



Fourth Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



Vol. XLVIII No. 69 - 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 23, 1998

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert	Steinbach	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David, Hon.	Riel	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank, Hon.	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Winnipeg Hospitals Food Services—Privatization

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of S. Thomas, S. Turbovsky, D. Fredette and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Health to put an end to the centralization and privatization of Winnipeg hospitals food services.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of K. Bagnell, P. Sangalang, J. Guevera and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Health to put an end to the centralization and privatization of Winnipeg hospitals food services.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of M. Arnott, K. Pickell, L. Brezowski and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Health to put an end to the centralization and privatization of Winnipeg hospitals food services.

Community VLT Plebiscites

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of A. Gajerski-Cauley, J. Radimer and C.H. Coltart and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier to consider permitting communities to hold plebiscites on VLTs, reducing gambling advertising and increasing funding for treatment of problem gamblers.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of R. A. Cuthbert, L. Chambers and K. Craig praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier to consider

permitting communities to hold plebiscites on VLTs, reducing gambling advertising and increasing funding for treatment of problem gamblers.

Independent Judicial Review Committee

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of H. Klassen, E. Cordova, R. Quint and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to advise the minister of the need to consider establishing an independent review committee to report to the Legislature on ways in which our judicial system may better service the public of Manitoba.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Independent Judicial Review Committee

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

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT an independent judiciary does not justify a total lack of public accountability; and

THAT the lack of public confidence and the level of frustration in our judicial system continues to grow.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to advise the minister of the need to consider establishing an independent judicial review committee to report to the Legislature on ways in which our judicial system may better serve the public of Manitoba.

* (1335)

Community VLT Plebiscites

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen). It

complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT in 10 years the current government has increased gambling revenues from \$55 million to more than \$220 million annually; and

THAT the introduction and the proliferation of video lottery terminals in virtually every licensed premises across the province has resulted in Manitoba having nearly 5,000 VLTs, the most per capita in the country; and

THAT gambling is now the Manitoba government's third largest revenue source behind only income tax and sales tax; and

THAT the provincial government doubled lottery advertising in 1996; and

THAT the Manitoba government has become more dependent upon gambling revenues than any other province; and

THAT the number of the tragedies involving people who have lost their savings, homes and in some cases their lives following gambling addiction continues to grow; and

THAT the provincial government spends less than 1 percent of its VLT profits on gambling treatment programs; and

THAT the Manitoba Lottery Policy Review Working Group amongst many others have requested that communities be allowed to hold plebiscites on banning VLTs as is allowed in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider permitting communities to hold plebiscites on VLTs; reducing gambling advertising and increasing funding for treatment of problem gamblers.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No? Dispense.

THAT in 10 years the current government has increased gambling revenues from \$55 million to more than \$220 million annually; and

THAT the introduction and the proliferation of video lottery terminals in virtually every licensed premises across the province has resulted in Manitoba having nearly 5,000 VLTs, the most per capita in the country; and

THAT gambling is now the Manitoba government's third largest revenue source behind only income tax and sales tax; and

THAT the provincial government doubled lottery advertising in 1996; and

THAT the Manitoba government has become more dependent upon gambling revenues than any other province; and

THAT the number of the tragedies involving people who have lost their savings, homes and in some cases their lives following gambling addiction continues to grow; and

THAT the provincial government spends less than 1 percent of its VLT profits on gambling treatment programs; and

THAT the Manitoba Lottery Policy Review Working Group amongst many others have requested that communities be allowed to hold plebiscites on banning VLTs as is allowed in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider permitting communities to hold plebiscites on VLTs; reducing

gambling advertising and increasing funding for treatment of problem gamblers.

* (1340)

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

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No. Dispense.

THAT in 10 years, the current government has increased gambling revenues from \$55 million to more than \$220 million annually; and

THAT the introduction and the proliferation of video lottery terminals in virtually every licensed premises across the province has resulted in Manitoba having nearly 5,000 VLTs, the most per capita in the country; and

THAT gambling is now the Manitoba government's third largest revenue source behind only income tax and sales tax; and

THAT the provincial government doubled lottery advertising in 1996; and

THAT the Manitoba government has become more dependent upon gambling revenues than any other province; and

THAT the number of the tragedies involving people who have lost their savings, homes and, in some cases, their lives following gambling addiction continues to grow; and

THAT the provincial government spends less than 1 percent of its VLT profits on gambling treatment programs; and

THAT the Manitoba Lottery Policy Review Working Group, amongst many others, have requested that communities be allowed to hold plebiscites on banning VLTs, as is allowed in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider permitting communities to hold plebiscites on VLTs; reducing gambling advertising and increasing funding for treatment of problem gamblers.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered the motion regarding Concurrence, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

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

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Law Amendments Fourth Report

Mr. Jack Penner (Chairperson of the Committee on Law Amendments): I wonder, Madam Speaker, whether I could have leave to present the Fourth Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Emerson have leave to present the report? [agreed]

Mr. Penner: I beg to present the Fourth Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Fourth Report.

Your committee meet on Thursday, June 18, 1998, at 10 a.m. and on Monday, June 22, 1998, at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

At the Thursday, June 18, 1998, meeting, your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 28—The Employment Standards Code and Consequential Amendments; Code des normes d'emploi et modifications corrélatives

Candace Bishoff, Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

Bill 32—The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités et modifications corrélatives

*John Nicol, Union of Manitoba Municipalities
David M. Sanders, Colliers Pratt McGarry*

Bill 33—The Municipal Assessment Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale et modifications corrélatives

*Councillor John Angus, Standing Committee on Fiscal Issues, City of Winnipeg
David M. Sanders, Colliers Pratt McGarry*

Bill 38—The Planning Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et modifications corrélatives

*Stewart Briese, Union of Manitoba Municipalities
Valinda Morris, Provincial Council of Women in Manitoba*

Bill 40—The Domestic Violence and Stalking Prevention, Protection and Compensation and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur la violence familiale et la protection, la prévention et l'indemnisation en matière de harcèlement criminel et modifications corrélatives

*Diane Peters, Private Citizen
Marilyn McGonigal, Private Citizen*

Bill 45—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba

*Kristine Cowley, Canadian Paraplegic Association
Garth Smorang, Q.C., Manitoba Bar Association*

Dr. Greg Stewart, Manitoba Chiropractors Association

*Frank Bueti, Private Citizen
Jerry Kruk, CAA Manitoba*

Bill 54—The Engineering and Geoscientific Professions and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les ingénieurs et les géoscientifiques et modifications corrélatives

Dave Ennis, The Association of Professional Engineers

Bill 55—The Certified Applied Science Technologists Act; Loi sur les technologues agréés des sciences appliquées

Ralph Caldwell, Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba

Written Submissions

Bill 28—The Employment Standards Code and Consequential Amendments; Code des normes d'emploi et modifications corrélatives

John Doyle, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Bill 38—The Planning Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et modifications corrélatives

Carolyn Garlich, Council of Women of Winnipeg

Bill 40—The Domestic Violence and Stalking Prevention, Protection and Compensation and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur la violence familiale et la protection, la prévention et l'indemnisation en matière de harcèlement criminel et modifications corrélatives

Valerie Price, Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties

Bill 45—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba

Steven Fletcher, Private Citizen

At the June 22, 1998 10:00 a.m. meeting, your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 26—The Teachers' Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des enseignants du Manitoba

Ian MacIntyre, Manitoba Teachers Society

Bill 34—The Public Schools Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques

Garry Draper, Fort Labosse School Division # 41

Bill 43—The Victims' Rights and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les droits des victimes et modifications corrélatives

Kim Futch, Private Citizen

Bob Hatch, Citizens Against Violence

Bill 53—The Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act; Loi sur l'apprentissage et la qualification professionnelle

Ken Pearn, Winnipeg Construction Association

Dave Martin, Manitoba Building Trades Council

John Doyle, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Written Submission

Bill 43—The Victims' Rights and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les droits des victimes et modifications corrélatives

Valerie Price, Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties

At the June 22, 1998, 10:00 a.m. meeting, your committee agreed to defer consideration of Bill 2—The Elections Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, until a future meeting of the committee.

At the June 22, 1998, 10:00 a.m. meeting, your committee elected Mr. Sveinson as its vice-chairperson.

Your committee has considered:

Bill 8—The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels

Bill 39—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi n° 2 modifiant le Code de la route

Bill 45—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba

Bill 54—The Engineering and Geoscientific Professions and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les ingénieurs et les géoscientifiques et modifications corrélatives

Bill 300—The Brandon University Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la Fondation de l'Université de Brandon

Bill 301—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Dauphin General Hospital Foundation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la Fondation de l'Hôpital générale de Dauphin

Bill 302—The St. Paul's College Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation le "St. Paul's College"

Bill 303—The Brandon Area Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Brandon Area Foundation"

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

Your committee has considered:

Bill 10—The Mining Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la tax minière

and has agreed to report the same, on division, with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT the proposed clause 44(3)(a.1), as set out in subsection 2(1) of the Bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

(a.1) where the amount in the mining community reserve exceeds \$10,000,000., direct the expenditure from the reserve of the amount, or any part of the amount, by which the reserve exceeds \$10,000,000. to

encourage and assist exploration projects that contribute to the welfare and employment of persons residing in mining communities;

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 26—The Teachers' Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des enseignants du Manitoba

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsections 17(3) and (4), as set out in section 9 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "clauses (2)(a) to (c)" and substituting "clauses (2)(a) and (b)".

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 28—The Employment Standards Code and Consequential Amendments; Code des normes d'emploi et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendments:

MOTION:

THAT subsection 1(1) be amended by striking out the definition "working day".

MOTION:

THAT section 32 be amended

(a) in the section heading, by striking out "industry"; and

(b) in the part preceding clause (a), by striking out "in the construction industry" and substituting "employed in construction".

MOTION:

THAT clause 62(m) be amended by striking out "in the construction industry" and substituting "in construction".

MOTION:

THAT clause 67(2)(j) be amended by striking out "in the construction industry" and substituting "in construction".

MOTION:

THAT subsection 144(1) be amended by striking out clauses (ll) and (mm).

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 32—The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same, with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT the following be added after section 39:

39.1 Subsection 431(3) is amended by striking out "the term of office for which the employee was elected expires or".

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 33—The Municipal Assessment Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT section 6 of the Bill be repealed and the following substituted:

6(1) Subsection 14(1) is amended by striking out everything after "error or omission" and substituting " , authorize and direct a municipal administrator to amend the annual assessment roll that immediately precedes the annual assessment roll being prepared under section 9."

6(2) Subsection 14(2) is amended by striking out everything after "error or omission" and substituting ", amend the last revised assessment roll as defined in section 205 of The City of Winnipeg Act."

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 38—The Planning Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendments:

MOTION:

THAT the proposed clause 43(1)(b), as set out in section 33 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "serve" and substituting "give it second reading and serve".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 14(1), as set out in section 72 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "or the authority granted under section 28, 42, 53 or 55 of The Planning Act" in the part preceding clause (a) and substituting "or the temporary posting of a notice under subsection 28(3), 42(3), 53(3) or 55(5) of The Planning Act".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed clause 14(1)(b), as set out in subsection 73(2) of the Bill, be amended by striking out "section 28, 42, 53 or 55" and substituting "subsection 28(3), 42(3), 53(3) or 55(5)."

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 40—The Domestic Violence and Stalking Prevention, Protection and Compensation and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur la violence familiale et la protection, la prévention de l'indemnisation en matière de harcèlement criminel et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same, with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT subsection 23(1) be amended by striking out "the name of the other person to the person being stalked" and substituting "to him or her the name of the other person, and any additional information necessary to identify the other person,".

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 43—The Victims' Rights and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les droits des victimes et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT subsection 17(1) of the French version be struck out and the following substituted:

Maintien

17(1) La Caisse d'assistance aux victimes est maintenue sous le nom de "Fonds d'aide aux victimes."

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 55—The Certified Applied Science Technologists Act; Loi sur les technologues agréés des sciences appliquées

and has agreed to report the same, with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT section 21 of the French version of the Bill be amended

(a) in clause (a), by striking out "technicien agréé, technologue agréé," and substituting "technicien agréé en ingénierie, technologue agréé en ingénierie"; and

(b) in clause (b), by striking out "des techniciens agréés, des technologues agréés," and substituting "des techniciens agréés en ingénierie, des technologues agréés en ingénierie,".

Your committee recommends that the fees paid with respect to the following Private Bills be refunded, less the cost of printing:

Bill 300—The Brandon University Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la Fondation de l'Université de Brandon

Bill 301—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Dauphin General Hospital Foundation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la Fondation de l'Hôpital générale de Dauphin

Bill 302—The St. Paul's College Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation le "St. Paul's College"

Bill 303—The Brandon Area Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Brandon Area Foundation"

Mr. Penner: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger), that the report of the committee be now received.

Motion agreed to.

* (1345)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have this afternoon forty-eight Grade 5 students from Whyte Ridge Elementary School under the direction of Mr. Carl Walton and Mrs. JoAnn Eliuk. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Vodrey).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Judicial Inquiry 1995 Election

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, yesterday, new and serious allegations were

made concerning the Conservative Party and the election in 1995 with the Native Voice candidate Darryl Sutherland, allegations that were backed up by Tory candidate Kim Sigurdson and confirmed at meetings that took place with Mr. Sale and Mr. Evans. Today, again, Mr. Sutherland has gone public with a written statement saying that the entire campaign was funded by the Conservatives.

Now yesterday, the Premier said that all of these matters had been investigated by Elections Manitoba, and today Mr. Wilkie admitted that the powers of Elections Manitoba are limited: "After the 1995 elections we recognized . . . the tools we had weren't sufficient."

I would like to ask the Premier to do the proper thing today with these serious, serious allegations of the political process, of the democratic process here in Manitoba, and clear the air and have an independent judicial inquiry so that all people can speak out under oath so the truth can come out and democracy can be served.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I might point out that the statement that was made yesterday, some three years after the alleged incident, by Mr. Sutherland was entirely different from the statement that he made at the time of the election and in fact the election finance return that he filed—an entire change.

I would like to point out, as well, that yesterday in questioning here in this House members opposite alleged that Allan Aitken had confirmed that he had had a meeting and had done all sorts of things. I heard him this morning on CBC Radio saying that: I was not at any meeting where Darryl Sutherland was asked to run. I was not with Evans and this other guy or with Sigurdson. So be it.

Madam Speaker, there appears to be a lot of allegations—[interjection] Or did you get to Sutherland? [interjection] Yes.

Madam Speaker, these are the kinds of things that we hear always from members opposite, and quite honestly there seems not to be any credibility in the things that they put forward.

As I said earlier, Elections Manitoba has looked at it before. If they want to look at it again, I would be happy for them to do so.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, why is this Premier trying to cover up the truth? Why does he not want an independent judicial inquiry? Elections Manitoba has admitted that they do not have the power. This is an allegation of corruption right in the office of the Premier. He can smile all he wants; he can laugh all he wants. This is not funny.

Madam Speaker, his election campaign was co-chaired by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) and the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey). These are serious, serious allegations.

Yesterday the Premier confirmed Mr. Sokolyk was not interviewed by Elections Manitoba. Mr. Sigurdson, a Tory candidate who was at meetings in April of '95 accusing the government of being involved in this money transfer to the Native Voice candidate, was not interviewed by Elections Manitoba. Mr. Sutherland today in a statement says he was never interviewed by Elections Manitoba. Mr. Sutherland is now saying that he wants to tell the truth under oath before this committee. Mr. Sigurdson wants to tell the truth; Mr. Sale, Mr. Evans want to tell the truth. Why are you afraid of a judicial inquiry? Let us have one right now.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I am glad to hear that Mr. Sale wants to tell the truth. That might be a novelty.

We are repeating, with the same cast of characters, allegations that were made here in this House, only different allegations this time by the member for Crescentwood who brought sworn affidavits in between October 21 and October 23 of 1996, brought sworn affidavits, sworn by, I might say, Mr. Kim Sigurdson, Mr. Allan Aitken and at that time Chief Pascal Bighetty. The member for Crescentwood brought those sworn affidavits about fishing, about illegal fishing, allegations that were made against the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger). For three days, he pounded away in this House waving around these sworn affidavits.

Then, when the matter was about to go to court, what happened was that the people who signed those

affidavits withdrew their allegations and wrote a letter saying that they were—and, in fact, Chief Pascal Bighetty said that this was all politics. In fact, he said that this is a publicity stunt and I have been set up, he said, by members opposite, all for their own cheap politics, by the member for Crescentwood, all for his cheap politics. We have more of the same today. Now it is being, of course, perpetrated by the Leader of the Opposition.

* (1350)

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) would tell us the truth about who paid for his hotel room if he was at the Olympic Games, unlike the Premier opposite.

But let us deal with the facts of this case. Mr. Sutherland has entered a statement that has \$4,913 that has been contributed to his Native Voice campaign by himself. He has now stated that this money came from the Progressive Conservative Party, the party to which the Premier is the Leader. He has stated that this money was passed to him, and he has admitted that, at the time he donated that money to himself, allegedly he was on social assistance. I would like to ask the Premier: why is he afraid for a judicial inquiry to review the \$4,913 and review where that extreme amount of money came from for that candidate? What are you afraid of?

Mr. Filmon: The member opposite knows that we have all sorts of rules and procedures that must be followed under Elections Manitoba's rules and legislation. He knows very well that it would be very easy to determine whether or not the Progressive Conservative Party gave that money to Mr. Sutherland, and I know that is just not so. It did not happen. Just because members opposite want to make those allegations does not make them true.

PC Campaign Manager Meeting Justification

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): A couple of days ago, on June 21, marked the 8th anniversary of the Meech Lake Accord dying in the Manitoba Legislature. At that time First Nations people and aboriginal people had a sense that they had some control and that the system was out there to work for them.

In our meeting this morning with Darryl Sutherland, who has been mentioned here today and yesterday, this matter concerning what we are talking about in this House has indeed troubled him ever since. He feels that he has been used and manipulated, as well as other aboriginal people, Madam Speaker.

Simply, I would like to ask the Premier to clarify or explain as to why the campaign manager for the Inter-lake met with the candidates of what were supposed to be opponents to give them money and advice.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, those are questions that the member opposite might want to ask Mr. Aitken. I am not aware of nor did I take part in those meetings. My only awareness of it is from what I read in the media. But I will say that what Mr. Sutherland is saying, of course, is similar to what Chief Pascal Bighetty said when he got involved in the allegations and the accusations brought to this House by the New Democrats. He said: this is a publicity stunt and I have been set up. So I can understand how he would feel used by New Democrats in this process.

Judicial Inquiry 1995 Election

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, simply what Mr. Sutherland would like to do is clear the air, and I am sure the Premier would like to do that as well.

I would like to ask this Premier again, simply will he call for a full independent judicial inquiry?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I have said before that we deal with allegations that change every day, with so-called evidence that changes every day by members opposite. They say Mr. Aitken said one thing; he denies that the next day, Madam Speaker, and those are the kinds of things that—[interjection] Yes, just as you got to Sutherland, sure, same thing.

Madam Speaker, these are the kinds of things that are not the subject of judicial inquiries. These are allegations, unsubstantiated, that are made by members opposite for their own political purposes.

Premier of Manitoba Meeting Request

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, the statement I was referring to by Mr. Sutherland, I would like to table that for the House. I also want to give the Premier an opportunity, if he does want to meet with Mr. Sutherland and call him a liar to his face, he has that opportunity. Mr. Sutherland is in the gallery this afternoon.

* (1355)

Physician Resources Foreign-Trained Physicians

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health. It follows the same line of questioning that I was asking yesterday.

Madam Speaker, for many, many years, rural Manitoba has been in desperate need of doctors. In the province of Manitoba, we have individuals that have the ability to in fact practise medicine. This government has not been addressing that issue, and I ask the Minister of Health: what is the Minister of Health prepared to do to ensure that those individuals that are here today are given the opportunity to practise medicine, something which, in many cases, they are qualified to do?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Health): Those in fact are the key operative words, "qualified" and "ability," and that is what the College of Physicians and Surgeons have the responsibility to determine. Now I do not always agree with all of the policies that the college puts in place, both in Manitoba and across the country, but they are the licensing body that has that responsibility to license physicians to practice in this province, and Madam Speaker, in order for any foreign-trained physician to be able to have the legal ability to be able to practice in Manitoba, they are required to be licensed by that body.

There are a host of factors that fit into why some physicians are not able to be licensed: having their qualifications confirmed from their place of education; being trained in an acceptable educational environment

to our college; and secondly, meeting the local nuances of practice. Being able to practice in a North American environment is also part of that test. We want to work with people to overcome those obstacles, but they are not dictated by the government. They are set by the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, maybe the Minister of Health can explain to me how it makes sense that the government travels the world in order to get doctors for rural Manitoba, when in fact we have doctors that do have the ability here, who are on social assistance as a direct result of this government's inaction. In fact, we have one in the gallery today.

My question to the minister, Madam Speaker, is: why has this government been sitting back for years in trying to deal with this very important issue to all rural Manitobans?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, first of all, this is not just an issue for rural Manitobans. It is an issue for all Manitobans. But secondly, the member for Inkster in no way has offered any criticism of the college, and yet it is their responsibility to license physicians. I know in the work that we have done, and my legislative assistant, the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) has done in this particular area, for example, I think it is the Part 2 Examination, which is the nuances and customs of practice in North America, that there are many, many of those students who fail that examination. We are working with the college now to find ways to be able to give them opportunities to hone their skills to be able to meet the qualifications of practice in this province that are set not by the Ministry of Health but by the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, will the Minister of Health recognize, had he recognized the talents and abilities of those individuals that we have here in the province today, that at the same time in which he appointed this committee to travel the world to look for doctors, in fact we would have 12 to 16 more doctors practising in rural Manitoba in the next few months? How does the Minister of Health justify his lack of

inaction causing more problems in health care delivery for rural Manitobans?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, first of all, there is no committee travelling the world. We retained a recruiter in South Africa last year because the physicians there meet the qualifications of our College of Physicians and Surgeons and have been able to be licensed. If it makes the member any happier today, I can say right here I recognize their qualifications, but legally that does not give those foreign-trained physicians the right to practise.

For the third time, I would remind the member that it is the College of Physicians and Surgeons who have that responsibility. If the member is advocating that we take away that licensing responsibility from the college and put it in the Ministry of Health, would he please clearly say so on the record?

* (1400)

Judicial Inquiry 1995 Election

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Speaker, my questions are directed to the Premier.

When I came here in 1990 it did not take me long to understand how this Premier regards aboriginal people. This Premier has absolutely no respect whatsoever for aboriginal people. When he is not telling them to go to the federal government instead of to him, he discriminates against aboriginal people in programs and services. A good example of that is the REDI program.

I would like to ask the Premier why he now has resorted to taking advantage of vulnerable people like Mr. Sutherland for his own political gain, and I would ask him today: will he do the right thing and call for an inquiry?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, with the greatest of respect to the member for The Pas, I would reject entirely his preamble. I recall in the days when he was Chief of Opasquiak First Nation how we worked together, our government and his First Nation, in the establishment of the northern aboriginal nursing program, which we hand in hand announced together in

The Pas after a number of years of working together. I can tell him that when we were running for office, I said that one of our commitments was to resolve many of the long-outstanding issues between the aboriginal peoples and the government of Manitoba. That government, I might tell him, for the better part of two decades was New Democratic. They left outstanding treaty land entitlements for decades; they left outstanding that issue, and they also left outstanding the Northern Flood Agreement for over a decade.

Madam Speaker, since we have been in office, we have not only done the resolution to the treaty land entitlement with over a million acres of land being transferred by this government to the First Nations of Manitoba, but we have settled with four of the five First Nations on the northern—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Beausheue Citation 417 is very clear that answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate. The member for The Pas asked the Premier about whether he will call an inquiry into the tactics of him, his chief of staff, his political party, in taking advantage of Darryl Sutherland and showing disrespect for aboriginal people.

I would like to ask you to call the Premier to order and answer that very serious question that we are asking on behalf of all Manitobans today.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker. The honourable member for The Pas raised issues in his question respecting the policies of this government, respecting aboriginal people and went on at some length to deal with those matters, exactly the matters referred to in the answer given by the Premier. The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has no point of order.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am not certain if the honourable First Minister had completed his response or not, but on the point of order raised by the

honourable member for Thompson, then, indeed, it is very difficult to rule if the honourable minister had not completed his response. He, therefore, does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I want to conclude with respect to the assertion that the member for The Pas has made about our lack of concern for issues to do with aboriginal people, that we have settled with four of the five First Nations in the Northern Flood Agreement; we have built the north central transmission line to be able to provide low-cost electricity to seven—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I just quoted Beausheue Citation 417. If the Premier wants to try and filibuster Question Period to try and get out of answering our questions, that is not only not in order in terms of our rules, but that shows complete disrespect for the question that has been asked by the member for The Pas, the kinds of questions many aboriginal people in this province want answers to. For the second time, I would like to ask you to bring this Premier to order and ask him to answer the question.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on the same point of order. None of the authorities to which the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) refers so often requires any minister in Ottawa or in any of the Legislatures to answer questions. Nonetheless, the First Minister has answered that very question at least a dozen times. I have been counting over the past couple of days. So, again, the honourable member for Thompson has no point of order.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Thompson, I would request that the honourable First Minister quickly complete his response.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: And so, Madam Speaker, there is absolutely no substance to his assertion that we are not concerned about aboriginal people. We have been working very diligently and accomplishing many, many things for the aboriginal people of this province in the last decade. I say to him this is not an issue of what is the race or the nature of the person. This is to do with the allegations and the unsubstantiated allegations and the lack of credibility of the allegations, and that is why I do not believe that there is any merit to their requirement to call for a judicial inquiry.

Mr. Lathlin: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier another question and that is: why is he so afraid, if he has nothing to hide, to let people testify as to what his party workers and officials did or did not do during the election?

Mr. Filmon: We have already seen that much of the information that has been brought to this House by members opposite has not proven to be factual. We have seen it in the past. It has been demonstrated on the record. We have seen it over the last couple of days. That is the reason why I do not believe that there is justification to do what the member opposite is suggesting.

PC Campaign Manager Meeting Justification

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Speaker, I have one last question for the First Minister, and that is: what explanation does he have as to why his campaign manager for the Interlake, in the '95 election, why did that person meet with candidates of what were supposed to be the opponents of the Tories? Why did he give them money?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, like the member opposite, I am sure he read as well as I did Mr. Aitken's explanations of that which were in the media three years ago.

Judicial Inquiry 1995 Election

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Speaker, yesterday in this House I confirmed that I had attended a meeting with Mr. Allan Aitken and others on January

6. I also confirmed that Mr. Aitken told us that the PC Party had funded the Native Voice candidates, and that he had also met with Mr. Taras Sokolyk.

Madam Speaker, my question to the Premier: since Mr. Aitken's statements today put my word in question since I am willing to state the truth under oath, will he allow this public judicial inquiry that we all are asking for?

* (1410)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I find it very interesting that this member is so concerned about this today over five months after the meeting took place. I find it really interesting as well that he did not put down his allegations or his accusations in writing back at that time, but five months later when I guess he and his colleagues had clarified just what it was that they had heard, he eventually put it down in writing. That is really interesting. That is really interesting that he had to get his story right five months later in order to make it happen in Question Period in this House.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Interlake, with a supplementary question.

Mr. C. Evans: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I said in my first question yesterday, I confirmed the meeting. Today I am asking the Premier to give us all the opportunity to establish what has been said, what has been heard, to tell the truth in this matter. Call the public inquiry. You will get all your answers. From whenever it started in 1995, you will get your answers.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Interlake that "to tell the truth," when made in specific reference to a member in this Chamber, has been ruled unparliamentary on several occasions, and I would ask that the honourable member pick and choose his words carefully.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, the term "to tell the truth" might be unparliamentary if it was used in regard to another

member, but even—we are so concerned about this. You may notice the only person that has been questioning motives in this House is the Premier. All the member for Interlake was doing was saying he wants an opportunity, along with everybody involved in this, to put all the facts on the record, to tell the truth. That is not only not an unparliamentary statement, that is absolutely appropriate to this scandal we are seeing right now in this House.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: If the member opposite was so filled with a desire to have the truth come out and to put it all on the record—the meeting took place in January, he says, but it took him until yesterday to decide to speak about it. It took him until yesterday to decide to put down his recollections in writing. It took him until yesterday to raise this issue in the Legislature. That is a real burning issue, Madam Speaker, quite evidently, in the mind of the member opposite. He is really concerned, is he not, about his own circumstances.

Mr. C. Evans: Madam Speaker, will this Premier provide us with a judicial inquiry? The Premier, who yesterday said “I am satisfied from my investigations,” will then have the opportunity to bring forward under oath all the investigations that the Premier himself did related to the '95 election.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I repeat: this member for Interlake is now putting on the record something that he says is a burning issue, and yet presumably all of the evidence that he has, which is a conversation he says took place over five months ago, he sat on it for five months. He did not put it down to writing, his recollections or anything. He did not do any of that for over five months. He did not raise it in this House, and now it is a burning issue. I think he lacks a little credibility.

Elections Manitoba Investigative Power

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, before the Premier digs himself in any deeper, I should

let him know that the notes to file were completed on January 8, and they were supplied to my lawyer very shortly thereafter—just before he digs himself in any deeper.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Billie Uruski, who was interviewed by Mr. Hanson, the former RCMP officer who undertook the investigation for Elections Manitoba, was told by Mr. Hanson, Mr. Hanson did not have the power to require people to talk to him. He did not have the power to require any of the candidates to speak. He did not have the power to take statements under oath. He did not have the power to require records. He did not even talk to Mr. Sutherland, and he said, even with that, Mr. Uruski's allegations were sustained in his view.

Will the Premier tell us how that constitutes an adequate investigation and adequate powers for Elections Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, of course the member opposite says that his recollections were put down in writing, but of course conveniently they were not raised here until five months later. This is the kind of thing—and similarly we have of course the so-called affidavits that were brought to this House by the member for Crescentwood from this same Mr. Allan Aitken, from this same Mr. Kim Sigurdson, and from Chief Pascal Bighetty regarding another issue, in 1996, in October of 1996, allegations and in fact signed affidavits that were subsequently totally renounced and withdrawn, and that is of course the kind of basis on which the member for Crescentwood always operates. That is not the basis on which we should be investigating this issue.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, can the Premier explain, if he is satisfied that Elections Manitoba had all the power and the authority to undertake a full investigation, which of course we know they were not able to do, why is he now putting forward amendments precisely giving them the power of subpoena, the power of search and seizure? If they had adequate powers to do their job in the past, why is he increasing their power by a very significant amount by the act which he has laid before this Legislature? How can he explain that?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, if the member opposite had listened to or read my comments in Hansard when I introduced that bill, or when I appeared before committee with respect to a companion bill, he would know that I have said that we believe, and I think that his party believes, and I certainly know the Liberal Party believes, that these acts that govern our elections process and our elections finances ought to be the subject of nonpartisan review, nonpartisan consensus recommendations, and that all of the recommendations were those that were brought forward by the Chief Electoral Officer as part of his effort to ensure that he can do his job as well as possible. We accepted those, and we converted them into legislative changes. That is exactly why those bills are before the House in this particular session.

Judicial Inquiry 1995 Election

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, the seriousness of the accusations that have been made about the corruption that took place in the last election, corruption to the electoral process, cannot be underestimated, particularly given the fact that Taras Sokolyk has been the director of the Premier's secretariat since 1991, continues in that position today, was also the central campaign manager in the 1995 election, a person who was described in the Tory newspaper as the person behind the machine, campaign manager refused to fail. Yesterday, on the record, the Premier stated, and I quote: "I repeat that I am satisfied from my investigations."

I would like to ask the minister: what investigations? What did the Premier know about this corruption of the electoral process, and when will he do the right thing, ask Taras Sokolyk to resign, pending the result of an independent judicial inquiry?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I want to ensure that the members opposite know and that members of the public know that this is alleged corruption by the New Democrats, alleged corruption for which I can find no substance or evidence to support their alleged allegations.

Madam Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Physician Resources

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I wanted to add to the comments that I put on the record earlier today for Question Period. Ever since I was elected, one of the first issues that came to the forefront on the whole issue of health care has been the shortage of doctors in rural Manitoba. I can recall our former critic, Dr. Gulzar Cheema, questioning the government of the day what it was that they were doing to ensure that individuals who have the skills—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster was recognized for a member's statement. Question Period has been terminated, and it is very difficult to hear the honourable member.

Mr. Lamoureux: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The concern has always been that we have individuals who reside in the province of Manitoba who do have the abilities, who do have the skill sets, and it is a question of whether or not the political will is there to make it happen. There are doctors who are in fact there who are prepared to go into rural Manitoba. The reality is that we have individuals who could be practising medicine today who are on social assistance because the government has not taken the action that is necessary.

Today in QP the Minister of Health tries to pass it on to the certifying bodies. I for one want to respect the importance of those licensing bodies, but I am not going to tolerate, as an elected official, their being put into place as a potential robot on doing what is important for rural Manitobans. What rural Manitobans want is to have doctors in their communities. We have doctors who are prepared to go into those communities if in fact they are provided the opportunity to do what they do best and that is to practise medicine. I think that we are doing a disservice by allowing them to be on social services.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Pork Production Training Program

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, our government remains committed to training Manitobans for management positions in the increasingly successful pork production industry. This is the goal of the new Advanced Pork Production Manager Training program. This program is a joint initiative developed in co-operation with the industry representatives, and our government will invest \$120,000 in the program through Workforce 2000. Manitoba Pork will also invest \$80,000 and agricultural-related businesses will contribute another \$40,000 towards the program.

This program will be delivered through the University of Manitoba and the Assiniboine Community College. Course content will be developed in consultation with industry. Building a skilled workforce is essential to ensuring Manitoba maintains its competitive edge in the growing pork industry. Quality managers will help sustain the growth being experienced in this vital economic sector, and we want to make sure Manitobans are in a position to capitalize on these opportunities.

Pork production in Manitoba has experienced tremendous growth, increasing by more than 50 percent in the last five years, and it is expected to reach five million hogs by the year 2000. It is anticipated that the industry will result in the creation of some 8,000 new jobs in production, processing, distribution and related industries, jobs essential to sustaining Manitoba's economic health.

We want to ensure Manitobans are ready to explore the many opportunities with the growing pork industry, and the Advanced Pork Production Manager Training program will benefit this industry, employees and also the province. It is one more key step in developing an industry which will pay long-term dividends for all Manitobans. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Judicial Inquiry—1995 Election

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): I rise today to put a few words on Hansard dealing with a government that manipulated part of my constituency in the last 1995 election and now does not have the guts or the courage to call an independent judicial inquiry to show what they have done.

Madam Speaker, this is an absolutely despicable act by a desperate government who has very low moral standards. The Winnipeg Free Press editorial goes on to say that Mr. Sutherland, who ran in the Interlake constituency, was one of three native candidates who emerged during the election campaign arousing considerable suspicion. The other two ran in Swan River and in the Interlake.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Allan Aitken, the rural Tory campaign chairman, admitted at the time that he had provided advice to the candidates. He denied he or any other Tory helped finance the three native election campaigns. Premier Gary Filmon said at the time that he knew nothing of Mr. Aitken's activities, and they were not sanctioned by Tory headquarters. Mr. Filmon yesterday tried to brush off the allegations, saying it would be up to Elections Manitoba to determine whether any further investigation was required, and the Free Press notes that he could not be more wrong. Elections Manitoba officials refused to comment, saying that they realized after the first review that they did not have the tools to do the job.

So it only makes sense that this government moves forward with a judicial independent inquiry so we can get to know what the true facts were of this case. This Premier owes it to my constituents in Dauphin and other constituents around the province where they manipulated and abused the voters in a despicable act to try to split the vote and have their candidates win in those constituencies. Madam Speaker, this is unManitoban. This is just simply wrong. The Premier should do the right thing, the courageous thing, the honest thing and call for a judicial independent inquiry.

Power Mechanic Student Competition

Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon to inform all honourable members about two very talented power mechanic students from Portage la Prairie. Trent George and Robin Boyechuk of Arthur Meighen High School competed against nine other pairs from across the province offering their skills in the face-to-face challenge to diagnose and repair a 1998 Ford Taurus. The duo repaired 10 problems within this vehicle in 45 minutes, a clear 15 minutes ahead of anyone else with no demerits. George and Boyechuk

will receive \$500 each for their victory, as well as an \$18,000 Ford Ranger for the Arthur Meighen High School auto mechanics program.

This duo went to compete in Toronto against this nation's best power mechanic students, although they did not successfully win out. However, we can all be very proud of their endeavours. As well, I would like all members to have the knowledge that CAA and Ford Motor Company of Canada continue to support the power mechanics courses in our high schools across the province. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to these two young men success in continuing their endeavours in power mechanics.

Judicial Inquiry—1995 Election

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, when we have elections in this province, we expect to have a good race based on policies of each party, and the candidate with the most appealing message should win. This is the democratic process, but when one party starts to fund candidates in another party to split the vote, this is an affront to democracy. What we are hearing about in this House shows clearly that the Conservative Party was interfering in the 1995 election. This is corruption of the election process, and it is a shame that we have this going on in this province. For the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to be discrediting those people who have come forward with information on these events is also disgraceful. It takes a lot of courage for somebody to come forward to bring forth evidence, and for the Premier not to show respect for them, I am appalled.

Madam Speaker, I have worked with aboriginal people for many years, and I have represented the people of Swan River for eight years in this House. Many times I have heard First Nations people say that they feel disrespected by the government. My colleagues the members for The Pas and Rupertsland relay this message very well in many cases. People on the reserves that I represent have expressed the same concerns when I talk to them about this government.

* (1430)

Madam Speaker, it is absolutely appalling to learn that the government tried to manipulate people in my constituency so that they could try to win a few more

seats. We must have a judicial inquiry. We must have the opportunity for people who were involved in this, for Elections Manitoba to speak out on this. We must have the truth come forward in this matter so that democracy is not eroded.

I urge this government to recognize that people have been coming forward with a request, the opposition has been raising this issue. If the Premier has nothing to hide, he should come forward with a judicial inquiry, he should testify with what he knows and allow all the other people to testify on this very important matter, Madam Speaker.

Committee Changes

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Point Douglas, with committee changes.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen); Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for Tuesday, June 23, 1998, for 6 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett); Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), for Wednesday, June 24, 1998, for 3 p.m.

Motions agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Gimli, with committee changes.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for Pembina, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments—this was effective June 22, '98, at 7:30 p.m.—be amended as follows: Pembina (Mr. Dyck) for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh). This substitution was moved previously in committee and is now being moved in order for the House records to be accurate.

I move, seconded by the member for Pembina, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law

Amendments for June 23 at 6 p.m. be amended as follows: the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik); the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for the member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

Motions agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I believe there would be a willingness to waive private members' hour today, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to waive private members' hour? [agreed]

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, I am advised by my counterpart, the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that during concurrence this afternoon the ministers of Highways (Mr. Findlay), Sport (Mr. Stefanson), Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) and Justice (Mr. Toews) will be requested for some questions.

I would move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Madam 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.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Consideration of Concurrence Motion

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): The Committee of Supply has before it for its consideration the motion concurring in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1999.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Chairperson, I have a few questions for the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay).

Back in the beginning of the 1990s—I think, in fact, it was the spring of 1990 or late winter of 1990—VIA Rail announced that they were going to be reducing a large portion of their passenger rail network across the country. Of course, that put us at a disadvantage here in Manitoba, as it did elsewhere across the country, in the sense that there used to be passenger rail services provided to what we would call cottage country, into the Whiteshell area.

People who owned properties, Manitobans who owned property in that area utilized VIA Rail services to access their properties year-round in many cases. When VIA Rail services were cut back and weekend services were no longer provided—because a large portion of the people accessing their properties were working people and obviously only had weekend times available to move to their properties—they were unable to utilize the VIA Rail service, and it became a disadvantage for them to have what we would consider to be landlocked properties in that there was no road access.

It is my understanding that—and I have seen the newspaper articles with reference to the Caddy Lake property owners association, I believe it is—there were some concerns raised with respect to a road that is going to go through the Caddy Lake area to give access to the former VIA Rail passengers accessing their properties. I think it is in the Nora, Florence lakes area.

I am just wondering if the minister can give me an update on that situation. It is my understanding that that case has now worked its way through the courts and has concluded the court process, and I think it would give the minister the opportunity to comment fairly freely on the status of that particular road project and whether or not that road project is underway, what types of problems does the minister anticipate that will be encountered in the construction of that road, if any, and when he anticipates there would be a completion of that particular project now that it has concluded its court phase.

* (1440)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Well, Mr. Chairman, this is not a provincial road that is being discussed. As far as I

know, it does not involve the Department of Highways and Transportation. The cottage owners at Florence and Nora lakes want to have a road built through Crown land, Natural Resources territory, a road at their expense is my understanding.

We are not involved, to my knowledge, in the road. We may be asked to give some comment on the engineering of a road that might ultimately get built, but we are not directly involved, to my knowledge. I will check that for the member, but I think it is on Crown land, a Natural Resources road to be built by the users.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister tell me does that road that he comments is Crown land and his department is providing some engineering support services for, can he tell me, too, will that road cross through the park, the Mantario wilderness trail park, and perhaps even the Whiteshell Park as part of its route?

Mr. Chairperson: Before we continue, can I have leave for honourable members to pose their questions from their seats? Leave? [agreed]

Mr. Findlay: Well, Mr. Chairman, I do not have any information along the lines that the member is talking about as to where the route is. I think the most appropriate minister to ask would be Natural Resources, but I will attempt to find out more on the issue and get back to the member today or tomorrow.

Mr. Reid: Well, then, perhaps, Mr. Chairperson, from my feet, a question for the minister, can the minister tell me, did his department or any other government departments participate in the court case that involved the Caddy Lake property owners, and the Florence, Nora lakes property owners with respect to the construction of the road?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, not to my knowledge, not that I as minister am aware of or know about, but my only mention earlier about engineering would be if we were asked to, we might get involved in some degree of engineering to assist in the road. But to my knowledge we have not been asked and are not involved in a direct or indirect way with this road, but I will clarify that. There may be things going on in the department that have not come to my attention.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister tell me, has this road been constructed to this point in time, or if not, can he tell me at what stage this project is at at the current time?

Mr. Findlay: The question is whether it is under any level of construction, and maybe the Minister of Natural Resources might know, because I do not know.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Chairman, I understand the question was about the Caddy Lake road and the access being sought by the people who have lost access that they formerly had by rail going in past Caddy Lake.

The most recent information that I have is I believe there was some site preparation. I cannot confirm whether or not there is full-blown construction undertaken at this point or not, but I anticipate that there will be.

Mr. Reid: The Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) a few moments ago indicated, for the Minister of Natural Resources' information, that this particular road passes across obviously Crown land, and, it is my understanding, may impact a particular wilderness area, the Mantario Trail, for example. Can you tell me: were environmental studies undertaken for the construction of this road, and, if so, what were the results of those hearings?

Mr. Cummings: My memory is being stretched a little bit, Mr. Chairman, but there was an environmental licensing that was required by the proponents to acquire licensing. The trail that the member refers to, I am going to reserve comment on that until I have my facts straight in my mind. I am going to have to think about that for a moment.

Mr. Reid: Because this particular road that both ministers indicate is in at least the preliminary stages, if not further along, in the construction stage, can you tell me, because this road crosses or utilizes Crown land, which belongs to the people of Manitoba, who is going to have access and use of that particular road?

Mr. Cummings: There was some debate originally whether this should be a gated road or not, but I am trying to remember what the final conclusion was in that respect. Certainly what we wanted to achieve is an

environmentally acceptable method of these cottagers accessing their property. There certainly are valid reasons to make sure that they have that opportunity, seeing as how they had their other method of access withdrawn.

The licensing goes back quite some time since the licensing was undertaken, but the concerns were raised and I believe dealt with in an appropriate fashion at that time. The public access, it strikes me that this is not a gated road. Therefore, while it would be a definite terminus in private land, I do not believe there was any gate that was put onto the access. But I can confirm that one way or the other.

Mr. Reid: Can either minister tell me, Mr. Chairperson, whether or not I or any other member of the public, whether it be Manitobans or tourists coming into Manitoba, will have the ability to utilize that road where that road is on Crown land—I understand if there is some restriction where that road may terminate onto private property, perhaps in the sense I believe there is a parking lot that may be involved at the northern end of that road—whether or not, excluding the part that is private land, all members of the public will have the ability to utilize that road to access those lakes and that particular part of the province?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Chairman, I just checked my desk, and the appropriate information that I should have available for me to answer these questions I do not have in front of me at the moment. So I believe the member obviously has a reason for asking the question. So I do not want to put any misleading responses on the record. I will be quite glad to answer that question in a few moments if he wishes to let me access the information.

But remember that when we are talking about public lands, he is correct that we try to make sure that unnecessary limitations are not placed on people's access, but he should also remember that this is work that would be paid for privately. This is not public funds that was involved here. That raised the question, of course, originally, whether or not there should be some gate. There is a provision within the parks act where restricted access can be placed on roads for a number of reasons, as the member might well be aware, but I will have to check what the precise answer is. Thank you.

* (1450)

Mr. Reid: A question for the Minister of Highways, Mr. Chairperson, with respect, because he says that he is not aware or his department is not playing a role in the development of this road project to Florence and Nora lakes through the Caddy Lake area.

Is the minister aware or have there been any financial contributions made by the provincial government from any of the government departments towards the construction of this road project—because it is my understanding that there may be some difficulties with respect to the development of this road; it is quite Canadian Shield-type of terrain, a lot of rock face and water areas, which, as the minister well knows from his departmental budgets, the cost involved in trying to construct road projects in that type of terrain—whether or not there are any monies that are coming from any of the government departments either by way of a loan or as a grant towards the development of this Florence, Nora lakes highway or road project?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, there are none that I know of.

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): I would like to ask the Minister of Highways a few questions. I know we have delved into this to some degree during the Estimates process, but today I have the Provincial Auditor's Report, got it yesterday, Value-for-Money audits. The report says some very positive things about what has happened in the past and ongoing right now, but there is also a certain degree of criticism and an emphasis on pointing out what we could do better. I do not mean this as an attack. I am just saying there is always room to improve. Certainly there are some large areas or some large holes, some large gaps that need to be fixed.

As I am reading the Auditor's Report, Mr. Chair, I noticed that the conclusion and key findings are as follows, I will just read a little bit: "We concluded that while projects are prioritized, effective processes and sufficient information are not in place to ensure that the projects selected will contribute, to the fullest practical extent, toward the accomplishment of the Department's strategic objectives."

One of their key findings, and it is no surprise to us, I think we have discussed this before, is the age of the road bed, the pavement. At the current expenditure levels I think our rehabilitation cycle is approximately 41 years, and that is in the view of most experts much too long. In fact, the desired cycle would be under 20 years, I believe 18 to 20 years. The minister knows and I know, as well, that if you leave it much longer than that, after that 18- to 20-year period, then you are spending six bucks for every buck you could have spent earlier and get the same result. In other words, it becomes six times as expensive to do the fixing. If we do not put more money into the system, then obviously at some point we are looking at some major, major and costly problems.

The first recommendation I would like the minister to comment on, as well as my general statements, is the recommendation from the Auditor: "Adopt a least lifetime cost methodology in determining rehabilitation and maintenance strategies, priorities and budgets." If the minister would comment, please.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, the Auditor made a fair bit of comment on Highways and Transportation, and I would just say, though, in general answer to the, I think, three points that I caught the member saying about putting more money in so we can reduce the life cycle renewal time from 41 years down to 20 years, I think the members opposite will be in support of what I am going to say, in that as a province we collect, and as the member knows, a little less than \$200 million from the road system in fuel tax, we spend back on the system \$190 million to \$200 million a year between capital expenditures, maintenance expenses and operating expenses associated with the highways.

So we as a provincial government are in balance with what we collect from the road system and what we spend back, and, at the same time, the federal government was withdrawing from that network \$140 million to \$150 million a year. Yet they expect that system to be there, and they will not spend a single penny on rebuilding, resurfacing, maintaining, building bridges or any aspect of that road system, and I call that immoral, intolerable.

The attitude that the federal government has is that we as a province should bear the full responsibility—and

the Auditor sees it that way—of building the network, but we are only allowed, legally, to collect half the tax as a province. That is where the extra money is to build the network faster, and that demonstrates very clearly the urgency we have been putting behind this issue with the federal government which continually and religiously says no. They are getting away with it politically, although every organization I know, everybody who has made comment, says that the federal government has a responsibility to invest in the system as long as they are taxing it.

They can do one of two things; spend the money on the system to maintain it, to meet these objectives of lowering the life cycle time or withdraw from taxing and leave Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Alberta and every other Canadian province and territory an opportunity to collect more revenue to deal with the rebuilding of the infrastructure. We all want to do that, but we are limited in how we can do it because the taxing power has been taken away by the federal government who pulls the money out for whatever other use. So that is the really big issue.

I will point the member to the comment by the Auditor, that sufficient—I will get the right comment here. It says that the project selected will contribute to the fullest practical extent toward the accomplishment of the department's strategic objectives. What that will mean is that those roads of highest volume will get even more money than they are getting today, and those roads of lower volume where we are spending money, as I say, to every region of the province, the low-volume roads will get less precedence, because the wear and tear there is not as rapid as on the high-volume roads.

I say that that is just not acceptable in terms of looking after all Manitobans because that is sometimes the same philosophy as the federal government which says, well, if we are going to spend anywhere, it is going to be where the highest volumes are. Well, that means that the Toronto-Montreal corridor and Vancouver would get the money, not the Prairies because, comparatively, we have a lot less volume of traffic.

There was one other comment. Least lifetime cost methodology: Within the financial capabilities, I will

tell the member opposite I am absolutely confident that what our engineers give us is aimed at that objective, but at the same time, we try to spread the investment and the maintenance all over the province regardless of traffic volumes or use. This is not always a perfect science because not only traffic volumes but weather impacts, extreme one way or the other, can deteriorate a road faster than one would expect.

But we have done a lot of things in the department to decrease our unit cost and maximize the benefit we can get out of the dollars we spend on capital or maintenance, and I have some tremendous confidence that our engineers are doing that objective as well as is possible, given the climatic conditions and variables we have to deal with.

But if there is any culprit in all this, it is pointing one finger right at the federal government for their irresponsible position of collecting tax and not investing in rebuilding the system.

Mr. Jennissen: Well, I have no difficulty supporting the minister in his plea with the federal government to put more money into the road system. Obviously, they are putting in very little, just, on paper, a lit bit, I guess. That is not the problem. I think all Highways ministers across the country agree to that. The reality is, though, we are at an impasse. The reality is the system is wearing down faster than we are replacing it, and that cycle has to stop somewhere. If we do not do it now, we are going to be paying much more for it later on.

So I am asking the minister, in light of this impasse, are there not some other realities we have to deal with, some other solutions? I guess you could say there is not enough money, but I am not entirely convinced. Take, for example, what your government is doing in paying off the debt. Yes, it is laudable to pay off \$75 million, but you paid off \$150 million. That \$75 million could have gone to Highways. Of course, it could have gone to Health; it could have gone to Education. I am saying there perhaps is more flexibility there than the minister suggests. It may also mean fighting around that cabinet table a little harder to get more money for Highways. I mean, it is basic infrastructure. I am sure the minister is fighting hard, but I suggest he may have to fight even harder.

We have no difficulty on this side of the House to support him in his fight with the feds, but the feds are not about to change, and the fact is the roads are wearing down. So what are we going to do?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, my position is we cannot tolerate the feds being intransigent on this issue like they are. They have a responsibility. They must respond, and it is going to be dealt with at the premiers' level again, not just the Minister of Transportation but at the premiers' level. It is an issue that is on the table.

I mean, this is the federal government that in '93 when they got elected extolled all the virtues of \$6 billion of infrastructure investment, which was only \$2 billion of theirs, \$2 billion of provinces' and \$2 billion of municipal in money. Let us face it, when a dollar was spent, only 33 and a third cents of it was federal dollar, federal money in that dollar. They get all their 33 cents back in the form of taxes within a year because of dollars spent.

* (1500)

So it is an automatic win-win for them. Infrastructure is approved, they get their money back, our economic competitiveness is improved, and yet all the provinces are in favour of reinvesting in that. The last time around when there was that \$400-million extension, everybody agreed that some of that infrastructure investment should go into roads. We had set the stage for the next announcement of the federal government that we should invest in more infrastructure dollars, right across this country on a shared basis. The municipalities are in favour of that, the provinces are in favour of that, and the people who started this, the federal government, oops, no, no, we do not want to do that anymore. I mean, I do not understand their thinking.

Meanwhile, our roads, particularly that our commercial operators must use, are getting less competitive with the U.S. roads. The U.S. government has just announced \$218 billion over the next six years to be spent by Washington on the roads all across the United States, \$218 billion. The north-south corridor, I-29 and I-35, is a very prominent corridor that is going to get a fair bit of that money. The state of North Dakota is an example. Maybe I am crying over spilled

milk here, but the state of North Dakota, on the federal taxes collected in North Dakota, for every dollar that goes to Washington, they get \$1.84 back in highway investment. For every dollar that leaves Manitoba to Ottawa, we get zero back—zero. I cannot tolerate that we can just accept that answer from the feds and not continue to beat them over the head and say you have a responsibility. You want us to be competitive. You are advocating more and more trade agreements and extolling the virtues of us exporting, but how can we do it if we are less competitive because of our road infrastructure. It is critical. We cannot let them off the hook. We must stay that course.

I can tell the member, as he knows, that every province and territory in this country is absolutely on side with that. Again, federal stupidity, I guess, is the word to use. When the Crow was removed, they had the transition fund which everybody in the province that I heard from wanted for roads—municipalities, farm organizations—that we as a province would spend that money on roads. We had them right at the table ready to sign, and they walked away and said, no, we are spending it on something else; we do not believe we should spend it on roads. I mean, they are absolutely intransigent on this, but I cannot accept it, and I expect at the premiers' level we will get a better response in the months ahead.

Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Mr. Jennissen: Well, I concur with almost everything the minister is saying. Again, the federal government is very remiss in its duty to helping the transportation infrastructure. They have basically walked away from it on many levels; I understand that.

But still he has not answered the question about the provincial government being in this squeeze and having to divert some resources they do not wish to perhaps divert to the infrastructure, to highways, because if we are going at the rate we are going now, we are going to hit a very serious crunch. It will not be all of a sudden. It will not be day one minute and night the next, but it will be pretty disastrous.

I came out of northern Manitoba on the weekend, and I do not mind telling the minister, despite a fair chunk of cash that went into 391, we lost a muffler coming

out. We lost a windshield. We saw trucks in the ditch. We saw graders having to tow vehicles through. This is, you know, a major transportation artery to Leaf Rapids. It was pretty horrible road conditions, especially the first 30 or 40 kilometres that were, you know, upgraded, that is true, but were in extremely rough shape, have not been maintained properly, and people are very angry because they are seeing that the province may not have the money to fix the road, but certainly the costs are there. Their costs are there in broken windshields and mufflers and bumpers and cars themselves. So we are paying it. It is being offloaded onto the people of Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake and so on. And they are very unhappy with—

An Honourable Member: Nelson House.

Mr. Jennissen: And Nelson House and Moose Lake and Cross Lake and so on, Norway House.

I want to get back to the second key finding from the Provincial Auditor's Report, and that is, and I will read a little bit: "Management advises that the results of these benefit/cost analyses as well as socio-economic factors are available for consideration in determining project priorities. However, an analysis that links the results of the highway needs analyses, the benefit/cost analyses and identified socio-economic factors, has not been developed. It is not clear, therefore, that the benefit/cost analyses of socio-economic factors have been adopted as significant planning inputs. Such an analysis would promote transparency in decision making."

I guess what I am asking the minister is, you know, I am not quite sure how we decide what is a priority, what is not a priority. I find it very difficult to believe that 391 at this moment is not a priority. I mean, we have two to three thousand people up there basically stranded. They cannot get through on the road. Well, they can, but at serious risk to their vehicle, and I would ask the minister, there has to be a way that we can make some of those northern roads passable. The socioeconomic factor has to be the factor that these are people that also pay taxes, these are people that also provide a very important economic base for the province in terms of mining or perhaps it is in the forestry industry, but we cannot simply go by volume, as the minister pointed out in his last answer. If we are

going to restrict ourselves to high-volume areas, that is where we fix the roads only, we are just going to be totally out of luck up North. Right now the roads are not passable. Something has to be done. We cannot continue operating like this.

Mr. Findlay: Well, Mr. Chairman, that comment can come from any region of the province because of the impact of big trucks on our roads that were never built to carry these trucks. It is comments that come from the bridge people that there are bridges out there that need to be rebuilt, shorn up to carry the extra weights, and I want to remind the member that he is reading from an Auditor's Report which talks only about paved surface and only about the rehabilitation of the paved surface. It is not talking about our concrete roads, it is not talking about our AST roads, and it is not talking about our gravel roads. It just zeroed in on one aspect, the paved roads.

The member has identified, as I am fully aware, there is a much broader context to these roads than what is being identified here. It is 2,400 bridges and water-carrying structures that we have on our highways. All those are part of our expenditure. There are interchanges for safety and turning lanes for safety. That is all part of our expenditure. Our expenditure is not just on repaving road surfaces. In fact, if anything, that is no more than one-third of our highway network, and I want the member to be very aware that they are focusing on a very narrow aspect of the total responsibilities of the department.

Transparency and decision making, the member knows I have a request list of \$1.5 billion of projects and \$100 million a year to attack that with, but I get input, we get input, cabinet gets input from the Department of Highways, which I bring. I get input from the municipalities which I hear from, from literally hundreds of them. There are pretty close to 200 municipal governments in this province that we hear from that have priorities and say exactly what the member says: our roads are the most important in the province and must be dealt with at the expense of others, I guess.

Certainly we have highway committees on many of our roads, groups of people. A 391 committee exists to give input. We get input from MLAs and I get input from a lot of citizens, particularly people that are

investing or need to haul heavy freight on our roads. I get input from so many directions. We try to move the money around to meet the most critical elements of need in every region. I want to remind the member that, if you let somebody else make those decisions, they will make decisions on traffic volume where they can get the best bang for the buck, and that means the low-volume roads, those under 200 vehicles a day, would get shortchanged, and 391 fits right into that category, where we are investing this year I think it is two-point-some million dollars on a stretch of road.

We spend 11 percent of our highway money in the North, where there is 11 percent of our network. Those are low-volume roads, in all honesty, and some of our municipal roads across southern Manitoba that are off the main beaten trail, those PRs, those 3-number PRs, low-volume roads, we have to keep working as much as we can on those roads. You cannot ignore them. We look after the whole system and all aspects of the system. We do not just concentrate on the paved-surface roads.

So although a lot of the comments in the Auditor's Report are legitimate, I want the member to be very aware, it is very narrowly focused on certain types of roads, but that is not all the responsibility. For instance, I think I mentioned this in Estimates, if we are spending \$8 million right now, it is a big chunk, 8 percent of our capital budget, on resurfacing the decks of the bridge over the Red River on the north Perimeter, but if we do not do that, that bridge cannot carry the heavy trucks on an ongoing basis. So it is mandatory, expended on that short stretch of total highway, \$8 million. It is incredible what kind of expenditures are needed to keep up with the commercial needs out on the road system.

In whole, I am very transparent with everybody on all the things that I receive, and information I give back. I do not hold anything back. The reality is more money is needed for the system, and the reality is that certain entities collecting taxes that are not contributing to the system, and it blows my mind that nobody ever calls them to account.

* (1510)

Mr. Jennissen: I thank the minister for that information. Still I feel that it is like we are on a

moving staircase or a moving platform, like we take six steps forward, but it pulls us back seven steps. I know that feeling, that sinking feeling, and I still feel that the province, despite the federal government's refusal to put more money into the system, we still have to find additional dollars. The minister still has not answered why did we put the extra \$75 million paying off the debt, when perhaps we should be dealing with infrastructure which is going to cost us much more in the future if we do not fix it now.

I will put in one more pitch for northern roads. I know I do this quite frequently, sort of a parting shot that I am sure the minister has heard before.

An Honourable Member: Put one in for a southern road.

Mr. Jennissen: My honourable colleague says put one in for southern roads. We will worry about the south later. They usually are No. 1; we tend to be No. 2.

That is that when the minister talks about roads, what volume, the traffic volume, I think we need to be aware that there is a real factor here in terms of people not using the road from Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake because it is so bad. I mean, you do not travel up and down that easily. You have to make a serious decision to even travel. If the road were better, the volume would certainly increase. Tourism would certainly increase. In fact, I met a group of American tourists on the plane, I think it was yesterday morning, that were really angry at the Sherridon road, they are not coming back. This is not good for business. So, I mean, volume has to be looked at in context. It may well be that people do not dare to travel on those roads because they are in that bad a condition.

Secondly, many of the northerners are very good at car pooling. It is not unusual for five or six bodies to be in one vehicle because it is not an easy trip to make. So it is different than just strictly volume here. We have to have northern criteria, and I think my honourable colleague from Thompson is always pointing that out. Whether it is in health or in education or infrastructure, we have to have slightly different criteria because we are living in quite a different part of the world, Mr. Chair.

I would like to go on to one more, well, several short points if I could, and getting away now from northern roads, that is that the Provincial Auditor says the department is in the process of implementing systems that will improve the accuracy of the pavement surface condition information, as well as truck volume and weight information. Good quality information of this nature will contribute to improved decision making regarding project priorities. I would like to ask the minister, what is being developed in terms of better information of truck volume and weight, as well as surface road conditions?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Chairman, if the opposition would indulge me while I answer the question that the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) had asked earlier about Caddy Lake?

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Dyck): Is there leave? [agreed]

Mr. Cummings: The question about the timing of the Caddy Lake road, I do not believe it is finished as of yet, but, yes, construction is and will proceed.

The question about whether or not there was access to this road, free and open to the public, I knew there was something about that issue that was more than just an independent decision-making process within Natural Resources. I reference the licence, the environmental licensing process which was begun back in 1993, and one of the major concerns of those who were opposed to the environment licence was the increase, potential increase, in volume of traffic, lack of privacy, and all those matters that were raised.

I am not going to get into the philosophical argument about whether or not that was a good thing or a bad thing, but in the end the recommendations were considered. The recommendations of the licensing process were that where possible, the concerns of the local people be considered in licensing the road. Their concerns in the main were about, as I have described, privacy and traffic. Therefore there was and is a restriction being placed on that road for public access. It will not normally be open for the general public. It will be restricted to the use of the people in the area, and that is not just to provide access for the people who

are building the road, and they are building it with their own money.

Normally, where faced with these types of decisions, the Department of Natural Resources would, in fact, make them open to public access, but because of the Caddy Lake interests that were considered collateral interests, at this time it will be a restricted access road.

Mr. Reid: I thank the Minister of Natural Resources for that information. He says there is going to be restricted access to the Florence, Nora lakes properties via this new road that is under construction now. Can the minister tell me, I take it then that what is going to happen in this situation is that there is going to be some type of a locking mechanism across this road, perhaps a concrete, steel barrier with chains and locks that will be on it? That would probably be the standard method of restricting access to that road.

I do not expect you will have some type of park warden at the entrance to that road. It would cost you too much to have that, and the property owners. So I take it it will be some type of fixed structure and that there will be so many keys given out to people, because it will be restricted access to that road. Will all of the property owners in the Caddy Lake and the Florence and Nora lakes area have access to their properties via this road, or is it going to be restricted to just a select few people?

Mr. Cummings: Well, there is a certain innuendo in the manner in which the member asks his question. He mentioned if all the property owners in Florence and Nora, and I am not sure if he is alluding to the fact that there might be someone down there who has been opposed to and has not contributed to this road who might now wish to use it. I do not know if that is the case.

I do know that a group of private people have put up the money to build the road. Whatever method of restricting access to that road that they choose will probably, as long as it is not an eyesore or intrusive in some ways, I imagine would be acceptable.

Interestingly enough, and while this does not answer the question, it does address the philosophical concern that goes with this. Very often a gate invites a trespass.

I am not too sure how successful they will be in imposing successfully a restriction of a gate, because obviously they are not going to spend big dollars trying to put up a secure fence. It is simply intended to be restricted access, and they will do that by whatever means, which I assume will probably be modest means, that they can get that message to the public.

Mr. Reid: The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Cummings) references a substantial cost for the construction of this particular road project. I take it then that either he himself as Minister of Natural Resources or in conjunction with the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), there was a proposal brought forward by the property owners of the Florence, Nora lakes for the construction of this road across Crown lands and through a wilderness trail area. Can you tell me: what was the total cost of this project?

Mr. Cummings: I do not know the cost that the people would have paid in the end, because they went out and sought their own private contractor. I know that I choked when I heard the original cost when they were asking for some involvement from the government, and, of course, the answer was no. Whatever number they were able to negotiate with a contractor in the area, frankly, I guess that is their business.

Mr. Reid: The Department of Natural Resources does not have a clue as to what the cost of this project was. The Department of Highways and Transportation may be providing some engineering support services. You have given permission to go across Crown lands to construct this road. You are going through a provincial wilderness trail area, and yet you do not have a clue as to what the contents or the cost of the project is as one of the criteria for development?

Mr. Cummings: The member, as I understood his question, asked me to put a dollar value on what the people of the area would have been paying to have this improvement put in place. I can guarantee him that it was not a small dollar because I know, in general terms, the amount of work that would have to be done. If I were to go back and search for him for information from various people within the department, perhaps I can find that number for him if it is, in fact, a public number.

But I would be interested in his motive for wanting to know why. When someone is building a road that is obviously going to cost them a fair amount of money and they are willing to do it at no cost to the public in an area that used to be serviced by another means, I do not understand his motivation for wanting that information.

Mr. Reid: It is my understanding, from information that has come to my attention, that the 50 or so cottage owners in that area are going to contribute some \$12,000 per property towards the construction of that road. So that puts the total monies available for the construction of that road at about \$600,000. Now, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), perhaps, needs to answer this question with respect to the overall cost of the development of that road, knowing that this is going across Canadian Shield area and that there is considerable expense in constructing through such a wilderness area.

Can the Minister of Highways and Transportation indicate what the cost of that project is? Because I would imagine his department should have been involved with at least part of the approval process or at least involved in the decision making with the approval for this road to go ahead.

* (1520)

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Chairman, first of all, after the principle of whether or not a road should be allowed in this area, one of the main concerns that needs to be dealt with by any responsible government is whether or not appropriate protection measures are being taken in relationship to the environment. People are sometimes willing to put up with a lesser standard of road, but they certainly will not be able to convince the neighbours or convince my department, for that matter, that they should be allowed to do something that is quite detrimental to the environment, the stream crossings and bogs, et cetera. Certainly any kind of work in that area is going to have some effect, so the conditions of the environment licence are very much the overriding issue.

I do know that the proponents were of the opinion that they would not be able to finance this until they were able to find a more reasonable cost. That is why I responded to the member in the way I did, not to poke

a stick in his eye but to remind him that these people went out and sought a contractor, that they were probably accepting a lesser standard of road than a lot of us would want under maybe similar circumstances, but they were becoming quite desperate, as I understand it, for access to their area. For that reason, I was a little curious about why he was concerned about the volume of dollars that we are spending.

Mr. Reid: Well, the information that is coming to my attention is that the province is contributing to the development of this project. That causes me some concern, and that is why I asked that question. I do not begrudge the property owners in Florence and Nora lakes access to their properties. That is not the intent of my question here. I mean, they are landlocked in there, and they need to have access to their properties. It is unfortunate that VIA Rail decided that they were going to withdraw their services to the people in northwestern Ontario, but that is a fact of life now, and it needs to be dealt with.

My concern here is that there are other property owners in the area now and perhaps other property owners in the future who may wish to buy property in those lake areas. How will this decision that you have made now affect those people, the people who will buy property in the future? Will they have to contribute \$12,000, or will that cost be higher in the future for those people wanting to develop, perhaps, a cottage lot in the Florence and Nora lakes area, or perhaps on Caddy Lake? What decisions have you made in that regard to future property holdings?

Mr. Cummings: I am going to have to give the member a general response at the moment in terms of what has happened traditionally in the parks system. Remember that Manitoba—this has to be contexted appropriately—is unique in Canada, if not in North America, in that we have cottaging opportunities within our parks system, and very often where what are considered private roads are put in, one of the fears of people in the area where a private road goes in is generally, well, once it is in there, then others will decide they want to come in and build, and then that will increase the usage.

Generally speaking, those who come in later and where it has, in fact, been privately established as a

road, they end up negotiating whatever arrangements they may wish to in terms of use of the road. That gives rise to what I just said earlier, that people say, well, then additional cottaging or additional traffic may evolve, ergo the change in the lifestyle. You could even argue, and I suppose this is a derogatory term, but the drawbridge mentality, that once people get in and they are happy with their own area, they are then reluctant to allow or to see others come in and share in the quiet and the beauty, if you will, of the area that they are in.

But I am not able to provide him with a direct answer as to whether someone who may want to in the future acquire usage of that road, if he would be able to negotiate some contribution to the road and then gain access to it. I suppose that is a question that may need to be dealt with in the future, but it is not one that I have the answer to today and probably has been accommodated in the process laid out, but I do not have the answer in front of me.

Mr. Reid: Does the Minister of Natural Resources anticipate, because this is a new road through a wilderness area, whether or not his department may be in a position to grant logging licences to logging companies that may wish to come in and log in that portion of our province?

Mr. Cummings: If there are forest management licences in the area, then why would we not?

Mr. Reid: So, in that case then, there is a potential to log in the Mantario Trail area in the future then.

Mr. Cummings: We have been around this place long enough, Mr. Chairman, that I am not going to be tricked into answering a question that I do not entirely know the answer to, but that was why I prefaced my answer to the last question: if there are forest management licences available in the area, then someone I think could logically assume that logging would occur there at some point. [interjection]

Mr. Chairman, the opposition hurls across the way that, well, then, that is why we put the road in. If we wanted to put in a logging road for logging, then I suppose whoever wanted to take the logs out would have been happy to pay for it, and then the whole area

would have been opened up under different circumstances, would it not?

Mr. Reid: With respect, I go back to my earlier question to either minister. The province has given permission through its environmental hearing process—or through environmental licensing I should say—to the construction of a private road through a Mantario Trail area, wilderness park. You have given permission to utilize Crown land owned by the people of Manitoba for the use of a private road, and you have restricted the use of that road to a group of property owners when they, as residents of the province of Manitoba, should have some control or some say in the decisions that are made with respect to the use of this particular road.

I do not understand why you restrict the use to a select group of people. I guess I need to ask the question, what role did Mr. Gordon play in the development of this road project, and what are his connections to your party?

Mr. Cummings: Well, I can generally trust the member for Transcona to ask the sleaze question. I do not have a hot clue what Mr. Gordon's relationship is to the party.

Mr. Reid: Perhaps I should ask the same question of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay). Can you tell me who were the proponents—or perhaps to either minister—of this project? Who were the front people for this project that was brought forward to your government?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Chairman, if the member for Transcona thinks that the only reason people of good will in this government do anything is because of political connections, then thank God he is on that side of the House.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Dyck): Order, please. If we could direct our comments, please, be more specific if possible.

Mr. Cummings: I will be more direct to the question, Mr. Chairman. I am quite incensed by the angle that the member wants to take with this questioning. I gave him an answer to begin with, and the Minister of Highways (Mr. Findlay) and I just looked at each other

and shrugged. I mean, why would either one of us know or care when we are dealing with an issue of this nature. It was access in a remote area—people who had no opportunity to access their cottaging because the railway access had been withdrawn, and the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) can take that and do anything he wants with it.

But I am very concerned about the preamble to that question when he referenced the logging issue, and I would like to remind him that logging in this province and forest management licensing also requires, first of all, the clearance and the management requirements that are imposed under forest management licensing, and secondly, the environmental licensing that goes with that.

I used the term earlier about drawbridge thinking. It strikes me that the member for Transcona, he says he does not resent someone having access to their cottage. It also, however, I think, should be observed that apparently he is not happy about the idea that there might be a forest management licence in that area.

* (1530)

Mr. Reid: I will tell you what I am disappointed in—and for either minister. I am disappointed in the fact that there will be property owners there now who currently hold properties and pay taxes on those properties to the Province of Manitoba, and these people will not have access to their properties because this road will be restricted access to the people that you gave the licensing to for the construction of this road through a wilderness trail area, across Crown lands, and these people will be restricted in their ability to access their properties because they do not have the financial wherewithal to contribute the \$12,000 to the construction of this road. You must know, if you have any heart for these people who are being left out of this decision because they do not have the financial capability, they will be the ones that will be disadvantaged as a result of the decision you have made for the construction of this road. That is why I raise this issue.

If you want to do it on the basis of fairness, you would give all the property owners there now in that

particular area—because it goes across Crown land and through a wilderness trail area and perhaps there will be logging licences issued in the future for use of this road, the taxpayers of Manitoba own this land. It is not a private road going across private land. It is a private road, as you call it, across Crown land owned by the taxpayers of Manitoba. Every resident of Manitoba owns that land, and you are denying access to those property owners who do not have the money, the \$12,000-plus, to contribute to the construction of that road. They will be denied access to their land. That is why I am raising these issues. It is a question of fairness for those people who are involved here.

You have made the decision as a part of your government to deny them that access. I do not think that is fair. Yes, the people who are living in that area who have their property should have access to their cottages. I do not have a problem with that, as long as the proper environmental process is followed, the proper precautions are taking place, and the province plays a role in providing some guidance or criteria for the development of that project—by all means.

But you, as a result of your decisions, are denying access; you are restricting it to the people who have money, and that is your decision. Perhaps you can explain why you have made that decision to restrict those other people from using that road.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Chairman, I am reading from comments that refer to the conditions of the environment licence: an Environment Act licence was issued on May 2, 1995, for the Florence-Nora Access Road Inc. for the construction and operation of the road. The licence requires that the road be constructed as a private access road to serve only the existing cottages on Florence and Nora lakes.

So I would suggest that if he has an argument it is with the conditions of the licence.

Mr. Reid: Then I ask the minister, do I interpret what he has just told me here with respect to the licence that every property owner existing and perhaps in the future will have access to their properties utilizing this road?

Mr. Cummings: No. I just said that it was restricted.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Chairperson, the minister said to the property owners in the area. Does that mean all property owners in the area?

Mr. Cummings: The wording here as I understand what would be in the licence is as—and I did not say property owners. It says existing cottages.

Mr. Reid: So then if I am a property owner or a cottage owner, describe it whatever you will, use whatever term you want, the cottage is on a piece of land and is a piece of property. If I am an existing cottage owner in that area, the Florence and Nora lakes to Caddy Lake areas now, will I have unrestricted access to my property as a result of your environmental licence here?

Mr. Cummings: Again, Mr. Chairman, I am not going to let my words be twisted or my lack of having the detail in front of me be twisted in such a way that my words can be used to undo what was the original intent of the licence and the agreement for access of that site. If the member has a specific concern, and I believe he does, about someone existing or potential that feels that they have been disadvantaged in some way by this licensing process, then I would be quite glad to hear it out. But what I have just conveyed to the member is that it is my understanding that the number of people in the area were very concerned about the volumes and increases of traffic, lack of maintaining their security. I do not mean the Florence-Nora people alone; I mean the Caddy Lake people, who did not want additional activity in the area. Therefore it seemed appropriate that the conditions as we have been discussing for restricted access would be made.

Now, the member is making a case that there is someone else out there who is apparently at Florence and Nora. Perhaps he would like to elaborate and be more specific. I do not mind if he does it off the record, but he can do it on the record if he wants to. If he wishes to write to me about it, that is fair. I am not intractable, but I am not going to put something on the record. This has already been in the courts, and the courts have ruled that the process was appropriate and that this would proceed. People love to quote ministers in court off of Hansard, so I am not going to answer the question until I have the precise detail in front of me.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, I think I remember the gist of the question awhile ago. I do not want to be too critical, but I have to comment that the member is saying that the \$75 million that was paid against the debt, in addition to what was required, should be spent on something else.

Well, I think the member is really starting to realize now the incredible burden of debt that was run up years past and that we had to pay interest on. There is an additional \$600 million of money spent to pay interest on old debt. The Pawley government contributed \$3 billion to that debt and has saddled us with having to repay that debt and pay the interest until it is paid down. So I think the member now understands the burden of debt that governments have had to deal with in the '90s that was incurred in the '80s. That is very negative to being able to deal with these things in front of us, whether it is highway construction, health, education or any other expense in government.

The member also must know that we added \$10 million to our budget this year, \$7 million in capital, \$3 million on maintenance, and we have to live within the reality. One could argue, no, we should not have paid \$75 million more in debt, but an awful lot of Manitobans said: pay that debt down as fast as you can so your interest payments in the future are less and that frees up more money out of your normal income through taxation to spend on things like roads.

* (1540)

The member asked if we had additional capacity to measure truck weights and truck volumes. Clearly we do. We have what is called a weigh-in-motion kind of technology that will allow us to go out and put a mat on the highway and in a short period of time determine the kinds of trucks that are running over it, the kinds of axle weights. If the axle weights are seen to be exceeding the maximum, then we can move in with enforcement to clean things up in that area. We are involved in what is called an asset management program with Saskatchewan and the City of Saskatoon where we will be developing a process by which we can do a better job of asset management, which is new technology that we hope to be able to use to give us more information along the line of knowing the lifetime

and how we could prolong the lifetime of a particular paved surface.

So the basic answer is yes, new technology is there. It is being used and new asset management programs are going to be put in place.

Mr. Jennissen: I thank the minister for that information, as well as the little lecture on the burden of debt. I would like to maybe, as a counter to that, point out our sister province of Saskatchewan where the Devine government left them with a burden of debt, and yet, despite this, I believe Saskatchewan is putting \$2.2 billion over the next 10 years into capital road projects, which would then, I presume, translate into roughly double what we are putting into our roads.

Now, we could argue that maybe they have more roads, maybe the roads are rundown more, and they took later to fix them, which strengthens my earlier argument which means we have got to get at this as soon as possible. But it certainly does point out that, if the previous government leaves you a debt burden like Devine did to Romanow, it does create some problems. Despite that, the Saskatchewan government still is putting in a lot more money into roads than we are, for whatever reason.

Having said that, I would like to make the point that the Provincial Auditor also says that the department does not conduct post-implementation reviews of completed construction and rehabilitation projects to determine whether anticipated benefits were achieved. In other words, when the work is done, the road is completed, we do not really test whether we achieved what we said we were going to achieve over time. Is there anything in the works that would address that concern?

Mr. Findlay: That is something we have not done is assess after we have built a road, and it is something we will look at in terms of the asset management initiative that we are involved in with the government of Saskatchewan and the City of Saskatoon. But, again, as I say, that is a new initiative that we have been involved in developing for approximately a year now, and we expect it to start bearing some fruit in the next year or so and that aspect that the member mentions will be covered in it.

I also want to, while I am on my feet, just remind the member that once in a while on northern roads it is not always criticism. I have gotten some letters and editorials in the northern papers of recent time that congratulate and thank us. They do acknowledge that a lot of complaining goes on, and once in a while they realize maybe we should be given some credit for doing a few things right. Even the odd person tells us how nice the road can be and drive at a speed that maybe would not be accepted by the police and get along quite nicely, so it is not always gloom and doom.

That is basically the answer I would like to give the member. We are moving forward. We have to do a better job of understanding our asset and managing our asset and seeing the consequence of the nature of rebuild that we do. There are certain roads, and I guess the one that comes to mind right now in western Manitoba is Highway 16—was resurfaced west of Minnedosa approximately five or six years ago, and because of much higher than expected truck volume, that road is not standing up to that as well as we would like it to.

So some lessons will be learned from that in terms of rebuilding other sections of that road. That section west of Russell to the Saskatchewan border, an additional basically two to two-and-a-half inches of asphalt was put on just to deal with the extra weights that that road is now carrying. So we learn as we go, and that is really the nature of the question the member has asked. The follow-up investigation helps us learn as we go.

Mr. Jennissen: Perhaps my concluding question, unless something really urgent emerges in the next few seconds, is that the departmental response to what the Provincial Auditor said was the department believes that Manitoba compares favourably with other jurisdictions relative to its investment in these infrastructure projects. I am not willing to quibble with the minister over this, yet I am still puzzled about the Saskatchewan expenditures which seem to be considerably higher than in our province.

I wonder if the minister could explain that because they are obviously in the next 10 years spending double of what we are spending, and we certainly need good roads. That is what the Auditor is calling for, and that

is what the CAA in Manitoba supports and what we all want. I guess the question is, directly, why Saskatchewan can put twice as much into roads than what we are doing.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Chairman, when we became the government in 1988, the provincial capital expenditure on roads—let us talk about that number as opposed to any other number—was down around \$85 million in Manitoba. It is now up to \$105 million, so we spent more over the course of time. At the same time, the Saskatchewan government expenditure was up around \$120 million 10 years ago, and it got down to \$50 million two years ago.

Saskatchewan has 50 percent more roads than we do. We have 18,000 kilometres; they have 27,000 kilometres. So they were all the way down to \$50 million per year expenditure and have been there for two or three years. They have made an announcement they will spend two-and-a-half billion over 10 years, which works out to \$250 million a year, but we have talked to their officials and their minister, and they say, you know, we have got that out in front of us. Part of that is transfers to municipalities which means not for provincial roads but for municipal roads, and they are not going to achieve the target in the first year or two. They just cannot budget enough money.

So they are not spending twice as much as us at this moment in time, if you want to compare apples to apples. They have a long-term objective of investing more in the roads, and they absolutely, absolutely expect federal dollars to help fill that gap in. As two provinces in the Prairies, there could not be two provinces that are on the same agenda more than we are in Highways. They do not see how they can ever budget that commitment, but they do expect fully that federal dollars will help them deal with that, as we expect and demand that federal dollars help us deal with the deficit that we have in terms of our infrastructure, because a lot of the impact on infrastructure is because of federal decisions that allow more rail line to be abandoned. It pushes more freight off of rail onto road by the rail closures.

These are federal decisions that impact particularly the prairie provinces, and they will not put money in here. When it is the Minister of Agriculture dealing

with low grain prices, the federal government will not come to the table, but yet if there is some problem with the fishing industry on the east or west coast, it is 100 percent, 100 percent federal dollars, without any questions asked. It is just astounding.

So we have to stay after them. The member earlier said we should not go after it; maybe the federal government said no, we have got to change what we do. We cannot let them off the hook because they are doing it elsewhere. Why are we always where they draw the money from and never contribute back to our economy? They are drawing it out of us, whether it is highway taxes or whether it is EI. The money is coming out of the Prairies, and they are spending big money on the two coasts. That is immoral and unfair, and we will argue with our partners in other provinces that they must come to the table. Otherwise, we have serious problems down the road, I will agree.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I want to ask the Minister responsible for Sport (Mr. Stefanson) a few more questions about the Pan Am Games, given some new information that I have received since we completed the Estimates process.

At that time, I had been discussing some concerns about the staffing for the games. The minister at that time said that only 14 out of the 170 people that have been hired so far were from out of province, and I have since been told that nine of those 14 are consultants that have previously worked on the Atlanta Olympics.

I, first of all, would like to know if the minister can confirm that, that there are nine out of those 14 out-of-province people are not on salary but are on a consultant's fee, a thousand dollars per day plus expenses.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Chairman, I can provide some partial information in response to that question, and I will certainly undertake to provide the remainder to the member. The information I have, as she mentioned, is that there are currently 170 staff or employees for the Pan Am Games Society. Of that number, 14 are non-Manitobans, and of that number, four are non-Canadians or they are Americans. I know that all four of those people, the four Americans, worked on the

Olympic Games in Atlanta. Whether there are five more out of the remaining 10, I would have to confirm to her the number of nine.

She also referred to some financial compensation. I am not able today to either confirm or deny that, but I will certainly undertake to provide as much information as I can on that issue.

Just as a point of interest, this whole issue of people working on different games, I am advised by the Pan Am Games Society that there were approximately 150 Canadians who actually worked on the Olympic Games in Atlanta. So, to a certain extent, it is not uncommon that there are individuals who come from other areas to work on games, and the member for Radisson and I discussed this during Estimates.

* (1550)

It is certainly our objective that the majority, which is the case here, of the staff positions will be filled by Manitobans. The majority of the benefits ultimately should flow to Manitobans, whether it is Manitoba suppliers. Obviously, there are going to be significant volunteers. I believe the number I gave committee the other day was, I think, as of May 9, there some 11,716 volunteers already signed up. I believe that number is now up over 12,000, but certainly the intention is to maximize the benefits and the opportunities for Manitobans.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Chairperson, just focusing for the time being on the job that these consultants that are being brought in are doing, I am wondering if the minister has also had it reported to him by a number of staff that there is a lot of the local community that are not very happy with the work of these consultants.

They are having a huge impact, I have been told, because they are responsible for what is called fit out. I am wondering if the minister has been made aware that they are making decisions in a very top-down authoritarian model without really consulting with the local people who know their sport and know how it needs to be played and to be managed here in Manitoba, that there is a sense that decisions are not being made to really benefit the sport in the long run. I am going to give some specific examples of that. But

after reading the column in the paper over the weekend quoting Mr. Jim Daly, the head of the '67 games, who has been concerned for awhile that there has not been enough authority given to local sport organizations in these Pan Am Games for '99—and this seems to confirm what the sport associations themselves are saying, that they feel like the decisions are being made by the consultants who were brought in that really do not know Manitoba and do not know what is needed by the sports here.

So I am wondering if the minister is aware of these concerns and problems and if he has talked with his representatives on the board for the Pan Am Society, if there is any discussion of this at that level, if there are going to be any changes made in resolutions to the problem of having people who really do not understand the situation locally trying to dictate decisions that the local sport associations will essentially have to live with for a long, long time.

Mr. Stefanson: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am certainly aware of the concern that the member raises. She did raise similar concerns when we were in committee, and there has been some coverage through some of the local media outlining similar concerns. I have had some discussions with our representatives and others involved with the Pan Am Games Society, and I think the challenge is striking that right balance as the games are unfolding, but there is a need to ensure that you have the kind of expertise that is required to run the games on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

It is not uncommon for games to bring in that expertise to a certain extent. It even happened with the Canada Games in Brandon. I think the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) was out at those games for a few days. I had the opportunity to participate and watch some of the events over a few days in Brandon, and I think most are suggesting that those were the best ever Canada Games put on in our country.

So, again, this concept of bringing in some people with particular games expertise is not uncommon and, in fact, quite the opposite, is now what many would describe as basically the norm. I think the point is a very valid one, that we want to also ensure that every

opportunity is given to Manitobans to maximize opportunities and benefits, whether it is in the area of being employees, whether it is in the area of the role they play as volunteers, whether it is in the area of our sport governing bodies.

So, certainly, the issue is a very important one, and I am aware of it and sensitive to it, as I believe most people involved with the Pan Am Games Society are.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I think it is important to look more seriously at this. The minister says that they hope to strike a balance, but I am wanting a little bit more definite explanation as to what is going to be done about this problem.

The sport organizations and the local people working on the Pan Am Games have explained it quite clearly that the people being brought in to assist are experienced and knowledgeable about putting on big events. They do not have sport-specific knowledge, and they should not be ignoring and dismissing the sport-specific knowledge of the local Manitobans who are very concerned that money is being wasted, that decisions are being made that are not going to leave the legacy of facilities that we want to see here in Manitoba.

I am going to give the minister an example. I am wondering if he is aware of this, specifically with track and field. With the proposal from the Atlanta people, for lack of a better phrase to refer to them—that is how they are phrased or referred to by the local sport associations is the Atlanta people—these consultants were recommending that Max Bell not receive the funds for upgrading.

The local expertise wanted to have the investment in the Max Bell Centre. It is an indoor facility. It would have much more long-term benefit to Manitoba, rather than what the consultants wanted to do which was to put a counterclockwise “J” outside the Pan Am stadium at the University of Manitoba at a cost of over a hundred thousand dollars.

It would then have to be ripped up by the University of Manitoba because it would interfere with their soccer and football fields. It would be a complete waste of money. So they did not see that using the Max

Bell, which is indoor, would then have a longer use for Manitobans locally, a lot more use than having something that would completely be useless and would actually interfere with our other sports facilities afterwards.

They also wanted to have the trials or the practise meet next year in May, at the end of May when weather is questionable, before even our high school season is finished here. They wanted to have this and then close the track for the rest of the summer until the Pan Am Games.

These are some of the recommendations that are being made. Again, you can see by that one example—and there are examples like that from, I have been told, almost all the sport associations—where the decisions that are being made or the recommendations coming from these consultants are really a waste of money or certainly are not going to benefit Manitoba sport in the long run.

So I am wondering if the minister is aware of those serious kinds of examples of what has been proposed by these people and what his staff are going to do to try and ensure that these things do not go ahead and that the local expertise is really consulted and adhered to.

Mr. Stefanson: The member referred to money being wasted and some concerns relative to the legacy of the games. I know from my discussions with various individuals involved with the Pan Am Games Society, obviously the whole issue of the physical requirements and the legacy are very important. They are spending an awful lot of time and effort assessing what needs to be done, what is appropriate, what the requirements are of the sporting organizations and also what these facilities will mean to our community not only for the games but for many years to come.

So the very specific example that she refers to of track and field, I am not aware of, but I know from discussions on other facility development that this is, like all aspects of the game but certainly this area is a very important area for the sport-governing bodies and for the Pan Am Games Society. I would suggest to date we are seeing some significant improvements and some excellent things happening to some of our facilities.

* (1600)

I had a chance to be in the Pan Am Pool recently, and some of the improvements to that facility are certainly very positive. I know the feedback I have been getting from the swimming organizations has been very positive relative to the Pan Am Pool. I had the opportunity to be at the opening of the field house at the University of Manitoba, and it is an absolutely outstanding facility in spite of one slight problem they have relative with the incline of the seating arrangements. The actual facility, the flooring, the height, the whole dynamics are extremely positive, very well received by the University of Manitoba and by the athletes participating in the facility.

I guess I do not want to leave the impression that the committee is not doing a good job. When it comes to the assessment and the ultimate decisions around facilities, I think they are doing a very good job. They are very sensitive to the needs of the individual sport-governing bodies and sensitive to the needs of our community. Certainly the one issue that she did raise specifically, I will pursue, but I would suggest that I think on an overall basis when it is coming to the facility improvement enhancement and so on that the committee is doing a good job.

Ms. Cerilli: I am glad to hear the minister will follow up on the issue that I have raised here specifically today. I do not think I can go through each sport and raise the concern specifically as I just did for the athletics menu and athletics, but I am wondering if I could ask the minister if he would endeavour to have his staff either write or contact in some way the sport associations for them to clarify specific examples in each sport where there is difficulty similar to the one I have just outlined and approach the Pan Am Games Society with those difficulties or conflicts?

Mr. Stefanson: One other point I failed to make, as well, was, as the members knows, Sport Manitoba is working with many of the sport-governing bodies relative to the facility requirements and particularly relative to the many test events that we are having in Manitoba that we discussed somewhat the other day. But I will certainly undertake to provide the member with a status report relative to facility requirements for the Pan Am Games and to highlight any areas that we

still have some challenges or difficulties related to any facility improvement and development.

Ms. Cerilli: A couple of other things then and another example of how the local associations feel like they are really not being involved in the way that they would like to be has to do with the press conference that was held when Donovan Bailey was announced as a partner in the games and as a competitor.

I was really concerned to hear that—I think different from what the minister said when I asked this in Estimates—it was actually Athletics Manitoba and the federal association that convinced the Pan Am Games Society to really go after Donovan Bailey. It was not directly from the Pan Am Games Society to come up with this idea, that they really had to push for it, and finally when the Pam Am Games Society put the agreement together—the minister has said already that there actually is not a contract signed. He might be able to clarify that today as well.

But when there was an announcement put together in the press conference, the local Athletics Manitoba people were not even notified or invited to the event. Here they have one of Canada's best athletes, if not the best track and field athlete in the country, coming to Manitoba, and the Pan Am Games Society did not include our local Athletics Manitoba personnel who really had pushed for this to happen.

So I would like the minister to explain what has happened there and to acknowledge that this is a public relations disaster in terms of the local people. Maybe while he is answering that, he could also explain why the decision has been made to—if there is or are any profits from the Pan Am Games, not to offer any of that to be shared with Sport Manitoba, but all of it is going to the national coaching centre. This is another concern again, after all the local volunteer and local organizations put out all this effort and have a lot of their resources diverted from the local provincial programming leading up to the games, that none of the benefits, in terms of finances, are going to come to Sport Manitoba and then to sport organizations.

Finally, in the same vein, because the minister had raised, you know, the legacy of facilities that is going to come here, if he can explain why it is that only 10

percent of the \$140 million or so budget for the Pan Am Games is going to facilities, as compared previously with over 70 percent. Is he concerned about that, that perhaps the budget for the Pan Am Games is not being spent in a way that is really going to have the most benefit to the province? If we compare that amount of money, the \$32 million allotted for facilities for these games of the budget for \$140 million, with the facilities allotment for the budget of the bid or the other budget of \$122 million, are we seeing that much of a difference?

What I am getting at here is even though we have seen a large increase in the budget for the games, how much of that is going to facilities. I bet that the 10 percent would have been higher for the previous budgets with the bid and than the \$122-million budget, and what we are seeing is the additional costs for the games are not necessarily going to facilities. So those are three different questions for the minister.

Mr. Stefanson: I know there were a few issues that we discussed in committee that I indicated I would get back to the member on, and I certainly will do that, as I have done in the past with her on various sport-related issues.

The first question related to the announcement of the participation of Donovan Bailey, which I think on an overall basis was very well received within our community and certainly for the Pan Am Games was a very positive way to launch the ticket sales. Again, the fact that one of Canada's best athletes is going to be here participating in the 1999 Pan American Games will certainly be a drawing card and something that many Manitobans will want to view and participate in.

Her specific reference to Athletics Manitoba not being notified or involved in that particular announcement and the nature of how the initiative initially began in terms of pursuing Donovan Bailey to participate in the games or to participate in some aspect of ticket sales, again, I will certainly get her more on the background on both of those issues, how it came to be that Donovan Bailey was pursued and whether or not there was any issue around, any confusion around and/or whether or not Athletics Manitoba was invited and/or participated in any way in that announcement.

The second issue is the issue of the legacy. Pan Am Games Society does have a legacy committee who are mandated to look at what are the best kinds of legacies to be left in our community, hopefully from surpluses that can be generated from the games, and I certainly await further details from them.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

I know they have been focusing on potentially doing something for the National Sport Centre which benefits athletes here in Manitoba, but in terms of finalizing all aspects of the legacy, I will certainly undertake to keep the member informed as that issue unfolds.

The third issue, the one of facilities—I think one of the reasons that we were able to have a budget like we do for the Pan Am Games here in Manitoba—and I know last year the member asked me questions comparing the Pan Am Games budget to the Commonwealth Games budget in Victoria for games which in Victoria I believe had 11 sports, I think, compared to 41, had fewer athletes and so on, but yet they had a larger budget. I think one of the reasons we were able to get the games in Winnipeg and one of the reasons we were able to have a better budget than Victoria is the fact that many of our facilities are in place, many of our facilities do not require significant investment. So, as a result of that, 10 percent of our budget is related to facility development.

* (1610)

But having said that, we have also been doing facility development outside of the Pan Am Games budget for a combination of factors. There are some facility improvements that will not only benefit the Pan Am Games but will benefit our community and sport in general. I guess one or two examples that I could give her is that some of the improvements at the Pan Am Games have been done through the infrastructure agreement between the Province of Manitoba, the federal government and the City of Winnipeg. As well, the proposed baseball stadium down near The Forks is also being done through the infrastructure program, so there are some facility enhancements that will benefit the Pan Am Games but will also benefit sport and benefit our community, which are being done outside of the Pan Am Games budget.

So, if you were to factor in those, obviously you would end up with a larger facility development budget, and if you were to factor it in, a larger percentage against your budget. So I think the reality is some improvements are being done outside of the Pan Am budget. The fact is that many of our facilities are in pretty good shape and will meet our needs for the Pan Am Games without significant investment. So certainly the feedback I get from the Games Society and obviously the fact that we were successful is a recognition that by and large we do have good facilities here to meet the needs of putting on the Pan Am Games.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I think we can get into a good debate on the facilities issue, Mr. Minister, but I am wondering, first of all, if I can ask that you provide me with a complete list of all the other infrastructure-funded or otherwise-funded facilities or accommodations. That is one of the questions I was asking previously. Maybe the minister did not understand what I was asking. You did provide me with a list of what other departments are funding in-kind services, but I would also like any other facilities or projects that are being funded for the Pan Am Games outside of the budget, that are being funded through infrastructure money or any other budget.

But back to why it is that we were successful in getting the bid, I have been told that one of the reasons is that we are paying for the air fares and accommodations for all the athletes. Now, there are at least 5,000 athletes coming, as well as all their support people, as the minister said, for 41 sports. They are going to be staying at least five days, I understand. So I am wondering if the minister can tell us how much we are paying for the accommodations and air fares for all of these teams and if it is not unusual for a large games like this to pay that expense, and if that is not one of the reasons that we were successful in getting the bid.

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Chairman, the first question the member asked about a complete list of facility improvements that have been done outside of the Pan Am Games budget but that will benefit the Pan Am Games, I will undertake to provide that information. I am sure I understood whatever she asked for before and provided whatever it was she asked for, but if there was some confusion there, we will provide a listing of

facility improvements that will benefit the games. I have referred to a couple, the baseball stadium at The Forks, the improvements to the Pan-Am Pool, and there might well be a few others. So we can certainly undertake and we will provide her with that information.

This issue of paying for athlete travel to participate in major sporting events, I am told, obviously it was part of the submission from the City of Winnipeg and the games bid committee to get the games here in Winnipeg in the province of Manitoba. Again, it is another area of competing for these kinds of games that I am told is becoming more common. Obviously the bid committee felt it was something they had to do to be successful to attract the games here. Obviously one can look at the fact that they were successful and say it is probably a culmination of all of these factors that led to their success.

The member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) asked a little bit about this issue the other day during concurrence, Mr. Chairman. The issue has been in the media on one or two previous occasions. What the Pan Am Games Society is doing is they are going to be utilizing the funding from the private sector to support the athlete assistance for the developed countries like the United States, with the majority of funding for the other countries coming from the overall budget in terms of the actual quantification of the amount of money allocated to athlete support for travel, or delegation support for travel, I guess I should say, athlete and delegation support for travel. I will undertake to provide the member with the specifics on that issue.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister also looked into recommendations again by the "Atlanta people," the consultants, that the volunteers who are going to be, for the large part, Winnipeggers and Manitobans, they would not receive meals. That would be one of the ways that they would save money is not to feed the volunteers. If that is the case, we compare that to some of the other expenses including the \$100 a day for some of these Atlanta people, and they are getting fed, I think that would jeopardize the volunteer retention. It would certainly jeopardize the good will and the feeling that a lot of volunteers have who are going to put in long days often under the hot sun or perhaps under the driving rain. To not have meals provided would be, I think, a foolish cost-saving measure. If we could compare

maybe the budget that would need to be provided to provide meals for all the volunteers for the Pan Am Games.

Before I finish, I will just ask the minister another question, as well, which has to do with the soccer venue. It is similar relating to the budget. Now that the decision has been made not to have soccer at the Winnipeg Stadium, can he tell me how much that is going to mean in lost revenue, since there are going to be far fewer fans, and does this also mean that we are going to lose a lot of the teams?

Their A teams or even their B teams—and we might get some C teams from some of the real soccer countries who are going to be coming who are showing their best teams right now in the World Cup—if we are not going to have those teams sending their best teams because it is going to be played at a venue that is going to hold so few people and it is not going to be perhaps as good a quality, if that is being now factored into the budget, if the minister can tell us the details of how changing the soccer venue is going to affect the budget.

Mr. Stefanson: The member raised two issues. The first one, the whole issue of the treatment of volunteers and so on and the issue of whether or not they will be provided with meals and so on, I will undertake to get her details on the whole issue of volunteers in terms of their treatment relative to what they will be provided with, relative to access to food, drinks, any other issues like appropriate clothing or uniforms or so on, Mr. Chairman, so that she has a sense of what I guess I would call the volunteer package is.

Speaking from past experience with volunteers, I think the No. 1 motivation, I am sure the member and I can agree, for the volunteers, is the involvement in the activity, in the sport, and so on, the opportunity to view that sport as part of being a volunteer and to interact with the public. But the whole issue of being appropriately treated relative to food and appropriate identification and clothing is also an important part of being a volunteer. So I will get her particulars on the volunteers.

She did raise the soccer venue, I think, last time we met. I will undertake to get her the details on the whole issue of soccer, what the estimated attendance is, what

the impact will be by not having it at the stadium, whether or not her suggestion that we might be losing teams is an accurate one or not. I have not been informed that that is, in fact, the case, but certainly I will give her the full details on the soccer venue and what it will mean in terms of team and athlete participation and estimated fan attendance.

* (1620)

Ms. Cerilli: It sounds like the minister is going to be getting me a lot of information. One final thing, I have also been told that there is another concern about the athletes' accommodation, that it is unusual for athletes to stay four to a room at a games like this. What is happening is athletes are going to be in bunk beds in the athletes' village. At the same time, I am wondering if we could find out what the budget is going to be for the VIPs in hotels?

So comparing those two items, I have been told, would also be interesting, if the minister could get that kind of detail from the budget, the cost for the room accommodation for the athletes and for the hotels for the VIPs. With that, I will conclude for now.

Mr. Stefanson: Yes, I will undertake to provide the member as much information as I can in that area. I have taken a few things as notice, and I will undertake to provide that information, as I have done in the past with the member. Again, the whole issue of accommodations for athletes is something that has to be supported by the sport governing bodies, the Canadian Olympic Association, the Pan Am Sports Organization, and there will be athletes housed at a few different venues, I believe obviously the University of Manitoba and I believe some in Portage la Prairie and some in other venues.

But in terms of the specifics of the locations and how the housing will be provided and the whole issue relative to VIPs, I will undertake to provide the member with as much information as I can in that area.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): When we left Estimates, I asked the minister if he could provide the committee with some information, and the first piece of information was with regard to the Maintenance Enforcement office and two statistics from 1997, that

being the number of active accounts and the total arrears. I wonder if the minister has that information available now?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): In fact, I do have some information. I know that the Maintenance Enforcement staff has been working very, very hard, and the system, as I understand it, is quite successful. One compares jurisdictions. As of December 31, 1997, Manitoba leads the nation in terms of percentages, amount collected. The statistics that I have begin with a low of about 28 percent collected for Ontario; 31 percent collected for the Yukon; Alberta at 35 percent; Saskatchewan at 41 percent; British Columbia similarly at 41 percent; Newfoundland at 49 percent; and Manitoba leading the jurisdictions at 51 percent.

I think it is only fair to give a more detailed answer so that these numbers can be seen in context. The Maintenance Enforcement staff has provided me with some statistics in addition to those I have already cited. Beginning from 1980, I might indicate that monies processed to clients were \$4.6 million with monies returned to the province at about \$363,000. I will not go through all the years, but I can indicate that the monies processed to the clients of the Maintenance Enforcement Program has increased every year since 1980.

In 1995, there were \$35.4 million processed to clients. Monies returned to the province was in the amount of \$2,123,000. The next year, 1996, was \$39.1 million, an increase of 10 percent, and monies returned to the province of \$2,517,000, for an increase of 19 percent. The figures over '96-97 indicate again a substantial increase. The monies processed to the clients are at \$42.4 million. An increase year over year is at 8 percent. The monies returned to the province increased by 14 percent over 1996 to \$2,863,000. The arrears are growing at about 2.9 percent, but I would indicate that that is actually, compared to other provinces, very, very good.

There are a lot of factors, of course, that the member is aware of that the Maintenance Enforcement Program has very little control over. One category is categorized as REMO-out. That is where the payor lives outside of Manitoba, they are the reciprocal enforcement of

maintenance orders out of province. So when the payor leaves the province, the enforcement file may be transferred to the jurisdiction where that person is residing for enforcement on behalf of Manitoba. The laws of those enforcing jurisdictions apply to these files and may be significantly different than Manitoba's laws.

For example, from the arrears, in 1996, in that category were \$16,582,000. In 1997, there were \$16,312,000. The income security category, where we are collecting money on behalf of the province, that is the provincial government, in 1996, that figure I am informed was \$6,817,000, that is the arrears; in 1997, \$7,382,000. I hope I am reading these figures right. If I am not, I am sure my staff will advise me.

The REMO-in category, which is where we are enforcing orders on behalf of payees outside of Manitoba, the 1996 figure was \$4,974,000. In 1997, it was \$5,142,000.

The regular accounts, as they are known, that is, Manitoba payor and Manitoba payee, I am advised the arrears in 1996 were \$10,682,000 and in 1997, \$11,362,000. The figure of the accumulated arrears in 1996, it was—and this is the accumulated arrears in the sense of the maximum collectable potential, in '96 was \$39,056,000. I am usually rounding these off, so I think they are accurate within \$100 or \$1,000 or so. In 1997, the figure was \$40,200,000. Just in respect of the breakdown, in terms of percentage of that \$40 million, the REMO-out is \$16.2 million for a total percentage of 40.3 percent. That is the figure where we have the least control, I am advised.

* (1630)

The uncollectable, what has been indicated as uncollectable is \$1 million, which is about 2.5 percent. The social assistance, excluding the REMO-out category, is \$13 million, for about 32 percent, and the regular is \$10 million, for about 25 percent.

I would indicate that most of the arrears are REMO-out cases in that category, but these cases comprise only 18 percent of the caseload. I would indicate that the figure of \$40,200,000 has not been adjusted for accounts with the following characteristics: No. 1, accounts with garnishing orders in place and where the

employer cannot intercept the funds until after the due date, therefore these accounts remain in arrear, although perhaps in substance they are not in arrear; No. 2, for variable orders the computer tracks at the highest rate and when the payor reports, so a lower amount or nothing may actually be owing; thirdly, the payor may be unable to pay but has not obtained a variation order; and, fourthly, the payor cannot be located. That is, he may be out of province or out of country.

The program is in the process of reviewing these accounts and, as indicated, there are about 83 accounts totalling \$1.6 million that have been considered as potentially uncollectible because the payor cannot be located, is on assistance, incarcerated or is a resident in a nonreciprocal jurisdiction. So, generally speaking, those are the figures that I think will assist the member in his task.

Mr. Mackintosh: I did not hear the number of active accounts having been given. I wonder if the minister could provide that number as well. I did not hear that.

Mr. Toews: I do not believe I have the number of active accounts. Just let me look through this for a moment.

There may be a way of determining it on the basis of these figures, but I would only be guessing. So I will have my staff provide the member with the number of active accounts.

Mr. Mackintosh: The Provincial Auditor identified some serious shortcomings with procedures within the Maintenance Enforcement office this fall. I am wondering if the minister has ensured that there be a follow-up to the Auditor's review and recommendations.

Mr. Toews: Well, I do not again have those statistics here, the notice that I was given. I appreciate that the member may have wanted to expand that particular topic, but the notice that I was given by the member was that he required the statistics concerning arrears and collections. On that basis, a survey was done by the department. I do not believe I have any other information here from the Maintenance Enforcement department. All I can indicate on that account is I can

provide the member with some information in due course as to any improvements that have been done as a result of any audit or otherwise.

I would just indicate that certainly in terms of jurisdiction, Manitoba is doing the best on a percentage basis on the amount collected out of the total amount due, far outstripping other jurisdictions. So I am certain that the issues that have been raised are in the process of being examined or implemented as the case may be, but before I give any details on that, I would want to have an update from my staff.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the minister prepared to provide the report done for the government on the Chief Medical Examiner's office?

Mr. Toews: The member was good enough to put me on notice that he, in fact, wanted that report, and I have indicated to the member that I will, in fact, produce whatever of that report I am legally entitled to produce. I understand that I am not at liberty at this time to provide that report. I understand that there are some issues. I want those issues resolved before the report comes to me. But I can assure the member that I understand that there are some outstanding issues relating to that report.

For the member's information, of course, we know that the Chief Medical Examiner has indicated that he is going on a sabbatical effective July 1 of this year, after which on July 1, 1999, he will be retiring from the University of Manitoba and the position of Chief Medical Examiner. The position of acting Chief Medical Examiner for the province of Manitoba was offered to Dr. Balachandra of the Department of Pathology of the St. Boniface General Hospital. We are very pleased that Dr. Balachandra has, in fact, accepted that position on a one-year, acting basis.

I understand it is the intention of the department that during this next year a selection committee will be struck in order to staff the position on a permanent basis commencing the first of July of 1999. I understand that Dr. Balachandra has, in fact, met with the staff. I could be corrected on that, but I understood that he was meeting with the staff today.

* (1640)

I just want to assure the member that because the former Chief Medical Examiner will be retiring on the first of July, there is a continuity of delivery of the services under the guidance of I think a very, very qualified pathologist. I think the people of Manitoba are very fortunate that Dr. Balachandra has agreed to act as the Chief Medical Examiner. I may be anticipating the member's question. I do not know what Dr. Balachandra's intentions are beyond July 1, 1999. So I could not give any further information in that respect.

But in respect of the report itself, I understand that there are some issues that remain to be resolved and that as soon as that report is available and if I am legally entitled to release that report subject to any concerns that my staff may express, it is certainly my intention to release that report.

Mr. Mackintosh: When would the report be available to be released? What time lines are we looking at?

Mr. Toews: I have been very careful not to be involved in that issue other than in a very, very general, supervisory way. As a general rule, the minister does not get involved in the actual writing of the report or the formulation of that report. I understand, I am advised by my staff that there are some outstanding issues. I also understand that they anticipate being able to resolve those issues in one way or another, but I do not want to indicate anything other than that.

I have not put a time limit on it. Unless good reasons are brought to me by the staff that such a time limit should be put on it, I will just encourage all parties involved to ensure that that report is completed, so that it can be released in a timely fashion to the extent that it may be released.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the minister now prepared to provide the report that we understand was compiled in respect of the issue of training or standards for security guards?

Mr. Toews: I am sorry. I might have missed that question.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister now provide the report prepared for the department with respect to security guards?

Mr. Toews: I have not addressed my mind to the issue of whether that report is releasable, whether it should be released. I have not closed my mind to that issue. I can stand to be corrected by my staff. The review, I know, was considered by the director of Law Enforcement Services, and there were certain conclusions that the review released. I know that as a result of that release, they talked. The review talks about the difficulties of training because of the discrepancy within the industry on the extent and type of training required.

I would point out that I have had some briefings on that particular matter. It has been the position of my staff that required mandatory training, such as is the case in only two provinces, British Columbia and Newfoundland, poses significant challenges. I might indicate to the member that I do not consider this a closed issue. I am not prepared to say that Manitoba should not have some form of mandatory training.

I know that the department is encouraging security guard companies to continue to provide training to their employees, and that the companies are encouraged to use the standard developed by the federal organization; that is, the Canadian General Standards Board. They are encouraged to use that standard as a framework when their training is being developed. At present, the focus of The Private Investigators and Security Guards Act deals with the protection of the public rather than the issue of mandatory training for these guards. Again, my staff has indicated why they have proceeded in the manner they have or made the recommendations they have, for the reason that—the difficulties associated with implementing of mandatory standards in that respect.

As I have indicated, the issue as far as I am concerned is not a closed one. I think, though, there needs to be further consideration of matters such as how one delivers this training throughout the province in a cost-effective and timely manner. Again, the argument that keeps on coming back to me by staff is the varied requirements of security guards. For example, a security guard supervising a barn dance in Swan River may need very different instructions or training than a security guard working in a manufacturing plant in downtown Winnipeg.

I would indicate that the comparison between police training and security guards is not necessarily analogous, but again, we do need to keep an open mind about this particular issue.

Mr. Mackintosh: Given that I had asked for the minister to provide this report several weeks ago, is the minister prepared to indicate when he would be prepared to release the report?

Mr. Toews: As indicated, I will consult further with my staff and then advise the member as to my position.

* (1650)

Mr. Mackintosh: Are there ongoing discussions between the minister and staff around the issue of standards or training for security guards?

Mr. Toews: I cannot say that I have recently had a discussion with staff on this issue other than fairly general conversations with some of my senior staff members. But in speaking to my deputy minister, I made it clear to him that I consider this matter, the training for security guards, to be an open issue.

Obviously, they have come to some conclusion about this in British Columbia and Newfoundland. On the other hand, they have not done so in seven of the other provinces, and it might be instructive to determine how British Columbia and Newfoundland are able to overcome some of these issues. Maybe they have not overcome those issues.

I know that the British Columbia, where they do have this mandatory training, the B.C. Justice Institute is, I understand, considering making the provincial government course there available on the Internet for \$200. I understand, I am advised, that the applicants would pay the \$200 through the B.C. Justice Institute and obtain a password, and then they would have 12 weeks to complete this course over the Internet. Upon completion, the applicants would have to successfully complete a provincial exam which would be a proctored exam in remote areas. So there are some ways of determining whether this can be done throughout the province on a low-cost basis.

I am not certain yet whether the British Columbia experience is one that we can look to given that my

understanding that some of these changes they are making to make this course accessible throughout the province is still in the consideration stage.

Mr. Mackintosh: The Lavoie report recommended that Manitoba adopt risk assessments at the bail stage for domestic violence cases. I am wondering what the minister's reaction is to that recommendation. I recall he was making comments on this one a few weeks ago, and I wonder then what he can tell the committee about his position?

Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Mr. Toews: As I recall, that particular issue, there are serious concerns about being able to implement an effective risk assessment program in the context of a bail hearing. As we understand it, as I understand it, I am advised that at a bail hearing, of course, the accused has not been found guilty of any particular offence and an effective risk assessment requires an analysis and an acceptance that the offence was committed. So I understand that the Lavoie committee has been having some struggles in respect of this type of risk assessment plan. There are some serious shortcomings with the implementation of risk assessment at the bail hearing, and the worst thing I think that we could do is lull people into a false sense of security in utilizing a faulty mechanism.

On the other hand, I am advised by the Corrections staff that our risk assessment in that context is a much more accurate instrument, because we are dealing with people postconviction, and those assessments are relied upon by staff to make certain determinations. I do not know what the status of that risk assessment for bail offenders is now, given the concerns and the very practical concerns that the staff and I understand the Lavoie committee has about the issue.

Mr. Mackintosh: I take it then that it is the minister's position that the government will not be introducing a risk assessment procedure for bail domestic violence cases.

Mr. Toews: No, I do not think I said that. I have indicated that there are significant challenges to implementing that kind of a program and that there are very real dangers in that program. The worst thing I

think that we can do, I thought I said, was to lull people into a false sense of security by using a faulty mechanism.

I would indicate that the Lavoie committee works extensively with other professionals and lay people in the community to implement these. We rely on their expertise. We rely on the expertise of my staff. All I can say at this time is that there have been some concerns expressed about that particular recommendation.

I know that, for example, Justice Schulman made certain recommendations in respect of a bail court for domestic violence, a separate bail court. The department had, in fact, accepted that recommendation, but it is my understanding that the Provincial Court judges, who are, of course, independent of the Justice department, have indicated that they are in disagreement with that recommendation.

So we implement recommendations where it is advisable and prudent to do so. We try to co-operate with our other partners in the justice system to implement recommendations where those implementations require that co-operation. Mostly, I do not think anyone is expecting us to blindly implement recommendations that in hindsight may, in fact, cause significant difficulties.

So I am not closing the door here, but I am saying that we need to work through difficulties, whether they are with the mechanism such as a risk assessment analysis, or concerns that others in the justice system may have with some of the other recommendations.

* (1700)

Mr. Mackintosh: On April 29, Sergeant Jennings of the RCMP was on a local television station and made the following statement. He said: police will now have the opportunity to contact an on-call Crown attorney who will oppose bail on our behalf.

My question for the minister is: are Crown attorneys, as of April, available to oppose bail on behalf of RCMP officers?

Mr. Toews: I understand that that might, in fact, be a reference to the bail policy that the senior Crown

circulated among the Crown attorneys. That policy outlined certain availability of Crown attorneys, and I understand that that policy has been implemented and is in effect.

Mr. Mackintosh: Are Crown attorneys then being made available to oppose bail on the RCMP's behalf throughout Manitoba? If so, how is that going to be implemented and resourced?

Mr. Toews: I understand that that policy is being implemented by my staff. The extent to which that requires additional resources, I do not know. I know that in the past, there have been other initiatives by the government or by the department, more properly speaking. Bail courts or hearing officers that used to hear these matters at night, I know that there were Crown attorneys who were made available in the context of those types of hearings. To the best of my knowledge, the matters are proceeding in a manner consistent with the policy that was established by the Crown attorneys.

As the member well knows, given the geographical discrepancies throughout the province, the manner in which a policy may be delivered may change for a number of very good reasons, but I think the intent is to carry out that policy. If the member is concerned about any aspect of that policy, I can forward those specific concerns on to staff so that they can have an opportunity to look at those concerns and address them.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is this availability of Crown attorneys to oppose bail on behalf of the RCMP a new policy, effective roughly April or so?

Mr. Toews: Well, I think that the bail policy speaks for itself. I know that in the past, Crown attorneys have been available in the context of various programs for the system operated in a different manner. I know, for example, when I was a criminal prosecutor between 1976 and 1979, I prosecuted outside of Winnipeg. The RCMP would contact me at night, and the local municipal police force would often contact me at night.

Now, I was a fairly junior prosecutor at that time, but I know that other individuals, even at that time, made themselves available to the police in order to give them advice on an as-needed basis.

So whether this is new or a clarification of an existing practice, I think can be discussed for some time. I think the thrust of the policy as formulated by the Crown attorneys is to assist the police whenever possible. One has to remember that in a number of cases, police officers have independent statutory authority to deal with cases without the involvement of Crown attorneys, so I do not believe that this policy purports to change the law; indeed, I think, will continue to respect the law that grants police officers this independent legal authority.

Mr. Mackintosh: If this policy is new, then the obvious question is: what was going on before? Indeed it appears that the Crown would not have been available to oppose bail on behalf of the RCMP before this statement. I understand the Crown would be available to provide advice, but this statement from Sergeant Jennings says that the Crown will be available to actually oppose bail. I would like the minister to clarify whether, in fact, this statement is accurate or not. Is there a new policy, and, if so, is there a written directive or some announcement from his office that the police will now have the opportunity to contact an on-call Crown attorney who will oppose bail on behalf of the police?

Mr. Toews: I cannot say I am familiar with every aspect of the application of every policy in the department. As I have indicated to the member and have given some examples in the past, I am personally familiar with the fact that Crown attorneys in the past have been available.

* (1710)

Mr. Mackintosh: There are accounting records that indicate that the minister or the department was involved in contracting with George Dangerfield, Krawchuk and Company for legal services at the rate of \$100 an hour in April of 1997. The purpose of that contract is described as the Toews matter. I am wondering if the minister can tell the committee what that contract was in relation to.

Mr. Toews: No, I cannot, but I can look into the matter. I do not know, I certainly have not personally retained Mr. Dangerfield, is it, as far as I am aware unless there is some particular advice that was being

sought. But certainly nothing springs to mind in respect of that issue.

Mr. Mackintosh: I had asked in Question Period as to why the Law Enforcement Review Agency was refusing to accept a complaint from a First Nations resident regarding a complaint against the Dakota Ojibway Police Service. The minister at that time was not in a position to provide an answer to that. I am wondering if the minister can tell the House why LERA is not accepting complaints apparently with regard to DOPS. I will leave it at that.

Mr. Toews: I will have to consult with my staff on that particular issue, but I believe that there is if not a constitutional issue at least a statutory issue that provides the review be done by the police commission responsible for the Dakota Ojibway Police Service rather than LERA.

As the member knows, the Dakota Ojibway Police Service performs services on First Nations communities that fall within federal jurisdiction. The structure of those communities is governed by the federal Indian Act, and I believe the issue of the availability of the LERA mechanism is related to that particular issue.

I know, for example, and I speak with a little more certainty in respect of the RCMP because, even though they are a contracted provincial police force, there were a number of, at least two, I believe, Supreme Court of Canada decisions which ousted the jurisdiction of the provincial government to review police conduct when the conduct involved the actions of an RCMP officer. There may well be similar issues here. I do not know.

Mr. Mackintosh: What can the minister tell the committee about the regulations that are contemplated by legislation currently before the House, and that is The Victims' Rights and Consequential Amendments Act, in terms of victim compensation? Can he assure the committee that the regulations will provide the same levels of benefits and duration of benefits and categories of benefits to the extent possible under the legislation and at a level no less than exists under the Criminal Injuries Compensation scheme now in effect?

Mr. Toews: I can indicate that those regulations and the amounts and categories are presently being

considered. I know that the member had expressed concern in the House in respect of a number of categories which I am advised will continue to be provided for, but as the member knows, the Prairie Research Associates made very sweeping recommendations to more effectively deliver victims' services in the province of Manitoba. We have looked at many of those recommendations. Some we have accepted and some we have not, and the result of the staff's consideration and the legislation is, in fact, embodied in the legislation and in the regulation.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

We are certainly concerned that victims receive appropriate compensation and that monies that the government spends in respect of victims' services be spent in a most appropriate manner as possible.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the minister aware of a proposal submitted to his department with regard to a child sexual assault victim counselling or support initiative by several Winnipeg service agencies?

Mr. Toews: I do not think that I will be able to respond on that particular issue, because I am not familiar enough with that issue. I know that numerous proposals are brought to my department and to my attention on an ongoing basis, and so I would not be able to assist the member in any significant way. If that particular project has been submitted to my department, the member can be assured that it will receive due and appropriate consideration.

Mr. Mackintosh: As the minister knows, 12 correctional officers were taken out of Headingley Correctional Institution and redeployed in other areas of the provincial government. I understand following on recommendations made by John Scurfield, the correctional officers have been moved to, in some cases, very different kinds of work without clear assurances that their tenure with the government will be assured beyond a two-year period.

Has the minister turned his mind as to whether the movement of these correctional officers would have a chilling effect on other staff at the institution, given that the Hughes Inquiry found that it was necessary to improve the relationship between management and

workers at Headingley and found that it was necessary to involve the workers and the workers' concerns in the development of management policies at Headingley?

* (1720)

Mr. Toews: Well, I do not think it was the intention or is the intention of staff to create a chilling effect at Headingley Correctional Institution. I am familiar with the issue that the member is referring to, and I do not think it is appropriate to discuss that particular issue, because I believe that there are some ongoing matters that need to be resolved there.

But just in respect of the issue of chilling, I know that the committee under the direction or chairmanship, perhaps is a better way of saying it, of Mr. Scurfield has done much, I am advised, to improve the relationships between management and staff, in particular unionized staff, and that this committee continues to work on an ongoing, positive way to resolve outstanding issues. So I think that there has been a mechanism that has been created to ensure that where there are issues of concern these can be raised in a meaningful way.

Mr. Mackintosh: The Hughes report identified significant management shortcomings at Headingley as one of the significant reasons for the Headingley riot. The concern of this side is that we see 12 correctional officers that are staff moved out of there, which would appear to indicate, despite Mr. Hughes' findings, the finger is being pointed at staff rather than management. I am wondering how the minister would respond to that concern.

Mr. Toews: I do not agree that there has been any inappropriate singling out of any one person or group of people. I think that the Scurfield committee continues to deal with issues in a proactive way to ensure that the Hughes recommendations are given thoughtful consideration in the context that that committee deals with them. I think that Mr. Scurfield has done an excellent job, but not just Mr. Scurfield. I also think that the staff, both management and unionized staff, have made a concerted effort to make that correctional institute a better place to work.

I acknowledge that working in a prison is never an easy task. I think there will always be issues that need to be responded to that arise in an ongoing way. I am

advised that those members on the committee are committed to applying their skills to resolve any outstanding issues or indeed any new issues that might come up and are relevant to their deliberations.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister tell the committee what the timetable is for the beginning of construction for the secure facility at Headingley that was announced some time ago?

Mr. Toews: I do not have that. Just give me a minute. I do not have the date, but I know that that is an issue that I discuss on an ongoing basis with my senior staff, that is, the conditions and the number of beds in our facilities. I understand, unless something has happened very, very recently, that the construction of those, I believe it is, 76 beds is on target. I have not been advised of anything that might delay the construction.

Mr. Mackintosh: What are the plans of the department for the Portage facility? Is there any intention to make any changes with regard to that institution in terms of its location or function?

Mr. Toews: Which Portage facility?

Mr. Mackintosh: The Women's Correctional facility.

Mr. Toews: I know that the issues related to that particular institution are complex. I have had occasion to attend at that institution at least twice and, certainly, have had discussions from time to time with my staff on that particular issue.

I do not have anything here to particularly assist the member. If the member wants some additional information on that, perhaps he could be more specific and I could provide some information that might be of assistance to him.

* (1730)

Mr. Mackintosh: Is it the government's intention to continue a correctional facility for women at Portage la Prairie in the structure that it currently exists at?

Mr. Toews: I do not think any decisions have been made one way or another in respect of that facility. I

know that we are very pleased with the quality and calibre of the staff in that institution. I have had occasion to meet a number of them. I do know that, as with any older building, there are always issues that need to be dealt with, but there have been no decisions made in respect of that particular building that would see it closed down.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand that a new position of bill co-ordinator has been established and there has been a hiring. Can the minister describe for the committee what the bill co-ordinator will do?

Mr. Toews: Well, rather than get into those types of particulars without having the notes here in front of me, I would defer answering that and indicate that an accurate answer could best be given by staff providing me with the job description and how that job is done in the context of the delivery of those services.

Mr. Mackintosh: If the minister could undertake in the next couple of weeks to have the position description forwarded to me?

Mr. Toews: Well, I will see if that is available, and I will have my staff advise me on that. What material I will provide I can provide in due course.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand that the Parliament of Canada is considering DNA database legislation, and the federal government is seeking resourcing to administer that legislation. I am wondering if the minister has been approached on that one and what the position of the government of Manitoba is with regard to contributing to the funding of the DNA database?

Mr. Toews: Again, I am sorry I do not have more of my notes here. I know the member was courteous enough to advise me of three topics that he would be dealing with, the Chief Medical Examiner and the Maintenance Enforcement matter and a third issue that has slipped my mind. I would prefer to have the member receive as accurate information as possible rather than my trying to rely on my memory without those facts in front of me.

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the Justice Initiatives Fund, the minister is reported in the Winnipeg Sun as saying, and this on April 21, that there was money left

over in the \$1.5-million fund. Can he tell the committee how much money was left over in that fund in the last fiscal year?

Mr. Toews: Again, I do not have those figures in front of me, but I might just indicate in respect of that matter, the money became available part way through the fiscal year, which resulted in that surplus, if I can put it that way. But I can advise the member as to the amount that was remaining at year end.

Mr. Mackintosh: If the minister could provide that in the next couple of weeks, that would be appreciated. I have no further questions. Just at this moment I know that the member for Elmwood is now scheduled to ask some questions of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I would like to ask the minister a few questions arising out of the Auditor's Report released yesterday in which the Auditor gives a rather scathing assessment of this minister and this department's activities surrounding grants under the Canada-Manitoba Communications Agreement. I would like to ask him whether any steps have been taken and what steps have been taken by the department to ensure that this sort of irresponsible action does not occur again in the future?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): First of all, I do not know what Auditor's Report the member is referring to, because I did not read an Auditor's Report that had any scathing attack on this minister or on this government. I know the Auditor made comments as it related to the two specific issues, one dealing with ManGlobe and one with Iris, but I certainly do not know what Auditor's Report he is talking about with any scathing attack.

He certainly is aware of the fact that the projects which were referred to and reviewed by the Auditor were research projects. They were under a communications grant of which there was no repayment as it related to those. The involvement was made on the basis of individuals that were participating as well, whether it was the Royal Bank or whether it was Canada Post.

Mr. Chairman, nothing has changed. There has been no inappropriate use of money. There has been a good

attempt by two business groups to try and employ people in the province of Manitoba using technology.

So, Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of the report that he is talking about as it relates to any scathing attack on me or my department.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, the report on page 34, Mr. Minister indicates that the overall agreement was anticipated to generate between 60 and 125 high-value jobs, and from 100 to 300 lower-level jobs. Could the minister tell us how many jobs were actually generated by this agreement?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Chairman, first of all, TR Labs is one of the projects that was supported under this agreement. I would have to get the specifics as it relates to the number of jobs, but we know there are substantial jobs. Also the information that has been provided, the technology that has been developed through the organization such as TR Labs has been extremely important in the new high-tech area. So I will get the exact number of jobs that flowed from the agreement and take that as notice from the member.

Mr. Maloway: I thank the minister for promising to get back to us with regard to the number of jobs that have been created as a result of this communications agreement.

I would like to draw the minister's attention to the fact that the Treasury Board received only four reports on ManGlobe when, in fact, they should have reported 10 times. Am I to know why the Treasury Board did not insist and ensure and why his department did not insist and ensure that proper reports be made to Treasury Board at the appropriate times?

* (1740)

Mr. Downey: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of the fact there was any mandated number of reports that were supposed to go to Treasury Board. Reports went to Treasury Board at appropriate times. Again, the monies which were advanced were advanced after certain conditions were met. They were not advanced until conditions were, in fact, met, and one of those conditions was that they had to raise funds from other partners or potential customers. They, in fact, did that.

So I do not believe that there was any lack of information. I guess the bottom line is that, if I were to say how I feel about this particular project, it did not succeed. Particularly ManGlobe I believe was somewhat ahead of its time and had difficulties which no one is happy to see that it is currently not operating today, but it did employ several people over the duration of its operation, which, in fact, brought knowledge to the table as it related to commerce over the Internet. Again, it was a research of which, quite frankly, I am prepared to stand and defend the decisions that were made as it relates to putting money into that.

Mr. Chairman, he again makes reference to the Auditor's comments. I truly believe that there have to be judgmental calls. Judgmental calls were made which, quite frankly, we believe were appropriate at that particular time. As far as reporting, I believe the reporting that was necessary was, in fact, done.

Mr. Maloway: The minister is at odds with the Provincial Auditor then, because page 37 of his report clearly indicates that the Treasury Board for Manitoba directed the department to report on the agreement to Treasury Board quarterly. The department submitted four reports to Treasury Board between March 23, '93 and September 30, '95. He goes on to say that during the above time period the department should have reported 10 times. Instead they reported four to meet the Treasury Board requirements.

Over and over and over again, we find that this department did not comply with the rules. The minister should answer for that.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Chairman, I am not at odds with the Provincial Auditor. I am quite prepared to receive the report that he has given to our department. Quite frankly, the department are quite prepared to do the necessary things that have to be done to make sure that, if any future agreements of this nature, we would, in fact, use the report of the Auditor at this particular time to make sure that if there were any changes necessary as it related to that report, they would, in fact, be carried out.

I do not accept specifically that there had to be a number of reports. After, the information that I have received from the department, quite frankly, was that

the department on an ongoing basis was in communication with the company. Again, the difficulties which the company had, no one feels good about.

Mr. Maloway: The Auditor also notes that no criteria was developed to assess the proposals and, as a result, there was no objective way to tell whether ManGlobe proposal was appropriate under the terms of the agreement. I would like to ask him why there were no criteria developed to assess these proposals.

Mr. Downey: I can tell the member that the decision to provide the kind of support that was provided. I, again, refer to it as a form of research in the electronic commerce. Quite frankly, it came about through the joint venture proposal that was put forward and by the partnerships that were developed through companies like the Royal Bank, Manitoba Telephone System, Canada Post. They were all partners, and there was monies raised and contributions in kind raised from those companies. The province as being part of it felt that there was enough evidence of work that had been put into it. In fact, the project should be able to proceed, and there was good support from those major corporations. Again, it is unfortunate that it did not succeed, and that is the bottom line. I would have liked to have seen it succeed.

Mr. Maloway: In the case of Iris Systems, the Auditor notes that the department did not but should have conducted an independent analysis of Iris' assertions. Why did they not conduct an independent analysis? Surely, at some point someone in this department should be replaced, fired, moved somewhere. Some sort of action should be taken. What sort of action has this minister taken in his department in light of this?

Mr. Downey: Well, basically, as the member knows, there is no longer a communications agreement, so no one is in charge or charged with the responsibility of carrying out this program.

I can as well say that the majority of people or any individuals, because of the fact there is no longer agreement, are doing other things. In fact, I can say that I have a new deputy since this particular agreement was signed and implemented. There is a new ADM in place. But the former people who were responsible for

this were not replaced because of this program. It is because the program came to an end and, quite frankly, we are talking about history of some time ago.

It is never a good situation when a company fails. The member is trying to lay blame at the government's feet. He is having a difficult time doing so, because I could get into all kinds of experiments that he and his former colleagues got into, whether it is \$29 million or \$27 million in Saudi Arabia. One would have to question what did he and his government do as it related to an audit and the work that was done on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba for that kind of money.

This money that was used in the telecommunications agreement was a developmental expenditure, research and development, which, quite frankly, I believe, and I will support the department as it related to proceeding with these projects and as it relates again to Iris. There may have been the opportunity to get more information. However, when you are on the leading edge of new technology, where do you get the kind of information that is absolutely essential to, in fact, satisfy the member opposite and/or any audit?

So I am satisfied that the work that was put into it was all that was available. We may have been able to do more. I will review with my department the comments of the Auditor to see, quite frankly, if there is more.

Again, he asked me who the people were that implemented this. Basically, they are either doing something else in government and/or are not a part of the government. There is a new deputy and a new ADM who is responsible for this area.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, this is the Conservative government's bridge to nowhere. You know, this money was simply frittered away. The minister talks about lack of experience in the Internet mall business, and the minister knows full well that there are probably hundreds of these malls operating before this one was in existence. In fact, in Winnipeg alone there is a company that with no government money—the only difference between these two companies is the other one did not have any political connections with the Tories. This other company had, I believe, something

like a hundred companies on the Internet mall with no government money, and it is operating to this day successfully. So this minister did not have to blow all this taxpayers' money on this pet project of Mike Bessey and the rest of his cronies. I mean, this was just simply a blatant misuse of public funds.

Now, page 38 of the Auditor's Report talks about the department, his department, assessed this ManGlobe management as lacking experience, yet they still went ahead and paid the money out for the grant. Why? What kind of judgment does this minister and this department exercise?

* (1750)

Mr. Downey: To reiterate the particular comments that he has referred to on page 38 of the Auditor's Report, I was not sure what part of page 38 he was referring to as it relates to ManGlobe. I would like him to make a more clear reference.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, it is the second paragraph from the bottom. It said the Auditor says that department initially assessed ManGlobe management as lacking experience and as a result the grant agreement with ManGlobe required the establishment of a project management team prior to the second installment of the grant.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Chairman, again, the decision to support and to be part of it was based on the fact that there were other companies that were making decisions, as well, in support of ManGlobe organization. I think that one would judge that the company the Royal Bank, the Canada Post, the Manitoba Telephone System were, in fact, as part of the decision making, satisfied that the procedures that were being carried out were, in fact, adequate. So one has to have some confidence that those individuals, as well, were making their decision in a responsible way. Quite frankly, as I said, the unfortunate situation is that the company did not proceed or it would have, in fact, been employing many people in the province.

Contrary to the comments put on the record, there were not a lot of people who were currently at that time in the electronic commerce on the Internet. I appreciate he has made reference to one that is successful, and

thank goodness that they are, thank goodness they were, but there were not hundreds. It truly was new technology or why would some of those other companies be interested in getting involved like Canada Post, like the Royal Bank, and like the Manitoba Telephone System?

Mr. Chairman, if they had hundreds of other people in that business, why did they show any interest in this at all? So I do not agree with the member opposite who said that there were many of these being carried out. Yes, there was, and I am pleased to know that there are successes because, quite frankly, that is what we were all driving for in this particular project as well.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what we are trying to find out: why and how did this fiasco develop when, in fact, there were other Internet malls operating successfully, in fact, right here in the city of Winnipeg, but getting no government money? Of course, the answer is there.

If you want to look more closely at it, you see that this thing was put together by Mike Bessey. That is who cleared the roadblocks out of the way and managed to put the proposal together with the help of Reg Alcock from the federal side of things, and I do not think that the Post Office or the Royal Bank or the telephone system, if left to their own devices, would have made these decisions. I think they were corralled and railroaded into this scheme. For example, if he would just look further down the page on page 38, he will see the deal with the credit ratings, which is an issue that we brought up before as to why there was no due diligence done, and why credit ratings were not checked on the individual.

At the time, you had the absolute preposterous situation of the principal of ManGlobe having federal judgments against her of \$18,000 for outstanding GST in 1994, another \$46,753 was owed to Revenue Canada, and I do not know how much, if any, was owed to provincial sales tax, and here you have his department handing out money. When this company owes all this money for not paying its taxes, they are rewarded with public money from his department, from his people. I would say that is an operation out of control. I think the Finance minister should get on top of this situation and reign this minister in, keep him in

the country for a while and keep track of him because he is dangerous. He really is dangerous if he keeps operating the way he has for the last few years.

Mr. Chairman, look at the grants that he funded under this program: Iris Systems, flop; ManGlobe, flop. And there are some more that we are looking into. Almost everything that this agreement touched turned into a big disaster. This minister's department is in total turmoil. It has been in turmoil all the time he has been around. He is the one who talked about competence in government and good business practice in government. I remember him 12 years ago relishing in the defeat of the previous government, talking about how competent they were going to be. Well, if this is an example of the competence of the government, God help the taxpayers of Manitoba.

There are a lot of members over there that, I think, would do a better job than this minister in controlling and taking an interest in making certain that this department did not get fleeced for its grants, because that is exactly what is happening. So what does he have to say? When the Provincial Auditor backs up our assertion that credit ratings were not checked in this case, what does he have to say about that?

Mr. Downey: First of all, Mr. Chairman, I take exception to the slanderous comments the member makes as it relates to a former employee of government who is a dedicated individual, who worked very hard to develop a lot of business for the province of Manitoba. Of course, it is typical of the New Democrat who wants to take the advantage that he has in the House to, in a very negative way, criticize individuals, who, quite frankly, is in the safety of the Chamber and says all these things without fear of anybody retaliating against him.

As well, I think that one should acknowledge the fact the Auditor did not point out uncollected, unpaid bills as it related to the individual. [interjection] He says he has it. Mr. Chairman, his credibility—he makes all these accusations and we checked them out. We checked out all those files that he carried with himself until he got one arm longer than the other coming into the House. The Auditor did not point that out. We have got an Auditor's Report that, quite frankly, I am prepared to accept, yes, sir. It is not a scathing report. It is making

some recommendations as to how better we could have performed, and I do not have any problem with that.

I have said it, and I will say it again: the bottom line is there was some money spent as it relates to development of research in new electronic commerce. The other program, Iris, quite frankly was new technology, for metre reading for both the gas and the hydro industry, two-way communications which did not succeed in Manitoba. But the technology did succeed. So it was not a total failure.

Again, the member keeps coming back at it as if this money that we used in the whole research area in helping a business or in trying to help a business get going, that that in some way was the wrong thing to do.

Let me put on the record again, this money employed people in Manitoba. It was technology that was being tested in Manitoba unlike him and his New Democratic friends that spent \$27 million in Saudi Arabia that we did not get five cents worth of benefit from—\$27 million, Mr. Chairman.

One of these programs cost \$500,000, and it was a grant to start with. It was a grant to do the development on the Internet for electronic commerce. The other was just under a million dollars, which I have no problem in supporting, saying it was to develop technology for meter reading for both gas and electric meters. The technology did succeed. Unfortunately, it is not operating in the province of Manitoba, but the technology was worthy of pursuing, so we do not believe all is lost.

I think the people of Manitoba did get some value. Companies that are now looking at Internet commerce can certainly get the information as it relates to what some of the mistakes were made, what some of the problems were. Again, he also wants to bring the federal member of Parliament to the table on this discussion. I do not know why he has not asked him questions or members of the federal government. This was a federal-provincial agreement of which we participated with the federal government to support new technology development in the communications field.

His communications policy, the member opposite felt great about spending \$27 million of taxpayers' money in Saudi Arabia. I mean, I will stand and defend what we have done. Yes, the Auditor has made some

comments which we certainly are paying attention to. We are not ignoring them. It is not a scathing report. I can tell you that part of his government's responsibility though actually caused them to be turfed out of government.

We are quite prepared to stand and answer to the people of Manitoba when it comes to supporting people in business in the province of Manitoba, creating jobs in the province of Manitoba, creating technology in the province of Manitoba that will, in fact, develop new opportunities, and TR Labs is a good example of the positive initiatives that have come from this agreement.

I will get the numbers of jobs that, in fact, have flown from this agreement. I am not ashamed of it. I can tell you that we are always prepared to accept ways to improve, if there are improvements that can be made either in reporting or in the kinds of information that is needed to develop proposals.

I have not got any problems with that. I am not like the NDP who thought they were so perfect in every way that they kept going into the taxpayers' pockets of Manitoba to make them pay for mistakes over and over and over again to the tune of which it almost broke the province. We today are back in the black as it relates to the books of this province, and I am darn proud of it.

Mr. Maloway: The minister runs and hides every time I ask a question here and keeps talking about the \$27 million in Saudi Arabia. That is his favourite story. I am sure he whistles that tune every night before he goes to bed. I mean, if he wants to talk about that, fine, but his predecessors lost \$93 million in Switzerland on a CFI deal, if he will recall, back in the good old days of Tory competence in government and competence in business and good Tory management. Ninety-three million dollars went missing mysteriously back in the CFI days. Do not forget that.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The hour now being six o'clock, committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Marcel Laurendeau): The hour now being six o'clock, this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until tomorrow (Wednesday) at 1:30 p.m. Thank you.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Petitions

Winnipeg Hospitals Food Services—Privatization	
Santos	4739
Maloway	4739
Dewar	4739

Community VLT Plebiscites	
Mihychuk	4739
Martindale	4739

Independent Judicial Review Committee	
Lamoureux	4739

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Independent Judicial Review Committee	
Lamoureux	4739

Community VLT Plebiscites	
Jennissen	4739
Mihychuk	4740
Martindale	4741

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Committee of Supply	
Laurendeau	4741

Standing Committee on Law Amendments, 4th Report	
Penner	4741

Oral Questions

Judicial Inquiry	
Doer; Filmon	4746
Robinson; Filmon	4748
Lathlin; Filmon	4749
C. Evans; Filmon	4751
Ashton; Filmon	4753

PC Campaign Manager	
Robinson; Filmon	4747
Lathlin; Filmon	4751

Premier of Manitoba	
Robinson	4748

Physician Resources	
Lamoureux; Praznik	4748

Elections Manitoba	
Sale; Filmon	4752

Members' Statements

Physician Resources	
Lamoureux	4753

Pork Production Training Program	
Helwer	4754

Judicial Inquiry—1995 Election	
Struthers	4754
Wowchuk	4755

Power Mechanic Student Competition	
Faurschou	4754

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Committee of Supply

Consideration of Concurrence Motion	
Reid	4756
Findlay	4756
Cummings	4757
Jennissen	4758
Cerilli	4770
Stefanson	4770
Mackintosh	4776
Toews	4777
Maloway	4785
Downey	4785