can produce fresh chilled pork. The Manitoba hog board has been also talking and working with the processors to stimulate them to put that technology into their plants here in Manitoba so that we can export fresh chilled pork to Japan. It is my expectation that not too far down the road some test shipments can and will be done by one or more of the processors here in Manitoba, and that will improve our market penetration rather significantly in my mind.

Mr. Gaudry: Development of an information base incorporating videos for the use in market development activity—has it been used in '91-'92, or is it just going to be developed in this upcoming budget?

Mr. Findlay: Two videos have been done for vegetables, and a video on dairy breeding stock is being prepared.

Mr. Gaudry: What amount of funds have been set aside just for preparation of videos?

Mr. Findlay: No specific amounts of money have been set aside. We are trying to do videos, you know, the low-cost budget approach. There are various ways you can put them together. We want them to be informational along with other promotional material that we have or promotional material that companies have. It helps to sell our products and expose our potential buyers to what we can do here.

Industry, Trade and Tourism also has an interesting video they have put together on industry in total, and Manitoba has a few shots of agriculture in it. Those are good ways to expose people to what we have here.

Mr. Gaudry: No doubt they are good marketing tools. Why I was asking the question as far as the funds are concerned, I understand that the video that was prepared for elder abuse cost somewhere around \$200,000, and I know it is a good video, but I am just wondering if that cost is substantiated.

Mr. Findlay: We can do them for \$2,000.

* (1650)

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, diversification and industry development has certainly always been something of interest to me and certainly needs to be, in my view, expanded dramatically. I think we have an indication of what industry development can do in a given community and in a number of areas of this province. Specifically, I refer to the oilseed crushing industry, and what that has done for diversification in crop production as well as in employment opportunities in this province.

I believe that there are similar other initiatives that could be taken to develop the agricultural industry and the agri-food base and processing in this province. Can the minister tell us how many staff people he has working in his department on initiatives that could, in fact, enhance the opportunities through private entrepreneurial initiatives and the department, or whether they are considering partnership agreements between industries that are currently not operating in this province, but that could probably be enticed to operate in this province if, in fact, the province might be looking very positively upon using some encouraging types of initiatives such as Quebec,

other provinces and other countries have used at times to develop industries?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is quite a broad question, really. A lot has been done in the past and certainly the Visions for the 1990s document, a new blueprint for the department, certainly focuses a lot more intensely on the diversification, the value added and working with the producers and the private industry to promote opportunities. I have a list of a number of initiatives that are kind of ongoing in various ways and means.

We work with the Beef Export Federation which is Canada-wide and trying to expand market opportunities globally, particularly into the Pacific Rim. The Red Meat Forum is in place in the province of Manitoba and they have initiated a study of between \$400,000 and \$500,000 looking for niche markets, particularly in North America. The Forage Council, we work with them, and we are aggressively trying to find markets for forage processed in various ways, whether it is south or again, in the Pacific Rim or over into Britain. Our special crop specialists are working on various interests. The Food Processors Association has been formed in the province. It is basically people in the cottage industry area doing various bits of small food processing, want to get together and try to expand their penetration into the markets. We work with them. PMU operations, clearly there is an expanding and increasing opportunity there. Ayerst, in Brandon, we have been working with them exploring new and larger opportunities for their production and processing here in the province of Manitoba.

We are spread out on a lot of fronts, not only our local staff, our ag reps, but our specialists and our marketing people working on a lot of fronts to expose producers and work with producers and processors to find new opportunities and expand them. Whether it is a food item or a nonfood item, we want to expand the markets.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can you tell me roughly how many people you have working in market research and new crop production research, industry research, in that whole research area in your department?

Mr. Findlay: It is tough to put a figure on it, because a lot of people might put 5 percent of their time, or 10 percent, 50 percent of their time. So I would be guessing to say that overall we might devote—livestock, crops—whether we are talking 15

or 20 staff years. I kind of think it might be in that category, the bits and pieces of many people's time.

I can tell you that many of our staff are being involved more and more with the incoming missions, or on outgoing missions to expand their horizons and let them bring back to producers they deal with on a daily basis the information they pick up from incoming-outgoing missions. Again, it is a newer focus of the department, an expanding focus, and we are trying to get producers more actively involved, so they understand opportunities and bring the processors to the table too and work as a team, from production right through to the consumer.

Mr. Penner: The sugar beet industry is something that took a number of people many years to establish, in this province especially, and it was done largely in conjunction with some American firms and American interests to initially get the industry established here. There was a great deal of concern and interest in expanding the sugar industry during the war years, because of the unknowns of supply at that time.

I am wondering whether this province has any concerns in regard to the sugar-producing industry in this province right now and what action the province has taken to encourage the federal government to reassess their reliance on outside sugar or sweetener interests in this country as a whole, and whether we tried to make the case in Ottawa to encourage the federal government to rethink their position and encourage them to produce more sweeteners in this country and to set aside maybe a specific amount of sugar that needs to be produced in this country. Again, in relation to the fears that were prominent during the war years, not saying that I am hoping that we will enter that kind of an historical event again, but countries always should be vigilant of the fact that we are now virtually totally dependent on outside sugar interests for our sweetener industry.

I am wondering whether this minister has had any significant discussions trying to impress upon his counterparts in Ottawa the need to establish a sugar policy that would encourage the enhancement of our industry and the expansion of our industry, because the prairie provinces, specifically Manitoba, could contribute significantly to the expansion of that industry. The growers in this province are certainly interested in taking an

ownership interest in any new initiatives that could be encouraged in the sweetener industry.

Mr. Findlay: Clearly, the sugar beet industry is an industry that has grown because producers have taken charge of things. There is no question. You know, we had to beat the former government over the head to get them to enter tripartite which has stabilized the industry rather substantially—

Mr. Plohman: That will cost you now with the offloading.

Mr. Findlay: The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) does not seem to care that it has supported the sugar industry. Certainly, a national sugar policy is necessary for this industry. I have raised it numerous times with the federal minister. They agree in principle, but we never see any action. The member clearly knows the lobby, particularly in southern Ontario and Quebec, about the sweeteners and the sugar cookie manufacturers wanting the cheap sugar or the cheap sweeteners from outside Canada.

The federal minister has struck a special measures committee. The producers of Manitoba are on that. We expect them to report by the fall of 1992, with regard to the further development of this industry. I hope that it does lead to a sugar policy that allows us to grow here, but we do respect that there is opposition to it.

I am glad that the producers have taken such an active role in the past and continue to take an active role in the management of the tripartite program and being involved in a special measures committee.

I see our hand wavers are busy here now.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 4. Agricultural Development and Marketing Division (f) Marketing Branch: (1) Salaries \$368,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$293,100—pass.

4.(g) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$27,000—pass.

Resolution 9: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,698,000 for Agriculture, Agricultural Development and Marketing Division, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1993—pass.

The time is now five o'clock, time for private members' hour.

Committee rise.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. 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 Education and Training. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Order, please. We are on page 43, 5.(g) Student Financial Assistance.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Madam Chairperson, let me begin by asking the minister, there was a fair bit of information that had been discussed, or referenced I should say, the last time this committee met, and the minister indicated she would try to get some of it available. I know some will not be available until the end of next week, and we will have to simply wait till then to ask those questions, but the material, I am wondering if any of it is available right now.

* (1430)

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Chairperson, I do have a number of documents to table. There was some information which was requested when we were last in the Estimates process. I explained we did have that information available and it was at our student financial aid office, and so I have that information to table now.

The first piece of information is information regarding the special opportunity loans and the Manitoba government loans and the totals. We were asked for trends, and we have the years 1987-88, '88-89, '89-90 and '90-91 available for tabling.

We were also asked for information regarding Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program recipients studying out of province in the U.S. We do have that information, 1991-92. We have it categorized for the member by type of award including Canada Student Loan only, Canada Student Loan and loan rebate and to carry on through, Canada Student Loan post-graduate bursaries, and then further combinations, Canada Student Loan technical bursaries, and then combinations with those, and Canada Student Loan undergraduate bursaries. So I have those to table for the member.

I also have the information requested on bursary and student loan debts. There was a question regarding the accounts receivable, contingent

accounts receivable in the categories of special opportunity loan and Manitoba government loans. Then we also had a question regarding current accounts receivable and the categories for a total of accounts receivable and number of students. We have that information for 1989-90, 1990-91, '91-92 and the information as of April 30, 1992, for '92-93.

We also have information on this tabling of defaults, debts delinquent by over five months rounded to the nearest dollar. We also have on the same document, the time frame for repayment of all Manitoba Student Financial Assistance bursary loans or debts and the debt repayment time and also post-secondary award expenditures, again, for the period 1987-88, '88-89, '89-90, '90-91, '91-92, with totals, so that the trends are then available for the member. Again, it includes programs other than the Manitoba Government Bursary and loan rebates in that category.

I also have for tabling, the total Canada Student Loan value in the millions from 1985-86 through to 1989-90. I have that for the member broken down by province. Then I have Manitoba's position noted in a box on the tabling, and then I have the total for across Canada for, as I said, '85-86, '86-87, '87-88, '88-89, '89-90 and also the percentage of the total by province.

I also have, for tabling, information on the part-time Canada Student Loans. This will describe the information regarding the part-time Canada Student Loans with statistical information from June 1, 1991, to May 28, 1992. This involves information about the number of part-time Canada Student Loans, the total value of the part-time Canada Student Loans, the average award. We were then asked for information regarding the marital status of applicants, and we have that listed: single, married and single parents. We also were asked information on sex of applicants. We have that listed. We also have the applicants listed by age group broken down 18-24, 25-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-54, 55-60. We have also broken that information down on the number of applicants by institution, including the universities and colleges within Manitoba, also private vocational schools in Manitoba and then other institutions as they apply, with a total number of Canada Student Loans, total value and the average award available.

I also have, for tabling, the Canada Student Loan repayment schedule, which is set by Ottawa and enforced by the lending institutions, with information

regarding how the expected repayment is determined by the amount of the debt, the rate of the interest and the repayment term. I also have listed the maximum repayment term determined by and have listed the details. Then I have also listed a schedule regarding payment and principal and term and interest rates and then information regarding the average debt load by level of study which was requested for the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance recipients. I have that broken down in certificate, diploma, the two-year program, a Bachelor's program, three-year program, a Bachelor's program for the four-year program, a Master's program, five years, and the Ph.D. program.

I also have for tabling designation information that was requested on the Maharishi International University and the Flanders Footcare and the Old Masters Institute of Photography. Information was requested about the designation of these particular institutions. So I have the information regarding their accreditation and what was submitted during the process of accreditation, a background on what this institution or school provides as a program of study, the levels of degrees offered, the provinces who have also designated these institutions and information regarding the level that the students would be applying for a program.

I also have, for the member, to table today, a table of the level of study by gender in the program year '89-90, '90-91, '91-92. The information requested was for the number of males and females registered within certificate programs, diploma or associate diploma programs, Bachelor, Bachelor Honours, Master's and Pre-Master's, the Ph.D. program and the associate degree program. So I have those numbers and also a representative percentage of those numbers to table.

I also have to table information regarding the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program, Canada Student Loan applicants by age for the program years 1987 through 1991, have that broken down by age categories 25 and under, 25 to 34, 34 to 70, again, for those years with the numbers of students and also the percentage. I have information on the Canada Student Loan applicants by gender, by group types for the program years '86 through '91, and the group types requested were the single, married, common-law and single parent, those in real number and also percentages.

I also have to table information from the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program average awards by program years which were requested. The years are '86-87, '87-88, '88-89, '89-90, '90-91, '91-92. We were asked for trends regarding this information and we are able to provide the trends for those years, a six-year period. We have information regarding the average Canada Student Loan, the average Manitoba Government Bursary and the average loan rebate.

Then we have that information also broken down by those same six years, in that same six-year period, for single students by program years. Then we have married students for program years, and we also have single parents by program years, so a list of trends and specific information.

I also have information regarding the tuition fees. These I will simply read into the record. I will not be tabling the tuition fees for the Bible colleges, but I do have the information. The request was for the tuition fees for Providence College \$2,980 per full-time student, Canadian Mennonite Brethren \$1,950 per full-time student, Canadian Nazarene College \$3,200 per full-time student and Mennonite Brethren College \$2,150 per full-time student.

* (1440)

I also have information for tabling on an analysis of the temporary staffing at Red River Community College which was requested. In the 1991-92 fiscal year, a total of 288 staff were employed against our temporary budget. This consisted of 19 full-time positions for one year, 149 full-time positions for less than one year ranging from 0.2 weeks to .40 weeks, and 120 part-time staff. An increase of 28.27 temporary SYs for the 1992-93 fiscal year will result in the hiring of 25 full-time positions for one year and approximately 22 full-time positions for less than a one-year term. Part-time staff includes food services, cashiers, food service workers as well as various other part-time instructors.

Madam Chairperson, I also have information regarding the private vocational schools in Manitoba. Several documents have been prepared to be tabled for the Education and Training Estimates for 1992-93. They are, first of all, the application for registration as operator of a private vocational school; secondly, private vocational schools registered for 1992; private vocational schools enrollment statistics for 1989 to 1991; private vocational schools offering truck driver training, qualifications of teachers at private

vocational schools, the teacher declaration form, the Foundation Learning Centre, information regarding that school, and private vocational schools grouped by course and program offering.

Madam Chairperson, I believe that is the information that has been requested. I feel that it is important to note that that information was available and was put together for the members in the order that they had requested it for their understanding and to meet their questions in a very short order. I am pleased to be able to table it today.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I will resist the urge to say, is that all there is? I suspect I have many solid days of reading ahead of me before we meet on Monday to discuss the contents of it. I would like to thank the minister and the department. This department has been very quick to respond and very efficient in their response, and I appreciate that because we may find once I have had an opportunity to review the documents that it will remove the necessity for a whole range of questions.

I would like then to move on in this question of Student Financial Assistance. I think the minister, in the discussion that took place the last time we met, was quite forthcoming about her discussions with the federal minister and Manitoba's position. I said then that the minister deserves some congratulations for the positions that she had taken, raising questions about some of the policy suggestions by the federal government, things such as increasing course-load requirements and their continuing refusal to raise the support levels, et cetera.

I think the position, if I can paraphrase the minister, was that Manitoba wants to see a larger number of students taking advantage of post-secondary education and feel that this program is one of the major supports for that. I would like to delve into that a little bit in this session.

The central concern that gets raised when you talk to students about this program is the very low level of the support that is allowed. We have talked about the support levels, the basic support levels not having been improved upon since 1984 on the federal side. There was some improvement allowed on the provincial side in 1986, but as it turned out, the former government only brought their bursary support levels up to the federal government level, that they had been lagging behind that. Since then, the basic support level has remained virtually

unchanged other than in areas such as fees and books and I believe there was an adjustment made for transportation.

As a result, we have seen I believe an increasing number of students come under an increasing amount of pressure as they attempt to deal with the realities of having to put food on the table as well as undertake a course of studies.

I am wondering if the minister can just explain to me why such an obvious problem—I mean, certainly the minister is aware of the ravages that inflation will inflict upon fixed incomes. She is aware of the tremendous levels of inflation we have had over the last eight years since these levels were frozen. I am just wondering, I am curious as to why the province has not acted to ameliorate this in some fashion.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, well, I would like to begin by reading into the record the expenditure level in post-secondary student assistance over the past few years, so that I can outline for the member some of the increase: 1986-87, the level of expenditure was \$6,764,200 and in 1987-88, the expenditure level was \$7,420,000, an increase of \$656,000. Then in 1988-89, \$7,198,000 in that year, a decrease of \$222,000, but then in 1989-90, the total expenditure was \$8,745,000 for an increase of \$1,546,000. In 1990-91, the total expenditure was \$9,180,000 for an increase of \$435,000; 1991-92, the expenditure was \$10,490,000 for an increase of \$1,310,000. The decrease in the one year, 1988-89, was due to less claims of previous years' loan rebate commitments. Basically, from 1986 to 1992, the increase to post-secondary students was \$3,726,000. The average yearly expenditure increase is 9.4 percent, and the average 9.4 percent increase is meant to cover increases in tuition and living costs. This year, in 1992-93, the increase to post-secondary assistance is \$615,000, for a 6 percent increase.

* (1450)

The member has asked why we have not done very much, in his mind, and I think he has perhaps not maybe known or paid attention or been informed about some of the initiatives that have been put forward, so I would like to let him know what those are.

In 1991-92, we increased the budget expenditures to allow for consideration of actual tuition, books, supplies increases. At the Manitoba universities the increase was 15 percent and at the

community colleges, a 12.2 percent increase. We increased the local transportation allowance of Groups 1 to 4 students in recognition of the increased costs of a bus pass. I think that is a very significant recognition of the local issues. Also, we increased the merit award exemption from \$300 to \$600. We increased the study period, room and board allowance of Group 3 students, Group B, single, independent, living with parents, from \$25 per week during the study period to \$38 during the study period. We also increased the maintenance allowance for single parents by 3 percent, and for those students who worked part-time to supplement their Student Financial Assistance, an exemption from earnings of \$75 per week times the number of weeks in the study period was allowed on income earned during the study period. The Canada Student Loan exemption is \$50 per week.

Then, in 1992-93 we continued to allow the actual cost of tuition, books and supplies in the assessment of financial need. We have increased the local transportation allowance for Groups 1 to 4 students, again in recognition of the increased costs of a bus pass. We have increased the allowable daycare cost from \$57 per week to \$100 per week. We have increased the study period room and the room and board allowance of the Group 3 students from \$25 per week to \$38 per week during the pre-study period.

I think those certainly indicate a continuing contact and recognition of the situation that students are in as they are attempting to finish their post-secondary training, and also a recognition by this government that we want to encourage that kind of training to be completed.

I also think, when the member has a chance to review the information which has been tabled on trends and on debt load, he will also find that there has been no significant increase in debt level over the past five years.

In relation to the Canada Student Loans Program, we have spoken of my continual discussion with the federal government and the three areas in which we have been told that there would be some consideration, and I have been pressing for consideration in the area of the allowance level, the weekly loan limit and in the area of parental contributions.

I believe the province is doing its part in attempting to make post-secondary education accessible, and we will continue to press the federal

government for its role in making post-secondary education accessible.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I appreciate the minister for taking me through that list. I do have those figures, but it is always nice to review them.

Perhaps the minister, though, having started us on this sort of historical perspective, could start back at '86-87 and tell us what the basic level of support was allowed by the federal government in that fiscal year.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would like to remind the member that this is the Estimates discussion of the budget for the Department of Education and Training for the Province of Manitoba. He is asking for information on the Canada Student Loans Program, which is provided by the federal government.

Mr. Alcock: I appreciate the minister pointing that out to me.

The fact is that the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program bears a relationship to the Canadian Student Loans Program, and that is referenced in the Objectives, Activity Identification and Expected Results of this particular division. I did not start these questions back in '86-87. It was the minister who did. So I am simply asking her to expand upon the point that she has already raised.

I would like to know, what was the room and board amount allowed for each one of the fiscal years that the minister has referenced in relationship to her discussion of the total amount available for Student Financial Assistance—'86-87, '87-88, '88-89, '89-90, '90-91, '91-92 and '92-93?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the figures that I referred to were the provincial expenditures from 1986-87 onward. They were provided for the member because in the past few sittings he has been, as has the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), very interested in the issue of trends. So we have provided the information for him in anticipation of his concerns and questions regarding our provincial commitment.

But he is asking a question that relates to a federal commitment. I would say to him that the information for 1986-87 which I provided him was our provincial commitment.

Mr. Alcock: Again, I thank the minister for that clarification.

Then, perhaps the minister could tell me: What is the provincial allowance for room and board in '86-87; '87-88; '88-89; '89-90; '90-91; '91-92; '92-93?

Mrs. Vodrey: I will remind the member that we are debating the Estimates for the Department of Education for 1992-93. We are not debating the Estimates for 1986 and onward; however, if this would be of help to him, I do have to table for him now the Student Financial Assistance allowance levels for 1992-93.

Mr. Alcock: The minister was not the least bit shy about tabling the total information for the Student Financial Assistance Program for the years '86-87; '87-88; '88-89; '89-90; '90-91; '91-92; '92-93. So why is she afraid to table, or to read into the record, the room and board support level for each one of those fiscal years?

Mrs. Vodrey: The issue is, this is the Estimates for the Department of Education, 1992-93. I have provided the member with the information for 1992-93. If he wishes the information from Estimates past, then we will certainly have a look to provide it for him.

* (1500)

Now I have been informed that Canada Student Loans have not changed allowance levels, but Manitoba has at various times increased its allowance levels. We will table the information on current levels, and we would be pleased to discuss its relationship to the 1992-93 Estimates.

Mr. Alcock: I wonder if there would be a willingness to recess then until that information is tabled.

Madam Chairperson: Was the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) posing the question to the honourable minister, or to the committee?

Mr. Alcock: I will start with the committee.

Madam Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to recess until such time as the requested information by the honourable member for Osborne has been supplied by the minister?

Mrs. Vodrey: No willingness at all. As I have said to the member, we are here to debate the Estimates of the 1992-93 budget year, and we are here prepared to do the work that Manitobans are expecting us to do in that debate. We are not willing to recess at this time to table information from Estimates approximately six years ago.

Madam Chairperson: My understanding is that leave has been denied for the recess.

Mr. Alcock: I am not at all surprised that the leave has been denied. I am sure the minister, while she is quite willing to selectively release certain information that goes back a particular distance, is not prepared to release other information because she knows what that information will show.

That information will show that this program and this particular government has been doing very little to bring the support levels for students up to an acceptable level. What they have indeed been doing is putting more and more pressure on students in a couple of ways. One is by increasing student fee rates at a rate well above the rate of inflation and well above the support levels to the colleges and universities.

They have been putting more and more responsibility for the support of these organizations on the backs of the students and at the same time, they have been creating greater and greater difficulties for students as they attempt to find a place to live and put food on the table, and at the same time do their studies. The only thing the government has proffered to them, is to allow them to work a little more. That is simply not an acceptable action on the part of the government that says that it really wants to see more and more people availing themselves of post-secondary education. The paradox, or the hypocrisy, is apparent in both the words and the actions of the minister.

Now, I would also point out to the minister that we are not here to debate the Estimates of Education and the post-secondary division of Education, we are here to discuss them. This is a point in the process of Supply, where departments come before the Legislature and they are questioned on their intentions relative to the amounts of money which they are asking this Legislature to approve, because at the end of this process, there will be an approval, a passage, and an acceptance of the amount of money that is put forward in the Estimates.

I think it is the Finance minister himself who has spoken at great length about how this is one of the most important activities that a government undertakes, and how it is important to put before the people of the province the facts about the spending that they are undertaking on behalf of the people of the province.

The fact that this minister is unwilling to do so, I think is unfortunate. Because, I think, we have at times been able to have a decent discussion about the policy structure that underlies this. I am asking this government and this minister a very simple question, frankly, and that is, why it has not seen fit to bring the room and board levels up to an appropriate level, so that students who are availing themselves of these bursaries and loans can live in the manner that allows them to undertake a course of studies and be successful, rather than forcing them into ever-increasing levels of poverty and putting them under greater and greater pressure, which mitigates against proper study?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am certainly willing to talk about the room and board levels for 1992-93, the information which is available, and in fact, if the member would look at the information which I tabled, I have already provided for him. So, certainly, there is a great willingness on this side of the House to discuss the issues which are at hand, and to provide the member with the information for this current year, which I believe is the year that students within the province of Manitoba are particularly interested in.

For his information, 1992-93 allowance levels, room and board, Groups 1-4: Group 1 ranges up to \$38 per week, depending upon the parental income and family size; Group 2, to \$106.50 per week; Group 3, \$53 per week; and Group 4, \$106.50 per week. Local transportation bus pass, \$10.20 per week; miscellaneous expenses, \$28 per week; and tuition, books and supplies, the actual as reported by the institution.

In addition, and by the way, Madam Chairperson, again, for the record, I would just like to remind the member that I tabled that information at the start of Estimates sitting today. So that it is completely clarified, the information I am prepared to table and to discuss in this House, I would also like to give the member some additional information.

Manitoba provides the highest level of financial assistance to dependent and independent students. Single, dependent students living away from home, the amount of money provided by Manitoba, which is No. 1 across Canada: \$10,710. The assistance to single, independent students—again, No.1 in Canada—the greatest financial assistance: \$10,710. Manitoba is first overall for maximum financial assistance available to married students with or without dependents. Married students with dependents: again \$10,710, the No.1 in Canada.

Manitoba, also, in terms of its support to single parents: \$10,710. Most of the provincial financial assistance available in the three other western provinces, I would remind him, is in the form of loans, which are repayable, whereas Manitoba's is in the form of a bursary which is nonrepayable.

Mr. Alcock: I realize, of course, that this is a new minister, so she may not be familiar with some of the processes that take place in the House. The information that she tabled is still in the process of being delivered to the other members of the House, so it is not quite the case. Of course, she is unwilling to give members any time to review the information she provides in the hopes that somehow she can slip this stuff through without proper review.

However, I do have right here in my hands—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, on a point of order. The member asked me for the information. He then said that he was willing to adjourn until he got the information, which says to me that then he was prepared to carry on as soon as he received the information, so he has received it now.

Mr. Alcock: On the same point of order, Madam Chairperson, I did ask for a recess to allow us time to—no, I did not, I am sorry the minister is right—prepare the information that is lacking thus far. But I am prepared to proceed right now with this particular piece of information that I have before me.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. There was not a point of order.

* * *

* (1510)

Mr. Alcock: To finish my question, Madam Chairperson. It is interesting that the minister indicated before that, of course, we were debating the Manitoba Government Bursary Program and there was no relationship between that and the Canada Student Loans Program, and yet, it is odd, basic married allowances there, Canada Student Loan, \$256; Manitoba Government Bursary, \$256. Group 8, \$200; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$200. For dependents, zero to 11, Canada Student Loans allowance, \$36; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$36. For dependents, 12-15, Canada Student Loan Program, \$54; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$54. For dependents, 16-plus, Canada

Student Loan allowance, \$65; Manitoba Government Bursary, \$65. For dependents, 18-plus, not in school, Canada Student Loan allowance, \$10; Manitoba Government Bursary, \$10.

Group 5-7, with parents, Canada Student Loan allowance, \$175; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$175. Group 5-7, subhousing, Canada Student Loans, \$221; Manitoba Government Bursary, \$221. Group 8, with parents, Canada Student Loans, \$119; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$119. Group 8, subhousing, Canada Student Loans, \$165; Manitoba Government Bursaries, \$165.

It is an odd kind of correlation there. I realize this may simply be just happenstance, and that there really is no relationship, as the minister has stated, between the two, and that we should only focus on the one. But I would like to ask the minister when I do note up in the—there are some variations. There are indeed some variations. We are lock step with this program, not above it, but lock step with it until we get to the area of, it looks like the Group B, at home, where the Canada Student allowance is \$53, the Manitoba Government Bursary allowance is \$38. What is the reason for the difference?

Mrs. Vodrey: Well, this certainly again allows an opportunity to discuss concerns of the federal government offloading onto the province. We do recognize that the level of the Canada Student Loans Program does present some difficulties, and there has been no federal increase in allowance level or in total program expenditures. Therefore, this increase is passed on to the provinces. It is important for us to make sure that the federal government in fact does accept its portion of the responsibility. The honourable member has said that he is quite interested in adding his support to that expectation that the federal government will accept its responsibilities.

Now, in terms of students living at home, yes, it is based on the expectation that students living at home do have lower costs and are sometimes assisted by their families.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, so the difference between what is allowed by the Canada Student Loans Program and what is allowed by the Manitoba Government Bursary Program, that difference between the \$53 and the \$38 in the first instance or in the living allowance, the \$76.20 to the \$38.20, or in the Group B at home, the \$91.20 to the \$76.20, in all cases, it is because the provincial

government has determined that, unlike the generosity of the federal government, students require less than the federal government has determined?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, again, I would like to remind the member that ours is a three-part financial assistance program to students. The first \$105 is the Canada Student Loans Program. The next \$105 is the Manitoba Bursary Program and then the next \$105 is the Manitoba grant or loan rebate program. As the federal government has capped the weekly loan limit, then that pushes the cost onto the province.

But I will remind the member again that what this province provides is a bursary system, and that bursary system then does not increase the student's debt load. I think that is important, where we look at other provinces that provide a loan and not a bursary program.

I would also remind the member that we have had a 9.4 percent increase in the past six years. I think that within this province and within our financial means we have been making a serious attempt to help students at the post-secondary level. I wonder if the honourable member would prefer a loan system.

* (1520)

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, a loan system—to respond to the minister's question—is not the only option. Some provinces, notably the province of Ontario, has a bursary-first system so that the loans are used to top up.

The question, though, is—and the minister has said within her comments that the government is attempting to do what it can within the context of the resources available, and in doing so the government has made a series of choices. It has made decisions. It has been faced with questions and it has made decisions. One of those decisions has been to not raise the basic living allowance. I am simply asking the minister, why?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, we have been negotiating with the federal government for improvements to the Canada Student Loans Program, and I have been speaking about what we would like those improvements to be again today. Some of the changes that we have been asking for are changes in the weekly loan limit, changes in the rate of student allowance, changes in the parent contribution table. We are hopeful that these

changes will occur. We have not been given a timetable or an assurance of when or by how much, but we are hopeful that these changes will occur, we hope as soon as the '93-94 school year.

For the member's information, I will be meeting with Mr. de Cotret, the Secretary of State, on Monday of next week. I will be raising this issue with the Secretary of State again. I would also remind the member that we have provided an increase to post-secondary student aid in this province, but we will not accept continued federal offloading, and that is why the representation to the federal government would be very important. Also, in Ontario, which the member referenced, for his information Ontario cut their student aid budget by \$100 million for '92-93.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I think I will have to just ask the minister one thing, as she has raised this information that she is meeting with Mr. de Cotret, I trust that meeting will be taking place in the morning of Monday here in Manitoba. Is there some possibility that the government will need leave in order to shift the Estimates debate which I believe was scheduled for Monday, away from Monday? I would certainly be prepared to give leave and to accommodate the minister, because I would love to see her attend that meeting. If I understand the minister—that is a question perhaps the minister can reference when she responds to this, just so I can prepare my House leader for that question from the government House leader.

The question I am interested in here is this question of the basic living allowance. If I understand the minister correctly, what she has said is that she believes, or her government believes—whichever—that the basic living allowance is too low and they have been pressing the federal government to address that issue. Is that what she has been saying?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, yes, there is a recognition that the student allowance is low and that it has not been increased and it is only with very careful budgeting that then that allowance is adequate, but as I said, it does require very careful budgeting, and there is a concern that it has not been increased for some time.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, so the minister then has been pressing the federal government in these various meetings and when the group of ministers meet to raise the weekly allowance?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, yes, as I have said many times during this Estimates discussion, I have been pressing the federal government to raise that student allowance.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I wonder if the minister would be willing to table copies of correspondence or presentations that have been made to the government by herself on this issue of the weekly allowance.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, no, my discussions with the federal minister have been face to face. They have been through the Council of Ministers of Education, my meeting with the federal minister in Ottawa and a meeting which I will have face to face with the federal minister in Winnipeg.

Mr. Alcock: So there is no record of this energetic advocacy on the part of this particular government with the federal government. It is unfortunate that does not exist.

Is there a requirement, is there some legal inhibition that would prevent Manitoba from raising its allowance?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, no, there is no legal prohibition against that. However, we do have limited resources within this province, and within those resources we have provided an average increase of 9.4 percent, as I have discussed with the member. We have looked at increase in other areas of needs in this province.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I am pleased that the minister references that. I would like just to take a moment though to explore how this works, if I understand it correctly.

In the first instance, the government offers an increase in support to the universities that is well below the rate of inflation and well below the support rate for contracts that the government has allowed the university or supported the university as they have entered into them, thereby putting the university under an enormous financial pressure.

The government then covertly supports the university while it raises fees to students in the double-digit ranges, 15, 16, 20 percent.

Then the government graciously increases the loan rate to include those raises so that it can comfortably shift the cost of supporting the universities off the general tax revenues and onto the backs of the few students who avail themselves of these programs.

Then the government can stand up and say, well, look, we offered this very large increase in the Student Loans Program. But the reality is, day to day, week to week, the people who are trying to find a place to live and put food on the table are having an increasing difficulty, because the basic weekly allowance for room and board has not been increased for eight years.

Now, the minister has said, not demonstrated—she has said that she is advocating on behalf of these poor students because she believes the weekly allowance is too low, but when faced with the opportunity to increase the weekly allowance—and she has indicated there is no prohibition—she has not done so. I would like to ask the very simple question, why not?

* (1530)

Mrs. Vodrey: First of all, the bursary program, as the member knows, is a supplemental program. We have made significant increases to this program each year as I have been describing this afternoon. Manitoba's support is affected by the federal government and the federal program. We have looked at increasing our support in other areas. Now, the loan limits, as we have been discussing, do need to be addressed. We are asking that those loan limits be addressed by the federal government. In terms of tuition fees, as the member knows, all of the tuition increases, tuition fees are recognized as an eligible cost to the student's support, and I have tabled information today which showed that the average debt load has not increased significantly in the past five years.

So, I do not believe, Madam Chairperson, that we have any need to apologize in this province for our support to post-secondary education, because I believe we have taken our support to post-secondary education very seriously indeed.

Mr. Alcock: I believe, Madam Chairperson, that a wise person once said that the proof of the pudding is in the tasting, and the tasting that the students are getting in this province is quite bitter. In fact, they have shifted a great portion of the burden of supporting colleges onto the backs of students. That is a policy of this government, not the former government, and I think that is something that this government can address.

I asked the minister a very simple question. The minister, herself, has said that the weekly allowance is too low. Now, we are talking specifically about the

allowance for room and board. She has said that it is too low; she has said that she is pressing the federal government to increase it; she has said that the supplemental support that they provide is not tied to the federal government, they are not prevented from increasing their support. So I asked her the question, why has she not increased the weekly support provided under their supplemental program to ensure that students have a decent standard of room and board?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, again, I offer the member the answer that I have been consistent in offering him all afternoon while we have been together, that I have said that I believe that the weekly loan limits are low, the student allowance is low, that we in Manitoba are examining ways to assist students in Manitoba all the time. We spend a great deal of effort and thought and take very seriously the position of post-secondary students in Manitoba.

However, I have also explained to the member that it is important that the federal government also examine its share and its position; and, in concert with my officials in the department and my counterparts across Canada, we have been pressing the federal government to improve its position, to improve its support to students. Our additional support, as I have explained to the member, does go into bursaries.

I have read into the record, for his interest, where in 1991-92 we increased our support in the area of budget expenditures to allow for the consideration of actual tuition and books and supplies. We also increased the local transportation allowance of Group 1 to Group 4 students. We increased the merit award exemption from \$300 to \$600. We increased the study period room and board allowance of Group 3 students. We increased the maintenance allowance for single parents by 3 percent. For students who work part-time to supplement their assistance, the exemption of earnings from \$75 per week was allowed on income earned during the study period.

Then I also referenced, for the member's interest, the changes which we have looked at and have made for 1992-93, including the continual allowance of the actual cost of tuition. Again, the member references the issue of tuition, and I raise it for him in our consideration as a government; also the actual costs of books and supplies and the assessment of financial need.

Again I reference the increase in the local transportation allowance for Group 1 to Group 4 students. I also reference the increase in the allowable daycare costs from \$57 per week to \$100 per week; again, increase the study period room and board allowance of the Group 3 students.

It is very important that this province has put forward a strategy, and that if we raise the weekly loan limits and the federal government does not, then there is an offloading by the federal government. A better strategy would be to add our support increases to the other areas and then to work jointly with the federal government on the issue that they are primarily responsible for. That is exactly the process that we are engaged in right now, that is, to work with the federal government to press them and to encourage them to assist in the weekly loan limits while we as a provincial government put our support in other areas, in our bursary program.

* (1540)

Again, I have information for the member on the Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program. The average awards by program years: The average Manitoba Government Bursary has gone from, in 1986-87, \$1,551 to the 1991-92 level of \$2,166. The average award for single students in the Manitoba Government Bursary category, from 1986-87 when it was \$1,121, has now risen to \$2,035. The average award for married students in the Manitoba Government Bursary category in 1986-87 was \$2,264, and in 1991-92 it is now \$2,685. The average loan rebate for single parents has moved from \$1,534 to \$2,505.

So I think that information certainly rejects the argument that the honourable member has been putting forward. It certainly shows, in a very concrete way, a commitment of this government, in terms of where it puts its money and increasing the money that it puts in, and also in a constant recognition of the needs of the post-secondary students, and also in a recognition of the federal government's share of the responsibility, which they have committed to and which we would like to continue working with them so that they meet that responsibility.

Mr. Alcock: For a person who did not have the list the minister was reading from in front of them, they would not have caught this, but in fact the minister did change the line she read back when she was talking about Manitoba Government Bursary

awards. The average award for single parents by program years from 1986-87, the average Manitoba Government Bursary was \$2,400 in '86-87 and then there is \$2,462. That is less than a 2 percent increase over six years and is exactly the kind of problem that we are referencing.

I would ask the minister this though: On the average Manitoba Government Bursary lines that she read out I would love to see those lines recalculated taking out the increases to tuition and books, because all the increases to tuition and books, tuition in particular—I will leave the books because the government does not control the costs of the books. The government has had a significant impact on the tuition. You take out of those numbers the impact of 15, 16 and 20 percent tuition fee increases and you will find that they flatten out considerably, and this government, when it comes down to the support, it goes—the direct support to the students. That is not simply a way to tidy up very sloppy and clumsy government policy.

The minister referenced daycare. Well, it is this government that raised the daycare rates. It is this government that puts single parents under the kind of pressure that they face today, and so all they have done is shift the burden of that from the government, in a true attempt to assist students, to the debt load of students, and I think that is unacceptable. I am sorry, I just think that this government is failing to live up to the responsibilities that it undertakes when it makes a policy statement about trying to encourage an increase in the number of people going to school. Now, let us have a look here. We have—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, they offer clarification to the member regarding the information that I offered to him for single parents, and, yes, it is true that the line that I read to him was the average loan rebate line, the reason being that for single parents we have put our money into the loan rebate because it does assist in reducing the Canada Student Loan debt load because this is applied against their loan.

So this was by this government a very conscious effort to assist that particular category of post-secondary students. So, again, I completely reject his characterization of this government and to say that in fact there have been a number of decisions made by this government which very

consciously are made to assist students studying at the post-secondary level.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, for single parents in six years referenced from the document the minister tabled today, the support available to them, the average Canada Student Loan made to a single parent in this province has gone up by 4.8 percent in six years. Now, I do not need to quote the inflation numbers to the minister to give her some sense of what that means to anyone who is living on fixed income. The provincial government—now, this is the provincial government support under the Manitoba Government Bursary Program which is delivered by this government that apparently is advocating so fiercely with the federal government to see that this basic support is raised, has gone up 1.8 percent in that same six-year period.

So I do not think that the minister's protestations of that, what they have done to attempt to make the lot of individual students any easier, really bear up under close examination. In fact, frankly it does not take very close examination to see the falsity of the policy position of this government. I will state again that all it is a very thinly veiled attempt to transfer the burden for supporting universities onto the debt load of the students, but I do have a specific question.

At some point in the minister's office, there was a meeting between senior departmental staff and the minister as they were preparing the budget. Subsequent to that, and perhaps before that, there would have been meetings with Treasury Board and other instruments of the government to determine the budget for this department. In that series of decisions, somewhere along the line, a decision was made not to supplement—not to increase the weekly allowance.

Now, I would like to know, given the relatively low level of the weekly allowance, has there been any study done that says that a single person can live on the amount of support that is proffered by the government?

Mrs. Vodrey: I would like to remind the member that the program which we offer in the province of Manitoba is a program to supplement and that this program is not a program of complete support. Now, the federal government has done some studies and the member is focusing on the federal weekly loan limit.

The federal government has done some studies through the intergovernmental consultative

committee on Student Financial Assistance, and there was a specific study by Dr. Gail Cook-Bennett and that was commissioned by the Secretary of State. That study did look at the loan limits in different jurisdictions. Now there is an effort for a collaborative approach on the part of the provinces to encourage the federal government to increase its position and its participation.

Madam Chairperson, I would also like to just clarify for the member in some of the charges which he has just made, that in Manitoba the loan rebate for single parents has gone up by 65 percent.

*(1550)

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I have not seen the study by Dr. Gail Cook-Bennett. I will certainly make a point of digging it up if it is available publicly. If I understand, from the minister's comments, what she is saying is that the Secretary of State undertook a study to see whether or not the support rate was adequate.

On the basis of the results, presumably of that study, the provinces have been taking the position that the basic weekly allowance should be increased. So I would assume that I can read into that the results of this study is that the current allowance is not adequate?

Mrs. Vodrey: My remarks focused on a need for change, and that is exactly what the Cook-Bennett report also focused on. The federal government has admitted a need to change. The intergovernmental consultative committee on Student Financial Aid has representatives of the provinces and the territories and the federal government. We also have staff on a committee looking at needs assessment.

As I have said to the member, the federal government has been pressed on this particular issue. The federal government has also said that it is looking at this issue, but it has not yet given us a time frame nor an amount level.

Mr. Alcock: The minister has referenced a study by Dr. Gail Cook-Bennett, which was undertaken at the behest of the Secretary of State, and presumably with some involvement or at least the support of the intergovernmental committee. Does this report state that the current weekly support rate offered students is too low?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, as I said, the report acknowledges the need for change. This report is a public document. The member had

asked me that. Yes, it is public. I will give him the name of the individual he can contact for more information. The individual he should ask for, her name is Marilyn Law. Her position is the chief of external relations. Her phone number, 994-5019, and the area code is 819.

Mr. Alcock: Well, now there is an answer, complete with a name and a telephone number. I thank the minister for that.

I will leave that one until I have had a chance to get the reports, and perhaps we can continue with those questions on Monday.

Now, there is a question here: It is my understanding that because of this problem, because there is this problem with the federal government and being tied to the federal government loan program, the Province of Quebec has opted out. It is not part of the Canada Student Loan Program. Instead, it receives a grant from the federal government, and it delivers its own student support program, so that there is not this split jurisdiction.

It is also my understanding—well, maybe before I go into the next piece of information, let me ask the minister this question: Has Manitoba ever considered opting out of the national program?

Mrs. Vodrey: The Province of Manitoba has not considered opting out, but opting out is an option, one of the options for discussion. Another option is that the provinces would take over the Student Financial Assistance Program.

There is, however, a concern on the part of the smaller provinces that the federal government may then abrogate its responsibilities. The economic realities of Manitoba and the position of Manitoba are such that it would make it very difficult within our province.

We do understand the federal government will introduce legislation which will include an opting-out possibility, but we have no details on that legislation at this time.

Mr. Alcock: Has there been any study done in Manitoba as to the impact on Manitoba of opting out?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, we have not done a study on the impacts of the opting out. We are waiting for the federal announcement. We would like to examine the issue when the federal government decides what changes it would like to make to the Canada

Student Loan Program, and then we can look at the impact on Manitoba.

We also would like to know what the federal government's intention on legislation and opting-out clauses in legislation would look like. The time that we have all the pieces of information, that is then the time to determine by way of a study what the impact on Manitoba may be.

Mr. Alcock: Then perhaps the minister could clarify one thing for me. My information is that the Province of Quebec has currently opted out, and yet what the minister seems to be saying is that there is legislation forthcoming that allows opting out. Is Quebec not opted out at the present time? Are the Northwest Territories in or out?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, it is true the Province of Quebec has opted out. It opted out by way of a special arrangement very much as it has opted out of the Canada Pension Plan. The federal government though has indicated that it will make opting out an available option for other provinces and that opting-out option will be known when it brings forward its legislation.

Mr. Alcock: It is my understanding also that the Province of Ontario—well, they have not opted out, obviously, but that they are currently considering that and have served notice that they are considering that.

* (1600)

Mrs. Vodrey: That may be the case that they have spoken about it, but they have not officially declared a position. Again, I remind the member that in the Estimates for the Province of Manitoba I am not able to speak for the Province of Ontario.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, the program that we have here in Manitoba is a loan first and then bursary to supplement. So we ask people to take on the debt load and then we provide what within the available loans they cannot achieve. Certainly, I would support the minister's contention that this is a preferable alternative to a program that was all loans, but I do have a question about the difference between that and the Ontario program, which is a bursary first and then loan to supplement program. Has Manitoba ever considered that option?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, no, Ontario is the only province that works its student financial aid system this way, with provincial input first and then federal government Canada Student Loan. There are certainly concerns on their part regarding the

high cost of providing their student financial aid in this way. They are also very concerned, I understand, that they are not receiving their equitable share of the Canada Student Loan funding and, as I mentioned to the member earlier today, they have announced within their budget a \$100 million budget reduction in the area of student financial aid. So I do understand that Ontario is discussing its options with the federal government as a result of some of this displeasure.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, last year in the Estimates the government withdrew the High School Bursary loan, which, although it did not apply to post-secondary, was instituted previously during the 1970s to assist students to complete their high school. I am wondering if the government has reconsidered that decision, that is, the decision to eliminate the High School Bursary Program and has either reinstated it this year or will consider reinstating it?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, there has not been a reinstatement, but there has been some adjustment to assist those students in need. The adjustment has been in the way of a special adult bursary for the adult out-of-division students. The Social Allowances Program of the Department of Family Services provides up to \$80 per year upon request for school supplies for Grade 9 to 12 students in households where parents receive Social Allowances.

Full-time students over 18 years of age continue to be able to apply for living costs from Social Allowances. In 1991, a one-year pilot bursary program was established for the nonresident adult high school students and that has been continued in this year. Nonresident adult secondary bursaries of up to \$900 helped to offset high tuition costs associated with adult students attending an educational institution outside of their school division in order to fast-track their education.

Adults attending Winnipeg School Division No. 1 pay resident fees of \$10 to \$20 per course, while nonresidents pay fees of \$160 to \$320 per course. There is no limit placed on the number of applications assisted by this program, but applicants must be 21 years of age or older and Canadian citizens or permanent residents. They must attend a high school outside of their local division, and they must take 100 percent course load and must demonstrate financial need and satisfactory progress.

To date, 130 nonresident adult secondary bursary applications have been received.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for that response. I am also thankful that the minister acknowledged something that I do not think the previous minister was prepared to acknowledge. That is, that there are fees charged to nonresidents in order to attend high school programs, and the previous minister did not seem to acknowledge that in his responses.

I am still concerned though about the several thousand youths that were cut off by the government last year from the high school bursary program. I assume from her answer stating no, the government is not reconsidering instituting that program for those young adults—admittedly not adults—that were previously covered under the program, the several thousand.

* (1610)

Mrs. Vodrey: No, we have not decided to reinstate that particular assistance. Our efforts have focused on students at risk through the Student Support Branch, the funding formula for special needs students, and also our participation in the federal government's Stay-in-School Initiative.

Mr. Chomlak: I will just remind the minister that those students were the poorest of the poor—that is who we are talking about—who received those bursaries. It is unfortunate that they no longer have access to it.

One of the positive things I can state about the previous minister with respect to the High School Bursary Program was the fact that he was prepared to do something that many of us are not prepared often to do in the Chamber, and that was admit that he was wrong with respect to that particular program. The area of co-ordination of that program with social allowance is something that the minister referenced. The minister indicated that social allowances would cover that portion or those students who had been cut off as a result of the cancellation of the High School Bursary Program.

I am wondering if any new mechanisms have been put in place between the minister and the Department of Education and Training and the department of social services in order to ensure that those students, those several thousand who would have qualified, in fact are receiving the increased benefits that somehow are supposed to accrue from

social allowances, in order to allow them to continue their education?

Mrs. Vodrey: Our efforts have been to improve the co-ordination at the policy level. Both the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) and I as Minister of Education sit together on the Human Services Committee of cabinet. On that particular committee, we do have the opportunity to review issues in which there are areas of overlapping concern. We also have staff in both departments working together on the impact of changes in policy which might affect one department or the other or both.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, finally, in this area the minister indicated that the adult bursary program was a pilot project. Will it be continuing this year, and can we look forward to a continuing program in this area?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, yes, as I stated, that program will continue in the year '92-93, and there is an evaluation in process right now of the first year of that pilot project, so again that will continue into the second year, into this '92-93 year, while we get the results of the evaluation. Future decisions will be based upon that evaluation that is forthcoming.

Madam Chairperson: Item 5.(g)(1) Salaries—

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I just recall one little area that we have left, and we discussed this under Policy in the last go-around. It occurred to me that the minister did reference this line in the Estimates as the place where I might seek some answers, and that is this question of parental support.

The question I raised at that time was relative to students who were assigned an amount as a requirement from their parents when their parents were not, in fact, able to or available to support them. I started off with a question to try to narrow down the area, asking a question about students who had no parents, when the parents had been, by order of court or whatever, deemed to be no longer present or no longer competent to be parents. When these children turned 18, was the parental support requirement waived?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, independent status is granted to an applicant who meets one of these following criteria, and that is an applicant whose parents are both deceased, or an applicant who has no legal guardian.

Mr. Alcock: Can the minister clarify for me, though, when someone turns 18, how do they then continue to have a legal guardian? Is this a point of law that I have missed?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, then at that time they do not have a legal guardian. Therefore, they are eligible to apply as an independent student.

Mr. Alcock: Then as an independent student, how is one assessed a parental support contribution?

Mrs. Vodrey: Parental support is then not considered for the category of independent student.

Mr. Alcock: I suspect from that answer I need to review my question and be a little more precise in my wording. Am I using the wrong term "parental support?" Should I be using "parental contribution?" Are you saying that a student who is of the age of 18 or above, applying for a Canada Student Loan, there is no parental contribution required?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the member is asking that when a young person turns 18 years of age and they do not have a legal guardian, or their parents are deceased, and they would not have a legal guardian had they been wards of the court or the province, and then they turned 18; I believe the member is asking, at that time how are those students then declared to have independent status?

* (1620)

I believe that I informed him, yes, that independent status is granted to an 18-year-old individual whose parents are both deceased or who has no legal guardian, which again, at turning age 18, the individual would not have. Therefore, there would not be parental income ongoing to be assessed within the student's ability to receive financial assistance.

I did try and outline for the member, independent status is granted to an applicant who meets one of the following criteria: an applicant who has been a member of the labour force employed or seeking full-time employment for at least two uninterrupted 12-month periods; or an applicant who has been out of secondary school for four calendar years; or an applicant who is divorced, widowed, separated with no dependent children; or the category that I believe we are speaking of at the moment, where the applicant's parents are both deceased or the applicant has no legal guardian; or where the applicant is married or living in a common-law union; or again where the applicant is widowed, divorced

or separated with dependent children or is a single parent.

The financial assistance program's definition of independence differs from the general views held about independence and is based upon the specific criteria which I have just outlined for the member.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for that answer.

I received in the mail this morning, a copy of this year's Manitoba Student Financial Assistance Program applications and it lists those criteria. It says on page 13 of this form that if you meet any one of the criteria below you have Group B independent status. As the minister has pointed out, your parents are deceased and there is no legal guardian. As the minister has pointed out, upon turning age 18 then one would not have a legal guardian, therefore people who are above the age of 18 would be Group B independent status, if I understand her correctly. Then it says: no financial contribution—this is point 2 under the same section here, Section D, page 13—is expected from parents of Group B applications living away from home.

So, presumably, then someone above the age of 18 living away from home would not be assessed a parental contribution. Yet, I know this practice is occurring. I would like to ask the minister why.

Mrs. Vodrey: The member seems to be referencing a group or a category called Group B, Group B being independent students who fall under that independent category from the list of criteria which I have read. However, within that Group B of students declared to be independent, Group B applicants may, in fact, still be living at home. For those students an allowance is made to cover the cost of food, but no allowance is made to cover rental costs. It should be noted that while a financial contribution is not expected from the parents of Group B applicants, any contributions made by parents should be reported by the applicant.

Mr. Alcock: That is quite clear in the application, and I think that is a reasonable expectation. The concern I have is about students who—in one particular case I have a student who was ejected from the family home at age 17 and basically has been self-supporting since then, has been doing quite well at university, and yet, all of a sudden, has been assessed a parental contribution, and it is unclear why, when she would be independent. I will

refer the details of that to the department, as I said before.

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

I think the discussion we have had so far has clarified that, and I will take that information back to the individual also, because, clearly, being above the age of 18 and not having a legal guardian, therefore she meets the criteria for section B. So I think that clarifies that, and I think that I might actually be in a position to, well, I would not want to get too eager about this, but certainly that has answered most of my questions.

I note with some concern the declining numbers of students negotiating loans, but I think I will reserve some of my comments on that for the debate that will follow the progression through the Estimates. Thank you.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson): Item 5.(g)(1) \$1,627,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$328,600—pass; (3) Assistance \$10,892,800—pass.

5.(h)(1) Salaries \$140,300.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am sorry, I would just like to take an opportunity to introduce Carol Cowles, who is the Chairperson of the Student Financial Assistance Appeal Board.

Mr. Alcock: Just to clarify the introduction, is Ms. Cowles the Professional/Technical person who is referenced here, or is she an appointed chair of the appeal board?

* (1630)

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, Ms. Cowles is the Professional/Technical person referenced in the Estimates.

Mr. Alcock: In the interests of moving these Estimates discussions along a little bit, perhaps I could just ask the minister a couple of broad questions on this line, and with the proffering by the department of some further information at a later date, I might be prepared to move this one rather quickly.

I note here that the Expected Results for this period are to administer approximately 1,150 appeals. Since the minister has been so forthcoming with information going back to the '86-87 years, I wonder if I might have the year-over-year totals. I do not need them immediately. Although, if the minister has them it

might be nice to read them into the record, or if she could simply table them when next we meet.

The second thing is the question of how appeals are categorized, to have a sense of where the appeals are coming from. Is there a breakdown in terms of are we getting them from single parents, from older students, younger students, rural students, urban students and the like? Perhaps the minister could start with those two questions.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do have the information with me today on the number of appeals received, number of appeals approved for the years '88-89, '89-90, '90-91, '91-92 and the projected '92-93 numbers.

In terms of appeals received: '88-89, 1,100; '89-90, 1,056; '90-91, 761; '91-92, the estimated number, 1,050; and in '92-93 the projected number, 1,150. In terms of the numbers of appeals approved: '88-89, 543; '89-90, 520; '90-91, 306. The estimated appeals approved for '91-92, 420, and the projected number of appeals approved for '92-93, 460. Again, about 40 percent of the appeals received in 1990-91 were approved, 40 percent were denied, and the remaining 20 percent were cancelled or were handled as reviewed.

I also have with me the category of appeals. Category A: assets, including bank accounts, vehicles and tax refunds; category B: other costs, debt payments, high living expenses; category C: bursary eligibility, out of province, second degree and number of years; category D: expected savings from summer earnings, and within that, the unable to work or to save; category E: family resources, spousal and student income; category F: parental contribution, unwilling or unable to provide; and category G includes all other categories.

Now the student appeal board categorizes similarly to the Student Financial Assistance categories, that is, "dependent living with parents." In terms of percentage of appeals received in that category: '86-87, 10 percent; '87-88, 10 percent; '88-89, 12 percent; '89-90, 14 percent; 1991, 10 percent.

Then for the category "dependent living away from parents" which is the second category also used by the Student Financial Assistance Branch: '86-87, 26 percent; '87-88, 28 percent; '88-89, 26 percent; '89-90, 22 percent; '90-91, 19 percent. In the category "independent living with parents": 2 percent; '87-88, 6 percent; '88-89, 4 percent; '89-90, 5 percent; '90-91, 6 percent. In the category

"independent living away from parents": '86-87, 39 percent; '87-88, 33 percent; '88-89, 32 percent; '89-90, 32 percent; '90-91, 39 percent.

"Married and the spouse at home": '86-87, 4 percent; '87-88, 3 percent; '88-89, 3 percent; '89-90, 4 percent; '90-91, 3 percent. In the category "married with a spouse working": '86-87, 9 percent; '87-88, 12 percent; '88-89, 13 percent; '89-90, 13 percent; '90-91, 9 percent. The category married and spouses in full-time studies: '86-87, 3 percent; '87-88, 2 percent; '88-89, 3 percent; '89-90, 3 percent; and '90-91, 5 percent. In the category single parent: '86-87, 7 percent; '87-88, 6 percent; '88-89, 7 percent; '89-90, 7 percent; and '90-91, 9 percent.

In terms of the actual numbers, then, with all of those groups categorized together for totals: '86-87, a total of 790; '87-88, a total of 888; '88-89, a total of 1,065; '89-90, a total of 1,025; and in '90-91, a total of 761.

Mr. Alcock: Finally on this, could the minister just review for me quickly the processing of an appeal? Are the students allowed to appear before the appeal board? Can they be represented in such an appearance?

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: The process of appeal is a written appeal where the student is responsible for submitting the documents. The staff reviews the documents, and if it is felt that more documents are needed in order to support the student's position or to clarify aspects of the case, then the staff will contact the students for more information. Staff will also meet with the student or talk with the student on the phone regarding any additional information or information about the case. The case then carries on to a hearing, and then if the student is unhappy with the hearing process, the results of the hearing process, the student can meet with the chair. Madam Chairperson, the student is not present at the hearing because of the submission of the documents beforehand.

* (1640)

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, could the student request to be present at the hearing, and would that request be granted?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that students are not usually present at the hearing. The reasons generally are that the process considers an individual's circumstances. Those circumstances

are required to be backed up by documents. Those documents might be bank accounts or information from income tax, and therefore with those documents, which are really the basis of what is considered through the appeal process, by and large then a student is not required to attend the hearing process.

Mr. Alcock: Then are the hearings public or private?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the hearings are private because of the nature of the confidential information and the third-party information.

Mr. Alcock: I have a final question. In that final step where the student can meet with the chairperson, can the student be represented?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, I am informed that students may be represented and it has happened.

Madam Chairperson: Item 5.(h)(1) Salaries \$140,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$7,700—pass.

5.(j) Post-Secondary Career Development/Adult and Continuing Education.

Mr. Alcock: Now, once again, just a similar set of information here, and the minister does not need to take a long time on it, but the history in this particular branch, number of students served, if that could be prepared and tabled. It does not need to be made available right now—oh, I am sorry. Does the minister have a staffperson they want to bring into the room?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would just like to take a moment to introduce Mr. Bob Knight who is the Acting Executive Director of Special Skills Training.

I do have to table for the member's information documents relating to the ACCESS program for the years 1988-89, '89-90, '90-91 and '91-92.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I note that one of the identifications for this particular branch is the Brandon University Teacher Education Program, the BUNTEP program. Could the minister clarify for us what is occurring with that program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, there are BUNTEP centres in Thompson, Island Lake, Cross Lake, Cranberry Portage and Brandon. Depending upon budget availability, there may be the opening of the Native Language Training Program at Yellowquill College.

The enrollment in the BUNTEP programs for '91-92 was 110 students. In '92-93, if the program at Yellowquill College opens, we are expecting the enrollment to be 136 students.

Mr. Alcock: When is the program at Yellowquill College expected to open?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the date at this time is an undetermined date. Brandon University is still in negotiations with Yellowquill College, and again it is contingent upon the discussions which they are having regarding '92-93.

Mr. Alcock: Would it be a fair statement then, if I understood the minister's response, to say that everything with the department is lined up and ready to go for Yellowquill but the difficulties lie in the relationship?

* (1650)

Mrs. Vodrey: At the moment we are still waiting to see the proposal. We need to see the proposal in terms of the detail that will be brought forward. The program, of course, will be dependent upon available funding, the costs of the existing centres, the number of students who are being enrolled. We are still looking forward to receiving the information regarding the 1992-93 academic year.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, so then there are some issues to be resolved between the university and Yellowquill. Assuming that those get resolved, then there are still issues to be resolved with the department?

Mrs. Vodrey: Certainly, in principle, we are supportive of this program, but we need to have the information that says the program can be managed within the budget allocation to BUNTEP.

Mr. Alcock: So the only issue that is outstanding then is this question of whether or not the—now is this arrangement between Brandon and Yellowquill? The money is being moved through the BUNTEP program through Brandon to Yellowquill? Is that the nature of the dilemma?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, we are having a little trouble hearing the member. If he could speak up, please, and repeat his question, that would be a help to us.

Mr. Alcock: Madam Chairperson, I will attempt to be a little clearer. In fact, it may be as much my own lack of understanding of what is occurring here.

As I understood—well, Madam Chairperson, you might want to lay the whips on the member for

Portage (Mr. Connery). I am having difficulty hearing myself now.[interjection] We know the answer to that one.

As I understood the initial statement of the minister, it was that there were some issues outstanding between Brandon and Yellowquill. When I asked what those issues were, I was then informed, I thought, that there were some concerns that the department had—perhaps concerns is the wrong word, because the department is supportive of the program, but there were some yet-to-be-resolved items. Then in response to the question about those, it was that they want some assurances that Yellowquill can be funded and operated within the funding made available to the BUNTEP program.

Now, does that take us back to the discussion between Yellowquill and Brandon, or has the funding been adjusted in such a manner that Yellowquill can be reasonably funded, or do the managers of the BUNTEP program have to give up some other kind of resources in order to get Yellowquill underway?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, this Native Language program is a new program, and it has to be funded through the BUNTEP allocation of funds. BUNTEP does operate in various centres, as I have indicated to the member, and these centres open and close at various times, so there has to be an assessment of funds, but there would be other issues related to this joint program, because it is the first time that BUNTEP is sharing a program with another aboriginal organization. So those details would also be important to be worked out, those details of sharing.

Madam Chairperson: Item 5.(j)(1) Salaries.

Mr. Alcock: This appropriation 16-5(j) is the administrative unit for this particular branch. Is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: The administration for this particular unit, 16-5(j), rests within the appropriation line 16-5(n).

Mr. Alcock: I note in the document that the minister has tabled, there are a number of terms here, one of which I understand which is BUNTEP. There is something here which is ED, which I am presuming is education; an SW, which I am presuming is social work; then there is a UMAP, SPSP, PHP, NBSW, UMAP-S, ENGAP, et cetera. I am wondering if the minister can fill in the terms.

Mrs. Vodrey: I am happy to identify the programs: University of Manitoba ACCESS North; the Special Premedical Studies, the Professional Health Program; the Northern Bachelor of Social Work; the BUNTEP program support services; Education Program, Winnipeg Education Centre; the Social Work Program, Winnipeg Education Centre; the University of Manitoba ACCESS South; the Engineering ACCESS Program; the Manitoba Association for Native Languages; the Churchill Northern Studies Centre. I think that may clarify the acronyms on the sheet.

* (1700)

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

Committee Report

Mr. Bob Rose (Acting Chairperson of Committees): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same, and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 16—The Health Care Directives Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading, public bills, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) (Bill 16, The Health Care Directives Act; Loi sur les directives en matière de soins de santé) standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 18—The Franchises Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) (Bill 18, The Franchises Act; Loi sur les concessions) standing in the name of the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit Bill 18 to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 25—The University of Manitoba Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) (Bill 25, The University of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Université du Manitoba) standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 27—The Business Practices Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) (Bill 27, The Business Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales) standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 31—The Municipal Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) (Bill 31, The Municipal Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités) standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 36—The Health Care Records Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) (Bill 36, The Health Care Records Act; Loi sur les dossiers médicaux) standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 50—The Beverage Container Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) (Bill 50, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boisson) standing in the name of the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 51—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) (Bill 51, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie) standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 54—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 54 (The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi sur la protection du consommateur), on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett). Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 56—The Public Health Amendment Act (2)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 56 (The Public Health Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi

sur la santé publique), on the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 66—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (2)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 66 (The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille), on the proposed motion of the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

Bill 77—The Liquor Control Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 77 (The Liquor Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools), on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [Agreed]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 32—The Immigration Consultants Registry Act

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that Bill 32, The Immigration Consultants Registry Act (Loi sur l'inscription des conseillers en immigration) be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a bill that has come about as a direct result of an issue that came to this Chamber a while back. There are a number of individuals who would like to be able to come to Canada or residents that are currently in Canada who would like to be able to get family and friends to join them here, and in many cases there are a lot of individuals from the different ethnic communities that volunteer and give time and give advice in regard to immigration matters.

In fact, quite often members of Parliament are used in order to find out how one goes about getting a relative or a friend or whoever into Canada also. There really is not a great number of individuals, but there are some who charge individuals who want to come to Canada or families of individuals or relatives, whatever it might be, Madam Deputy Speaker, a fee in order to process some of the papers or do some of the things to help those potential immigrants in coming to Canada. I have on a few occasions run across one individual in particular, but a number of individuals, who have been immigration or, if I can use the terminology, immigration consultants, where they were somewhat taken advantage of, Madam Deputy Speaker.

What we would like to see is legislation or regulation that has an individual consultant have to register with the province. Now, we do not want to prevent the large number of volunteers who give advice from being able to give that advice. What we want to ensure takes place is that for those individuals who want to charge for their service have to register. By registering, they have to be able to qualify for that licence, if you will, Madam Deputy Speaker.

They qualify for that licence by meeting certain criteria. One of them would be, Madam Deputy Speaker, that they be familiar with the immigration laws. Another would be that they be a notary public, because their signatures are needed for passports and so forth. We just want to ensure that these individuals who are charging fees in order to get someone to enter into Canada are in fact well-qualified individuals.

* (1710)

I know that the government does not want to encourage all individuals to take up or to go to lawyers. We have seen that with the creation of POINTTS, which is another organization that is out there. It has a legal identity to it in the sense that it can represent individuals, but they have to register, of sorts. We feel that this is an area in which, with proper regulation, a service can be rendered.

For those who want to provide that service, they have to have certain qualifications or they have to meet certain criteria. If they meet that criteria, they are given a certificate of sorts or a licence that would allow them to charge that fee; thereby, Madam Deputy Speaker, when they are meeting with, whether it is a member of Parliament or an

immigration official in Winnipeg, both are aware of the fact.

I have heard of cases where consultants have charged in order to set up a meeting with a member of Parliament. I have heard of cases and, in fact, have talked to some individuals who were told one thing, which was really nowhere near what was reality.

I look back to a trip that I was able to take where I met one potential immigrant who was told to say "this" and to put "this" on their application because you will have a better chance in order to come to Canada, and saw the price sheet for fees that were being charged, Madam Deputy Speaker. The fees were quite high for the services that were being rendered.

With this particular individual, the person followed what she was being advised because she believed that this individual had a lot of credibility because they were recognized as a notary public. They had a reputation from within a community and felt that yes, in fact, this is the way, if I want to come to Canada, what I have to do in order to come.

This particular bill will ensure that individuals who abuse or take advantage or exploit would-be immigrants would not be able to do it in the future because, with the licensing requirement, if you get complaints of this nature and they are searched and found out or turn out to be valid, that the individual will no longer be allowed to charge a fee for this service that they want to be able to give.

As I say, it is not like it is one or two individuals. I am aware of a significant number of people who were taken advantage of, who were exploited for money, in return were given false expectations and promises that really never were fulfilled, and primarily because the individual involved was more concerned in trying to better himself than to try to get those individuals, in fact, to Canada, as he was going around telling people that he could do.

In fact, another aspect of it is that the immigration workers quite often receive a number of phone calls from individuals, and they do not have to tell Immigration, or there is no way the Immigration office knows if that individual is an immigration consultant who charges fees.

What has happened in the past is that an immigration consultant will get the forms that are necessary in order to even get an application going and then send those forms out to an individual who wants to bring a family member over and charge a

considerable amount in order to provide that service, when in fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, nothing prevents the individual from phoning the Department of Immigration and Immigration will send them that form. In fact, they could go down and fill out the form.

Now, it is not to say that we are against providing the service because we do believe that you can justify having immigration consultants. In fact, I would like to see more immigration consultants.

Preferably or ideally, the community volunteers are the ideal immigration consultant. But for those who want to charge for their service all we would like to see is some sort of control in terms of ensuring that individual has the credentials that are necessary in order to do what they are saying they are able to do, and that individuals who are dealing with immigration consultants are well aware of what it is that the limitations are, including individuals such as the immigration officers.

We have seen an incident where we have had the director of Immigration dismissed as a result of some actions that were taken by one individual who was an immigration consultant. In part of the interview we saw the immigration officer talk about, well, he had no idea that the individual was an immigration consultant; that, in fact, that he had done some work; he did not know that he charged fees.

Well, if we had that registry of immigration consultants that charged fees, the immigration officers and, as I say, the members of Parliament would be well aware of the individuals who do charge the fees. There is nothing wrong with charging the fee for service.

Many go through lawyers, and we know that lawyers charge fees for services. But you know when you are dealing with a lawyer, or an immigration officer or a member of Parliament is dealing with a lawyer, that they are well aware of what it is that the lawyer is there for and the role the lawyer plays.

We would like to see the immigration consultant also registered in some fashion and feel comfortable that that particular individual is knowledgeable about our immigration laws and has an idea in terms of what is a fee or a proper fee for a service and so forth.

Having said those few words, I hope that the government will give consideration to this bill and

put up a number of speakers, so we can find out where they lie on this particular bill.

Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker.

* (1720)

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), that debate be now adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Laurendeau: Madam Deputy Speaker, I was wondering if there might be leave of the House for me to give second reading to Bill 83, which was distributed in the House today?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave of the House to permit second reading of Bill 83?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave? Agreed? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Laurendeau: I move, seconded—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Laurendeau: But leave was already granted.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I posed the question. I apologize. I did not hear the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) saying no, but the Clerk has advised that indeed the honourable member for Thompson denied leave.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 30—Changes to Bail Review Provisions

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett),

WHEREAS the bail review provisions in the Criminal Code of Canada currently set out that accused offenders, including those suspected of conjugal or family violence, be released unless it can be proven that the individual is a danger to society at large or it is likely that the accused person will not reappear in court; and

WHEREAS the problem of conjugal and family violence is a matter of grave concern for all Canadians, and requires a multifaceted approach to ensure that those at risk, particularly women and children, be protected from further harm.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call upon the

federal Parliament to amend the Criminal Code, so that courts may prevent the release of individuals where it is shown that there is a substantial likelihood of further conjugal or family violence being perpetrated.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reid: It is my honour to present this resolution to the Legislature. This is a very serious matter for us in the province of Manitoba. I know there are many members in my own community of Transcona that are interested in the deliberations of the members of the Chamber here today on this matter.

I have some comments dealing, particularly, with the life of one individual, one woman from my own community of Transcona who unfortunately met an untimely death at the hands of another individual through a violent act. The comments that I have here I would like to read for members of this Assembly here today, and it is relating to the Jensen family of Transcona.

On February 5, 1972, Sharon and David Jensen celebrated the birth of their fifth child, a girl, whom they named Marilyn Nadine Jensen. Marilyn, being the youngest of five children, held a special place in the hearts and minds of her parents, not unlike that of other children in other families.

As Marilyn grew to school age, she attended two schools in the Transcona community, including Regent Park elementary school and John Gunn Junior High. Marilyn made many friends during these early years and was well liked by her many friends and classmates, but Marilyn was not content with just school activities; she was also an active participant in the Pirates Community Club girls' baseball team. For several summers she played on that team. Marilyn was also involved in the community club's majorette program where, through competition, she was successful in winning several awards for performance.

The Jensen family enjoyed many activities together, including their time spent at the family trailer in the Woodlands. This was the area where Marilyn joined the Manitoba muzzleloader club, where she enjoyed target practising. She was also, during her early teens, a member of the junior rifles.

The Jensen family also had a small farm near Vita, Manitoba, where Marilyn enjoyed the outdoor lifestyle. As many have known Marilyn to be, she was a vibrant, energetic young woman.

For Marilyn's final school years, she attended the Kildonan East Regional Secondary School from which she graduated in 1990. After graduation, Marilyn met and fell in love with her husband. Together they lived in a new home with the amenities that make life comfortable.

Both Marilyn and her husband had jobs and life seemed to be evolving as one could wish. Soon after, on November 4, 1990, Marilyn delivered into this world a healthy daughter which she named Keshia. Keshia, as most newborns do, filled her parents with a sense of pride and purpose.

Then one day, on August 22, 1991, things started to go horribly wrong and life started to unravel for Marilyn. She was severely assaulted by her spouse, thus starting a chain reaction of events that would eventually lead to her demise. Marilyn, like many abused women in our society, hid the truth from the world.

Finally, she confided in her brother. As protective siblings often do, the brother became incensed at this senseless, violent act. The brother confided in Mr. Jensen, the father, who, as a loving parent would do in, I am sure, almost all cases, immediately contacted Marilyn and strongly advised her to press assault charges with the police. On August 24, 1991, the alleged perpetrator of the assault was arrested and charged by the Winnipeg Police. Less than 24 hours later, the accused was released on bail with a restraining order in place.

Now, one might think that this would be enough to sober up any individual who thought that he or she might be able to assault people and go unpunished, but this was not to be.

Marilyn moved with her daughter out of her family home so that she could avoid any further confrontation with her spouse. To take such a step requires the strong support of immediate family and friends, something which Marilyn received. She established a new home for herself and her daughter and continued to work at fast-food outlets in Winnipeg. Sometimes she held two jobs at once, trying to make ends meet. Marilyn was determined to succeed as a single parent.

During this time, with the restraining order in effect, the family relates how the phone calls started, the warnings that next time it would be worse if Marilyn went to the police, the apparent intimidation, the alleged threats. Marilyn changed jobs. She moved in an effort to escape the cloud of fear that

she was living under. This worked for a short while, but time had run out.

On October 12, 1991, while at work, Marilyn was confronted by her estranged spouse and forced to leave the premises. Marilyn was kidnapped from one of the few safe havens that she knew. Less than 24 hours later, Marilyn's body was discovered on the banks of the Red River. Her estranged spouse has been charged with this crime.

* (1730)

Now, we can look around to see where we have failed. Maybe it was the work of a deranged person. Maybe it was the lax attitude of society in general. Many questions should be asked. Should we include abuse education in family life courses in our schools? Should we teach dispute settlement and redirected anger techniques to our young people? Do we need more safe homes? Do we need more police? These are ideas. These ideas and many other ideas may hold the answer.

Now, many of us can look around and we can point fingers about who is responsible for this act. That will not solve anything and will definitely not bring back Marilyn and the dozens and possibly hundreds of other women who have suffered the same horrific fate.

What we can do is we can work together to pass this resolution today, thereby sending a strong message to the federal Parliament and government that the time to change their Criminal Code is now. We must empower our courts to prevent the release of individuals where it is shown that there is substantial likelihood of further conjugal or family violence being perpetrated.

Those now living in fear in our society, the most vulnerable members of our society, need to feel a sense of security within the justice system. We can accomplish some of this by allowing the justice system and the courts to take preventative action. We need to let people know that violence against women and children is not a private matter. It is a serious crime against society.

On February 5 of this year, 1992, Marilyn would have been 20 years of age, 20 years young. May we preserve the memory of Marilyn and the many others in our society who have perished by violent, senseless acts.

I ask all members of this Chamber, in hearing the thoughts about this particular family and the many other families in our society who have had siblings

and children perish by this type of act at the hands of others, that we go forward with this resolution today and that we pass this resolution on to the federal Parliament of Canada to empower them, to let them know that our intent is serious and that we strongly request and require changes to the Criminal Code of Canada so that we can protect the vulnerable members of our society, so that we can preserve life in the future as we all want it to be.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, I wanted to add a few words on behalf of our caucus in regards to this resolution.

We support the efforts that the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) has put forward to bring the resolution and allow the debate to occur inside the Chamber on this very serious issue. Madam Deputy Speaker, what the public has to realize, and what we have a responsibility as politicians to change the attitudes and the mind set, if you will, of the public when it comes to violence of this nature. It is imperative that we strive to embed in the minds of individuals that domestic violence is a crime. We have to get that message out to the public in whatever fashion that we can.

We have seen a number of areas where government has been very successful in getting a message out. I can recall 10, 15 years ago when we had drinking and driving, and there was a general feeling amongst many of the public of Manitoba that there was nothing wrong with drinking and driving. A lot has changed since that time where the mind set today is to drive and drink is wrong. We see our high schools with a completely different attitude towards drinking and driving. Our young people have seen a complete reversal of attitude. The same has applied to things such as smoking, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Well, our educational facilities, our community groups, community leaders, all have a role to play on educating the public on domestic violence in ways in which we can combat domestic violence. I look at the Pedlar report which talked about domestic violence and talked about the importance to educate especially those in our school system, those who are the offenders, that you need to provide counselling, that you need to provide the resources that are necessary in order to take a firm grip on the issue.

We have a resolution before us that the government has put forward, supported by all three parties that want to see a domestic violence-free

zone where we work towards the elimination of domestic violence. Madam Deputy Speaker, that is an applaudable goal. We all three political parties inside this Chamber support that, and anything that we can do as legislators, whether it is within this Legislature, within this Chamber, within the Chamber in Ottawa, that we should do.

I see this resolution as a positive step, because it is imperative that we send a message to Ottawa that violence is not acceptable. In fact, the resolution is calling for being able to prevent the release of individuals where it is shown that there is substantial likelihood of further conjugal or family violence being perpetrated, that is a positive gesture on our behalf to achieving the government's own resolution, that is supported by all three political parties. So I would like to see all members support and vote on this resolution. I can say, on behalf of the Leader of the Liberal Party and our caucus, that we will support this resolution and would like to give our condolences or our best wishes to the family members of the particular case that the member for Transcona has brought before us today.

But it is a very large issue. There is a lot of domestic violence out there, and we have an obligation, a responsibility to do whatever we can to prevent cases that have been brought forward so eloquently this afternoon, from happening. Having said those few words, Madam Deputy Speaker, we would hope that the resolution will pass today.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to put a very few words on the record, as well, in support of the private member's resolution brought forward by the member for Transcona.

The case of Marilyn Jensen is, as has been stated here, a personal tragedy for the family. A woman's life was cut short in a manner that all members of this House and almost all members of our society find repugnant and repelling and a major tragedy. The issue, as well, as has been stated in this House, not only in dealing with this resolution but with other resolutions and bills before this Chamber, is that it is not just a family tragedy, it is also a societal tragedy. It is a scourge that is being visited upon our society today. We have talked in this House, sometimes with one voice, sometimes as partisan members of different political parties, but we all have brought to our discussions in this House an understanding from our own personal lives and from

lives of those around us and from our reading of cases such as the Marilyn Jensen tragedy.

We all bring to these debates and discussions a sense of urgency, a sense of a need to move as quickly as we can so that personal and social tragedies such as Marilyn Jensen's do not reoccur.

As the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) have stated, it is a problem that runs the gamut from the justice system, through the education system, through major basic changes in attitudes and values and the way women and children are viewed and valued in our society.

We have talked in the House about many ways that we see those changes taking place. We must not stop making those discussions, making those suggestions and sharing our concerns about the enormous range of problems and potential resolutions.

* (1740)

Madam Deputy Speaker, we can, as the member for Transcona and the member for Inkster have stated, make a small step. I believe this resolution today will, if it is as I understand it will be, be supported by all members of the House and all parties in this House today, make a beginning first step in at least one part of this problem that we are facing today.

It is not acceptable that women and children or anyone should live, for even one moment of their life, in fear of the actions of someone else, particularly the actions of someone in whom that person has placed trust and love and request for support.

The resolution that is before us today calls on the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call upon the federal Parliament to amend the Criminal Code so that courts may prevent the release of individuals when there is shown there is a substantial likelihood for further conjugal or family violence.

I believe this is the least that we as legislators in Manitoba can do for Marilyn Jensen. There is, frankly, not very much we can do for her or her family other than share with them our outrage and sorrow for their personal grief and the life that is not going to be able to be lived.

We can, however, do something for Marilyn and for all of the Marylins to come, and that is make this first step towards making it less likely for violence to

be perpetrated again, once it has been perpetrated on a woman or a child. We can make it less likely that individual will be allowed, by our society and our judicial rules, the freedom and the access to do again the damage that he has done before.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would urge, and I understand that all parties will be supporting this resolution. I would like to close by saying that in this House we are very partisan many times. There are not very many occasions when we all do stand up and support each other. I am very pleased to be a member of this Assembly today to be able to vote unanimously for this resolution. Thank you.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, my voice will not allow me to speak too long, and I know there is another member at least that wants to speak on the issue.

I would like to thank the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for bringing forward the resolution and reviewing the tragic sequence of events that, of course, led to the resolution we are debating today.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I hear some call for change in attitudes of society. Of course, that has been called upon now since the beginning of recorded history. I think possibly my colleague the dean of the House, in a speech he made several years ago when I was a new person in this House, probably reflected it best to me as to how society has changed over the years. He said, when you want to look at civilization and you want to measure how much it has improved, if you want to measure that in the terms of how fellow humans treat fellow humans, we have probably progressed about that far, not an awful lot further. We like to think we have, but really we have not.

So I hear some people say that government, all it needs to do is get the message out to the public, that we can have a strong ability to change attitudes. I do not think it is quite that simple. I wish it were, but it is not, because I disagree with those that say that people do not know the difference between right and wrong, because they do.

The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) used the example of drinking and driving and the way it was years easier and so many people, of course, flouted the law. It was not that they did not know the difference between right and wrong, but they had no respect for the law. It is only through tougher laws, of course, that people come to their senses. It is through tougher enforcement that people realize that they had better do what the law said or there

would be serious, serious consequences, and that problem has come some distance over a short period of time.

I would also like to say that, in my view, domestic violence will not be resolved through education. I wish it would. It is not that education is not good, but if we really believe that education is going to resolve domestic violence, I think we are thinking we are more important than we are.

What will resolve it? Well, certainly a changed view as to tougher laws, and tougher laws in themselves will not change it. I am not going to stand here and say it will, but in the sense that the approach that we bring as legislators, and society brings to how it wants to deal with those perpetrators of domestic violence, I think, will have some very obvious judicial system changes, yes.

Those in ivory castles, those small "L"—and this is not a partisan shot—but those small "L" liberal types in society who believe you can always cultivate the good, and if you continue to reach out that you can always make good out of less, I think you have to set those arguments aside. I have heard the arguments that as long as we provide shelters for those who are abused, that will help. It helps, there is no argument, but that is not the solution to domestic violence.

Neither are, entirely, tough laws. Most certainly, until all the role models, and that includes all of us, the leaders politically, the leaders in our community, whether they are clergy, whether they are business people, whether they are labour leaders, indeed, anybody who is respected; until all the role models begin to practise nonviolent ways, quite frankly the only solution we have right now, and the first step, is tougher laws.

I hear the discussion here, and I remember the debate we had in this House about seven or eight years ago. It was a bill at that time, I think, sponsored by Mary Beth Dolin. We were talking about domestic violence. When I hear the commentary today—it is seven or eight years later—certainly, I think society is beginning to realize that the only first solution it has is to tougher, tougher laws. If that requires bail reform, which I think it honestly does, quite frankly, in my view, the resolution is most supportable because we have nowhere else to turn right now. Otherwise, the evidence that is provided and the testimony that is provided by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) will just continue.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, certainly the government supports the resolution before the House, and I think that comments made by others in this House, of course, will dictate that we are starting to come some distance in agreeing what needs to be done at this point in time.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Deputy Speaker, just a very few, short comments and, probably, congratulations to the honourable member for presenting a resolution such as this in this House, because I think this is probably a most appropriate forum for which an issue such as this should be dealt and debated and discussed and considered.

* (1750)

However, I agree somewhat with what the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Manness) said in his comments in indicating that whatever action we contemplate in this House will not be a simple solution by simply passing laws or indicating to others what our wishes are or what our concerns are, because I think we all have as legislators the kind of concerns that domestic violence is simply an abhorrent act and cannot be condoned. Therefore, those that contemplate violence must be dealt with and dealt with much more severely than we have in society dealt with them till now.

However, I do not think that is the real issue. The real issue is society itself, and we as members of society. We condone violence in our cartoons that our children watch every Sunday morning or every Saturday afternoon, and we sit idly by and watch it without taking any action. We condone actions within our own family that promote the thoughts and education of violence, not through the school system or the formal education institutes that we have. However, I think it is important that society itself begin to realize the value of family and family life, and the closeness of family and the education that goes on with the everyday interaction of families with each other.

I think some of the laws that we pass and some of the actions that we take as government can have a great deal to do with the promotion of family life and family interaction and the relation of the togetherness of family. I think that is an important factor that we should take into consideration every time we make and/or consider law, whether it is such

things as allowing certain things and encouraging certain things on Sundays or other actions that we take that encourage sometimes, I think, activities outside of the homes that do not always include all members of the family.

I have some very, very strong feelings on some of the cases that we have witnessed over the last year in this province, that have taken place in communities very close to us. I can refer to an incident in my own community, in my own constituency, that caused the community a great deal of difficulty.

One does not want to point fingers at anybody in specific relating to those kinds of incidences, but I think it is a clear indication of where society is and where values in society emulate to. Maybe we have only since the era of the cave man moved so far in changing the way human beings act towards each other and how much value we place in the hurt that we cause others.

Therefore, I appreciate and support the resolution that has been brought forward, and I would hope that it will cause at least a small consideration to remain in dealing with those that attempt to abuse the rights of be it spouses or others in society that have similar rights that we all value.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is the proposed resolution of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid). Is it the will of the House to have the motion reread? Dispense.

Is it the will of the House to adopt the resolution?

Mr. Manness: Agreed, Madam Deputy Speaker. But once you have made the decision, I just would ask that the record show that it was by unanimous consent.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed?

All Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered. The record will indeed show that this resolution was passed unanimously.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Six o'clock? Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock. [Agreed]

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Thursday, May 28, 1992

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