



First Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Seventh Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Joy	Fort Garry	P.C.
SMITH, Scott	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Monday, July 31, 2000**

**The House met at 1:30 p.m.**

**PRAYERS**

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Standing Committee on Law Amendments  
Eighth Report**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Eighth Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Eighth Report.

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your committee met on Tuesday, July 25, 2000, at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 26, 2000, at 6:30 p.m., and Thursday, July 27, 2000, at 2:45 p.m., in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.*

*At the July 25, 2000, meeting, your committee elected Mr. Reid as Vice-Chairperson.*

*At the July 26, 2000, meeting, your committee elected Mr. Martindale as Chairperson and Mr. Smith (Brandon West) as Vice-Chairperson.*

*At the July 25, 2000, meeting, your committee agreed, by motion, on a counted vote of Yeas 6, Nays 4, to the following motion:*

*THAT presentations be limited to 15 minutes with a maximum 5 minutes for questions.*

*At the meetings held on July 25 and 26, your committee heard representation on bills as follows:*

*Bill 12—The Public Schools Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques*

*Gerald Huebner – Manitoba Association of Christian Homeschools  
Norbert and Debbie Maertins – Private Citizens  
Bernd Rist – Private Citizen  
Abe Janzen – Private Citizen  
Dr. Terry Lewis – Private Citizen  
Marion Hart – Private Citizen*

*Bill 42—The Public Schools Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques et modifications corrélatives*

*Theresa Ducharme – People for Equal Participation Inc.  
Rey Toews & Carolyn Duhamel – President, Manitoba Association of School Trustees  
Len Schieman – Rhineland School Division #18  
Fran Frederickson and Val Weiss – Chair, Interlake School Division  
Bart Michaleski – President, Manitoba Association of School Business Officials  
Jim Murray and Linda Ross – Chair, Brandon School Division #40  
Floyd Martens – Chair, Intermountain School Division  
Ron G. Plett – Chair, Hanover School Division  
Dr. Dave McAndrew – Western School Division #47  
Kurt Guenther – Private Citizen  
Wayne Motheral – President, Association of Manitoba Municipalities  
Mary Hudyma – Chair, Dauphin-Ochre School Division  
Judy Eagle – Flin Flon School Division #46  
John Pshebniski – Duck Mountain School Division #34  
Gerald Thiessen – Garden Valley School Division  
Peter Wohlgenut – Rhineland Teachers' Association  
Ron Friesen – Garden Valley Teachers' Association  
Bryan Harley – Private Citizen*

*Joanne Huberdeau – Birdtail River School Division #38*  
*Val Thomson – Private Citizen*  
*Claude Vigier – AEFM*  
*Doug Halmarson – Private Citizen*  
*David Rondeau – Private Citizen*  
*Amy and Peter Buehler – Brandon Teachers' Association*  
*Harvey Bridgeman – President, Mountain Teachers' Association*  
*Craig Blagden – Midland Teachers' Association*  
*Andrew Peters – Private Citizen*  
*Garry Hornung – Private Citizen*  
*Ward Kay – Private Citizen*  
*Lori Johnson – Chair, Winnipeg School Board*  
*Peter Kotyk for Rod Giesbrecht – Private Citizen*  
*Bob Fraser – Chair, River East School Division*  
*Doug Edmond – President, Manitoba Association of School Superintendents*  
*Roy Schellenberg – St. Boniface School Division*  
*Sandra Paterson-Greene for Scott Johnson, St. James-Assiniboia School Division*  
*Ruth Ann Furgala and Vivian Leduchowski – Chair, Evergreen School Division*  
*Betty Green and Kelly Decker – Lakeshore School Division #23*  
*Neil Whitley – Rolling River School Division*  
*Pam Stinson – Private Citizen*  
*Jan Speelman – President, Manitoba Teachers' Society*  
*Ric Dela Cruz – Seven Oaks School Division*  
*Wendy Moroz and Howard Holtman – Chairperson, Assiniboine South School Division*  
*Paul Moist – Manitoba Federation of Labour*  
*Graham Starmer and Dave Angus – Manitoba and Winnipeg Chambers of Commerce*  
*Susan Popeski – Seven Oaks Teachers' Association*  
*Dan Kelly – Canadian Federation of Independent Business*  
*Marijka Spytkowski – Transcona-Springfield Teacher's Association*  
*Chris Pammeter – Private Citizen*  
*Victor Vrsnik – Canadian Taxpayers Federation*  
*Barry Wittevrongel – Private Citizen*  
*Rachel Ouimet for Linda Brezina – St. Vital Teachers' Association*  
*Albert Cerilli – Private Citizen*  
*Bob Land – Private Citizen*

*Wendy Land – Private Citizen*  
*Henry Pauls – Winnipeg Teachers' Association*  
*Roland Stankevicius – River East Teachers' Association*  
*Darrell Rankin – Communist Party of Canada*  
*Diane Zuk – Assiniboine South Teachers' Association*  
*Rudy Peters – Private Citizen*  
*Ed Hume – Private Citizen*

*Bill 45–The Teachers' Pensions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pension de retraite des enseignants*

*Jan Speelman and Henry Shyka – Manitoba Teachers' Society*

*Written Submissions:*

*Bill 42–The Public Schools Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques et modifications corrélatives*

*Marvin R. Anderson – Prairie Spirit School Division No. 50*

*Susan Boyachek – Rural Municipality of Ethelbert*

*James Bedford, President-Elect – St. Boniface Teachers Association*

*Your committee has considered:*

*Bill 45–The Teachers' Pensions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pension de retraite des enseignants*

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

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed subsection 63.1(2), as set out in section 2 of the Bill, be amended by striking out everything before clause (b) and substituting the following:*

***Purchase of service for past maternity leave***  
**63.1(2)** *A teacher who was granted a period of maternity leave referred to in subsection (1) and did not elect to make contributions under that subsection for that period may, if she has neither received a refund of her contributions*

nor begun to receive a pension, purchase the service for the period by

(a) filing with the board

(i) before July 3, 2002, if the period of leave was granted before subsection (1) came into force, and

(ii) within 18 months after the end of the period of leave, in any other case,

an application in a form prescribed by the board; and

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 12—The Public Schools Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques

and has agreed to report the same, without amendment, on division.

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 42—The Public Schools Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques et modifications corrélatives

and has agreed, on a counted vote of Yeas 6, Nays 4 to report the same, with the following amendments:

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 97(1), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out the definition of "dispute" and substituting the following:

"dispute" means any dispute or difference, or apprehended dispute or difference, between a school board and one or more of the teachers it employs or a bargaining agent acting on behalf of those teachers as to

(a) matters or things affecting or relating to terms or conditions of employment or work done or to be done by the employer or by the teacher or teachers, or

(b) privileges, rights and duties of the school board or the teacher or teachers that are not specifically set out in this Act or The Education Administration Act or in the regulations made under either of those Acts.

However, it does not include a controversy or difference arising out of the termination or threatened termination of a teacher's contract. (« différend »)

**MOTION:**

THAT the definition "teacher" in the proposed subsection 97(1), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by adding "under a written contract in Form 2 of Schedule D or in any other form approved by the minister under section 92 and" after "employed by a school board".

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 102(2), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

**When Labour Relations Act applies**

102(2) Part VII of The Labour Relations Act applies, with necessary changes, to an arbitration carried out under a final settlement provision referred to in subsection (1), except to the extent of any inconsistency with the final settlement provision.

**MOTION:**

THAT item 6 in the proposed section 103, as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "that were in the statement of matters in dispute before hearings begin" and substituting "during the course of the hearing".

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed section 107, as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "for the purpose of section 108".

**MOTION:**

THAT subsection 6(3) of the Bill be amended by adding the following at the end of the subsection:

*For that purpose, any notice to begin collective bargaining given under the former Act respecting the renewal, revision or replacement of such an agreement is deemed to have been given under section 60 or 61 of **The Labour Relations Act**.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the following be added after subsection 6(3) of the Bill :*

*6(3.1) Notwithstanding subsection (3), arbitration proceedings may not be initiated under Part VIII of **The Public Schools Act** (as enacted by this Act) until 90 days after this Act comes into force, during which time the parties must bargain collectively in good faith with one another and make every reasonable effort to conclude a collective agreement.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT subsection 7(2) of the Bill be amended by adding ", school superintendents" before "and parents".*

**MOTION:**

*THAT subsection 7(3) of the Bill be amended by adding "school superintendents," before "parents".*

**Mr. Martindale:** I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), that the report of the Committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Standing Committee on Public Utilities and  
Natural Resources  
Sixth Report**

**Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Public Utilities and

Natural Resources presents the following as its Sixth Report.

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your committee met on Wednesday, July 26, 2000, at 10 a.m., and Wednesday, July 26, 2000, at 6:30 p.m., in Room 254 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.*

*At the Wednesday, July 26, 2000, at 10 a.m., meeting, your committee elected Ms. Korzeniowski as the Chairperson.*

*At that meeting, Ms. Cerilli moved that presentations be 15 minutes with 5 minutes for questions. The motion was agreed to.*

*At that meeting, your committee heard representation on bills as follows:*

*Bill 14—The Provincial Railways Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les chemins de fer provinciaux*

*Roger Cameron – Railway Association of Canada*

*Gord Peters – Central Manitoba Railway*

*Steven Van Wagenen – Southern Manitoba Railway*

*Don Fyk – Western Rail Coalition*

*Bill 16—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg*

*Councillor Jae Eadie – City of Winnipeg*

*Wayne Motheral and Jerome Mauws – Association of Manitoba Municipalities*

*Bill 31—The Electronic Commerce and Information, Consumer Protection Amendment and Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act; Loi sur le commerce et l'information électroniques, modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi sur la preuve au Manitoba*

*Brad Fry – Mind Computer Products*

At the Wednesday, July 26, 2000, at 6:30 p.m., meeting, Ms. Cerilli moved that leave be granted to accept all amendments passed by this committee tonight that were read only by the Chairperson be accepted as if read by the Minister or member. The motion was agreed to.

Your committee has considered:

*Bill 6—The Water Resources Conservation and Protection and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur la conservation et la protection des ressources hydriques et modifications corrélatives*

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

**MOTION:**

**THAT section 6 be amended**

(a) in clause (a) of the French version, by striking out everything after "à titre de" and substituting "sous-bassins hydrographiques;"

(b) by renumbering it as subsection 6(1); and

(c) by adding the following as subsection 6(2):

**Public consultation re designation of sub-water basins**

6(2) Except in circumstances that the minister considers to be of an emergency nature, in the formulation or substantive review of a regulation designating parts of the Manitoba portion of the Hudson Bay drainage basin as sub-water basins, the minister shall provide an opportunity for public consultation regarding the proposed regulation or amendment.

Your committee has also considered:

*Bill 7—The Protection for Persons in Care Act; Loi sur la protection des personnes recevant des soins*

and has agreed to report the same, without amendment.

Your committee has also considered:

*Bill 14—The Provincial Railways Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les chemins de fer provinciaux*

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

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 33(3), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended in the part before clause (a) by striking out "may" and substituting "shall".

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.2(4), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended

(a) in the section heading, by striking out "180-day" and substituting "60-day"; and

(b) in the subsection, by striking out "180 days" and substituting "60 days".

**MOTION:**

THAT section 4 of the Bill be amended by striking out the proposed subsection 34.2(5).

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed clause 34.2(7)(d), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "60" and substituting "30".

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.2(10), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended

(a) in the English version, by striking out the section heading and substituting "Period for reaching agreement"; and

(b) in the subsection, by striking out "six months" and substituting "90 days".

**MOTION:**

THAT section 4 of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the proposed subsection 34.2(10):

**Board may extend period for reaching agreement**

**34.2(10.1)** The board may, on application by the licence holder or the interested person with whom the licence holder is negotiating, extend the period for reaching agreement

(a) by any period that the licence holder and interested person agree on; or

(b) by up to 90 days, if the licence holder and the interested person cannot agree on the length of the extension but the board is satisfied that they are involved in on-going negotiations in good faith that may result in an agreement.

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.2(11), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "six-month period" and substituting "period for reaching agreement".

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed clauses 34.3(1)(b) and (c), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "six-month period" and substituting "period for reaching agreement".

**MOTION:**

THAT section 4 of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the proposed subsection 34.3(4):

**Deposit**

**34.3(4.1)** When the Government of Manitoba or a municipality accepts the offer, it shall provide a deposit to the board of 5% of the net salvage value set out in the offer or \$25,000., whichever is less.

**Deposit to be held by the board**

**34.3(4.2)** The deposit shall be held by the board for the parties under the deposit conditions set out in the regulations.

**Acceptance not binding without deposit**

**34.3(4.3)** If the government or municipality fails to provide the deposit to the board, the acceptance is not binding on the licence holder.

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.3(5), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "communicates its written acceptance of the offer to the licence holder," and substituting "accepts the offer in writing and provides the required deposit,".

**MOTION:**

THAT section 4 of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the proposed subsection 34.3(10):

**Canadian Transportation Agency as arbitrator**

**34.3(10.1)** The board shall refer an arbitration under subsection (10) to the Canadian Transportation Agency if

(a) either of the parties requests that the reference be made to that agency; and

(b) that agency is prepared to accept the reference.

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.3(11), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended

(a) in clause (b), by striking out "40(4)" and substituting "40(5)"; and

(b) in clause (c), by striking out "40(5)" and substituting "40(6)".

**MOTION:**

THAT section 5 of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the proposed clause 48(1)(j.1):

(j.2) respecting deposits and deposit conditions under subsections 34.3(4.1) to (4.3);

**MOTION:**

THAT the proposed subsection 34.3(6), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "90" and substituting "30".



*Your Committee has also considered:*

*Bill 16—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg*

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

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed section 437.1, as set out in clause 2(a) of the Bill, be amended by adding the following definition in alphabetical order:*

*"The Public Health Act" means The Public Health Act and includes regulations made under that Act. (« Loi sur la santé publique »)*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed subsection 440(1), as set out in section 3 of the Bill, be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b) and substituting the following:*

*(a) personally, or by mail in a manner that provides the city with an acknowledgment of receipt; or*

*(b) if the person cannot be served by one of the methods described in clause (a) after a reasonable effort has been made, by sending a copy of it to the person's address, as determined in a manner provided by by-law, by facsimile transmission or any other type of mail or communication that provides confirmation of delivery.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed subsection 467(1.2), as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b) and substituting the following:*

*(a) personally, or by mail in a manner that provides the city with an acknowledgment of receipt; or*

*(b) if the person cannot be served by one of the methods described in clause (a) after a reasonable effort has been made, by sending a*

*copy of it to the person's address, as determined in a manner provided by by-law, by facsimile transmission or any other type of mail or communication that provides confirmation of delivery.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT section 4 of the Bill be renumbered as subsection 4(1), and the following be added as subsection 4(2):*

*4(2) The following is added after subsection 467(1.2):*

**Deemed date of service**

**467(1.2.1)** *An order sent in accordance with clause 1.2(b) is deemed to have been properly served on the day it is confirmed to have been delivered.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed subsection 477(2.1), as set out in subsection 5(2) of the Bill, be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b) and substituting the following:*

*(a) personally, or by mail in a manner that provides the city with an acknowledgment of receipt; or*

*(b) if the person cannot be served by one of the methods described in clause (a) after a reasonable effort has been made, by sending a copy of it to the person's address, as determined in a manner provided by by-law, by facsimile transmission or any other type of mail or communication that provides confirmation of delivery.*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the proposed subsection 490(2), as set out in section 12 of the Bill, be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b) and substituting the following:*

*(a) personally, or by mail in a manner that provides the city with an acknowledgment of receipt; and*

*(b) if the person cannot be served by one of the methods described in clause (a) after a reasonable effort has been made, by sending a copy of it to the person's address, as determined in a manner provided by by-law, by facsimile transmission or any other type of mail or communication that provides confirmation of delivery.*

*Your committee has also considered:*

*Bill 21—The Water Resources Administration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement hydraulique*

*Bill 29—The Health Sciences Centre Repeal and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur le Centre des sciences de la santé et modifications corrélatives*

*and has agreed to report the same, without amendment.*

*Your committee has also considered:*

*Bill 31—The Electronic Commerce and Information, Consumer Protection Amendment and Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act; Loi sur le commerce et l'information électroniques, modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi sur la preuve au Manitoba*

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

**MOTION:**

*THAT the following be added after the proposed subclause 18(1)(d)(ii):*

*(iii) prescribing classes of documents for the purpose of clause 13(1)(a);*

*Your committee has also considered:*

*Bill 37—The Miscellaneous Health Statutes Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant diverses lois en matière de santé*

*and has agreed to report the same, without amendment.*

**Ms. Korzeniowski:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Ms. Allen), that the report of the Committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside):** I seek your advice. Is this motion debatable?

**Mr. Speaker:** It is not debatable.

**Mr. Enns:** Okay, I thought I would try.

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table the report to the Legislature, pursuant to section 63(4) of The Financial Administration Act, relating to supplementary loan and guarantee authority for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2000, as required by section 52.27(1) of The Legislative Assembly Act.

## Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my left where we have with us today Mr. Tom Benson, a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly. On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

Also I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery where we have with us today Todd and Darlene Babula and their children, Rachel, Wade and Janet, from Petrolia, Ontario, who are the guests of the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). On behalf of all honourable members, I also welcome you here today.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### E. Coli Bacteria Government Safety Measures

**Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, we are now advised that the residents of Anola, Balmoral, Tyndall and Garson are all being advised to boil their drinking water before they proceed to use it.

My question is to the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin). What specific measures is his department taking to ensure that residents throughout Manitoba, but in particular throughout rural Manitoba, can have some comfort about the safety and security of their drinking water?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, as the Member is aware, Public Health and Conservation undertook their duties when notified of the higher levels of contamination and did notify residents with the procedures that have been adopted in this province for some time.

With respect to the larger issue, it is obviously of concern to all residents of Manitoba in light of the national coverage with respect to the issue. Mr. Speaker, as the Member is aware, what has happened from Manitoba Health's perspective is we have, and Manitoba Conservation and the Government in general, put in place a water advisory committee that is scheduled to report, that is reviewing all the procedures, all of the processes, all of the testing regulations, et cetera, that have been put in place and were put in place for the past number of years. It is coming back with recommendations, we are hoping, in September.

\* (13:35)

In the interim, Mr. Speaker, we have asked the subcommittee, particularly because school is starting in September, to report back, a subcommittee that can report back interim measures as soon as possible. We also have the—*[interjection]* I will complete that in the next portion of my question.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Speaker, I am aware that different parts of Manitoba have received unusual amounts of rainfall which no doubt has added to the problems, but it is little comfort to hear from the Minister, from the Government, that they are setting up review committees, checking out processes and procedures.

What is needed is some immediate emergency-type reaction on the part of government. Number 1, I would like to know that specific steps, resources have been funnelled to

aid and assist the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) to test these wells immediately and have the information resulting from those tests made publicly available to all residents of Manitoba.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, the Member ought to be aware that we put in place a hotline with respect to Manitoba residents for the first time to advise them about the procedures in place. Resources have been allocated to Conservation and Health. The Member will be aware that one of the difficulties is the change in regulations that occurred when the Member was a member of Cabinet several years ago, when the funding arrangements with respect to testing of private wells, private testing, changed, and that was one of the issues being reviewed by this committee.

In the interim, recommendations have been made. Conservation and Health are monitoring the situation, are making recommendations, are on site when a problem occurs. There is a committee that has been struck that will report in September. A subcommittee will be reporting in the interim period to deal with specific issues as relates to the water issue, and we are dealing with the issue as it confronts us, I think, in a comprehensive sense. There are short-term issues that we are dealing with and there are long-term issues that have not been dealt with over the past decade that have to be dealt with.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Speaker, we are rapidly getting accustomed to this government setting up review committees, setting up hotlines, giving all the appearances of consulting with residents of Manitoba and doing very little about it.

I want to know specifically: Is every school being tested for their water supply before September 1 and our children go back to school?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, we are undertaking those measures.

#### **Labour Management Review Committee Labour Legislation**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield):** On July 17, the Minister of Labour stated to this House: "I will stand in this House and state unequivocally that I have been giving the Member a full, complete

and truthful comment about the Labour Management Review Committee."

I quote from a letter of July 20 from the Chair of the LMRC management caucus: It is not accurate for the Minister to state that every element of Bill 44 was sent to the Labour Management Review Committee or to in any way imply that management caucus was given an opportunity to review the provisions of Bill 44.

My question to the Minister is: Who is telling the truth?

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Member looks at Hansard from last Thursday where we extensively had questions on this particular issue.

As I stated on Thursday, and I will restate again, every single element that appears in Bill 44 was sent either as an issue or a specific reference to Bill 26 to the Labour Management Review Committee. There is no element or issue in Bill 44 that did not get sent to the Labour Management Review Committee in one form or another, and there is nothing in Bill 44 that was not sent. So all of the issues and elements that went to the Labour Management Review Committee came back in a form of recommendations, either consensus or not, and all of those elements, all of those issues that went over to the Labour Management Review Committee are reflected in Bill 44.

**Mr. Schuler:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister for a simple yes or no. Is she accusing the Chair of the Labour Management Review Committee management caucus of being a liar?

\* (13:40)

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, the Labour Management Review Committee is made up of representatives, five representatives from the business community chosen by the business community, five representatives of the labour community chosen by the labour community, and a chair, Professor Wally Fox-Decent. The Labour Management Review Committee is a wonderful concept. It is a wonderful idea. It is a

wonderful way to get feedback from both the labour community and the management community.

Mr. Speaker, unlike in 1996 with Bill 26, Bill 44 reflects the thinking, not the unanimity, but the thinking on every issue that was sent to it of the Labour Management Review Committee, membership from the labour community, membership from the business community. I applaud them for the time and the energy and the very good effort that they put into giving recommendations to us so we could reflect many of those recommendations in Bill 44.

**Mr. Schuler:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister still will not answer the question. My question to the Minister: Is she saying that the Chair of the Labour Management Review Committee management caucus lied in his letter?

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, I am reframing my answer again. There were issues and elements, some reflecting concerns we had with The Labour Relations Act amendments that came in in 1996 and another area of alternate dispute resolution. We sent a package of issues, a package of ideas, a package of specific concerns we had and asked the Labour Management Review Committee to respond to those.

In that package that was sent over in late May was an attachment that said: We are very concerned about the days lost to strikes and lockouts; we would like the Labour Management Review Committee to take a look at this issue and see if they can come up with some responses. They were unable to come up with a unanimous vision, a unanimous view on this, but the issue of an alternate dispute resolution mechanism, along with issues from Bill 26, were sent to LMRC.

#### **Labour Management Review Committee Labour Legislation**

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister is right when she says the Labour Management Review Committee is a tremendous or wonderful concept to get feedback, but she is only right if she allows it to work. The point that we make over and over again is, if she wants it to work, she has to allow

it to have time to consult with its constituents and to debate the issues before it makes presentations.

I would ask the Minister: Is it not true that the major proposal in her reform bill or her bill of amendments to this Labour Relations Act was not presented to that committee until the eleventh hour, allowing no time for consultation, no time for discussion and no opportunity for the Labour Management Committee to work and do its job, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, under any answer that I have given in the House have I ever said that specifics were sent over on this particular area. I said that we sent over specific concerns that we had with Bill 26, and we sent over a statement saying here is another area that we are concerned about, which is the lengthy strikes and lockouts that have cost Manitoba workers and Manitoba businesses and the Manitoba economy untold time lost and productivity lost.

What we sent to the Labour Management Review Committee we sent as a package to the Chair. The Chair then sent that information to all of the representatives, both labour and management. The internal workings of the Labour Management Review Committee are treated by this government—I cannot answer for former governments—with distance. We were not privy to what went on in the discussions in the Labour Management Review Committee, but the issue was there.

**Mr. Praznik:** As a former minister of Labour, I always ask the question: Did they have enough time to discuss it? Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this minister, given that the management caucus in this committee said very clearly that they did not receive the proposal from Labour until the eleventh hour, with no time to consult, no time to discuss, why, then, did that minister accept those recommendations without sending them back to the Committee to have a proper discussion?

\* (13:45)

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, I will put up against our process our relationship with the Labour Management Review Committee's recommendations, the way it is reflected in Bill 44, the fact that in 1996 when Bill 26 was sent to the Labour Management Review Committee, the Labour Management Review Committee had a very short time frame as well. They were able to come up with some consensus positions after a long, hard discussion and debate, I understand. Not one, not a single one of the recommendations that were, by consensus, achieved in 1996 by the LMRC found their way into Bill 26. I will hold up our process against that former government's process any day.

**Mr. Praznik:** Mr. Speaker, since the Premier (Mr. Doer) is so fond of quoting me as Minister of Labour, I would like to remind the Minister that when I was Minister of Labour, I never had a letter sent about me like she has had from the Chair of the management caucus.

My question to the Minister of Labour is a simple one. Given that she has now admitted that there was not proper time for consultation, why, then, did she mislead the House in trying to make the public believe that there was proper consultation on that committee?

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Labour Management Review Committee was in charge of its own internal operations. It is not my responsibility, nor should it be, because we want to have this be a distant-third-party, as objective as possible, process to give advice to the Minister and recommendations. We understand the distinction between a third-party arm's-length group and government, unlike some instances that I could share of the former government.

Mr. Speaker, the Labour Management Review Committee was able to come up with a number of consensus items. On this particular one they were not, and obviously the management side is not happy. I do not expect unanimity on many issues when it comes to labour relations. I am very pleased with the amount of unanimity, the amount of consensus that was reached in Bill 44 discussions, and that is reflected in the legislation before us.

**Labour Management Review Committee  
Labour Legislation**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, if the Minister were truly interested in proper consultation, she would have ensured that full details went to every member of the Labour Management Committee. I am going to go back to her quote in response to a question from the Member regarding their election commitment to send all pieces of labour legislation to the LMRC. The Chair of the management caucus of LMRC, in his letter, said, and I quote: Management caucus did not receive the proposals from government or from the Department of Labour, was not given an opportunity to consider the proposals and does not in any way concur with them.

Does this minister believe that is consultation?

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, the Labour Management Review Committee is one very important avenue for consultation and for advice, and we did follow our commitment to send every piece of labour legislation to the Labour Management Review Committee.

We are also in consultation and discussion and dialogue, and have been for months, with various members of the labour community and also various organizations within the business community and individuals within the business community. We are having very positive productive consultations as we speak and would like very much to finalize the process by getting one of those other things that Manitoba has and that is the public hearing process where we are able to then hear and discuss and get everyone's opinion out on the floor in front so everyone knows what all the issues are and get more suggestions and ideas. So we would like very much to send it to the Committee as quickly as possible to hear everyone's perspective.

**Mr. Loewen:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, the Minister's words cannot be reconciled with her actions. My question to the Minister is—

\* (13:50)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

**Point of Order**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** It is well known to the Member that supplementary questions require no preamble. Would you please draw his attention to that rule of this House, this convention?

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the Honourable Member to please put his question.

**Mr. Loewen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask this minister: Does she really believe there was consultation, and if there was, would the Chair of the management caucus of the LMRC have to write her, and I quote: request that you contact the Minister of Labour to address the manner in which this played out before the LMRC and particularly our concerns about not being consulted on these fundamental changes? Is this consultation?

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, every element, every single element that was sent to the Labour Management Review Committee—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Barrett:** Every element that was sent to the Labour Management Review Committee has found its way into Bill 44. There are no additions or deletions from the topics that were sent.

The concern raised by the Chair of the management caucus of the Labour Management Review Committee talks about information that he felt was not given. We gave the same information to the labour caucus, to the management caucus and to the Chair. We gave

the package to the Chair for distribution. There was nothing to prohibit management from coming up, from caucusing at any point during the Labour Management Review Committee process and saying this is the issue that has been raised; do we have any ideas, do we have any suggestions? That was done by the labour caucus; it could have been done by the management caucus. Management caucus's response was there was not enough time, and that is an internal dispute. We sent everything to both sides.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

Mr. Speaker, it is already clear that the Minister of Labour has called the Chair a liar, so I think it is important that, rather than provoking debate and calling the Chair a liar, she should just sit down.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Well, the Opposition House Leader clearly has no point of order. He does not even have a point. He is trying to put words in the mouth of a minister, which is entirely inappropriate. But, Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, it was the same opposition that got up and said that the Labour Management Review Committee had not received the issues relating to Bill 44. And today they get up, and they admit that they had received the issues related to Bill 44. That is the kind of allegation that needs a full response from the Minister of this government, and she did so appropriately.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the Official Opposition House Leader, I was just about to rise for a length of time, and *Beauchesne's* does state that answers to questions should be brief and deal with the matter and not provoke debate.

But I would like to take this opportunity to draw the attention of all honourable members to

the words "liar," "who is telling the truth." We are walking a pretty fine line here. It is being very, very close to being unparliamentary language. I would ask all honourable members to pick and choose their words very, very carefully.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is straightforward. Does she understand that in the English language the sentence: "Every single element of Bill 44" was sent to the Labour Committee differs from the statement: "Every element that was sent"? If she understands, which is accurate? which reflects the truth?

\* (13:55)

**Ms. Barrett:** As I have said before, and I will say again, we sent a package to the Labour Management Review Committee. We sent the entire package, the entire package is what we sent, and what was included in that package were 11 issues related to specific concerns we had with Bill 26. We also sent a 12th issue which was a concern that we had as government about the cost of extended, protracted labour disputes. We asked Labour Management Review Committee's advice on the 11 specific issues that were of concern from Bill 26 and the one concern, the one more general concern about an alternate dispute resolution mechanism. We asked LMRC to come up with, if they were able to, a recommendation on an alternate dispute resolution mechanism. They were not able to come up with consensus. They did, however, agree that it was an issue that was worthy of concern, and management's position actually was, Mr. Speaker, they did not need to have a change because the current system was working well enough. But they all had the same information going in, and they all had the same information coming out.

### Labour Management Review Committee Labour Legislation

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier, given that he was too shy to mention this in his speech to the Chamber of Commerce, did not put it in the Throne Speech when he wrote the Throne

Speech, did not mention it at the Century Summit, I would ask him now to get involved. Given that the LMRC did not receive all of the information, I think it is time for him to get involved and to do something about this.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, the Labour Management Review Committee was given the topic of days lost to strike and lockout. They were given that topic and six or seven other topics that have been canvassed. There was—*[interjection]* Well, the only sandbagging I recall is the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) bringing in frozen food here to Manitoba and letting war veterans eat that kind of food.

Last week when members opposite were asking elements versus proposals versus legislative questions, I talked about the increase in private investment here in Manitoba. I talked about the increase in financial investment here. I would like to take this occasion to congratulate CanWest which, I was informed today, has bought the *Victoria News*, two Vancouver newspapers, the *Calgary Herald*, the Edmonton paper, Ottawa papers, Montreal, Halifax, Charlottetown. Congratulations to CanWest, another Manitoba success story.

### **Labour Relations Act Amendments—Withdrawal**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** What the Premier has not done is tell the business community about these major labour changes that he is bringing in.

I would ask the Premier, given this process that was described as wonderful has been gerrymandered, it is time to step back, and I would ask him to do that now.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister said last week, I believe on Monday, and I would reiterate again today, that we are listening to Manitobans. We listened to them—

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

\* (14:00)

**Mr. Doer:** I know it is a foreign concept to members opposite. They can howl all they want, Mr. Speaker. I know it is a foreign concept to members opposite, but we are listening to Manitobans. We want to ensure that the proposals, particularly those to ensure that we can reduce the number of days lost to strike and lockout, are rebalanced in Manitoba but not tilted in Manitoba. I would encourage members opposite to join us in the debate, which is legitimate. I think they will find, in the debate, I believe, a number of proposals in the law—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Doer:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, a number of proposals did have a consensus from the Labour Management Review Committee. There are proposals in the legislation that do not have a consensus. We are welcoming of advice we receive in this House, advice we receive out of this House, and we will continue to make sure that Manitoba is an optimistic province, something the members on this side believe in.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** The issue is that those elements did not receive consideration because they were not received by the Committee. I would tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the three major dailies in this province have all written editorials asking the Government to step back from this legislation, legislation which they did not mention to the public of Manitoba during the election, legislation they did not include in the Throne Speech. I would ask the Premier to withdraw—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

### **Point of Order**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** An interesting speech, Mr. Speaker. I do not know when his 40 minutes are up. Of course *Beauchesne's* Citation 410: Preambles to questions should be brief, and supplementary questions require no preamble.

Mr. Speaker, would you please direct him accordingly.



**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the Honourable Member to please put his question.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Doer) if he is prepared to listen to the editorial writers of the three major dailies in this province who have all recognized that you have failed to consult with Manitobans and that you have failed to send these elements to the LMRC. Will you withdraw it now?

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, we are prepared and have been, as I have stated and the Premier has stated. We have been talking with a number of groups and individuals for months on these issues, not just the Labour Management Review Committee, important though that is, but we have spoken with various groups and individuals in the province, and we are continuing to do so.

We have, as I have stated, another really wonderful opportunity in Manitoba, unique in Canada, where we are required to hold public hearings. We have 30 or more people in organizations who have signed up who want to speak to this issue, who want to speak to the labour relations legislation, who want to say there are good things about it, there are changes that we would like to see made. We are prepared to take this legislation to the public hearing process, hear from Manitobans and listen very carefully to their suggestions and their concerns and the things that they think we have got right in this bill.

#### Standing Committees Public Presentation Process

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin). The Committee process in this Legislature is a very important

means of getting input from citizens without fear of being influenced or coerced by government. I would ask the Minister: Is it his policy to have political staff call ahead of time those registered to present to committees on bills like Bill 43 in order to suppress dissent and stifle opposition to those, the Government's attempt to kill the Manitoba Environment Council?

**Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Conservation):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the Member asking questions here in the House for an extended period of time now, and so far I fail to understand why the Honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) does not support our efforts in sustainable development. He just attacks our efforts as we try to implement the—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the Honourable Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

Mr. Speaker, the Minister does not have to answer the question if he does not know it, but the Minister should not be provoking debate.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable ministers of *Beauchesne's* Citation 417: Answers to questions should be brief and deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the Honourable Minister of Conservation to please conclude his answer.

**Mr. Lathlin:** If the Member is truly concerned about the environment, he should support our government's plan to implement one of the most proactive sustainable development strategies in the country.

**Mr. Gerrard:** My supplementary to the Premier. I ask the Premier to confirm that his Executive Council's policy analyst, Jane Gray, called one of the presenters listed to present on Bill 43 explicitly to try to persuade her to support the Government's bumbling environmental policy.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, the member that has been quoted by the Member for River Heights has been involved in increased inspections to ensure manure storage facilities in the province are adequately dealt with. We are dealing with an independent study on soil sustainability in Manitoba; we are preparing groundwater maps in sensitive areas because they had not been updated in sensitive areas for years. She has been involved in conservation processes for livestock operations which will allow us to deal with water concerns, proximity to neighbours. The applications will go through a cumulative impact study and risk assessment prior to a decision being made, something that did not happen in the past. We are dealing with a municipal approval process that allows for science at the back end to be dealing with science at the front end.

Yes, we expect people on our staff to be listening and discussing issues and advancements with citizens of Manitoba on a constant basis.

**Mr. Gerrard:** My second supplementary to the Premier. I ask the Premier why he will not be fully open, admit that Jane Gray called Christine Common-Singh, a member of the Manitoba Environmental Council and the round table, a member who teaches political sustainability at the University of Winnipeg? Will the Premier not admit that Jane Gray, his assistant, called specifically to try and influence her presentation before Bill 43, a bill which is designed to kill the Manitoba Environmental Council?

**Mr. Doer:** Well, knowing the individual that was presenting her views to the Committee and knowing the individual that had worked with the previous caucus, the Liberal caucus as an intern, and works with us now as a staff member, I know both of them are very committed to the environment. I would not expect that the

individual who was presenting could be influenced by any staff of the Legislature.

### **Public Schools Act Amendments—Home-School Registration**

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP party should re-assign its name to the no democracy party. Members opposite and the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) last week were supposed to be listening very carefully to members of the public presenting to committee. Bill 12 was on the agenda last week, with home-schoolers' concerns coming to the forefront. A particular concern was centred round the registration of home-schoolers.

\* (14:10)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

### **Point of Order**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** On a point of order. I wonder if the Member came here with a question today, Mr. Speaker. It has been acknowledged by both sides of this House that on a question there can be a preamble of one carefully drawn sentence. I think she is on No. 3 or No. 4 in terms of sentences. Would you please ask her to put her question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Fort Garry on the same point of order?

On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2): "A preamble should not exceed one carefully drawn sentence."

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the Honourable Member to please put her question.

**Mrs. Smith:** Mr. Speaker, given that Bill 12 has not even been passed yet and the presentations were given on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of last week, how can the Minister of

Education (Mr. Caldwell) justify the fact that registration forms arrived Friday morning at home-schoolers across this province with serious amendments reflecting Bill 12 prior to the Bill even passing? How did this happen?

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** I will allow the Minister to answer the specifics, but, Mr. Speaker, I remember, prior to this Legislature changing and amending the Sunday shopping laws, the police forces and the Prosecution branches of Manitoba were told not to prosecute any store that was open on a Sunday before this Legislature even had the Bill introduced.

**Mrs. Smith:** Mr. Speaker, given that the Premier stood up and talked about something totally different, I would like to address my question to the Minister of Education.

Given the fact that Bill 12 is not passed, and given the fact that parents of home-schoolers are now asked to give out their level of their own personal education, as well as other significant changes to Bill 12, could the Minister of Education please explain why these registrations were mailed out prematurely to home-schoolers, with these significant changes?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, the Member in her opening remarks to the first question talking about democracy—it is passing strange, of course, that members opposite, with the Monnin inquiry that the people of Manitoba underwent for a number of years, would be talking about democracy in this province.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to home-schooling, Bill 12, which went through legislative committee last week, of course there is no change of substance in regard to this bill with regard to the forms for registrations. Last year, registration packages were sent out during the last week of July, the first week of August. This year they were sent out in the last week of July, and they will be in the first week of August.

**Mrs. Smith:** Given that this minister does not seem to understand that last year we did not have Bill 12 going through with major changes to the home-schoolers' registration, and given that the home-schoolers association—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Mackintosh:** It is a good thing that we have *Beauchesne's* here. I know the Member is on a supplementary question, and, of course, *Beauchesne's* is very clear that supplementary questions require no preamble. I think, when they are talking about preamble, they mean long phrases that begin with the word "given" and I think we are on the second "given" now and the second supplementary. Mr. Speaker, would you please ask her to put her question.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the Honourable House Leader, he does have point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask the Honourable Member to please put her question.

**Mrs. Smith:** Mr. Speaker, how is it that this Minister of Education can defend sending out registrations that have significant changes to them in view of the fact that Bill 12 is not even passed and in view of the fact that the Manitoba association of home-schoolers has sent a letter to the Minister objecting to these significant changes? I would like to ask this minister how he can justify sending out these registrations with these changes without the Bill going through, and I would like to table—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Mackintosh:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It is almost funny, on her first supplementary question, we did not get up on a

point of order. I guess give an inch, take a mile, but we got up on the second supplementary. The Member used the word "given" and extended phrasing, and then she got up after your admonishment and changed it to "in view of the fact that," and then there is some postamble. Would you please ask her to put a simple question. That is what is required under the rules of this House.

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** I know that the House Leader does a lot better listening than I have seen his colleagues doing in the committee rooms, Mr. Speaker, but if he had been listening, I am sure he would have heard that the Honourable Member was just about to table a document.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble.

The question had been put. If the Member was continuing to table a document, I would ask her to table the document.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Please put your question.

**Mrs. Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is precisely what I was about to do before I was interrupted. I would like to table this letter that indicates the outrage of home-schoolers across Manitoba at not being listened to.

**Mr. Caldwell:** Government members on this side of the House place primary importance on the education of young Manitobans in our school system. We believe in investing in education across the province, both on the public school side and the post-secondary side.

Of course, the challenges in that regard are formidable, given the 10 years of cutbacks implemented across this system by the members opposite. However, we are dedicated in government to investing in education for the economic well-being of the province of Manitoba.

### Nursing Diploma Program Curriculum Approval

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government announced its two-year diploma nursing program five months ago. Students are set to begin classes in four weeks and the program has yet to receive the required approval.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health tell this House when he expects the program to receive final approval from the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, considering they have not yet received the curriculum to review?

\*(14:20)

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question, I think, two or three times during the course of the Estimates debate. I indicated to the Member that we are in the process of getting approval from MARN with respect to this, but I did indicate to the Member that I am so concerned the members opposite have done everything they can to block this program.

I wish they would not have cancelled it three years ago. If they had had a proper nursing program, we would have nurses today.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** I have a ruling for the House.

Would it be the will of the House to grant leave for about 30 seconds for the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) to come into the Chamber? [*Agreed*]

### Point of Order

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we on this side of the House see the dilemma the House is in at this point in time. You have already distributed your ruling. We understand that this ruling is about the Honourable Minister of Health who, unfortunately, cannot hear these remarks that we are

making right now but who in a few moments I know, Sir, will be available to hear these comments. So I believe if you would ask for leave of the House, Sir, I think that we would sit on this for a few moments while you might want to move to Members' Statements and then revert to your ruling because it is already out in the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to move to Members' Statements and deal with this ruling upon completion of Members' Statements? *[Agreed]*

I thank the Honourable Member for Carman for that advice.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Citizen Patrol

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, on June 20, in spite of pouring rain, 84 people from Shaughnessy, Gilbert Park, Willow Park and Willow Park East communities attended a public meeting at Shaughnessy Park School. The purpose of the meeting was to gauge interest in forming a citizen patrol in their neighbourhood.

After listening to the provincial Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), Mr. Wyman Sangster from the Department of Justice, City Councillor John Prystanski and City of Winnipeg police officer Cam Jones, those present decided overwhelmingly to make their community a safer place in which to live and become extra eyes and ears for the police by forming a citizen patrol. A second meeting was held on June 29 to choose a steering committee. I want to congratulate everyone who made the effort to attend the meetings and who want to volunteer in order to make their community safer for everyone.

A special thanks goes to those who were elected to lead the citizen patrol: co-ordinator Kim and the team leaders, Robert, Bob, Hank and Andrea.

I look forward to volunteering occasionally in the future with Manitoba's newest citizen patrol group, the Shaughnessy Neighbourhood Patrol. Thank you.

### Agricore

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to congratulate Agricore on their newest grain inland terminal. Last Tuesday, I had the pleasure to participate in the official opening of the terminal which is located southwest of Melita in my constituency in a small community by the name of Elva.

Agricore's newest commitment to the people of Manitoba is very much welcomed. Congratulations to all of the staff that will be working with producers in the area. They are: Dave Dayholos, Danny Morris, Art Brister, Darcy Vancauwenberge, Chad Yeoman, Bruce Fleger, Kelly Fry, Lisa Crepeele, Andy Penner, Kevin Penner and Rob Bodin. These fine individuals I know will serve the agricultural community very well.

\* (14:30)

Agricore Cooperative Ltd is a farmer-owned co-operative operating on the Great Plains of North America. It provides fully integrated grain and special crops marketing and handling services throughout a prairie-wide network of elevators and processing plants.

Created in 1998 by the merger of Alberta Wheat Pool and Manitoba Pool Elevators, Agricore is the leading supplier of crop nutrition and crop protection products in Canada, and one of Canada's largest grain handling and marketing businesses. As a co-operative, Agricore returns all of its profits to its members.

Mr. Speaker, again, I welcome the newest facility to southwest Manitoba.

### Viking Landing – 1000th Anniversary

**Ms. Linda Asper (Riel):** I am pleased to inform the House of a remarkable millennium event. July 27 and 28 were commemorated in Newfoundland as the 1000th anniversary of the landing and establishment of a settlement by Vikings, led by Leif Ericsson, at L'Anse-aux-Meadows on the island's northern tip.

A number of exciting events to commemorate the occasion are scheduled, including

the exhibition Full Circle, Full Contact: Vikings and Skraelings in Newfoundland and Labrador, which relates the initial encounter between the Vikings and the Aboriginal peoples, who, at the time of contact with the Vikings, had lived in Labrador for 9000 years and in Newfoundland for 4500 years.

The anniversary features L'Anse-aux-Meadows, the first and only authentic site of Viking settlement in North America, now a national historic site and one of 13 world heritage sites in Canada recognized by UNESCO. Norwegian explorer Helge Ingstad and Anne Stine found the site in 1960 and led the archeological team which worked there until 1968. Their work has resulted in the unearthing of seven Viking turf houses capable of sheltering 50 to 100 people and the restoration of three sod-walled buildings.

Not only Newfoundland celebrates its Iceland heritage. We in Manitoba are proud of the very important contribution made to Manitoba by citizens of Icelandic descent over the last 125 years. Manitoba is home to the largest population of people of Icelandic origin in Canada. The celebrations in Newfoundland were also an important occasion for our Icelandic communities. Let us join Newfoundland by recognizing our shared wealth in our both having a diverse cultural and heritage legacy. I am pleased to bring these significant commemorative events honouring Iceland heritage to the attention of this Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

#### **Manitoba Association of School Trustees**

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry):** Today I rise to acknowledge the important role the Manitoba Association of School Trustees has in the school system here in the province of Manitoba. I rise to also acknowledge the fact that they have sent a letter, as we all know, complaining about or acknowledging the fact that they were profoundly disappointed at the manner in which they were addressed and treated during our review committee hearings on Bill 42 on July 25, 2000.

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees is the catalyst across the

province in putting teachers, students, parents, trustees and principals together in a forum whereby the significant policies of the school divisions across this province are put into place with significant input from the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, working at a local level to ensure that the school divisions give the best possible education to the students in our schools across Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, as we well know in this House, MAST was unable to complete its presentation of its 11-page brief within the 15-minute time constraint at Committee. The significance of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees' presentation is a significance that will be felt across this province for many years to come. I acknowledge the fact that they were profoundly disappointed that the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) took up the majority of the time and, indeed, the debate over the time limit took longer than it would have taken to complete. Thank you.

#### **National Child Benefit**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that our government is taking many initiatives to address poverty, including increased funding to child care, our Healthy Child Initiative to invest in early years.

Recently, our government announced an increase of approximately \$180 this year and next year in the federal National Child Benefit supplement, which will now flow through to families. This change is effective in July and will end the previous government's policy of clawing back for families on employment and income assistance payments from the National Child Benefit increases. This change has been welcomed by many in our community who are concerned about poverty, and it continues our government's efforts to address the serious problem of child poverty in Manitoba.

The National Child Benefit was introduced as a measure to reduce child poverty in Canada. Unfortunately, in our province, families on income assistance had their income eroded, dollar for dollar, and saw no benefit. This has had a profound effect on children living in Manitoba families on income assistance, and we

have seen the depths of child poverty in our province grow over the past 10 years.

Our government is committed to reversing this trend of child poverty by ensuring that all families receive the supports they need to live dignified and independent lives. As a first step toward restoring monies previously clawed back from families receiving income assistance, our government is providing increases to the basic benefit for children aged six years and under by \$20 per month and increases to school supply budgets of \$20 per child. For children six years and under, this means 49 percent of the total new supplement money from the federal National Child Benefit will flow through to families on social assistance. It means \$420 for children six and under will be increased to their income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Speaker's Ruling

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. As previously agreed, we will deal with the ruling.

During Oral Questions on July 24, 2000, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the Honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Laurendeau) concerning the words "that is a stupid question" that the Honourable Official Opposition House Leader attributed to the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak). The Honourable Minister of Health also spoke to the same point of order. As I did not hear the comments in question, I took the matter under advisement in order to peruse Hansard.

On page 4332 of Hansard, the words "That is a stupid question" do appear. However, the words are not attributed to a specific honourable member. In addition, the words did not contain any imputation of motive nor was any unparliamentary language used. I therefore rule that there is no point of order.

### Point of Order

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (Interim Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, just after you finished your ruling I heard the Minister of Family Services from his seat, while laughing, say: It is still a stupid question.

Mr. Speaker, I would like you to call the Minister of Family Services to order and indicate that is the arrogant attitude of this government that we see on a daily basis in this House.

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Member does not have a point of order. She cites no reference in *Beauchesne's*, she cites no infringement of our rules, and she does not have a point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the Honourable Interim Leader of the Official Opposition, I thank both members for their advice. I will take the matter under advisement to peruse Hansard and consult the procedural authorities, and I will report back to the House.

\* (14:40)

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, would you please call debate on second readings, Bill 48.

### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

#### Bill 48—The Rural Development Bonds Amendment Act

**Mr. Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), Bill 48, The Rural Development Bonds Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les obligations de développement rural), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Fort Whyte.

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to put a few words on the record before Bill 48 makes its way to committee. We are very interested in attending the committee process and finding out some information from the Minister and her staff regarding this bill.

I will say that in principle we do not have any particular problems with this bill. Certainly expanding the Development Bonds to allow businesses within the city of Winnipeg to access these funds we believe is a reasonable expansion

of this program, provided that it is carried out right. Our main concern is going to be in the application.

Once again we have a bill before us that does not say much or does not really speak in regard to the application of the intent of this bill. The Minister and her department are aware that within the city of Winnipeg and across the province of Manitoba there are other avenues for entrepreneurs and for businesses to raise capital. The Crocus Fund is just one of a number of venture capital funds that are available to businesses, whether they are in the infancy stage, start-ups, or whether they are already existing and looking to expand. It is also well known that for the most part a number of those funds are constantly looking for solid investment vehicles.

In particular, the Crocus Fund has a substantial amount of capital which has not yet been utilized, I believe. I am not quite as close to it as I was a year ago prior to being elected to this House. At that time I do know that management of the Crocus Fund was certainly looking far and wide for good opportunities to invest some of the capital that they had on hand, as were the other funds such as the recently started ENSIS Fund. So it is not quite the same situation in the city of Winnipeg as it is in rural Manitoba.

The Minister is aware that Rural Development Bonds and the Act are there for a specific purpose, to help business, particularly small business start-ups and expansions in rural Manitoba, come to fruition, a very worthwhile policy. Implementation of that policy by the previous government, which has led to tremendous diversity and tremendous expansion in our rural economy, something that was long overdue and something which needs to be encouraged as much as possible. I note that while there appears to be possibly a—and it may just be a momentary slowdown in the rural development programs underway at this time as compared to the previous three years. The program is still being undertaken by this government, and they are to be commended for that. It is a very, very important program.

Those of us in the city, those of us who have, for the most part, lived our lives in the

city, sometimes forget the importance that the rural economy plays in our well-being. I think it is imperative that the Government continue to find ways to foster business growth in rural Manitoba, because it really provides, in a lot of cases, the opportunity for our young people to see a future in rural Manitoba, to see that they can have hope and opportunity in the areas where they were born or where they were raised, and I think that is very important for the future of this province. It would be wrong to change the focus of this program from rural development to a heavier emphasis on the city, and that is one of the fears that I have with the introduction of this bill.

In business you see from time to time where it is very difficult for one structure, one management structure, one department, one bureaucracy, to successfully manage two programs that, in essence, go in two different directions. I think it is going to be critical that in the application of the amendments to The Rural Development Bonds Act the Minister and her department ensure there is a continued focus on development in rural Manitoba in an effort to provide the same type of opportunity to individuals, entrepreneurs and businesses in the city of Winnipeg. It is very important that the Department does not lose its focus on what has been accomplished on the rural side of the equation because to do that would be folly. We cannot, as has been mentioned many times regarding many different situations in this House, have a successful Winnipeg, we cannot have a strong and vibrant economy in Winnipeg unless we have a strong rural economy. The two are very much intertwined and should not and cannot be separated.

We would just also like to state that hopefully some of the changes that have taken place recently in The Securities Act that came out of a study that was prepared by Economic Development Winnipeg in the prior two years, which indicated very strongly that there is need for more access to capital in the province of Manitoba and in the city of Winnipeg. While that is true, I think really what is important and what was said in that briefing to the Government and what was acted on is it is important to get private sector capital into the mix. It is important that we as a community can foster growth,



primarily through private capital, and that is really what the changes to The Securities Act were meant to accomplish, and I am sure they will. One only has to look at the activity, the stock market activity with start-up companies in Alberta and compare that to Manitoba to understand the tremendous impact and the tremendous positive results that can flow from opportunities for economic expansion.

So, on this point, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we look forward to getting this bill to committee to discuss with the Minister and some of her departments how they see that businesses and entrepreneurs in the city of Winnipeg will benefit from the application of this bill. I note at the same time that we are seeing a government announcement in the fall regarding the Neighbourhoods Alive! program, which I think in many cases is an admirable program. It was certainly focussed for the most part at the areas of the city of Winnipeg that need that type of activity, the inner city as well as two other areas in the North that I am sure will benefit from it.

I think with regards to that bill, while it does serve a useful purpose, it is somewhat unfortunate that the Neighbourhoods Alive! funding is somewhat restricted and, in fact, I am sure just by mere coincidence is restricted to neighbourhoods that currently have elected a member of the Government. I would hope, in the application of this bill as well, that we see some broader spread to the economic activity that might result, but, as I said before, it will really come with the application and how the program is rolled out.

I am not sure whether the Minister anticipates that there will be round circles in the city of Winnipeg or in various parts of the city of Winnipeg similar to what we see in rural development, which will be some of the impetus for the success of the introduction of this program into the city of Winnipeg.

\* (14:50)

I would also like to say that, while it is important that the focus remain on rural development, it is also important that the right type of economic activity is fostered. Particularly with regard to the city of Winnipeg, it needs to be economic activity that will be not

only sustainable from an environmental perspective but also sustainable from an economic perspective. Of course the true test is whether private sector investors have the belief that the businesses are in fact realistic and will improve. So, as I have said, we are interested in getting that portion to the committee.

I also have a couple of concerns which will be raised in committee regarding some of the amendments which are being proposed on the basis of allowing the Government to react more on what is recorded in the preamble as to react on a more timely basis to minimize its exposure on the guarantee. That is certainly something that is laudable, certainly something that I can see that the administration and the Minister, a road they would want to go down.

While per se I do not have any particular problem with the wording in the legislation, what will be critical, again, will be in the enactment and how it flows. What could become a problem, if not handled properly, would be the issue of putting roadblocks in the way of business. Sometimes in these negotiations and these types of issues we have entrepreneurs all across this province who want to act, who want to act quickly. We have to be sure that we are not putting roadblocks in their way of a bureaucratic nature. While I do not see any indication that that is the case here, we certainly want to flesh that out at the committee stage.

Just in closing, we are pleased to pass this bill on to committee. We are anxious to hear from the Minister and her staff and we are also anxious to hear what the proposed new cap will be on the bonds and in fact how much more funds will be available to incorporate growth in the city of Winnipeg, because I think it would be wrong just to keep the existing caps in place and divert some of the attention from rural Manitoba to the city of Winnipeg. So with those few brief comments, we will look forward to discussing this bill in further detail in committee.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 48, The Rural Development Bonds Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

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

### House Business

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet on Tuesday, August 1, that is, tomorrow, at 10 a.m., to consider Bills 35, 43 and now 48.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet on Tuesday, August 1, 2000, at 10 a.m., to consider the following bills: Bills 35, 43 and 48.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, I would seek leave of the House to have the Committee of Supply meet in two sections only as the business before the section in Room 254 has been completed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House for the Committee of Supply to sit in two sections only as the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 has completed the business assigned to it? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Sale), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

*Motion agreed to.*

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### HEALTH

\* (15:00)

**Madam Chairperson (Bonnie Korzeniowski):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply

meeting in Room 255 will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Health.

Consideration of these Estimates left off on page 91 of the Estimates Book, Resolution 21.4. Health Services Insurance Fund. The floor is now open for questions.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have a couple of administrative matters. When we last left this committee, the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) asked when the Committee commenced again on the next day, whether I would have available the individuals from the Department, and it did deal with Emergency Services. I undertook to do so. Of course, we did not reconvene the next day nor the next day nor the next day, I believe. The individual responsible is now away on holidays, and I am loath to bring anyone back from holidays in order to do that.

So I sent a note to the Member, unfortunately during Question Period, for the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) outlining that information and then recognized that it was in fact the Member for Emerson who had asked me that. So I would appreciate if perhaps the critic would convey that fact to the Member for Emerson and indicate that I will still endeavour to have that individual and the departmental officials available for a briefing as soon as we can justify that. I would appreciate that.

Secondly, for the information of the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), I indicated to the Member for Minnedosa and to the Member for Charleswood that I was going to reply to the issue about physician coverage in Erickson. I did have a private conversation with the Member for Minnedosa where I did convey the information to him concerning that. He seems satisfied with respect to the response on that particular matter. I can assure the Member for Charleswood that I think that that issue has been resolved, at least in terms of providing the information that was requested by the Member for Minnedosa with respect to the issue of the Erickson physicians.

I also have a number of issues that I will bring to the attention of the Member for

Charleswood and other members with respect to queries that have come forward to the Minister and to the Department, of which I have indicated I would take as notice and, depending upon the pattern as to when Estimates are completed, I will still endeavour to provide all information to the Member for Charleswood and other members of queries that they made during the course of the Estimates debate.

I did deal with the issue of physician demand in rural Manitoba. The Member did ask about physician vacancies, and I indicated there were 20 positions posted on the Web site.

The Member also asked what Manitoba's position was vis-à-vis specialists in the country last year and this year with respect to the status. As of December 1998, the Canadian Institute for Health Information reported that Manitoba had 88 specialists per 100 000 population and ranked fourth in Canada and 89 family medicine physicians per 1000 population, with a ranking of sixth in Canada. The 1998 CIHI will not be available until September of 2000.

The Member asked the level of doctors remaining at levels. The College of Physicians and Surgeons indicates, as of July 1999, there were 2037 fully licensed medical practitioners in Manitoba, Madam Chair.

The Member asked the number of doctors per capita, and for the 1998-99 statistics, the physician ratio to population of full-time positions was: Brandon, 660; Burntwood, 5560; Central, 2102; Interlake, 2188; Marquette, 2550; NOR-MAN, 1948; Parkland, 1145; South-Eastman, 2015; South-Westman, 2669; and Winnipeg, 610. The Department advises us, given the number of physicians in the province, the population of Manitoba has not changed significantly. The ratio of physicians to population is unlikely to have varied from previous statistics. Those were from 1998-99.

The Member asked about rural experience for students. Manitoba Health does provide funding to support travel and accommodations for year 3 and 4 undergraduate students to do an elective in rural family practice. Manitoba Health provides funding to support travel and accommodations during their rural rotation for

all family and medicine residents as well as for residents choosing to do rotations in surgery in a rural locale. The Department also funds a summer student rural experience in this program. Up to ten students work with rural physicians for ten weeks over the summer. Manitoba also, of course, funds the rural family medicine program in Parklands which trains 6 residents in rural medicine per year. There is a training program for family medicine residents in Parklands. It is anticipated this program can be expanded to support 12 additional residents, and the number of training sites are anticipated to be increased.

The Member asked about loans for students. The Department provides funding for 15 loans of \$15,000 for students in years 3 and 4 of the undergraduate medical education program. In return for this, the student agrees to work in rural Manitoba for one year/loan immediately upon licensure.

The current rural medical program for practising physicians includes funding for additional skill training as well as continuing their medical education. Manitoba has been supporting the rural physician program for over a decade, and as I indicated, we will be announcing shortly a very comprehensive and expanded rural and retention program that is as, and I have said, long given expansive answers during the course of this Estimates debate with respect to an expanded program that will be announced, that will build on all these initiatives and expand a number of these initiatives in this respect.

I will also provide the Member with a copy of the, as I indicated, the action plan with respect to the rural physician program. I have a kind of marked up copy here. If the Member can bear with me, I will not probably have it today, but I will have it for her in the next day or two, if she could appreciate that.

The Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) asked about specialist shortages in Manitoba. The WRHA reports about 68 specialist vacancies. There are two specialist vacancies in rural areas shown on the rural Web site. The WRHA does some recruiting for rural RHAs. Therefore some of the vacancies reported by the RHAs may exist in rural RHAs. The WRHA is

in the final stages of negotiations with the potential candidates for approximately 10 vacancies.

I provided the information to the Member for Russell in this regard on the understanding, of course, that he would appreciate the difficulty sometimes in terms of negotiation and dealing with these specifics and also recognize that this is the first time this type of information has generally been provided, from my memory.

The Member also asked how much funds have been allocated to diabetes and communicable diseases for the year 2001. It is approximately \$600,000. The Member asked about the RHA funding model review process. Manitoba Health is working with representatives from the council of RHA chairs and has established a funding advisory committee and a working group.

The steering group memberships consist of a co-chair of the CEO from Central RHA; a co-chair of the ADM of internal program divisions of Manitoba Health; the executive director of the Regional Support Services for Manitoba Health, the RHA chair from South Eastman RHA; the chair from regional health authorities of Manitoba; the executive director of the regional health authorities of Manitoba; the chair of the RHA chief financial officer's council; the executive director of the Health Programs for Manitoba Health; and the director of financial services for Manitoba Health.

The working group membership consists of the co-chair, director of financial reporting; WRHA co-chair; the director of financial services of Manitoba Health; chief financial officer from Parkland RHA; V-P corporate services from Central RHA; director of financial planning from the WRHA; director of community health assessment from Manitoba Health; financial consultant of Financial Services from Manitoba Health; consultant from Regional Support Services of Manitoba Health; an epidemiologist from Regional Support Services of Manitoba Health.

The Member asked about the terms of reference for this group. The Department of Health is working with representatives of the

council of RHA groups in this regard. It is recommending, amongst other things, considerations to the existing funding model of RHA authorities in Manitoba to deal with a model with a relationship to health needs and outcomes and provide direction and support for the regional allocation working group.

The objectives are to develop guiding principles for the committee in a working group; pre-existing and other funding methodologies for regionalized health systems; to advise in the scope proposed funding methodology and its implementation; to approve the work plan deliverables; and to provide direction and advice to the Government.

The Member asked for access to the last published community needs assessment for RHAs. I am advised the RHAs completed their first comprehensive community health assessments between 1997 and 1999. Subsequent work in the ongoing community health assessment process may have been written up in some follow-ups.

Documents are available from RHAs. A contact list will be provided to the honourable members so that copies of reports can be accessed. I will provide it, again not today because it requires me ripping off pages, at a later date to the Member.

The Member asked a similar request with respect to the RHA regional plans. The RHAs were to submit their 2001-2002 regional plans to the Minister of Health in June, which consist of a strategic and operational plan. They are also available from the RHAs, of which the same contact list can be provided to the Member.

The Member asked about whether responses have been sent to one Terry Hnatiuk with respect to a query. A reply has been sent out as of last week. There have been some delays in terms of correspondence from the Minister's office, not as much as in the past. I will not go down that road, but we are trying to upgrade and update more immediate responses from the department, particularly as we move to a more responsive-based system.

The Member asked for information with respect to organizational changes as a result of

the regional health authorities. I have flow charts, the most recent flow charts of the organizational structure with respect to the Member's query. We have copies of this which we can provide. We can provide copies to the members. I am now tabling copies of the RHA contacts, three copies, that I indicated to the Member. I am also tabling copies of the organizational structure of which I am, hopefully, tabling three copies for the members.

\* (15:10)

Whoever requested a breakdown of the number of patients with respect to hip and knee replacement, a separate breakdown of patients waiting for hip procedures and knee procedures is currently not available. The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority surgery team is in the process of building a data base that will produce this information. Willis deCormier for orthopedics is collecting data from each orthopedic surgeon. Historical data indicate that annually approximately 45 percent of the total number of joint replacements performed are hip replacements and 55 percent are knee replacements.

The Member asked for the salary scale for a nurse 4 in relation to midwives. The salary scale for a nurse 4, step 1, is \$42,970; step 2, \$44,561; step 3, \$46,154; step 4, \$47,891; step 5, \$49,880; step 6, \$51,811; step 7, \$53,918; step 8, \$56,112. For nurse 5, step 1 is \$51,694; step 2, \$55,487; step 3, \$57,768; step 4, \$60,047; step 5, \$62,507. I understand that the salary range for the clinical nurse specialist, nurse 5, was used as a benchmark for establishing the salary range for midwives. The arrangement was negotiated specifically with the Midwives Association of Manitoba.

The Member requested comparison of the cost of tuition for the baccalaureate program and the new diploma nursing program. The tuition for the new diploma program is approximately \$3,000 a year, which would be \$6,000 for the entire program. I am advised that tuition for the baccalaureate program is \$3,015, which, over four years, is \$3,015 times four.

The Member for Steinbach (Mr. Jim Penner) requested the number of patients on dialysis in southeastern Manitoba. The WRHA provincial

dialysis program has confirmed there are nine hemodialysis patients and six peritoneal patients whose address at diagnosis was within the boundaries of the South Westman Regional Health Authority. In other words, of the two levels, the 15 who have an address, it has not been investigated at this point where these patients are currently residing. As the Member is aware, hemodialysis is provided at 12 sites in Manitoba: Health Sciences Centre, St. Boniface Hospital, Brandon Regional Health Centre, and local centres located in Dauphin, Flin Flon, Morden, Pine Falls, Portage, The Pas, Thompson, Ashern, and Selkirk. All adults in Manitoba on peritoneal dialysis attend a clinic at St. Boniface Hospital, which is responsible for and delivery of service and supplies for all adults in the province receiving this type of commitment.

The Member asked for the breast feeding service at Women's Hospital. Funding has been extended to the Health Sciences Centre vision fund for the continuation of the Women's Hospital breast feeding program. A proposal for comprehensive in-hospital and community program to support breast feeding has been included in the 2001-2002 health plan submission of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. So it has been extended until an overall look at the whole program and a continuation in that context can be secured.

**Mr. Chomiak:** At this point that deals with a number of issues raised by the Member and other members.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I would like to thank the Minister very much. I do appreciate receiving the information. I have colleagues here with me today that actually have some questions they would like to now pose to the Minister.

**Mr. Gary Filmon (Tuxedo):** I think that the Minister is very well skilled in responding to questions now, so I will just ask him if in fact the issue that I am raising has already been dealt with. You can interrupt me and direct me to the answer.

I have been contacted several times by people involved with a proposal by the Southeast

Resource Council to build an Aboriginal personal care home on the site of the former Nazarene College on Lee Boulevard in Fort Garry. My understanding is that the chair of the Southeast Resource Council at that time, Chief Louis Young, wrote to the Premier, Mr. Doer, on the 1st of February with copies to the Minister and Minister Robinson and several other Ministers requesting a meeting to have them become aware of this proposal.

There have not been any replies, I understand, to that letter. I know that our government had been dealing with various of the proponents and that we looked favourably upon the proposal that was followed up by the new chair of the Southeast Resource Council, Chief Sheldon Kent, on June 15, with a letter directly to the Minister with copies to Premier Doer, Minister Robinson, Mr. Lathlin, et cetera. Again no response.

It is my understanding from having read in the *Winnipeg Free Press* about the proposal to have the First Nations people become very much involved in the provision or at least the administration of a lot of their health care services, that this proposal fits eminently well with that intent, that the proposal has the support of all sorts of leaders in the community including Grand Chief Bushie, former Grand Chief Fontaine, Mary Richard, Wayne Helgason and many others of the leadership of the First Nations and Aboriginal community.

The proposal is for 120 beds with the possibly of expanding another 100 beds. They clearly have the ability to provide their 10 percent share of the cost. The proposal is a long way along the road to being able to be qualified, I would say, by the government.

I guess my question is: Why are they unable to receive any response from the government, and, secondly, is this part of the capital program that was announced last week by the Minister?

**Mr. Chomiak:** With respect to the proposal, the Member might be aware that there have been other proposals with respect to Aboriginal personal care homes to be constructed within the city of Winnipeg. What we have asked the WRHA to do is we have asked them to set up a

subcommittee. They have set up a subcommittee, in fact, that is reviewing the various proposals with respect to personal care homes, obviously with respect to Aboriginal services and an Aboriginal personal care home or homes specifically for review by the Department.

I am in a little bit of a difficult position. I do understand they have been in contact with the Capital Planning branch, as well as the WRHA in this regard. I am not in a position today to give specific responses about that specific proposal nor other capital proposals other than that I am given to understand that they have been contacted by the department and by the WRHA in this regard. With respect to capital proposals specifically, it is our intention in the next several weeks to contact all of the various authorities with respect to the approvals in that regard. At the very latest we are anticipating by the early fall to have completed the process of contacting all of the various regional health authorities with respect to proposals.

With respect to the idea and the concept of an Aboriginal personal care home situated within the city of Winnipeg, I can indicate that we are favourably inclined in that regard.

**Mr. Filmon:** Given that my understanding is that the design is fairly well along the way to completion, that as well it is a 23-month construction timetable, I am wondering why there is no sense of urgency being exhibited by the Government on the issue, given that this group is very well along the way to being able to deliver a personal care home sooner, perhaps, than others might be. I recognize that there has been some minor contact by the Department just to, as I understand it, keep them at bay.

There was a request on the 1st of February for a meeting with ministers. It was followed up again on the 15th of June for a meeting with ministers. I recognize that once we are in session it is more difficult for the Minister. But when groups take the initiative and do all of this spadework to put themselves in a position to fulfil what they believe to be the requirements that government is putting forward, you can understand the frustration that these people are feeling.

\* (15:20)

**Mr. Chomiak:** I appreciate the comments and I understand their frustration. I hope that we can remedy that very shortly.

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Madam Chairperson, it is a while ago that I asked the Minister two specific questions. I think that it was going to come out at the tabling of the capitals, the budget that you were putting out specific to Salem Home in Winkler and Tabor in Morden. Now, these were both projects that were announced last year and I believe they were also in the design stage, if the Minister could indicate to me where they are at and also to the communities so that they can continue with their planning.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, similarly, as I indicated both to the Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) and last week during the course of the Estimates debate, we embarked on a little bit of a different process with respect to capital this year for several reasons, firstly, because of the transitional nature of the Government, and, secondly, because of the fact that last year's capital and the previous year's capital were fairly extensive.

We wanted to review all of the capital needs requirements. The Department has done probably the biggest assessment, I am given to understand, they have ever done of all of the capital needs and requirements. We also wanted to embark on a different process, returning somewhat to the process that had been followed in the early 1990s with respect to approvals of projects at the various levels. I appreciate the Member's questions with respect to those particular locations, deal with homes that were previously approved.

We are in a situation now where we wanted to stick with a specific process. Last week we announced publicly projects that we are actually going to tender. We did make announcements with respect to the rest of the projects. Over the next several weeks we will be contacting each individual RHA and outlining the status of each of their projects. As tempting as it might be and as much as I would like just to maintain the integrity of the process, I cannot give a specific

response other than that we are well familiar with those projects. That has been communicated to the RHAs. We will be getting back to them about this particular status of those projects.

**Mr. Dyck:** I just wanted to reiterate the fact that there are about 45 people waiting right now. They are waiting placement. Right now they are in the hospital and will need to find a place to stay. I would appreciate an answer to that, and a positive one, as soon as possible.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** My first question deals with an issue which I know the Minister has spoken of frequently. That is the need to look at where cost savings occur in health administration. I know that the Minister has moved to consolidate the two RHAs in Winnipeg.

My questions are: (a) how are you doing in looking at administrative across the whole system, across the whole province; and (b) I wonder whether you could provide for each of the RHAs the administrative costs and the total costs and the percentage that is going to administration.

**Mr. Chomiak:** As the Member recalls, we have discussed this issue during the course of these Estimates with respect to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, and the cost savings that were assessed at somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$800,000 with respect to allocated savings in that regard.

I also indicated that, during the course of the Estimates, we are also doing a review of all of the various health authorities and have asked for a breakdown specifically on administrative costs and allocations in that area. We are also undertaking a number of measures. There were suggestions from members opposite about various procedures to adopt with respect to a review of the health authorities and regionalizations per se. Several members recommended, for example, a wholesale review at this point, which is a valid suggestion, of the regional health authorities. For purposes of continuity and trying to lessen the ongoing nature of constant change in the system, I sort of chose for administrative reasons not to go down that

course, although at some point that is not necessarily ruled out.

We have undertaken a review of all the financial situations. I have asked for specific information precisely on the lines that the Member has suggested. I do not have that information at this point. I think when I am in a position I could probably share some of that information with the Member once that process is complete. The Member probably is aware as well from discussions that occurred during the course of these Estimates debate that we are also in a process of reviewing the financial systems and the financial funding of RHAs in general. It has been an ongoing process that began last year.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I thank the Minister, and I would appreciate receiving that information when it is available. Certainly, as I travel around the province in some but not all areas, administrative costs come up again and again. It would seem to me that, if indeed the Minister is able to carry through on his efforts to have a system which works with less administrative overhead, we should be able to compare spending, for instance, last year with this year, in various regional health authorities for administration, and have an estimate of the proportion of health care costs by region which go toward administrative expenses.

The one area where I note, when we are looking at the departmental Estimates for Administration and Finance, there is really a very small reduction this year of about \$4,000, from about \$7,038,000 down to \$7,034,000, is for administration. I noted with interest at the time of the amalgamation of the regional health authorities that Dr. Brian Postl indicated that he felt there could be some reduction in the administrative at Manitoba Health. I would like the Minister to comment.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, in fact the issue that Doctor Postl made reference to is an issue that I have made reference to myself. It is a difficult task for the regional health authorities. They are constantly criticized for having high administrative costs, and some of us do it centrally, and then they point to the Department of Health and say, well, you are making commensurate kinds of changes in that regard.

Having said that, I hope that all members appreciate that what has happened at Manitoba Health and the regions is, as we have moved from centralization to regionalization, there has been a dramatic shift in resources from the Department of Health to the regional health authorities. Literally hundreds of positions have moved. The Department of Health is a relatively extremely scaled-down version of what was a Department of Health several years ago. That transition is still not complete. Clearly the regionalization process that was put in place is a matter of continuing development.

\* (15:30)

I can indicate it is an interesting administrative and policy development question. There are some areas, for example, at the Department of Health where I would think I would like to have additional resources to carry province-wide programs, and we do not. There are some areas where there are perhaps programs that are still being administered or carried out by the Department of Health that might be more appropriate in the regions. We are still looking at that entire process.

I can tell you in terms of a policy and administrative sense that it is my sense, I mean, the people at the Department of Health that I deal with on a daily and weekly basis work extraordinarily long periods of time and work extraordinarily hard. In some cases we have given them tasks that they literally have been unable to deliver for sheer lack of personpower. So the way I have characterized it basically is that because we are in a transition phase from a centralized approach delivery of health programs to a regionalized approach—we are in the early stages, we are still working on this particular process. It is noteworthy that we have kept positions down and the only hirings have been generally in areas of direct delivery of programs, et cetera, with some rare exceptions.

We have been conscious of the need not to expand the operations at the central structure. At the same time, we are cognizant, and we ought to be cognizant, of how we deal with these issues on a province-wide basis. We ought to be wary of not putting ourselves in a position where we cannot deliver programs and services that the



public expects us to deliver by virtue of overextending the resources and services we have.

At this point, I do not have a definitive response to the Member on this. We have recognized the issue. One of the reasons for the choice of the Deputy Minister that we now have as the Acting Deputy Minister is some expertise in this particular area. Having said that, we are conscious of those. They are initiatives and indications that, in fact, we have made ourselves.

It is interesting, particularly as we have gone through this period of a lot of labour negotiations in the past few months, how many individuals and many people in the Department of Health have been running extended hours. That is right across the board, actually, in most areas of my experience with the Department of Health. So I think we have to be cautious and prudent in this area, keeping in mind that, as we move towards a regionalized nature, most of the programs are delivered, for the most part, by the regions.

**Mr. Gerrard:** As the Minister is aware, there has been considerable debate on the precise number of nurses that are needed in Manitoba. What I would ask is how does Manitoba compare the number of nurses per capita with other provinces, and how are we doing in being able to provide efficiently the nursing services that are required?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As the Member is aware, we have canvassed this during the course of the Estimates. The per capita, we actually compare relatively favourably. The Member may not know, personally, a personal comment, I do not like per capita comparisons because I do not think they provide a true picture. That is a personal point of mine, but in terms of per capita, the recent reports show Manitoba on a relative basis, as a relatively high per capita nurse ratio vis-à-vis at least other western provinces. In fact, I will get the specific data again to the Member.

In terms of nursing vacancies in programs, we have also canvassed that issue during the course of these Estimates. One of the frustrations of undertaking a number of programs, you know the scenario has changed in Manitoba. It is not,

well, we are cutting back here, we are cutting back here. It is actually to an air of, well, we are expanding a program here, we are expanding a program here. One of the difficulties with that is it is more difficult to expand when the resources, obviously, in terms of nurses, are not available, which is one of the reasons why we took the major step of announcing our nursing recruitment and retention plan, which is fairly comprehensive, and I have canvassed it during the course of these Estimates quite extensively.

In the short term, we are doing everything we can with respect to recruitment and retention. The two top issues that nurses over and over again said to us, with respect to nursing recruitment and retention, were: (1) bring back the diploma program; (2) provide funding for nurses to get the kind of upgrading and training that other professionals have access to, and that they do not have to have difficulty, so that they can have the same kind of access and resources. To that end, we have provided \$3 million from the nurse recruitment and retention fund that has been given to the RHAs to provide that kind of information to nurses in order to undertake those activities. The vacancy ratios have been provided, and I will provide them again to the Member. He may not have been in committee at that particular time because of, as I understand, his need to cover other committees. I will attempt to provide that to the Member as soon as possible.

**Mr. Gerrard:** One of the problems that resulted from the closure of Misericordia Hospital was that the plastic surgery program, which had been building up and was becoming a major presence at Misericordia, was bringing many of the plastic surgeons there, was able to provide plastic surgery with people working together in a pretty efficient kind of way, was in essence dispersed around a number of hospitals that, for example, at the Health Sciences Centre, this presented or has presented major problems because, in point of fact, it being a major trauma centre, many of the surgeries got interrupted. There were patients who waited, in at least one instance, for a week before being able to receive surgery, occupying beds unnecessarily, and so on.

I would like the Minister to provide a little bit of an update on where plastic surgery is and where it is going.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I am aware of the issues, some of the issues surrounding plastic surgery. I am aware of some of the difficulties. I can indicate that they have been brought to the attention of the WRHA in order to try to deal with. The Member appreciates the complex and conflicting nature of this particular issue. I guess, while I am not trying to be evasive, I am aware of the issue and the difficulties, and we are trying to address them. I think probably there are a number of initiatives that we are going to be undertaking to try to come to grips with that particular problem. It has been a long-standing problem. It is based on a variety of difficulties both on the pediatric and the adult end, and it is one of the issues that we are asking the WRHA to come to grips with.

\* (15:40)

**Mr. Gerrard:** Next I would like to ask the Minister about his plans in terms of the use of information technology in communications throughout the health care system. I am well aware of the huge problems that were present with both the vision and the execution of what was the SmartHealth program proposal, et cetera. But it is clearly an area which is extraordinarily important to get right in health care, to spend wisely to provide the kind of technology and information support to all those who have varying roles in the health care system.

It is also an area in which the Manitoba Health, in essence, probably has a particularly important role because in many circumstances we are dealing with communication across regions. We are dealing with the need not only to be able to communicate but to have systems which can talk readily to another, whether one is talking about health information or laboratory services or other things.

So I would ask the Minister what his vision is in information technology and telecommunications in telehealth and where he is going.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, we have also had an opportunity to discuss some aspects of this during the course of the Estimates debate. I am going from memory here. I believe during

the course of the Estimates debate I indicated if one were to look at the technological proposals that have come up to us for technological need, probably about \$400 million have come up, the majority of which are very, very worthwhile processes. The Member is also aware that we have fallen behind other jurisdictions. The Member is also aware that at the provincial-federal level, it has been identified as one of the top three, maybe one of the first orders of priority with respect to dealing with some of the issues in health care. The Member, because of his former position, I will not go into a long dissertation, because the Member is more aware of the ramifications and some of the issues than I am.

Clearly the principle that (a) we have to advance the technology is recognized; (b) that it has to be the kind of process that avoids some of the pitfalls of the previous experience. That is, one must be wary that it is not a Cadillac. At the same time, it must be a process that is interchangeable and workable.

We have set up an information technology strategic task force to co-ordinate IT projects across the Manitoba health sector, which includes the RHAs as well as individuals involved. Now, we are also allocating, during the course of this budget, some funding for some high-need projects that will shortly be announced. When I say high-need projects, when you look at prioritization of this issue, it is almost a Solomon-like task to determine which projects should go ahead this year and which priority projects are not going to get the go-ahead this year based on capital needs and requirements. That has not been an easy task.

The process will move ahead. It will be co-ordinated and integrated in Manitoba. It will be tied in with many of the federal initiatives that have been announced. One of the reasons for a slower-than-I-would-like output in this area is because of the negotiations that are ongoing with the federal government which we are hopeful will be addressed in the fall and which may or may not include a technological portion to it. The Member can appreciate that some projects obviously are going to go ahead. Some are going to involve some federal assistance. Some may not but may have a potential for some federal

assistance, which would then permit us to lever up the funding from the federal sector.

One of the clear, I think, directions that is easier to discuss and easier in principle than actual implementation is the directive that has sort of been one of the courses of direction from the federal government and the provinces. That is collaborative work. There has been a fair bit of work on the collaborative side, and it has been an interesting exercise. It has been a useful exercise, and I think we will see some success from it. But it is interesting that, in theory, it has not amounted to as successful—we are breaking new ground in this area—as one would hope. We are still involved in some negotiations.

There will be some announcements of some major capital initiatives. We have a task force review. We are intending to co-ordinate the programs. We are discussing with the federal government. We are discussing with other provinces. This is really an unfortunate area that it would be absolutely ideal, for operational reasons, to actually fund front-end some massive sums this year. But given our needs and requirements, that will not be the case, and we are looking for a more planned approach in investment in this area over the course of the next several years, keeping in mind that it has been identified as a significant factor in saving costs and in co-ordination down the road. It is a chicken and egg argument with respect to technology.

**Mr. Gerrard:** One of the areas that has been controversial in the area of education has been the procurement policy. In recent times, we saw this with the Winnipeg School Division No. 1, which chose to go out of Manitoba, indeed out of Canada, to procure computer products and services. I think that one of the things that has come quite strongly from people in the information technology area and telecommunications area in Manitoba is that there is a considerable amount of expertise here and that there is a role for the provincial government to work with people in the business who are quite knowledgeable in Manitoba in developing an approach to procurement which would be compatible with the trade rules but would also facilitate the growth and development of Manitoba-based enterprises who are developing

skills and products and services in the area. I would ask the Minister what his approach is in this context in the information technology, telecommunications, and telehealth area.

*\* (15:50)*

**Mr. Chomiak:** In fact, in some ways, that was one of the supposed intentions of the former SmartHealth initiative, which did not materialize, and which, in fact, in some cases, took an opposite flow. The Member is correct to identify it. It is a principle that not only forms a useful resource, but forms part of an infra-structure and a critical mass that allows for further development. So we are cognizant of that principle.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I would ask the Minister's approach to research and development in the health area. I am aware of, and I commented in the Legislature about, the investment which would provide some increase to the Manitoba Health Research Council in matching funds to those awarded federally.

*Mr. Jim Rondeau, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

I would point out that the investments that are being made in Manitoba still are proportionately less, on a provincial scale, than many other provinces, including the provinces which one would call "have not" provinces, like Québec, for example. I would ask what your approach is in this area.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The Member is correct, in terms of this specific observation. We are attempting to remedy that, not just through the Department of Health, but through the efforts of the economic committee of cabinet, as well as other government agencies, in terms of co-ordination. I have met with the Manitoba Health Research Council. I have received some of their suggestions and advice in this regard. I have also asked for some individuals who are knowledgeable in this field to provide us with specific recommendations and advice. We are still poring over that. Recognizing that there are some jurisdictions, particularly to the west, that are undertaking some extraordinary initiatives in this area. There is the experience of Québec over

the last decade or so, or even longer, which has undertaken their initiatives. This is also an area that is, if one delves into it, rife with countervailing principles and countervailing theories with respect to type and means and assistance from private sector, and private-sector involvements, and the type of projects, primary research versus the kind of research that is marketable. It is being looked at in a comprehensive sense by the Government.

**Mr. Gerrard:** One of the areas which is expanding is the area which is using foods for their health benefits, functional foods, nutraceuticals. I just wonder what the Minister's view of this development is and what his department is looking at in this area?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I believe that we have a staff person that is devoted totally to nutrition and nutrition-related matters. I will endeavour to get a reply back to the Member with respect to the specifics of his question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** That finishes my questions. Clearly one of the important functions of the Department of Health is not only to provide the highest quality care we can, to look at how over the long run we reduce costs for Manitoba and Manitoba taxpayers. I would ask the Minister what initiatives he has in this area.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, during the budgetary process, the exercise that we just went through at the Department of Health, we basically identified a short-term, mid-term and long-term range of goals with respect to expenditures and revenue. We identified the need to isolate and to allocate, because clearly health is a needs-driven system, to deal with the other side of the equation. That work is being undertaken by the Department of Health in recognition of the fact that while there is—here, in the interests of time, I am actually not going to go on, because I could go on for a long time in this area of the whole question of the movement of the Department of Health towards, you know, the whole issue of the acute care side versus community side, et cetera, which the Member is well familiar with.

I should indicate to the Member a couple of things, firstly, that we are aware of that at Health

and we are undertaking that exercise at Health, and, secondly, as I indicated previously during the course of these Estimates, there were some significant increases both on the acute care side and the community-based side with respect to Health expenditures this year. One of the goals and directives that we have asked for the RHAs, particularly the WRHA, to consider is the whole area of community side. They have undertaken an extensive planning process around the community side with respect to initiatives to deal with particularly the next budgetary year as they relate to the community side. If one were to look through—this is why I told the Member I did not want to get too far.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Let me then explore one specific area, the area of stroke. Neuroscience is clearly an important area with an aging population. The figures, as I remember them, as of a couple of years ago were that the average length of hospital stay in Manitoba for a patient with stroke was 66 days. In Calgary, the average length of stay was 13 days. I would ask the Minister what the current statistics are and what the Minister is doing to bring a much more focussed effort in the area of stroke care than was present before?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I will get the specifics back to the Member. I just want to point out that, almost on every single announcement we have made, we have been trying to be cognizant of the rehabilitative and preventative in the community side.

For example, on the hallway medicine initiative, half the expenditures were devoted on the community side. On the recent cardiac program, the cardiac program that we announced recently, there is a significant component, a significant component that is based on the rehabilitation and the community-based and the preventative side for cardiac.

With respect to the neurosciences, neurosurgery and neuro-related programs, I will get the specifics back to the Member.

**Mr. Gerrard:** In the case of stroke, rehabilitation is a clearly important area, but the experience in other jurisdictions would suggest that rapid identification of the problem and very

early intervention, and I am talking here within the first few hours, and optimum care within the first 12 to 24 hours, can have a huge difference in terms of outcome, so that it is more than just rehabilitation that needs a focus. It is the ability to provide the very best, high quality care very early on which can make a huge difference in terms of how long patients are in hospital, how well and how fast they recover and what the costs are to the system.

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the Member is correct, and it goes further than that. We have had presentations by health experts that have told us, if we can increase, for example, our recognition and treatment of high blood pressure, we would dramatically reduce the risks of strokes and subsequent illnesses in that regard. I have been told point blank that, if you were to increase incredibly, if you could increase dramatically the detection of high blood pressure and deal with that symptom in the first instance, we could reduce dramatically our strokes and heart attack victim cases.

I agree with the Member. Not only is it rehab, but it is the early identification and the early treatment, particularly with the new forms of drugs that are presently available, as well as rehab on a more immediate basis than in the past as well as the whole preventative side. We are cognizant of that, and the Member's advice is good advice.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I have asked in the Legislature in Question Period about the Minister's approach to hepatitis C, and I would ask for an update in terms of how things are coming with rapid identification of patients and with the treatment of patients with hepatitis C, because here again is an opportunity to prevent serious end-stage liver disease by early detection and treatment.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the Member might be aware that there are significant federal dollars that have been tied up in this regard for, I think, and I am thinking out loud, approximately a year. There have been ongoing negotiations and discussions with respect to the release of those federal dollars and the implementation of programming. We have undertaken, and I am not

pointing any fingers here. The resolution and the negotiations on the federal-provincial level were very, very difficult. The way I understand it, and I do not know, I had better hold off on what I can, but there are some hindrances that are not anyone's fault with respect to the flow of federal money.

We have endeavoured at the Department of Health to organize a look-back program and to do the work with respect to just proceeding period while those issues resolve themselves, on the assumption that the issues are going to resolve themselves. If they do not resolve themselves, we have to proceed to deal with this very serious problem, the expansion of the services, the look-back program, the moving forward with a second hepatologist for Winnipeg as well as ongoing. So we are moving on that, and we are still hopeful, and this is not pointing any fingers, that federal dollars can flow as soon as possible. But this is not a case of us saying, well, one government or another government is being bad in this regard. There has just been some difficulty in that actual developing, but we have said at Manitoba Health, we put it on the agenda, the deputy ministers. We have had discussions with the federal government and, I believe, some of the other provinces. We are just proceeding on our own on the assumption that we are going to receive that federal assistance, and if we do not receive that federal assistance, well, we are proceeding.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** I just have a couple of quick questions for the Minister and with his indulgence. One of them was, though, you just mentioned, Mr. Minister, the flow of dollars from the federal government. Can you outline for me just what the flow of dollars was in transfer payments last year, in 1999?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I think I will take that question as notice and provide the Member with some specific figures, because I want to be able to give an accurate view, and to the best of our capability I will provide him with it as soon as we can. The reason I am being hesitant is I could probably give numbers to the Member right now, but there are disputes and discussions as to what is one-time money, what is the base, what is continuing, what is not continuing, how it

relates to, for example, the CHST, and the relationship with education dollars and other related dollars, and obviously it is the subject of considerable discussion right now, particularly leading up to the first ministers' conference next week. So rather than complicate the matter by giving the Member a number at this point, I will provide the Member with as best and accurate a figure as I can at a later date.

**Mr. Maguire:** Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that. If then you are going to take that as notice, I wonder if I could perhaps just go back five or six years on that and get the transfer payments. You are looking at the development of the base dollars and the education dollars in other areas that you have outlined. Would it be possible to have that included?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I will endeavour to provide that to the Member.

**Mr. Maguire:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Just on a related issue in my own constituency, I do not know if it has been brought up at this point yet or not. I was in Boissevain on the weekend and not on a matter of health, but I had the pleasure of opening a new facility there in the grain industry, being at it. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could indicate for me when you will be contacting the Mayor in Boissevain. Mr. Anderson has indicated that he is looking at some clarification, I guess, around when construction would begin on the clinic for the community of Boissevain, and I wonder if you could give us more information on that.

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are caught up in a couple of sort of processes. Firstly, we are working through the capital plan and I am trying not to run off particular announcements with respect to the capital plan, and to deliver the information, the undertaking that I made to the RHA CEOs when we announced our capital plan is that we are hopeful that within a few weeks we would flow to them most of the information concerning capital projects. For some of the projects, we may not have all of the information ready, but certainly by early fall all the information will be communicated. That is the first point.

Considering generally normal practice, my plan had actually been to visit a whole series of

locales, but that has been changed by two factors: firstly, our continuing presence here; secondly, the ramifications and implications of the federal-provincial issue. I believe there is a scheduled meeting. I believe I am meeting with the RHA authorities, and what I intend to do is to visit those locations, including Boissevain, as soon as I can arrange it.

**Mr. Maguire:** Just a finality, then, Mr. Minister. Your objective is to put the capital budget out for the Health Department by September or in early September, albeit we may not still be in the House at that point.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The capital plan process is not related to the House as much as it is related to a process that we wanted to adhere to, and that was that we made the initial announcements of the capital programs that we are going to tender. Through the course of the next few months and months on, we will announce other programs going to tender. We indicated to the regional health authorities that we did a complete reassessment of all of the capital projects and we are going back to the stage level-one, level-two, and level-three approval process that had been in place in the '90s. We indicated to the RHAs that we were hopeful in the next several weeks that most of them would hear about most of their projects in the next several weeks. At the outside we were hopeful by early fall that most of the information would be provided, keeping in mind, for example, that some projects might not be announced in terms of going to tender until perhaps later in the year, or perhaps early next year, et cetera, depending on the particular project.

**Mr. Maguire:** Mr. Chairperson, those are all the questions that I have.

\* (16:10)

**Mrs. Driedger:** I was glad that Doctor Gerrard brought up the issue of strokes because we had been certainly committed to looking at funding of a comprehensive stroke program that did have a price tag on it of \$13 million. I think the concept of looking at a comprehensive stroke program is a good one. I think that the direction we had been moving in, in concert with the

regional health authorities, the WHA and the WCA, who jointly submitted a concept document proposing a comprehensive stroke program, was a good one. It looked at a full continuum of care for stroke patients, including prevention, acute care, continuing care and long-term care. I did not see anything in this budget at all that related to anything specific to a stroke program that would look at particularly maintaining stroke numbers through prevention efforts because we are certainly seeing an increase by 10 percent to 20 percent a year regarding the incidence of stroke.

I wonder if the Minister could comment as to whether or not there is any funding at all allocated specifically to a comprehensive or otherwise stroke program.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I indicated to the Member for River Heights that I would get back to the Member with specifics in that regard.

I just want to point out to the Member that the Member indicated intentions. I have looked through numerous, numerous intentions by members opposite for all kinds of programs with no money and no allocations attached, period, in terms of the budgetary process. The best example is the LDRP rooms that the Member made reference to in the House recently, which I then went back and saw that, yes, it was approved at one point with no money attached. Then the Member stood up and indicated: Well, where are the LDRP programs which we funded and which we are funding in terms of our budget?

So there are all kinds of good ideas. There are all kinds of program initiatives that have been announced and have been suggested over the past few years, many, many of which had literally no money attached to them, literally. It then becomes incumbent upon us in terms of reviewing our budget to determine which programs can go forward, which programs are going to be dealt with in terms of a priority basis. So the Member can outline all kinds of programs and all kinds of initiatives that have come up over the past several years and indicate their good faith in wanting to bring those programs forward. I am sure there was good faith, but that good faith did not come with the

matching funding allocations. That has been the case in numerous, numerous initiatives.

We are the Government, and we are delivering the programs. I will get the specifics back to the members.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Now that the Minister has touched on the topic of the LDRP unit at the Women's Centre, I wonder if he could tell me whether or not the \$300,000 that was going to be needed to finish the—I understand it was electrical and otherwise—work there. I wonder if that money has been released so that they continue on.

A doctor had phoned me in some distress about the fact that the unit had been opened in June and then had to be closed because there was not this funding of \$300,000 that had been needed. The money was not put into it. She had reached the point of such concern that she went to her superiors and asked permission to speak out publicly on the situation, because she had major concerns at the risk that patients were being put at, because antepartum moms were being kept at home, postpartum moms were being sent home too soon. She said all we are waiting for is the \$300,000 to come forward.

Can the Minister indicate whether or not that funding has been released so that they can proceed to do the work they need? Those 17 beds, I understand, are ready to go; nurses are trained. Has that money been released so that they can finish the work and move on with the opening of the unit?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the Member may be familiar that these units were recommended in the early '90s for allocation. I believe they went to the Member's government in February of 1998 for development, of which no funds were allocated. The Member might know that we announced the LDRP rooms are going to tender for St. Boniface Hospital. I can indicate that the LDRP rooms are going to be functioning in the fall.

**Mrs. Driedger:** That is fine and well for St. Boniface Hospital.

But I am just wondering if the Minister could indicate the status of the unit at the Health

Sciences Centre, at the Women's Centre, whether or not that \$300,000 is being put into place to finish off the unit so that they can open it.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, as I indicated to the Member, all rooms will be up and operating in the fall.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Another question there related to the sonographers. I know we had discussed that. I believe it was perhaps last week in Estimates. Again, I had a phone call from another very concerned physician who indicated to me after he saw in the newspaper the Minister's comments that we really had to address in a more comprehensive way the training program for sonographers so that we were training enough, so that we were doing what it took to retain them here. He had phoned me, because he had some concern that the Government had authorized the hiring of three more sonographers.

It had been approved, but the Government had not released the funding, and because the Government had not released the funding for it, the WRHA was in a bind in that it could not offer jobs to these new graduates who are now graduating, I believe it is, in two weeks' time. In fact a number of them have taken jobs elsewhere and out of province, and this doctor felt that, had there been better planning in place, these jobs should have been offered to these students four months ago. It was not that we did not have a good training program.

In fact we were training, the minister has said seven; this particular physician thought it was eight. I will not quibble over one. But the fact was we had students coming out of the sonographer training program. The Government did not jump on the bandwagon fast enough and manage the situation so that they could have hired these three new needed sonographers. This particular physician wondered why the Government did not release the funding, particularly four months in advance, so that jobs could have been offered, and we might not have been in the situation of having an ultrasound waiting list that has pretty much doubled.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wish that the previous government had taken some action earlier on the

whole human resource issue right across the board. I have said over and over again, but having come to office, we are faced with this, and we are developing a series of strategies and initiatives on human resources right across the board. I find it interesting, for example, on nurses, the Member says why are you not doing more on nurses, when for a decade there was no action. To be criticized now for not moving fast enough strikes me as curious. Having said that, we hired, I believe, 75 percent of last year's class, and we are hopeful of trying to hire as many as we can in this year's class.

**Mrs. Driedger:** First of all, just to reiterate to the Minister that the criticism was coming from a physician in the field, one that was particularly concerned that here we have a graduating class. We have an opportunity right now to hire some people. In fact, as of a week ago, I understand there were three people who did not even have a job offer. According to him, he said the money was authorized, but the Government did not release it. So we could be losing those three students. That would be where my concern would be. We have a waiting list that has pretty much doubled in ultrasound, and I know ultrasound has always been a challenge in managing that waiting list, but we also, when we were in government, we did not have a growing waiting list. We were actually bringing the waiting list down despite the fact we were doing more ultrasounds. We still managed that list, and we brought it down despite the increasing numbers that were being done.

\* (16:20)

So certainly I have to support this particular physician's concern because he felt that, had the situation been managed more efficiently, those students should have been offered a job four months ago. We should not be losing students because we have not thought far enough ahead and tried to keep them. It is one thing to say I wish that the Tory government had a human resource plan. Here we have in front of us a situation maybe where there was not one. I am just hoping that we do not lose any more time in this situation, if we are sitting right now with three students that have not been offered a job, that they might be offered a job, that we do not lose them. I know one is going to Moose Jaw out



of this course, and others are going elsewhere. I truly hope that the Minister and his staff could assure us that these students will not be lost.

**Mr. Chomiak:** As I indicated, we hired 75 percent of last year's class, and we are endeavouring to do as much or better, but as good as we can in this area. We are trying to deal with this. I am also indicating that we are also going to have a more comprehensive approach to the whole issue. I have indicated that publicly, that that will be coming forward.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I wonder if the Minister could indicate to us and confirm for us: Has the Canadian Blood Services gone on strike this morning, as of 7 a.m.?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the Minister tell us what the plan is in terms of ensuring that there is enough blood in the province, so that surgical slates are not cancelled?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As the Member is aware, the Canadian Blood Services is, for lack of a better term, an arm's-length agency, established several years ago with provincial representation on a board of directors that operates basically on a national mandate in each provincial jurisdiction, and undertakes negotiations to that end.

I do not want to discuss too much the issue of contingencies. We are endeavouring, to the best of our abilities, to do everything that we can to ensure that adequate resources and adequate supply can be maintained.

*Madam Chairperson in the Chair*

**Mrs. Driedger:** The Minister is very familiar, I think, with a particular case. I just want to reinform him, I guess, about the continuing calls I am getting from a Nadine Hammersley. She does not feel that she is being properly dealt with by the Department. I wonder if the Minister would be prepared to give this another look. She certainly does not feel that her situation is improving. I wonder if the Minister would be prepared to address this situation. I do not know if he is prepared to speak to her personally. Certainly, that is what she would like. That may

help in some instances, but I am wondering if the Minister would be prepared to look into that one a little more.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am prepared to look into the situation. I am also prepared to sit down with the Member and discuss the specifics of that. Perhaps that would be a better course of action to follow, and then to follow from that discussion.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I would like to now get back into some issues. One being a follow-up to what Doctor Gerrard had started to talk about. If I looked back to a release put out by the NDP, September 1, it criticized the bureaucracy of the Tory government. The phrase here is "the Tory's ever-growing bureaucracy." It goes on to comment that we had an ill-fated attempt to cut the bureaucracy in the Department of Health. Obviously, the tone of this is criticism of what we were doing in addressing the number of people involved in working in the Department of Health. With this kind of criticism and headlines, as they were in here, I noticed that in this particular budget all we see are 15 less people in the Department of Health.

This particular news release also indicated that funding had gone up in our budgets for Executive Support, Finance and Administration, and Corporate Services, and we were being criticized for the budgets going up in those areas. It is interesting to note that the budgets, also in those areas, have gone up in this budget. I wonder if the Minister would like to comment on his criticism of the spending we had and the bureaucracy we had in this area, and yet he has not made any significant change at all in this particular budget.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I wonder if the Member could table a copy of that release so I could see what the Member is reading from.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I would be prepared to table a clean copy. Mine is all marked up, as the Minister has indicated with a number of his, but I would certainly be prepared to table a copy of this, and pending that, I wonder if the Minister would have any comments on the statements made in this particular news release.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Of course, as we have discussed extensively during the course of these budgetary Estimates, we very soon in coming into office melded together the two health authorities, and we had a pretty extensive discussion on that. I am not clear if members opposite approve or disapprove of that. They indicate that they were going to do that too at some point so I take that as tacit approval, but I think the Member said that they would not have done it as fast. So coming into office very quickly, we moved to deal with that particular issue. We also endeavoured, Madam Chairperson, to utilize the various health authorities with respect to programs. What comes to mind is the move to move USSC back into the auspices of the health authorities. *[interjection]* Well, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) indicates that is a bad move. That was recommended both by the Auditor and by the Webster report as a primary order of business, and there are a whole series of initiatives in this respect that we are specifically undertaking.

**Mrs. Driedger:** The Minister pretty much skirted the question and the criticism levelled against us by the NDP Government during the election where certainly they criticized our ever-growing bureaucracy as it is indicated here and criticized that budgets in these particular three areas went up, and yet we do not see anything different, hardly anything different, right now in this particular budget. So I will go on to my next question if the Minister was not interested in commenting on that because there is another point in this document that says: Today's NDP will ask the province's Auditor to review the overall operations of the authorities, being the WCA and the WHA, including their tendering policies. I wonder if the Minister could indicate for me whether or not he has asked the province's Auditor to do this.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, if memory serves me correctly, we have asked the health authorities to follow the tendering guidelines, the provincial tendering guidelines, and to ensure that tendering guidelines are followed.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I wonder if the Minister could indicate then, this having been an election promise made, is this what he might consider

then, if he has not moved to do this, a broken election promise?

**Mr. Chomiak:** No.

\* (16:30)

**Mrs. Driedger:** Well, I do not understand how the Minister could answer no when in fact, if we looked at all of these statements where we have been criticized, where the Tories were criticized for their bureaucracy and the NDP were indicating a number of changes they would make, in fact there are maybe a few broken health care promises in this small area alone. One of the promises here I see they have kept. They have combined the authorities, and they have eliminated the number of vice-presidents. It does indicate here that the combined cost of the authorities is an estimated \$5 million, and that is what the NDP published in this press release or this news release back on September 1.

Could the Minister tell me what the cost of the WRHA is? I am assuming, if we were looking at \$5 million then, it was an administrative cost. Could the Minister tell me what the administrative cost right now of the WRHA is?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As the Member indicated, that was an estimated cost that we provided. I will endeavour to try to find that out and provide it to the Member.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I think what this has certainly led into, and I know we still have not seen any figures, and perhaps the Minister has had a chance to review this with his staff and might have some information on it now, what the cost of this particular merger of the WCA and WHA would be. Certainly, with the severance package for six V-Ps, if it was six that were laid off—we have two CEOs that were laid off that would have had severance packages. I understand then that Mr. Webster was severed and then rehired as consultant. I do not know if he was hired with extra salary on top of his severance package. Then the Minister tells us that we are going to see a savings of \$800,000 in this first year alone.

I am really having trouble looking at all these numbers and figuring out how we could possibly save \$800,000 when the cost of this

merger must have been huge. I wonder if the Minister has had a chance to talk to his staff to come up with the total cost of this merger, which would include all of the severances and if indeed he wants to stick to his story that the savings will be \$800,000 this year alone.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The Member should be well familiar with some of those figures since it was her government that negotiated those particular arrangements with respect to CEOs. I indicated that was the information that was provided to me. I indicated that the information would be coming out with respect to the normal reporting procedures vis-à-vis CEOs, et cetera, as it relates to those particular issues.

Mr. Webster was not rehired at some additional rates. Mr. Webster undertook the tasks he undertook under the course of his contractual relationships. Obviously that information will come out during the reporting process that was put in place by the previous government with respect to accounts and with respect to salaries. That information will be forthcoming.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Just for clarification here, the Minister indicated that we had negotiated salaries. Certainly we had negotiated salaries for all those people. We had not negotiated severance packages because it was not us that laid these people off, so, therefore, the total cost of the merger really is costs that have been brought about because of moves by the new Minister of Health.

Those costs of the merger and those costs related to the severance packages had nothing to do with the Tory government, because we were not the ones that eliminated the positions and created this situation where severances were offered, so certainly the responsibility for that figure is borne by the NDP government and not by the Tory government whatsoever.

**Mr. Chomiak:** So the Member is indicating that the previous Tory government would have continued all of these people at all of those salary levels over the next number of years, and therefore what? We would have incurred those particular costs. So I think the matter speaks for itself.

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** I find this discussion rather interesting, because the Minister is trying to evade the question as to the costs of the severance to the Government of Manitoba and the people of Manitoba when indeed he is the Minister and his is the Government that initiated those costs by removing from their positions the two CEOs of the two authorities. I do not think that either one of those CEOs understood in their contract that when the two authorities would merge that indeed they would be out of a job. Then you still need a CEO for the merged authority. I do not think that either one of those CEOs ever imagined that neither of them would be qualified or would be the preferred choice for heading up the merged authority.

I also find it interesting that this government on two occasions, at least to my knowledge, has actually terminated the employment of two female CEOs within the Government who were very high profile, if you like, administrators, very capable administrators, and did not offer them any kind of employment except to give them the offer of the severance package, which was of course mandated under the Civil Service Commission. Both of those CEOs I think had worked for two administrations, had not necessarily worked for our administration, but indeed had worked as loyal civil servants and professionals in their fields. This government chose in both instances to get rid of both of those very high profile, very capable CEOs. I find it very curious for a government who says on the one hand that it believes in the advancement of women in the civil service, and on the other hand we had a very case in point where two civil servants, both women, were fired by this government.

My question, I guess, would be to the Minister. Why would he have chosen to eliminate the position of one of the female CEOs rather than be able to provide an opportunity for that individual who is obviously capable somewhere in the large system of the civil service within government or within the Department of Health?

We have seen in other instances where staff people were transferred from one department to another in government if in fact there was an

awkwardness in dealing with the Minister or dealing with the administration, but they were given opportunities. In these two instances they were not. They were axed by the government and given their severance and thanked for their services. I do not believe that in either case the Minister can make the point that they were political, because these were professional people and people who were obviously capable in the civil service.

I guess it is a bit of hypocrisy if you look at the method in which these two people were dealt with. In one case the individual who was fired by this government was given a fairly significant recognition by an outside agency, not government, with regard to her contribution to Manitoba. In this instance I know that this individual certainly has contributed to the overall health system in our province. If there were problems, I could understand the Minister wanting that individual to be placed elsewhere, but my question is: Why was there not an opportunity offered to this individual somewhere else in the system rather than this individual being terminated?

\* (16:40)

**Mr. Chomiak:** I do not want to discuss personnel and these kinds of issues in a public forum. I do not want to discuss these matters in a public forum, nor do I accept the long stretch and leap made by the experienced Member for Russell in trying to draw some kind of connection between the release of a senior civil servant and the release of a president of two organizations that were being merged together, of which there was one male and which there was one female, and in both cases, they no longer continued as the head CEO.

The leap in logic that the Member is attempting to connect, I think, is extraordinary in terms of stretching logic. I only ask the Member to look at the composition of the newly combined board of the two authorities that for the first time has a predominance of women and has a woman chair, which is a first. For the Member to make the extraordinary leap in logic that somehow the combination of the two authorities, which we said we would do and

which we undertook, and because one happened to be a woman and one happened to be a man somehow is tied in with other initiatives by the Government, is an extraordinary departure from logic and an extraordinary stretch, particularly if one looks at the fact that we hired a VP on the community side that was a very long-standing health employee for many, many years.

I do not want to, and I do not think it is prudent to, discuss matters of personnel during the course of these Estimates debates. I resist it in principle, because once we go down this road I do not think it serves the public or it serves those individuals or any of us well to go down that particular road. I do not see any connection whatsoever in the logic of the Member. I only ask the Member to look at the combined board as an example of actual initiatives and perhaps more reflective of government policy than the attempted weaving together of disparate events by the Member for Russell.

**Mr. Derkach:** There is no stretch of any logic when we are faced with the truth. The truth is that this government has made it a point of terminating long-standing employees who are in very senior positions, the highest positions, for that matter, in their particular fields, with no explanation as to why those employees were terminated. In both cases they were female. That is no stretch of logic; that is a fact. That is the truth.

Secondly, if the Minister would wish to look at the composition of many of the boards of the previous government, there was certainly a mix of men, of women, of people of different backgrounds on all boards within government. It is no novel approach by this particular government in terms of putting a mix of people onto boards who are both men and women.

Indeed, it is a compliment that we have a woman heading a health authority. We have them in other areas, and certainly that is a credit to the Government for putting that individual in there. On the other hand, I do not compliment the Government for the approach they took with regard to two very senior civil servants, both of whom were women, both of whom were very capable, and both of whom never received so

much as consideration for alternative employment within government.

Having said that, though, Madam Chair, I know that the Minister and I will disagree forever and a day on our view of that, and I accept that. I do not expect him to favour my point of view on this matter.

I would like to ask the Minister, with regard to the September 1 news release, I think it was September 1 that this news release came out by the government, which said that, and I quote: We will make the regional health boards more accountable to Manitobans by allowing for the election of the majority of the seats. Can the Minister explain that statement, please?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, I believe the Member is reading from a news release, and I believe that is what we said in the news release.

**Mr. Derkach:** I hope the Minister will read his comments in Hansard following this session, because indeed he will see how silly his response is. My question to the Minister is: Can he explain how he intends to make regional health boards more accountable to Manitobans by allowing for election of the majority of the seats?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the Member for clarifying the question. If the Member will look back at his question, I do pay attention to what questions are asked, and I do pay attention to what words are used, and I attempt to respond to the words that are used. The Member asked me to explain that press release comment, and I explained it. It was part of a press release comment. With respect to the Member's question, fair point. I will attempt to explain that.

Madam Chairperson, as I explained during the course of the Estimates—and I received advice from numerous members during the course of these Estimates. In fact, as I recall most recently, the Member for, I cannot recall now and they do not look alike, but the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) and the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gillehammer), I keep confusing, sometimes, their questions. *[interjection]*

I was attempting to make light of this, but I do not remember if it was the Member for Emerson or if it was the Member for Minnedosa, who suggested to me several meetings ago that he had had an encounter with the Premier of Saskatchewan who said: The one thing that you should not do is elect board members in terms of the regional health authorities.

I cannot remember which member made that, and I said I would take note of that particular comment.

I have indicated to the Committee that we are reviewing this, and there will be an announcement in this regard in due course.

**Mr. Derkach:** So, Madam Chair, is the Minister telling me that he will indeed move in accordance with the election commitment of calling for elections of regional health board memberships?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I indicated during the course of these Estimates on many occasions that, when we came to office, one of the things that we did not want to do, in the course of coming to office, was to cause a good deal of dislocation and disruption in a system that was already suffering from significant disruption and dislocation. That is why we stuck, in some instances, to processes that had been put in place and processes that we had followed, which is why, over the course of the past few months, we made some adjustments to boards according to the present legislation.

As I have indicated previously, that was an election commitment we made, and there will be an announcement in this regard in due course.

**Mr. Derkach:** Madam Chair, I would take it by the perception given to Manitobans from this news release that our regional health boards are not as accountable to Manitobans as they should be and that the Minister feels that they will be more accountable when he allows for elections to these boards. Is that the Minister's attitude towards the boards that are now in place in Manitoba?

\* (16:50)

**Mr. Chomiak:** I have already indicated what our position is with respect to the boards that are in place in Manitoba.

**Mr. Derkach:** The Minister said that in due course he will be making some announcements. Can he give us any indication of when he intends to call for elections of regional health boards?

**Mr. Chomiak:** No.

**Mr. Derkach:** Does that mean that he is not prepared to tell us when he will call for them, or has he not made up his mind yet?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As I indicated, we are reviewing this amongst many, many, many initiatives that we are undertaking. There will be an announcement in due course in this regard.

I know there is pent-up desire out there from the Member for activities in a variety of areas that have not taken place over a decade. We have probably been more proactive. The Member disagreed previously in Estimates in terms of activities we undertook, but in terms of an examination of the record I think it will show that we undertook activities in a tremendous number of areas. We will continue to do so as we work through the process, to deal with the situation of health in Manitoba.

I just call to mind the hallway initiative, the Nurses Recruitment and Retention Fund, the palliative care announcement, the announcement on PACT, the announcement on various dialysis initiatives, the capital program that is rolling out, and the announcement that will soon be forthcoming, of which I have given the barebones of the Physician Recruitment and Retention Plan, the most advanced cardiac program announcement in a number of years, the approach to information technology, which will also be forthcoming, the approach to the frozen food fiasco that will also be announced, shortly coming, as well as a number of initiatives that we have undertaken.

**Mr. Derkach:** I will acknowledge that the Government has taken some initiatives in health care. Let not the Minister think that these are earth-shattering initiatives that he has undertaken. He is only in his first term as

minister, so he has got a lot to learn in terms of initiatives.

If you look at the initiatives that have been undertaken in the course of the last 10 years, there were some monumental initiatives that were undertaken in the whole health care area. The Minister, I think, acknowledged, when he was still opposition critic, that 85 percent or 90 percent of the health care system was fixed. I think the Minister also acknowledged the fact that the same staff whom he has under his jurisdiction are working extremely hard under him as Minister. It was not any different under previous ministers. Indeed, these are very committed, dedicated people who do not simply turn it on in terms of work ethic for a particular minister. As a matter of fact, they work for the people of Manitoba, and I think they have done a tremendous job for the people of this province.

Having said that, Madam Chair, I certainly do concur that the Minister has taken some initiatives, but, indeed, there are many, many more that will have to be undertaken in order to bring our system to where we all would like to see it. I do not know if we will ever achieve that goal of satisfying everyone.

The one thing that I do note from many of the announcements that were made by the NDP in their election mode and afterwards was that they were going to be taking moves on many fronts. The Minister himself was talking about doing away completely with hallway medicine. I think we have learned that hallway medicine, although known by a different name right now, is still thriving in Manitoba and probably will for the next number of years. It is not something that any administration can eliminate completely.

The Minister talked about the initiative in recruiting doctors. The Minister also has to acknowledge that indeed there was a major recruitment of physicians to rural Manitoba undertaken by the previous government. I have to say my own constituency was the recipient of several of these physicians, who are practising in my constituency. Indeed, we appreciated that.

The Minister also in this press release indicated that Today's NDP will cut senior bureaucrats in the Department of Health. I would

like the Minister to tell us to date how many senior bureaucrats have been cut in the Department of Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, I cannot let the Member's remarks go uncommented on. Insofar as the Member made comments, I just want to reflect on them for a few moments.

If the Member were paying attention, and I am not saying he is not, but if the Member paid attention to every announcement that I have ever made that I can recall that had an initiative of the previous government, I have made mention of that. It has been included in newspapers. It has been included across the board. So I have tried consciously to acknowledge the efforts of the previous administration. I call to mind palliative care. I call to mind the hallway medicine initiative, where, if the Member were to look in the announcement when we had our six-month announcement, we announced that we had reduced it to 80 percent and 90 percent respectively. The newspaper specifically, and I give them credit, reported that the Member acknowledged the initiatives of the previous government. So I do not want to leave the impression that when efforts were made they are not acknowledged. We have tried to be logically consistent in this regard.

Now we have our political differences, but I think if you look at all of the announcements we have made and all of the initiatives, we have acknowledged and indicated the involvement of the previous government, so I do not want to leave that impression. I also do not want to leave the impression that it is me or anybody else. I do not like that. I do not follow that as a practice, and I hope I do not leave that impression. Maybe during the course of Estimates, we go around. But I tend not to do that, and I tend not to try to. It is the people of Manitoba's initiatives. It is their capital project; it is their project; it is their home care system; it is their funding. And I try to reflect that. If I do not always succeed, it is not because we really do not try to do that sometimes in the course of Estimates or in the course of debate. And I do not try to do that. I just wanted to deal with that particular impression. I know the Member is familiar with that, but I think if you looked over the announcements and if you looked over all of the

pronouncements, you would find that that point was acknowledged. I appreciate that because it is just one of the modus operandi that we like to follow.

With respect to the senior management at Health, I will get back to the Member on that specific.

**Mr. Derkach:** I was listening carefully to his statements, and I will give the Minister his due in terms of him giving credit to what has happened in health previously. But some of the comments that we make to one another are a result of the aggressive nature in which the Minister undertook his responsibility as critic of Health. Indeed, I think he has become much more aware of some of the initiatives since he has become minister, and that is fair game. Certainly, I will not ever think that his job as Minister of Health is an easy one or one that I should make light of, because I think it is a very heavy responsibility and one which I know he spends many sleepless nights and days away from his family when he would rather be there I am sure.

I would like to ask the Minister with regard to the election commitment or the news release commitment that was made that I refer to, he said in some previous comments today that, indeed, he would like to get more help in the ministry to develop and to carry out some of the initiatives of government on a provincial health-wide basis, and certainly I would like to see that as well. I think all of us would. We understand the finite nature of budgets. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he is still committed to reducing or—I will use the term that was used in this news release—cut senior bureaucrats in the Department of Health over the course of his mandate, or whether in fact he has reflected on this and taken a more in-depth look at it and now can see where, in fact, the Department is not oversupplied with senior bureaucrats.

\* (17:00)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Chairperson, let me answer this a couple of ways. When the immediate, immediate predecessor to me, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), came into office he hired a number of ADMs and he

came to me privately and said: Are you going to criticize me for the hiring of these ADMs? My comment to him was, no, because I know what people are doing, and I know you do not have the horses there to undertake a lot of the tasks that need to be undertaken, and I did not.

The second point is that we are in a transition stage with respect to regionalization and the Department's role and function vis-à-vis regionalization, and we are looking at that whole process and that whole system. We have moved towards regionalization and regionalization is going to continue. There are some jurisdictions that I am aware of that have pulled it back at this point. Some jurisdictions have gone ahead and pulled back regionalization and moved back into a central mode, and there are some jurisdictions that are contemplating doing that. I do not think that helps the uncertainty in the health care field to say: Gee, we are thinking of—and I had that sort of philosophical discussion early in Estimates, you know, we are going to do a complete review. I just think regionalization is here. We are down this path. There has been so much disruption in health care over the past few years—and this is not a political comment. There has been so much change that I am loathe to change that course and that direction that regionalization has moved. That is notwithstanding we had some criticism on regionalization when we were in opposition, particularly when the bills came down. But having regionalization been legislated, adopted and functioning, that is going to move.

The role statement that was put out by the previous government with respect to the role of each of the components of the health care system, that is the Department of Health, the Regional Health Authorities in their various responsibilities has not been changed by us. We are still functioning under that particular modus operandi. Clearly it would be fair to say that we are continuing the moves towards regionalization, and we are continuing to move towards providing supports where we need them. At this point I do not think I can go much further than that.

**Mr. Derkach:** Madam Chair, and I do not expect the Minister to do that, but I think he has given us some comfort in terms of his comments

with regard to looking again at the entire area and examining whether, in fact, the staffing levels are where they should be, and whether, in fact, we need to be cutting senior bureaucrats as was indicated in this press release.

So I take some comfort from the Minister in his acknowledging that, in fact, this is something that they will be examining and continue to examine and, indeed, there might be a different approach. I do not think that is such a bad thing, given that the Minister has a large department to get his mind around and to get a better understanding.

I think we have one view of some of our responsibilities when we stand away from them, and then we get a different view when we are immersed in that particular area. I am hoping that that is the direction that the Minister will take when he looks at regional health boards. He indicated that he was going to be examining and making an announcement in due course. I hope that he takes to heart the comments that were made by some of our members with regard to the Saskatchewan experience because, at the end of the day, this is much more than simple, pure, raw politics. This is a system that has to be developed so that indeed it is accountable to Manitobans, yes, I agree with that, but one which is also accountable to government, because we know full well that regional health authorities do not have the authority to tax people.

So therefore their responsibilities and their accountability is much different than it is of, for example, I guess, municipal boards who have the right and the responsibility to tax and then have the accountability for that taxation to their electorates. So I do encourage the Minister to continue to take a close look at that, and indeed, if the direction has to change from what has been indicated here, I will certainly applaud the Minister.

I have a question with regard to the regional health authorities, and I would like the Minister to tell me how many of the rural health authorities are running deficit positions right now. He may have answered that previously, but I would just like him to, if he could, for my sake,



tell me how many of the rural health authorities are running deficits as of this year.

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are just in the discussion stages with all of the regional health authorities on those particular issues. There is some analysis and some discussion between Health and some of the regional health authorities with regard to some deficit figures, and we are still in the discussion stages.

**Mr. Derkach:** The reason I asked the question is that there is a feeling, and it may be a feeling out there that has started from rumour or whatever, that indeed one of the ways that the Government will be dealing with deficits is through the closure of facilities in some of these regional health authorities where there are deficits. I guess, I am seeking some comfort from the Minister that he will not be looking at closures of acute care facilities and emergency facilities in some of our rural and remote communities in order to be able to balance the books in these regional authorities.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The experience that I have seen generally with closure or reconfiguration of facilities has been generally that it has not dramatically reduced the funding initiatives. That has been a cross-Canadian kind of experience, and on the cases that took place in Manitoba, that has also been the experience.

*Mr. Stan Struthers, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

**Mr. Derkach:** I take some comfort from the Minister's comments, because I do think that their deficits probably are as a result of a transition period that has to be dealt with, and certainly today we are experiencing more services, more required services in some of our regions, and I think, it would be a sad day if we simply took the template that was developed in, I specifically referred to the Marquette region and the southwest region, and look at that as a means of dealing with deficits and with regional health authority budgets.

I would like to ask the Minister, specifically with regard to the capital projects that were announced or that were embarked on by the previous administration, whether or not some of those projects in rural Manitoba have been

cancelled and whether the Minister can tell me which ones were cancelled.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The announcement we made last week, essentially, we announced projects that we are going to tender. We also announced that we were returning to a stage process of capital approvals that was more akin to what happened in the early '90s vis-à-vis capital projects. There might be a debate or argument, well, that was what was happening all along, but from my experience that was not the case, that sometime in the mid-'90s the process of capital approvals went off the rails. We are going back to more of a three-stage approval process.

\* (17:10)

I also said at the time one of the reasons that the capital plan was announced the way it was, and is being announced the way it is, is that we have undertaken a complete review. I am advised it is the most extensive review every undertaken at Health of all the capital projects, a complete top-to-bottom review of all of the capital projects.

I am in an awkward position, and I know how significant these issues are to individual MLAs, as well as to communities, that I really cannot say much about the process, other than the general direction, and this is what we told the CEOs and this is what we told the public, that we announced the projects last week. Within several weeks, we hope to advise most of the RHAs about most of the projects. At the outside, we are hoping that there will be pretty well complete knowledge of the process by early fall.

We are cognizant of the issues involved. We are cognizant of construction and timing schedules, but we felt: (a) this is a transition year, and; (b) we had an opportunity as a new government to perhaps change some of the approaches, that this is probably the best time to change the actual capital process now, when we are a relatively new government, in our first capital plan. Suffice it to say that the capital plan, at the end of the day, will be as robust or more robust than previous capital plans announced for the past several years.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Chair, just a final question to the Minister with regard to the capital projects, I have some projects in my constituency that were in, I guess, a variety of stages of announcements or development, and I am not going to pursue those specific ones with the Minister. He and I can chat about them privately. I do not disagree with him that a review is possible, but I also say that I know of one project, and that is basically the Shoal Lake project, which was off and on since 1979, I believe, or 1978. It just seemed to get bumped every time an election came around. So, therefore, you know, those kinds of things do happen. But, indeed, if the Minister is reviewing capital projects, I can live with that, and he and I can talk about specific projects on another basis. So, with that, I will turn the questions back to the critic.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I am wondering if the Minister would consider providing, as he requested when he was Health critic, a written status report on the Pharmacare program which would include the number of Manitobans who received benefits and a breakdown of the benefits offered under Pharmacare. Would he be prepared to provide a written status report on that?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I can advise the Member I never received that. In fact, I can advise the Member that there are literally hundreds of requests that I simply was not provided access to. You know, I am not trying to be political here, but a lot of the information one had to extrapolate because one just was not provided with that information. I will endeavour to see what is available, and I will endeavour to see if that can be provided to the Member.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I thank the Minister for that. I certainly appreciate all the work the staff has gone into in order to provide me with the information that I have requested. I know that does take a significant amount of their time, and I do value receiving it. I would hope that the Minister would extend my thanks to all the staff that participated in doing that for me.

I am glad to see that the Minister has indicated, on numerous occasions, that 90 percent of what we did in government, in health care, we did right. I think that has been—*[interjection]* I am glad that the Minister has

said that publicly and to staff, et cetera. Despite the fact that I probably have about 20 more hours' worth of questions just in this area alone, because we are running out of Estimates time, and I am disappointed because I really did have a lot more I wanted to go into, at this point in time, though, I am prepared to pass this line.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):**  
21.4. Health Services Insurance Fund (a) Funding to Health Authorities, Acute Care Services \$1,023,663,200—pass; Funding to Health Authorities, Long Term Care Services \$338,942,300—pass; Funding to Health Authorities, Home Care Services \$162,506,100—pass; Funding to Health Authorities, Community and Mental Health Services \$106,348,900—pass; Funding to Health Authorities, Emergency Response and Transport Services \$16,344,800—pass.

Just for information of the Committee, Third Party Recoveries (\$4,694,500); Reciprocal Recoveries (\$28,465,600); Recoverable from Urban Economic Development Initiatives (\$2,000,000).

4.(b) Provincial Health Services, Out of Province \$19,043,100—pass; Provincial Health Services, Blood Transfusion Services \$36,254,100—pass; Provincial Health Services, Federal Hospitals \$1,820,200—pass; Provincial Health Services, Prosthetic and Orthotic Devices \$5,008,000—pass; Provincial Health Services, Healthy Communities Development \$8,000,000—pass; Provincial Health Services, Nursing Education \$5,748,200—pass; Other \$82,900—pass.

4.(c) Medical, Physician Services \$444,594,800—pass; Other Professionals \$13,121,900—pass; Out of Province Physicians \$13,335,100—pass; Other \$2,975,200—pass.

For the information of the Committee: Less: Third Party Recoveries (\$2,221,300); Reciprocal Recoveries (\$6,726,300).

4.(d) Pharmacare \$94,189,300—pass.

Resolution 21.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,247,870,400 for Health, Health Services

Insurance Fund for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2001.

**Resolution agreed to.**

21.5 Addictions Foundation of Manitoba \$10,616,300. Shall the item pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

\* (17:20)

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):**

21.5. Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Board of Governors and Executive \$194,800—pass; Finance and Personnel \$358,300—pass; Awareness and Information \$536,800—pass; Program Delivery \$11,193,100—pass; Problem Gambling Services \$1,655,000—pass.

For the information of the Committee: Less: Third Party Recoveries (\$1,666,700); Recoveries from the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation (\$1,655,000).

Resolution 21.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,616,300 for Health, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2001.

**Resolution agreed to.**

21.6 Capital Grants \$75,014,700. Shall the item pass?

**An Honourable Member:** Pass.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):** The item is accordingly passed.

6. Capital Grants (a) Acute Care (1) Principal Repayments \$29,389,100—pass; (2) Equipment Purchases and Replacements \$10,933,100—pass; (3) Other \$11,590,500—pass.

6. Capital Grants (b) Long Term Care (1) Principal Repayments \$13,857,100—pass; (2) Equipment Purchases and Replacements \$1,551,100—pass; (3) Other \$7,693,800—pass.

Resolution 21.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding

\$75,014,700 for Health, Capital Grants, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2001.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 21.7: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,192,600 for Health, Amortization of Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2001.

**Resolution agreed to.**

If I could have order, please. The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Health is item 21.1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary \$27,300.

At this point, I would like to request that the Minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item.

1. (a), shall the item pass?

**Mrs. Driedger:** I would like to thank the staff for their attendance here, and again their support in providing the information that I have requested. *[interjection]*

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):** Can we have some order? The Member for Charleswood, to continue.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I would like to indicate to the Minister that I appreciate very much the responsibility of the Minister of Health. That particular portfolio probably is one of the most contentious of all portfolios. The workload is phenomenal. It is a complex department. I am talking generally about the role of the Minister of Health. Certainly, I appreciate the efforts that any Minister of Health makes to address the complicated issues that arise in health care.

However, I would like to also indicate, despite the fact I appreciate the challenges of running the Department of Health and being the Minister of Health and I certainly appreciate the work any Minister of Health is going to put into working on making our health care system in Manitoba better, I would like to indicate that this particular government made a lot of health care

promises in the election, and there are a number of health care promises that were made and broken.

One of the most serious of the health care promises that has been made, and we still do not see an end to it, was to end hallway medicine in six months. That has not ended. Another health care promise made and broken is to immediately open 100 acute care hospital beds.

*Madam Chairperson in the Chair*

Another health care promise made and broken, as we noticed in a news release, was to set standards in consultation with the profession to ensure that adequate nursing staff is on duty in our health care facilities. Again, a promise made and broken. Another promise made and broken, the NDP had wanted to end what they called dangerous reliance on overtime and extended shifts. Again we have not seen a lot of change in that particular area. The NDP had wanted to stop the casualization of the nursing profession. I have not seen much momentum in that area at all. The NDP wanted to ensure there is an appropriate staff-mix in the hospitals, and it certainly came out as a health care promise in the election, and so far there is very little movement that has occurred in that area. Within its first year, an NDP Government promised to establish a prostate cancer screening program, and while they do have a month and a bit, I am hoping that we might see that particular health care promise kept.

\* (17:30)

This government also promised, as a first priority, to stop frozen food. In this particular health care promise, the intent had been to feed it to the prisoners. Again, I believe that it actually has expanded rather than been eliminated. There was a promise to hire nurses in schools, and we have not seen any movement in that area. There had been a promise to hire a hundred full-time nurses; we have not seen that promise kept. We have seen a promise made and broken to change part-time to full-time nurses.

Today we see that the NDP are going to ask the province's Auditor to review the overall operation of the authorities, including their

tendering policies, and also in this one we have not seen any action. There was also a health care promise to allow for the election of the majority of seats on the regional health boards, another broken promise. And another broken promise was to decrease the bureaucracy in the Department of Health, particularly at senior bureaucracy levels, and we have not seen that particular health care promise take effect.

Although this never came up in the election, it certainly was talked about a lot over the last year. It was the introduction of the cervical screening program, and despite the fact that that new government was quite vocal about it in opposition, we are still waiting to see this take shape and evolve. So, Madam Chairperson, there is probably, out of these, 15 health care promises made and broken by the NDP Government just in health care alone, and the cervical screening program, I am disappointed to see that that particular program did not evolve.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach),

THAT due to the recognition by Manitobans that the Minister of Health has failed to live up to his election commitments of ending hallway medicine within six months, immediately hiring 100 new full-time nurses, opening 100 new beds and reducing waiting lists, the Minister of Health's Salary, budget line 21.1.(a), be reduced to the amount of \$4 equivalent to \$1 for each month that patients still lie in the hallways since the passing of his self-imposed April 6 deadline;

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED that consideration be given to reallocating the Minister of Health's remaining salary towards breast cancer research in the province of Manitoba.

**Madam Chairperson:** May I have a copy of the motion, please.

I find the motion to be in order. Debate may proceed.

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Question.

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Question.

It has been moved by the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), seconded by—

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Madam Chairperson:** Dispense.

Is it the will of the Committee to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

#### Voice Vote

**Madam Chairperson:** All those in favour of adopting the motion, say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Madam Chairperson:** All those not in favour, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Madam Chairperson:** It looks like the Nays have it.

**An Honourable Member:** Yeas and Nays, Madam Chairperson.

**Madam Chairperson:** A recorded vote has been called. The Committee will now recess.

*The Committee recessed at 5:53 p.m.*

*The Committee resumed at 6:28 p.m.*

**Madam Chairperson:** The hour being 6:28 p.m., committee rise.

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

\* (15:00)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This

section of the Committee of Supply will be considering Estimates of the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. Does the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs have an opening statement?

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman.

It is my privilege to introduce for the committee members' review the first Estimates for the new Department of Intergovernmental Affairs for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. I am very pleased to have the honour of serving as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. It is a relatively new concept in the history of the province of Manitoba, and it is one, I think, that is certainly very challenging and has, I think, great benefits for many aspects of Manitoba.

I would like to present a brief overview of our direction and some of the priority initiatives and expenditures reflected in the Department's funding appropriations of the \$139 million for this fiscal year. Our department's mandate has been developed to a province-wide role in supporting programs and services that foster community-based leadership and action. Ours will be an integrating comprehensive approach to community and neighbourhood development that will incorporate many aspects of sustainable development, land use and conservation planning, community economic development, neighbourhood revitalization, local governance and assessment and infrastructure development.

The programs and services in our Estimates reflect the movement towards this and towards the important components of strong communities and neighbourhoods, and a new organizational structure for the Department. To provide a coordinated approach, whether we are working in the neighbourhoods of Winnipeg or a small community in rural or northern Manitoba, the Department's new divisions follow responsibility areas or program lines rather than geographic distinctions.

For those members who are not aware of this, they should be aware that three new divisions have been created. First of all, Community and Land Use Planning Services will reflect the government's priority in the area

of neighbourhood revitalization and community land-use planning. Secondly, Provincial-Municipal Support Services, this division will continue to provide services and financial support to all local governments, including the City of Winnipeg. This division is also responsible for the provision of assessment services to all municipal corporations outside of Winnipeg. Thirdly, Economic and Community Development Services, this division will focus on support and services to develop and upgrade our sewer and water infrastructure and enhance conservation planning. This division will also provide support to small business, youth, local organizations and local government in the areas of community economic development and business development.

The new department has also assumed responsibility for two federal-provincial co-operation agreements. The Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Works Program, which ends in March of this year, and the Canada-Manitoba Economic Development Partnership Agreement. These province-wide programs will give us additional tools to support new economic regional and infrastructure development projects. In 2000-2001, \$5.5 million has been dedicated for projects under the economic partnership agreement.

We believe that an expanded mandate and new structure will enable the Department to better co-ordinate and deliver effective programs and services to our citizens in rural, urban and northern Manitoba. I am confident that the Department will be working with all Manitobans to enhance neighbourhoods and communities and to address important economic, social, environmental and quality of life issues.

Mr. Chairman, it has been very evident to our government for some time that our capital city has undergone significant economic, social and physical strain, particularly in inner-city neighbourhoods and the downtown business districts. In order to create healthy neighbourhoods, we have argued that we need more than housing, more than bricks and mortar. Although, indeed, in the downtown area and in the inner-city neighbourhoods themselves, bricks and mortar and good housing are certainly important.

What we intend to do is to work in partnership with the City and with the people of Winnipeg, invest in them and in their ideas and plans for neighbourhood revitalization and downtown renewal. One of the priorities of our Community and Land Use Planning Services division will be to work with urban neighbourhoods, organizations and residents to begin to address these challenges.

During last fall's election, we unveiled a plan to strengthen our communities that were in greatest need of attention. That plan is called Neighbourhoods Alive! and I am pleased to report that our government is now delivering on this election promise by allocating \$3 million in this current fiscal year towards this initiative. I should indicate that this is in addition to the money that has been put aside in housing, the \$2 million per year that has been allocated to housing for inner-city neighbourhoods. It has been developed as a single window in conjunction with the City of Winnipeg and the federal government.

\*(15:10)

Neighbourhoods Alive! is a long-term, community-based social and economic development strategy. Neighbourhoods Alive! focusses on housing and physical improvements, employment and training, education and recreation, and safety and crime prevention.

We recognize that each neighbourhood has different needs, priorities and resources. One of the components of the strategy, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, makes it possible for neighbourhood organizations to have access to funds for projects which directly meet local needs. Neighbourhoods that have been given priority include five of Winnipeg's inner-city neighbourhoods, one neighbourhood in Brandon, and discussions are underway for Thompson to identify how the money will be applied there.

In Winnipeg, the five neighbourhoods have been identified. These are Lord Selkirk Park, North and South Point Douglas, Spence, West Broadway and William Whyte. I notice that in a speech on another bill earlier today the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen), the critic for this area, made some suggestions about the political

representation of those areas. I would like to say to him that those areas were considered and decided upon in conjunction with the City of Winnipeg staff, and they are based upon, I am sure he is familiar with these, the neighbourhood area indicators that both the City of Winnipeg and the Social Planning Council have worked upon.

In the future, we anticipate additional neighbourhoods can be considered for eligibility under the program, but we are concerned in the beginning that there be a visible impact, and so the narrower boundaries are ones that were chosen.

Perhaps I should add that the reason for the addition of Brandon and Thompson is not to indicate that there are not needs elsewhere in Manitoba; that is certainly the case. But Brandon and Thompson were identified by the federal government as areas, along with Winnipeg, for the spending allocations in the urban aboriginal strategy for which the federal government has allocated \$30 million. So that was one way of hoping to partner with other levels of government.

As members can see, that is what we have tried to do, both in the inner city of Winnipeg and in trying to make this partnership with at least the possibility of a partnership with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy of the federal government.

The four main areas that Neighbourhoods Alive! focuses on are: Neighbourhood organizing and planning to support neighbourhood plans and organizations, and to provide leadership training when neighbourhoods see that as important. Neighbourhood enhancement provides for renovations and development of neighbourhood recreation facilities and open spaces. Neighbourhood economic development will support the preparation of neighbourhood development strategies to retain and attract neighbourhood businesses, to enhance employment and training opportunities for residents. The neighbourhood support programs will advance neighbourhood safety and contribute to better health practices.

The Neighbourhoods Alive! program will, as I indicated earlier, also participate in various housing initiatives and this includes the tri-

government Winnipeg Housing Initiative involving the Province, the City, and the federal government. The Winnipeg Housing Initiative announced in April provides a single-window access to housing renovation programs operated by all three levels of government. In addition to the new resources we will be putting into Neighbourhoods Alive!, this initiative is designed to complement and build on existing programs and services of government and non-government organizations and with other levels of government.

Part of this commitment to community and its people will involve continuing the partnership that has been developed in Manitoba with Aboriginal peoples. The direct involvement of Aboriginal people in inner city neighbourhood revitalization community development will be a critical element of the future economic success in the city of Winnipeg.

Training and skills development is a significant catalyst in realizing opportunities in our neighbourhoods. Manitoba in the 1970s was a leader in training Aboriginal counsellors, administrators, teachers, social workers, doctors, nurses, and pharmacists. We are strongly committed to facilitating the involvement of our Aboriginal people in the new economy.

We know that in Winnipeg we have benefited greatly from the two core area agreements: the infrastructure agreements and from the Winnipeg Development Agreement. As the WDA winds down, we are committed to providing an additional \$5.1 million in this year's budget to follow through on project commitments to enhance the city of Winnipeg. We will also continue to work for further tripartite agreements and federal commitments to support us in our efforts to renew Winnipeg's inner city, address the infrastructure and economic needs of rural and northern Manitoba.

Our new planning division will also work to strengthen and better co-ordinate planning and development across the province. We have committed \$515,000 for expanded planning programs including the Livestock Initiative which represents more than double the budget from the previous year. This includes additional support from municipalities that wish to plan,

and it encourages more municipalities to join with their neighbours to undertake regional planning through planning districts. The anticipated rise in livestock production means that we must place greater emphasis on community planning and issues of sustainable development.

The Livestock Stewardship Initiative across three departments has been established to deal with inspections of manure storage facilities, to create an independent review of manure spreading and its effect on soil quality, and to update our province's groundwater sensitivity maps to identify areas where protective measures may be needed. We will be utilizing existing resources and staff but refocusing their efforts and attention to address issues related to sustainable livestock expansion, and to provide advice and support to municipalities, planning districts, producers, and citizens.

Amendments to The Planning Act have also been introduced to provide for technical reviews for proposed livestock operations of 400-animal units or more. This has been done to ensure all municipal and provincial approvals are obtained before any development begins. It will also ensure municipal counsels and the public have the information they need to hold informed discussions and make responsible decisions. To build on these changes and to enable the livestock industry to grow in an environmentally sustainable way, our government has prepared a discussion paper and is presently touring the agricultural regions of the province to receive input and ideas from Manitobans. These meetings will continue, I think, until the end of this month. We anticipated an earlier Estimates. These meetings will continue until they are completed and the report is made.

Our objective is to raise awareness, stimulate thought, and focus public discussion on the livestock industry and the economic future of Manitoba. Ultimately, we anticipate developing a livestock strategy, together with Manitobans, that will address environmental, economic, and quality of life issues, and ensure that the growth of the industry continues to benefit both the rural and urban economy.

\* (15:20)

The need for regional co-operation is particularly evident in our Capital Region and has been so for the last decade. The Capital Region panel report has been received by government and circulated for comments. We now are reviewing these comments and expect that we will be announcing soon the steps that we will be taking. Funding of \$278,000, along with a commitment of staff and resources, has been included in our departmental Estimates to address the next steps in the Capital Region process.

Another of our major commitments as reflected in our departmental Estimates is to enhance our support to municipalities. One of our government's commitments when we came into office was to rebuild relations with the City of Winnipeg. As lead minister for provincial-municipal relations, I have met frequently with the Mayor and different councillors to discuss issues of priority and interest to both of us. We look forward to continuing to work to strengthen relations with the City, through dialogue and through joint strategic initiatives.

Recognizing, too, that Winnipeg's financial and economic health are vital to the wellbeing of our entire province, we are taking a number of steps to support the capital city's continued growth. Through our provincial municipal support services division, we will continue to review existing arrangements for provincial funding to Winnipeg to ensure these are adequate to meet the city's current needs and mandated responsibilities.

In the current budget, the City of Winnipeg will receive \$21 million in unconditional grant support, including transit grants to assist it in addressing its own municipal priorities. To assist with capital projects including renewed and enhanced municipal infrastructure, residential street repair and improvements to the Red River flood control structure, the Department will provide an additional \$22.1 million in grant support. Rural and northern communities will also continue to receive support for transit systems in major centres, and handi-transit services in some 60 communities.

As a province-wide measure, we will continue to grant funding to municipalities under



The Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Act. Manitoba remains the only province that shares tax revenues with municipalities, enabling the provincial revenues to work directly in communities and neighbourhoods.

In 2000-2001, it is projected that the City of Winnipeg will receive approximately \$44.8 million, while other municipalities, including Northern Affairs' communities, will receive about \$33 million. This 2000-2001 contribution represents a year-over-year increase of 9.9 percent. I think members may be aware of a small change, small perhaps in the overall terms, but quite large in terms of its implications for rural Manitoba. That is a change to include the count of military personnel for allocation of the Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing agreement.

This division is also preparing for the 2002 reassessment. Additional funding has been identified to support this significant undertaking. The division is committed to maximizing the ability of local governments to function effectively and efficiently and to continue to provide quality services to Manitoba residents.

With respect to community and economic development, our Estimates are directed toward providing Manitobans with tools they can use to build strong and healthy neighbourhoods and communities. Under the new Economic and Community Development Services Division, the Department is pleased to have the opportunity to co-ordinate VLT-funded economic programs for both the City of Winnipeg and rural areas. Our Estimates include a REDI funding commitment of \$15 million. Through contributions and loan guarantees, REDI will remain targeted to enhancing the capacity of rural Manitobans to expand their economic base through increased business activity and job creation.

Funding incentives through such programs as the Community Works Loan Program and Grow Bonds enhance economic opportunities for rural residents.

REDI will also continue to support Manitoba youth through such programs as the Green Team and Partners with Youth. We all know the importance of providing employment opportunities to build skills and confidence in

our young people. Through REDI, we will continue to empower local people to make local decisions on business development. For the coming fiscal year, we will begin to devolve one aspect of the Partners with Youth program, that is, the Young Entrepreneurs component, to community development corporations so that local people can encourage and work with new, young entrepreneurs in their communities.

CDCs have the mechanisms in place to assess business proposals, and devolution of this program to our communities is a logical next step. Young Entrepreneurs is designed to encourage Manitoba's young people to start their own full-time businesses by providing them with a matching grant of up to \$2000 to help offset start-up costs. An additional \$2000 is available to cover items outside the range of normal start-up costs. Through this year's Estimates, the Department will be doubling the funding for the Young Entrepreneurs component from \$200,000 to \$400,000.

The Urban Economic Development Initiative, or UEDI, is targeted to support \$17.75 million worth of economic development projects within the city of Winnipeg this fiscal year. UEDI financial support is being provided to a variety of organizations and programs whose activities promote the economic well-being of the City of Winnipeg. These include economic development agencies like Economic Development Winnipeg and Tourism Winnipeg, youth programs such as Urban Green Team, major facility supports such as the Winnipeg Convention Centre or smaller projects such as Just Housing and other initiatives. UEDI will also support the Winnipeg Police Service agreement and dedicate \$2-million support to the Winnipeg ambulance service for needed improvements to emergency services.

We will also be exploring new programs under UEDI to give people in Winnipeg neighbourhoods additional tools to support community and economic development. Within the UEDI budget, we are exploring the possible extension of the Grow Bonds and the Community Works Loan Program to include urban projects. While we plan to continue to support the diversified economy of rural Manitoba, we also want to build new strategies

for downtown and neighbourhood development in Winnipeg as well as to build the links between the two. And I think that is one of the challenges for this department.

In addition to REDI and UEDI programs, Manitoba's VLT revenue-sharing program will be providing \$7.1 million to the City of Winnipeg and \$6 million to rural and northern communities for locally identified economic priorities.

Our 2000-2001 Estimates also provide for \$18.2 million for rural capital projects such as sewer and water and rural gasification and for expansion of the Conservation Districts Program. The events that unfolded in Walkerton, Ontario, are a reminder of how important and vital it is that Manitobans continue to have safe and reliable supplies of drinking water. Our Estimates reflect a commitment in funding to enable us to continue to provide technical and financial assistance to municipalities, rural communities and farmers for sewer and water infrastructure. This will include the management of 14 water treatment plants on behalf of municipalities, and the Conservation District Program will see a \$320,000 increase in the 2000-2001 fiscal year, making total funding \$2.9 million. Mr. Chairman, \$2.1 million of our infrastructure funding is dedicated to expansion of natural gas to rural Manitobans. This includes the Swan Valley and Interlake gas projects.

Mr. Chairman, a further change in our organizational structure has resulted in the creation of the Program and Policy Development Branch. This new branch will be responsible for the Department's marketing activities, program development and the development of new strategies and initiatives for our urban, rural and northern communities. This new branch is also being given the mandate to assist in developing international opportunities for Manitobans and co-ordinating international co-operation agreements entered into by the province.

Our focus will be to build on one of Manitoba's main strengths and advantages, our heritage and cultural and linguistic diversity. This initiative will continue to address the important work begun, with Ukraine as one of its priorities.

Over the past several months I have visited many communities and neighbourhoods. I have met with municipalities, municipal organizations, with conservation districts, with community groups, with Aboriginal groups and with Manitobans of all ages and from all walks of life, and it has become abundantly clear, as I think it is to all MLAs, that Manitobans in all parts of our province are committed to taking an active role in the future stability and growth of their communities and neighbourhoods.

I believe the challenge for Intergovernmental Affairs is to bridge the different views and opinions, so that whether one lives in rural Manitoba, in Winnipeg, in one of our other major cities or in northern Manitoba, we all recognize that we share similar values and have the same concern for one another, and that we do work on a daily basis to build across the boundaries that have divided us in the past. We need to build on this co-operation to continue to respect our differences and develop together the opportunities that will enable all of us to share in a wider prosperity.

Mr. Chairman, this is just a brief overview of the Estimates and initiatives for the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs for the 2000 and 2001 fiscal year. I want to welcome departmental staff, who will be joining me to provide additional details of our spending Estimates. Before we move to that stage, I want to take the opportunity to thank the staff of Intergovernmental Affairs for their continued hard work and for their dedication on behalf of the people of this province.

It is not easy for a department to be combined with another, so I think the difficulties that have been faced by any department, as we combine responsibilities and create new divisions and new priorities are ones that they have met with great fortitude and some enthusiasm.

\* (15:30)

I also want to recognize the role of the former deputy minister, who is on secondment at the moment to the Lotteries Commission, and that is Winston Hodgins, who played an enormous role in my education, and whom we

certainly wish all the best for in the very difficult task that he has taken on. The Government has great confidence in his ability to bring some order to that situation. Winston Hodgins continues to be connected with the Department, and he continues to chair the very small Crown corporation that we have that is called the Water Services Board. I am very grateful for his agreement to do that.

I also want to thank the AMM and a number of other organizations such as the conservation districts and the community development corporations, each of whom have invited me to their conferences and asked me to speak, and who have been very helpful in offering advice and taking the initiative to keep in contact with a new minister. I think that each of these organizations is a very strong testament to the strong organizing capabilities of Manitobans, to the very close relationships that they have developed with their governments over the years and, I think, for their concern to create a community where government and citizens are in close contact and where each is able to talk to the other formally, informally and on a relatively close basis to ensure that we have the kind of laws, the kind of regulations, the kind of programs that are going to be beneficial for the situations that they are very familiar with in their own communities. I very much appreciate the assistance that I have had from them. I appreciate their advice in so many areas, and I want to ensure that we keep that relationship going.

There were some difficulties, I might say, in committee this morning, some confusion over how or what instructions were given about presentation at committee. I am very pleased to have been able to have the faxed presentation from the AMM on Bill 35. I think we all wish that things had been smoother, and I certainly will be talking personally to the AMM this afternoon after Estimates are over to let them know what happened and certainly hope that something like that does not happen again.

With that, I will call in the staff at this point, and I look forward to the questions from the Opposition.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the Minister for those comments. Does the critic of the Official Opposition, the Honourable Member for Fort Whyte, have any opening comments?

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. I want to thank the Minister for her opening statement; quite informative in terms of the direction that the new department will be heading. I certainly appreciate her overview, from that perspective.

I am going to try and keep my comments short for a couple of reasons. I do not want to keep the staff here any longer than necessary. I also know we are running short on time, according to today's Order Paper, in Estimates.

Just a couple of comments on the Minister's opening statement, just because I think I am in concurrence with most of what she talked about from a perspective of direction that her department will be taking. I do have some rather serious concerns that I hope through this process and perhaps others will be addressed in the Department in such a fashion as to benefit all of the citizens of Manitoba. I am sure the Minister and her staff have not underestimated the tremendous effort that takes to meld two departments into one, not only the personal upheaval on all the staff, I guess from a policy and implementation process, making sure that programs that are there and are effective, are continued and that new initiatives are begun.

My main concern, and I think it is reflected somewhat in the Minister's statements, is the amount of effort that will be placed on issues regarding the city of Winnipeg versus rural Manitoba. I think that is always a danger in any organization, particularly in any large organization, to have, in essence, what will be two focuses. Issues that come up with the city of Winnipeg are extremely different than those that apply to rural Manitoba. It will take some real juggling on behalf of the Minister and on behalf of the Department to make sure that for a lot of reasons those two separate and distinct areas will be provided the type of support that they are going to need to be successful.

I touched on it briefly in my comments in the House today regarding Bill 48. The continued development of rural Manitoba, particularly as it pertains to economic diversification, I think is something that is crucial for the Province of Manitoba to continue on. I think one of the real strengths, one of the real legacies of the previous government was their ability to recognize that and to ensure that the economy was diversified and the rural economy was expanded. I speak to that not only as a Member of the House, but also coming from the business community where, for a number of years, certainly the general feeling in the business community was that rural Manitoba, economically, was doing very, very well. I think the numbers would bear this out. In fact, in a lot of cases, doing better than Winnipeg in a lot of areas, which still seem to be suffering from certain malaise. I can attest from my days on the Economic Development Winnipeg Board that there was certainly a lot of concern in the community about the future of the city of Winnipeg and where it is going to go.

With regard to the Minister's comments on the need to redevelop and to look to ways of strengthening communities, and in particular her emphasis was on Winnipeg, and quite rightly so. There is a very, very large job to do, one that has been recognized in the community for a long, long time. I do not think it can be attributed to any one provincial government, any one federal government, or any one municipal regime. It has been a situation that has been allowed to deteriorate from all levels of government, I think, over a lot of years. We are, unfortunately, I think, with regard to the inner city in particular and downtown Winnipeg, in a bit of crisis mode. I am pleased to see that that is high on the agenda. Again, the question maybe I would have or where I would differ from the Minister, in terms of approach, is the role of the private sector will have to play in any revitalization, whether it is inner city neighbourhoods, inner city housing, or whether it is downtown development. I think we have seen over the course of the years maybe an excess of government spending, particularly when you look at the Winnipeg Development Agreement and its predecessor, the Core Area Initiative.

I do not think that we could point to a lack of government funding for the reason for the deterioration of the inner city or of downtown Winnipeg. A lot of it, I think, can be focussed on the lack of the ability to attract the private sector to the table in downtown and an inner city that, for many reasons, their residents have seen a lack of hope and a lack of opportunity and have looked elsewhere, particularly as, in some cases, their economic situation has improved through the growing economy. So we will have, I am sure, some earnest and worthwhile discussion on that.

I guess there are a couple of other issues just to touch on from the Minister's comments and certainly with regard to the aboriginal community and the need to provide particularly those individuals who are coming to Winnipeg, in particular, I think, but also those that remain on the reserves, to try and make sure that there is essentially hope and opportunity and a means to realize that hope. Certainly, through economic growth and through the training and career development programs that the Minister mentioned, hopefully that will be an impetus for not only the success of the Aboriginal people but for the revitalization of the inner city, because I think the two are inextricably linked.

\* (15:40)

One only has to look back to the growth of the city of Winnipeg over the course of the last 25 years and the change in the inner city, I guess at one point in my youth where communities largely ethnic, largely relatively new arrivals in Canada and in the province of Manitoba. But the people who were in the inner city had hope. They were provided opportunity, and they provided their children with hope and, in many cases, found the means for their children to go on to university and to get well educated and to be successful enough to move out of the inner city. I guess that came as a realization of some of their hopes and wishes. Unfortunately, that type of ethic and that type of economic opportunity has not been replaced, particularly in the inner city. I think that one can never forget the importance of economic development in all of these neighbourhood revitalizations.

I do appreciate the Minister's comments on the reasons behind the selection of the communities. No one could argue that those communities are in need, although I am not as familiar with Brandon and Thompson as with some of the other areas. No doubt, there are areas in those communities that could and will benefit from Neighbourhoods Alive! I guess I would hope that if successful programs and some success is achieved as a result of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program that, as soon as possible, the Minister and her department would look at expanding those successes to other neighbourhoods, other communities within the city of Winnipeg and within other parts of the province of Manitoba, because it is not only in the inner city that we are seeing the types of trouble we are seeing. We are seeing it in some of the outlying—I guess I maybe refer to it as the ring surrounding the inner city, where there are spill-over issues. Certainly, if those neighbourhoods are not attended to, we will simply be moving the problem, as opposed to solving the problem.

Just to go back for a minute, particularly as it deals with downtown, I mean, that is an issue that has been on the plate for a long, long time. The business community has been aware of it. I guess I go, on that issue, back to the early '90s when I was the first co-chair with then Mayor Susan Thompson regarding CentrePlan. As a community, we saw the deterioration for a lot of years before that. We finally organized ourselves as a community to try and figure out what to do about it.

I would like to be sitting here saying we, as a community, were more successful. I do not think we have been. I think there are some good opportunities there. Certainly the creation of CentreVenture and the provincial government's support is—I congratulate them for that, but, once again, we are in a situation where the deterioration happened. It has been there for 10 years or it has been there for 30 years, but it is just the last 10 years that we have started to deal with it. It is now time to really move the process forward and ensure that that happens.

I am very interested to hear the Minister's comments on the Capital Region, another important issue, not only for the community of

Winnipeg, but certainly for the surrounding communities, and we will look forward to hearing more about the Grow Bonds as well.

Again, my congratulations to the staff, and I echo the Minister's comments regarding Winston Hodgins. Although I never did have the opportunity to work with him, he certainly has a stellar reputation with members on this side of the House who have worked with him, and I am sure he will do an excellent job in his new role.

I guess I would ask the Minister—I notice that she had prepared statements. Given that we will not have much time in Estimates and I will not have time to review Hansard until Estimates are through, if it would be possible for her to share a copy of those statements with me, just so I can keep the facts and information accurate and in proper perspective.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the critic from the Official Opposition for those remarks. I would remind the members of the Committee that debate on the Minister's Salary, item 1.(a), is deferred until all other items in the Estimates of this department are passed. At this time we would like to invite the Minister's staff to take their places in the Chamber.

Is the Minister prepared to introduce her staff members present to the Committee?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, if I could first respond to the Member's request for a copy of my speaking notes, unfortunately I cannot do that. I can have it typed up for you for tomorrow, but I ad libbed, edited, as I went along, and what I have in front of me is not what was delivered. So, unfortunately, I cannot do that right now, but I will get it to you tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce our Acting Deputy Minister, Marie Elliott on my left. Next to her, Heather MacKnight, Assistant Deputy Minister. Across the table, Larry Martin, Assistant Deputy Minister, and on my right, Denise Carlyle, Comptroller. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The item before the Committee is item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$468,000.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just by way of process, this is, as the Minister knows, my first time in Estimates. I wonder if it is fair to ask some questions on some of the information provided in the schedules at the front of the Estimates which, I think, are general questions that might reflect on the Minister's statement at this time, prior to getting into sort of the detail.

**Ms. Friesen:** In general, I have no difficulty with that. We do not have very many hours left. So I understand that. But I think the Member would have to recognize that one of the trade-offs we have here for air-conditioning is that we can only have a small number of staff in the Chamber as opposed to in a committee room. So it is a little more difficult to have the right staff available at the right time. So, within the constraints of that issue, we do have other staff who are ready to come down. If the Member would like to wait on certain questions, we can provide the answer, or if he would prefer to wait a little longer we can provide an answer after Estimates are over or during concurrence or whatever. But those are the constraints that we are working with and within that we will do our best.

**Mr. Loewen:** The questions I have, I think, are of a fairly broad nature initially. I do not think we want to get into shuffling staff back and forth, and I appreciate the fact that, if the information is not readily available from the Minister or from the staff, we can maybe follow it up when we get to that particular section. I know there has been an emphasis today on stupid questions. I will try not to ask any stupid questions in this session, but recognizing that I am fairly new to the process, I would ask for some leniency.

I guess, just in terms of the historical background and the role and the mission, I have a couple of questions, one regarding The City of Winnipeg Act and one regarding the Capital Region Review. In particular, with The City of Winnipeg Act, my understanding is, from speaking with people at the City, that there has been a lot of work done to look at The City of Winnipeg Act and, I guess, in effect clean it up. My understanding is that over 500 clauses have tentatively been reduced down to roughly 250 and that there is staff working on it and also that

part of the intent is to maybe update the Act in terms of delegating a little more authority or a little more appropriate authority to the City of Winnipeg. I would ask the Minister if there is a time parameter around that, and if there is a plan in process to get that before the House so it can be dealt with fairly shortly.

\* (15:50)

**Ms. Friesen:** Yes, the Member is right that there has been, I believe, over the past two years a secondment from the former department of Urban Affairs to work with the City on "streamlining," certainly to reducing some of the vast number of pages included in The City of Winnipeg Act. I can tell the Member that that is not something that I have had an opportunity to address yet. It is something which is on the agenda for this year. It was not something that we felt we would be bringing into the House in this session, and so we will be looking at the product of that two years' work.

Certainly I think there would be a desire on our part to do the best we can to make The City of Winnipeg Act as accessible as it can be to citizens. I think one of the ways in which citizens can participate in local government is by having acts which are readily available to them. Transparent, I guess, is the current terminology, but easily understood where everybody, whether they are proponents of development or citizens or interested observers can have the opportunity to participate and to understand their own particular role. So that, as I look at The City of Winnipeg Act, that will certainly be one of the things that I have in mind. I do not know the date, but I assume it was the previous government which put in place a guide to The Municipal Act in 1997. Something along those lines, I think, is something I would personally particularly like to see. If it is not possible to have The City of Winnipeg Act in true, plain English, which would, I think, be the desirable outcome, at least I think we should try and have something that provides some guidance to citizens on its use.

So those are the kinds of thoughts I have at the moment. I do not have any other preconceived ideas about what is in the report that has been developed over the past couple of

years, but obviously to go from 500 pages to 200 pages there are some things which will have been changed.

In previous years when I was the critic for Urban Affairs, I did have some concerns about changes that were made at various committees and obviously I am going to be looking at those and to see where they rested. The principle of subsidiarity that I think the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has made reference to in his speech on Bill 35, of having each level of government do what they do best is certainly one, I think, that I would hope all members of the Legislature would be in accord with, and that would be another principle, I think, that I would take into the examination of the work that staff have done.

**Mr. Loewen:** From time to time there has been some speculation that it might—and it was recently in the paper regarding term limits on City Council. Is there any anticipation that that would be looked at for consideration of the Act?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, it is not something that I am considering and I do not know, without having yet read the material, whether it is something that the joint city-provincial committee that worked on the streamlining of the act has considered either. I am sure that the Member is aware of the pros and cons of these kinds of things. We all hear about them, as we get closer to an American election and the last two years of any incumbency, in the terminology that is applied to that there are certainly two sides to this debate.

**Mr. Loewen:** I had a question on the Capital Region, but, given the Minister's opening comments, maybe I will leave that until that section. I think she has answered most of what I would have asked on that, but maybe we will get into it in a little more detail then. The other act that is mentioned in the introduction is, of course, The Municipal Act. I was just wondering, given that the AMM in their presentation on, I believe it was Bill 15, gave conditional support for that bill based on two issues but certainly one of them being amendments to The Municipal Act, are there plans underway or is there work being done on revising The Municipal Act to reflect the

changes that were requested by AMM in their presentation to that bill?

**Ms. Friesen:** Just for clarification, the Member said Bill 15, and I am not quite sure whether the Member means Bill 35, the one we were looking at this morning, or whether it was Bill 16 on the City of Winnipeg that the AMM spoke on, so if you could just clarify it?

**Mr. Loewen:** Actually, it was neither of those. I think it was Bill 15. Unfortunately, I have not got it here with me. It was a bill regarding the—actually it was a conservation bill regarding water, the water rights and drainage issues. The AMM was fairly specific that they were giving approval to that legislation subject to the Government changing The Municipal Act. After all, it is Bill 15, The Water Rights Amendment Act.

**Ms. Friesen:** My apologies. I should have recognized Bill 15 as well as The Water Rights Act. What is going to happen in the whole area of water rights is that there will be a much larger review of which this initial legislation is one small part.

I think it would be appropriate to look at the AMM recommendations in the context of that larger review of The Water Rights Act. Drainage is certainly an issue that has been raised many, many times by the AMM, both with me and, I am sure, with previous ministers. The opportunity to have a full review, I think, is very timely. It is one that I am sure that we are going to be very cognizant, very attentive to the kinds of proposals that the AMM has in this area. Their members, particularly in some areas, have for many years faced some very difficult situations between citizens in the whole area of drainage. It is one of the things that we would like to look at.

**Mr. Loewen:** I thank the Minister for those comments. I guess my only response would be, we certainly have seen, from the committee process, a number of bills which cross departments and affect a number of departments, particularly as they deal with water and drainage issues.

In addition, certainly some comments today from the presenters on The Planning Act that,

hopefully, and I realize it is difficult to co-ordinate all this, but I would hope that we certainly are not getting just ad-hoc bills here and there that will maybe make it a little more difficult to clarify the bigger picture after all the consultations are done. Hopefully, we are moving in that direction.

\* (16:00)

On page 5 and schedule 2 is a departmental organizational chart. I realize there have been a number of changes since the election, particularly with the reorganization of the departments and the movement of Mr. Hodgins to the Lotteries.

I would ask the Minister if she could provide me, and it does not have to be today, but if I could get a list of any changes in staff that have taken place since the election, as well as the salary levels for that staff and where they fit in in that salary level. I am interested in getting the range that the new staff is in, as well as the annual salary, as well as a list of any terminations since the election and any severance payments that have taken place. If the Minister can provide me with that at some point in the not-too-distant future, I would appreciate it.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, there has been very little staff movement other than reallocation in this department. With the amalgamation, there has been one fewer Deputy Minister, and the three and a half staff who were associated with the Minister and Deputy Minister also resigned or moved on. There were two resignations within the Department very shortly after the election: Heather Campbell-Dewar and Paul Staats. There were two people in the Ukrainian secretariat who have moved back to their respective departments, and I think that is about it at the moment.

We are in the process of appointing somebody in Neighbourhoods Alive! At the moment, it is being dealt with internally through staff, but we can provide the full list that the Member asked for. These took us a little time to go through it here. It actually has not been for an amalgamated department any great shift and certainly not of staff who did not resign.

**Mr. Loewen:** I guess with that behind us, I am prepared to move on to the line item we are talking about, if I could ask the Chair to repeat it so I can get my bearings.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We are on line item 13.1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$468,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$88,000.

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** Mr. Chairman, first, before I ask a few questions, I just want to extend my congratulations to the appointment of Ms. Marie Elliott as Acting Deputy Minister. I have worked with her before in my former life as a minister, and also to her ADM, Ms. Heather Campbell-Dewar, Heather MacKnight—I heard the name before—and some of the other staff, so it is sort of like asking questions of some of my old staff. I just wanted to get a few questions to the Minister in regard to some of the programs that were initiated just to get an update.

I would like to know the Partners in Public Service program that was initiated in which there was extensive consultation with all departments with the City of Winnipeg and the departments here within the provincial government, looking at ways where they could amalgamate, cut down duplication, possibly look at ways to streamline cost of efficiency between the two bureaucracies, if you want to call it, the two largest spenders of consumer goods in Manitoba, and see whether there was a way to bring in more efficiency.

What I am looking for from the Minister, if she could tell me or give me an update as to which departments are initiating programs, the status of the programs and possibly even some of the possible savings that have been realized.

**Ms. Friesen:** The Member was asking which departments were initiating co-operation with the other level of government and what savings have been achieved, and I do not have the information on the savings achieved here. To the best of my knowledge and the knowledge of the staff who are here, probably the one that has the largest impact is the amalgamation of the two social service departments. I am not sure that we would have actual numbers on the savings, if



any, to be made there, but certainly the one stop, I am sure, makes a difference for people.

*Mr. Stan Struthers, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

\* (16:10)

There are discussions dealing with public health nurses and the possibilities of amalgamating the work and responsibilities of the nurses. I think there are also some discussions with conservation on public health matters. Other than that, I do not have anything more specific. If there is something that the Member would like to pursue?

**Mr. Reimer:** No, there was nothing specific. I know that there was a fair amount of discussion between the City of Winnipeg and the provincial government in their pursuit of the Partners in Public Service, and there seemed to be enthusiasm from both civil service ends of the business, the City of Winnipeg and the Province, in trying to come to some sort of mutual undertaking.

I would think, and I would encourage, the Minister to pursue that, because I know the department seemed to respond quite energetically in trying to come to some sort of partnerships and agreements. It would be a pity if they did not follow through because it was not only an initiative on our part, but I think that there was an enthusiasm shown by the civil service in both areas, whether it was the City of Winnipeg or the Province, in trying to come to various degrees of partnership in their efforts to serve the public of Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg. I would encourage the Minister to take advantage of that type of enthusiasm.

I will go on to a different question now, because, as the Minister pointed out, there is not that much time. I wanted to ask a question in regard to the Urban Capital Allocation program, the program which is the partnership of funding that the Province has with the City of Winnipeg. I believe the agreement would have at least maybe two or three years left of funding in it, if memory serves me right. I was wanting to know whether the provincial government has set any project priorities or capital allocation funding for

this year in co-operation with the City of Winnipeg, and which programs of capital expenditures would be initiated this year, pardon me, under this budget.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I recognize the Member has made two comments and a question; one is dealing with Partners in Public Service and his support for that. Certainly, any of those co-operation agreements, I think, at formal and informal level, are something that we would want to encourage. It is something I think that—obviously, it depends on all partners—might best be reflected in the kind of co-operative discussions and working arrangements that we have been able to have with the City of Winnipeg on the housing, single-window housing. That really has been very remarkable, I think.

We started not quite from ground zero. The City already had some plans and proposals for housing, as did a number of community groups. Yet I think everybody who was discussing the whole housing issue, led by my colleague the Minister for Family Services (Mr. Sale), recognized the importance and the great value that could be achieved by having three levels of government work together and to pool the money for a portion of the city where we could make some visible impact. That is really the thinking that is behind the single-window opportunity.

It has been a little more difficult, I think, for the federal government. I do not think I am speaking out of turn there or putting words into their mouth. They have, as you know, withdrawn from many elements of housing over the last number of years, and their most recent housing initiative has been couched in the context of homelessness, which is not as easily applicable to the kind of proposals which the other levels of government had.

So we are very welcoming and supportive of the moves that the federal government has made. We hope that the single window that we are all looking at will work well for the citizens of Winnipeg. It is another indication, I think, perhaps not of the Partners in Public Service program, but of the general co-operation that is developing that we saw in the Winnipeg

Development Agreement and Core Area agreements and that we hope will continue to be there in the future.

The second point that the Member made dealt with UCPA and the proposals for this year that normally come from the City around this time. All I can really tell the Member at this point is that we have received the list of projects that the City has proposed, and we are reviewing them. I think we are more or less on the same schedule as the previous minister and member would have been at this stage.

**Mr. Reimer:** I noticed in this year's budget one of things that the previous government had initiated over the last two years was the residential streets program cost-sharing with the City of Winnipeg for which was allocated \$5 million per year. It is not in this year's budget in funding to the City of Winnipeg. I was wondering whether there are plans to initiate this type of program with the City of Winnipeg again in regard to cost-sharing some of the neighbourhood street improvements with the City of Winnipeg.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, on page 89, sub-appropriation 13-6A-2A, the Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer) will find, under Capital Grants, City of Winnipeg Residential Street Repairs \$3,000,000.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, I have one other question for the Minister. One of the things that the City of Winnipeg always lobbied for when I was minister of Urban Affairs was the ability to make decisions and the ability to do some planning, long-term planning. I compliment them on their planning strategy that they have initiated over the last few years in regard to the direction that they wanted Winnipeg to go.

One of the things that came out in the last couple of years was the Cuff report, which had a number of recommendations in it that were far reaching and very outgoing by the request that the City of Winnipeg had in the management of their own destiny, if you want to call it. We acted fairly promptly within about a year after the Cuff report was out in bringing forth amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act which were in consultation with the City of Winnipeg

councillors and the Mayor coming to the Legislature here and passing into law.

One of the things that was outstanding with the Cuff report was the rewrite of The City of Winnipeg Act. Recognizing that that was quite an undertaking and the fact that it was a fairly long, detailed and outdated act in the sense of all the amendments and add-ons to it, we realized that it would take quite a while for a rewrite, but we did assign a staffperson who worked for almost a full year on the rewrite of The City of Winnipeg Act, working with the City of Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg put staff towards it. The Department of Urban Affairs at that time put a staffperson towards it. I believe the rewrite of The City of Winnipeg Act was completed before year end, because they were working on that type of parameter.

\* (16:20)

I was wondering whether the Minister has received the recommendations of the rewriting of The City of Winnipeg Act and whether she will be acting on them with the recommendation that we had sort of initiated, that we would be bringing in amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act, not necessarily for this session, but for next session. I was wondering whether this is indeed in the timetable of the Minister and the dealings with The City of Winnipeg Act, as it is now in the rewrite stage.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I think perhaps before the Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer) came in, the Member for Fort Whyte had asked essentially a similar question, but I can give an essentially similar answer, and that is that I have not had the opportunity to look at that work that the staffperson, in conjunction with the City of Winnipeg, has been doing. I know that it is quite extensive. I know that they believe they have been very successful in reducing from 500 pages to 200 pages.

I indicated two approaches that I would take in looking at that proposal. One is to ensure that we have either a plain language version of The City of Winnipeg Act if that is at all possible, or something similar to the previous guide that the previous government put in place in 1997 to The Municipal Act to try to ensure that there is

greater clarity and ease of ability to work with the Act for proponents, citizens, people who are interested in the future of their city and concerned about the legislation which is there.

Secondly, I would also, I think, take one of the principles of subsidiarity that I had made mention of before, that the Member for River Heights has talked about in his comments on Bill 35, and that is that each level of government should take on itself that which it can do best and that which it can enforce.

With those two very general principles, we will be looking at it. It is not something which we had intended to do in this session of the Legislature, whatever the schedule for this session of the Legislature is, but it is something which I shall be working on relatively soon.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just to clarify, we are back on 13.1.(c), correct, Mr. Chair?

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):** Yes.

**Mr. Loewen:** Thank you. I do not have too many questions on the sub-appropriations, with regard to staff. I note that most of the levels have been maintained. I assume that most of the increases reflect salary adjustments for the year and possible increases. I think really what I am interested in in this area is whether there has been a change in direction with regard to the involvement of the staff and what they are spending their time on. By that, specifically, I refer back to the Minister's opening statements. A lot of her comments reflected on program spending as opposed to economic development. I am wondering if, for example, in a situation in 13.1.(c) there are, I believe, three full-time staff or equivalent in Brandon, same as last year. I am wondering if there has been any change in focus on behalf of that staff. I do believe that in previous years most of their focus was on economic development. I am wondering if some of that focus has been shifted to program delivery as opposed to economic development.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):** Just before recognizing the Minister, I want to point out that I erred in the advice that I gave the Member for Fort Whyte. We are actually on 13.1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$88,000. I think

we need to pass that before we move on to the next line. Is that part of the agreement that we had before?

**Mr. Loewen:** We could either do that, or that question, I think, can be posed under 13.1.(b), as well, if the Minister is comfortable answering that.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mrs. Struthers):** Maybe then we can pass that line and move on to the Brandon Office.

**Mr. Loewen:** I think, just to clarify, my question and my comments were—although the example I gave was Brandon—in fact regarding the total staffing situation. I will leave it up to the discretion of the Minister. If she wants to answer it under 13.1.(b) before we pass that, I can ask it again and then again, but, if she would rather deal with it just right now, I am comfortable.

**Ms. Friesen:** No, the Brandon cabinet office is not on this particular line, but we can certainly talk about it now. I am advised by staff that there is not any great deal of difference between the responsibilities that were there under the previous government and those that are there now. It may have been that under the previous government economic projects were taken on from time to time, and that may still be the case. It is not specifically the case at the moment, and the kinds of things that the Brandon cabinet office is dealing with are essentially service to citizens in the Westman region.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just for clarification, if we are on 13.1.(b), I am prepared to pass it.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Struthers):** Item 13.1 Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (2) Other Expenditures \$88,000—pass.

1.(c) Brandon Office (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$161,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$60,400—pass.

1.(d) Human Resource Management (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$131,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$27,200—pass.

1.(e) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$400,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$208,700—pass.

1.(f) Program and Policy Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$695,900. Shall the item pass?

\* (16:30)

**Mr. Loewen:** Just for further clarification, I hope this is the right area to pose a question to this Minister, but I am really interested in the emphasis that the staff in her department, particularly with the amalgamation, is placing on economic development.

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

I am sure she understands from the tack of the questioning that I do believe that one of the primary functions of this department needs to be economic development, particularly as it applies to rural Manitoba, and I note that on page 30 that is certainly one of the activity identifications for this department. I guess, with regard to this department, and I would ask the forbearance of the Minister to maybe reflect on it for all of the departments that we have just talked about, what I am trying to get at is whether there has been a change in approach whereby less of her department's staff time is being spent on economic development and more is being spent on program delivery in the opinion of herself and her senior staff, whether it reflects relatively the same amount of staff activity on economic development particularly as it pertains to rural Manitoba as has taken place specifically in the '90s. So if she could deal with that issue, I would appreciate it.

**Ms. Friesen:** I thank the Member for the question. There have been no decreases in staff and there have been no changes in programs. I am sure that the Member is aware of the recent Grow Bond that we announced in Crystal City, a continuation of a program which most rural Manitobans saw as very successful. We are also continuing and in fact expanding the Community Works Loan Program, which again we also think has been of great benefit. We are, as I mentioned in my introduction, extending some of the responsibility in the Community Works Loan Program for the rural youth entrepreneur participants. We are, I think, doubling the finances for that. In a number of those areas, I

think we are committed to continuing the programs.

As the Member knows, we are also looking at expanding the programs in the city of Winnipeg, but I understand that is not the import of the question at the moment. There have been no changes in staff, and there have been no changes in general direction. Indeed, an addition of a Grow Bond in Crystal City, which we anticipate will be very helpful, both for exports and for the manufacturing economy in rural Manitoba, not just the agriculture economy, what is impressive I think.

I share the Member's recognition of the economic vitality of parts of rural Manitoba. I think we would say that perhaps not all parts have shared equally, but certainly in parts of rural Manitoba there has been great diversification, great energy, a tremendous amount of community support for entrepreneurs. The programs that were put in place by the previous government have certainly supported some of those.

I wanted to add in fact the last question dealt with the Brandon cabinet office, and when I had been talking to the Member earlier about changes in staffing in the Department, I had not included the Brandon cabinet office. Clearly, there have been changes in staffing there. The numbers have not changed. So when we do provide the written account, we will include that as well.

I should also add that the Food Development Centre, which used to be in the former department of rural development, continues to operate in the Department of Agriculture and Food. That may be an area and was certainly an area of economic activity in the Department. It is one that is not here any longer, but it certainly continues to operate with government and community support.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just as a follow-up to that, the Minister noted in her opening remarks that there were going to be two people hired for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program. I understood from her remarks that those people have not yet been hired. I am assuming that, given the priority of that program, based not only on the

election promise but on the Minister's opening comments, there is a fair bit of work going on in the Department on that program. I am just wondering if she could share with us sort of how that is being organized, given that the staff that were anticipated of being hired for that program have not been hired yet.

**Ms. Friesen:** Yes, the Member is right that Neighbourhoods Alive! is a priority, but also a priority, obviously, are hiring issues and staffing issues.

Much of the Neighbourhoods Alive! work has been done by an interdepartmental committee, so there has been work done by at least five departments on this in preparing criteria and in preparing the boundaries of the proposal.

We also, after the announcement, seconded somebody from within the Department. I do not know if the Member is familiar with Ross Thompson who has been very active and very successfully active in the Round Tables' program. Ross Thompson has served us in the Neighbourhoods Alive! co-ordinator position until such time as the appointment can be made.

I can tell the Member that we are at the moment in the final stages of seconding somebody on a more permanent basis from elsewhere in the civil service, so we are trying to do this, working across departments, pulling together the strength of departments of Aboriginal Affairs, of Education and Training, of Family Services and of Justice. Actually there are a couple of other additional departments who from time to time are pulled in. These are staff who have a great deal of experience that Intergovernmental Affairs has led to prepare the material for the release and for the development of the programs.

Ross Thompson was able to take on the role of dealing with the groups after the announcement was made, and as I said, we will, I hope, have concluded a seconding agreement from within another department of government within the next couple of weeks. There will be an additional person that we will hire later on in the process, probably around September or October.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just on a matter of process, how we go about this. I note that we probably have a little over an hour left to go through a number of issues, and I would like to suggest maybe that we move rather quickly through some of these sections. I will try to do them sequentially. I am prepared to basically pass globally; reserve the right maybe to discuss the Minister's Salary. Other than that, I would certainly be willing to pass it globally, so we can spend some time speaking to the issues as opposed to some of the technical details. If that is acceptable, I would suggest we move that way.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, there is a requirement for the Chair to read each line which does take some time, unfortunately. In principle, I have no problem with what you are suggesting, but there is a problem for a committee and for a committee chair who actually has to read it. So if you want to go through quickly and stop at certain places, that would be fine, and within the constraints we originally discussed, then we will do the best we can.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It will be easier for all concerned if you ask the global question on the Minister's Salary. Then there will be no need for a technical answer, but right now we are on item by item.

By agreement, the Minister and the opposition critic can agree on global questioning, but sometime it has to be passed. Is there an agreement?

**Ms. Friesen:** Perhaps it would be simpler in the interests of time just to proceed with the questions, and then we will see where we get to.

**Mr. Loewen:** I am on the Municipal Board, and I just asked the question if the Minister anticipates that will continue to operate much the same as it has in the past, or is there any intention to change that?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, Municipal Board is a very important board to both the City of Winnipeg and to Capital Region and rural Manitoba. We have appointed a new chair. The previous chair resigned at the end of the year. We appointed a new chair, Peter Diamond. We

have also appointed a number of new members—we may have the list with us at the moment—and we have moved off the Board those people whose time had expired.

I have talked about this when I have been to the regional AMM meetings. What I am looking for is—perhaps it is reflected in the appointments that we have made. The advice that I got from a number of sources was that what the Board needed was expertise in assessment. So we have appointed people, I think at least two people, who have recent experience in assessment. It needed—perhaps I am speaking for myself here. Having read some of the Municipal Board reports, it seemed to me that there was the opportunity in some areas for conflict resolution before things actually got to perhaps some of the stages that they did. So one of the lawyers whom we have appointed does have experience in that, in the area of conflict resolution.

Obviously, we have tried, as previous governments have, to have a geographical balance on the Board. I am not yet satisfied that we have northern people on the Board and the representation that they should have, so I am still anticipating some appointments in that area. We have looked for representation from both Winnipeg and outside of Winnipeg, but we are also I think mindful that in the recent past quite a large number of the cases that the Municipal Board has had to hear have been from the Winnipeg region, and I say the larger region. So there has been a need for, I think, people who are able to get to those hearings.

I think there have been some problems in the Municipal Board, certainly, that have been brought to my attention with access to materials and access to information for the general public. I have asked the new chair of the Municipal Board to look at some of those issues to see if we can make sure that people who are making presentations to the Board have access to the materials that they require. I would say that is the general direction we are taking at the moment.

**Mr. Loewen:** I would like to move to the area 13.3.(b) Provincial Planning and deal with the Capital Region report there. I have a few brief questions. I appreciate that in her opening

statement the Minister identified that they have received back the input they were looking for from the various participants after the publication of the final report. The Minister indicated that she felt they would be able to have an announcement fairly soon.

Could she maybe pin that down a little bit for us? Soon is a month to me. Is it a different time frame for her?

**Ms. Friesen:** Perhaps I should have said soon or subsequently. That might be closer to reality. We have received a number of responses. Frankly, I would have liked to have seen more, but I think people generally want to see some action on the Capital Region rather than continued reports and responding to reports. I think the Member suggested I had received the responses I was looking for. That is not quite it, but certainly there were a number of responses. We have asked also for responses across departments in the Government as I am sure the Member is aware. There are a number of government departments from Highways to Conservation to Culture and Heritage that have concerns and interests in the way in which the whole Capital Region process moves along, so that I am not able to give the Member a specific deadline, merely to say that those reviews are underway and that we will be coming in the fall, perhaps if I can make that general sense, in the fall with a next step in this.

I could advise the Member that I have met with the mayors and reeves of the Capital Region a number of times. Most recently they did ask me if we were proceeding with the recommendation in the Capital Region Review for an act of association, if I can put it that way. It was one of the components of the review, and I did advise them and I can advise the Member that obviously in this session we are not proceeding with that. When we get to making some responses to the Capital Region, we will perhaps look at that further and look at the issues really that are surrounding that, the desire for connection, the desire for some common planning areas and the sort of service areas that are outlined in some elements of the report and in some people's responses.

\* (16:50)

The other piece of this in the whole Capital Region issue is the COSDI report, which I imagine the Member is aware of, and the COSDI report was something which this particular department had co-chaired and it is very much part of our assumptions, the large-area planning in particular. It is part of our assumptions and our general approach to all of Manitoba as we move forward, whether it is in the livestock area or whether it is in the Capital Region. It is something which I think there was general support for in the COSDI recommendations. It is something which makes planning sense, whichever issue you are dealing with, and it is something, as the Member is aware, that we have provided some money for in the livestock initiative to enable larger regional planning to occur, whether it is through a planning district or through a conservation district, so that if the Member is looking for some general principles, some general direction, I can indicate that that is where we are at the moment.

**Mr. Loewen:** I thank the Minister for that. I think my observation would be that the Capital Region Review Committee, their final report, although there was a lot of good work there and some suggestions, certainly would not fall into the classification of a bold new step in terms of the direction that it gave the Government and given the comments that have been made particularly by the Premier (Mr. Doer) on previous occasions on his views on the Capital Region and the necessity to ensure that the city of Winnipeg does not suffer from ex-urban development both commercial and residential. Certainly when one looks at North America, there has been a variety of approaches, including one, which might be the most extreme, in Oregon where they actually drew a hard circle just around the outskirts of the city and declared there would be no housing or commercial development outside that circle. I am sure the Minister is aware that there are a number of municipalities, including one that borders on the south end of Winnipeg and Brady Road that are looking at the possibility of rezoning agricultural space for commercial space, partly driven by the fact that in that particular part of the city we are virtually out of commercial space to redevelop and there is a demand there.

What I am wondering is if the Minister is predisposed to taking a hard line and having the provincial government give instruction to municipalities surrounding the city of Winnipeg on what they will be allowed to do or not do in terms of commercial and residential development, or whether she is prepared, and again, in a general sense, whether she feels we do have time to go through a, for lack of a better word, consensus-building process with the City and with all the outlying municipalities before we arrive at a solution. What I am trying to focus in on is whether she feels her department will be taking some bold steps, some proactive steps, to address this issue, or whether she just sort of sees things unfolding in a more gentle fashion.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, those are good questions. They are certainly ones that I think people have been asking for the last 10 or 12 years as we have gone through a number of stages on the Capital Region issue with reports and guidelines, et cetera, et cetera. They are ones for which there are a number of alternatives and approaches across North America, as well as there are in other jurisdictions as well.

The Member has drawn perhaps one example, I would not want to call it rigid, but it is certainly a very clear-cut approach that Oregon and other jurisdictions in the Pacific Northwest have taken. They face somewhat different issues than we do, and they have perhaps had the luxury of greater wealth, in some cases, in dealing with them.

One of the issues that we face, and it was something which I think, whatever comments the Member made about the Capital Region Review, certainly drew to our attention the issue that there are issues within the city of Winnipeg as well and that the expansion of suburban Winnipeg has also taken place at the same time as expansion has occurred beyond the city. So it is a complicated issue. It is a complex one. The Member is asking essentially: The carrot or the stick? What was it, "gentle" or "hard line," I think, are the options he offered me. I am not convinced that those are the only options, but obviously those are the constraints within which one has to work.

My general assumption is that co-operation always works better than coercion, and that particularly in the issue of planning, planning is one area where it is important that municipalities, communities are part of the process. Planning depends upon people being able to use public forums, able to participate in the kinds of issues of land use and other issues in planning that will very much affect their own direct quality of life. There are regional issues here, there are provincial issues. I think it is important that we look again at the provincial land-use planning guidelines, just as we are looking at the recommendations of the COSDI report.

That is really all I can say at the moment. It is perhaps a somewhat idealistic statement, I recognize, in saying co-operation works better than coercion. I am sure that is something that members opposite would also agree with. Sometimes, and I am learning this as I look at municipalities across the province, there are often rivalries which go back a long way, which perhaps some of the origins of which have even been forgotten in the mists of time.

One of the challenges, I think, that the Department, whether it was rural development, or whether it is Intergovernmental Affairs, has always faced is sometimes the difficulties in bringing together for planning purposes municipalities and regions which do not, on the face of it, appear to have opposing views or antithetical interests. But nevertheless there are personalities that are involved; there are people; there are families. There are regional rivalries which go back a long time. So, we are looking at all of those issues across Manitoba.

More particularly, obviously there are concerns being expressed by the general populous about a number of areas in the Capital Region. We do intend to address those. We are very grateful to the commission which worked on this over two jurisdictions, over the time of the previous government, and then presented its report to the new government. I wanted to thank the staff and the commissions who had worked on that and also to the municipalities of the Capital Region, which I think have paid a great deal of attention and effort and work to this particular report.

**Mr. Loewen:** I would like to thank the Minister for those comments. One of the reasons I ask these types of questions on this issue in particular is because I do believe there is a great urgency to come to some resolve over this issue. I guess I gave one example. Another example would be the city of Calgary who took the other approach and just drew the circle large enough that it captured virtually everybody and went that route. But, in particular, certainly as it affects certainly newer developments within the city and, again, I note from time to time the premiers in the House stood up and referred a number of times to the wonderful development in Whyte Ridge which he oversaw when he was the Minister of that department. I will agree with him, as part of my constituency. It is a wonderful region, as is Lindenwoods, as is Waverley Heights, and as is Fort Richmond West, which comprised my constituency.

The difficulty I have is that at the time that those communities were planned, not enough forethought was given to the size of the community. The result is I believe, or I represent the only constituency in the province of Manitoba that does not have a high school and likely never will, simply because the individual communities are cut off from one another either by major commercial development or retail development.

I think it is important on these issues that we come to grips with that very clearly so that when we are planning for growth, whether it is commercial or residential. There are a lot of examples like that on the residential side. We are planning far enough ahead, that those new communities that hopefully will develop as the city continues to grow through economic expansion, will be planned in such a way that in fact all the amenities that are needed to make a healthy community can be planned from day one.

Again, the clock is moving fairly quickly. While I would enjoy the pleasure of a philosophical discussion, I will maybe try and keep my comments down to some specifics.

I would, I guess with approval, like to jump ahead to sub-appropriation 13.5. (b) Manitoba Water Services Board. My question there also



relates to Bill 15. Again, a number of the presenters on The Water Rights Amendment Act indicated that it would be absolutely critical for the success of anything to be done regarding drainage and water rights, that the conservation districts actually be based on watersheds as opposed to what they are now. I know that I think there are two that are based on watersheds, and the rest are not. I am just wondering if, in light of that, and in light of the previous comments, we talked about AMM and their concern with the Bill, if the department has any plans to redo the conservation districts to more closely align with watersheds in the near future.

\* (17:00)

**Ms. Friesen:** We waited a few minutes so that we could be joined by Dick Menon, who is the Director of the Water Services Branch, who will have some of the specific answers that you were looking for. But I wanted to say, before we got into that, that the conservation districts are, we believe, a very good program. I think they fit where Manitobans, whether they are rural or urban, are looking to be; it fits with the COSDI arguments for large-area planning and enables Manitobans to work together across boundaries and to develop the best programs for their own areas. It is very much of a co-operative program. It is one, I think I mentioned in the introduction, that we do intend to expand, and we have set aside the monies for two additional conservation districts this year. Obviously, that is subject to practice. It is subject to the agreements being made, but that possibility and that anticipation is there.

Do we plan to change those? I recognize the point that the Member is making. In a way it is similar to the one that he made in his previous question which dealt with the fact that he had no high school in his constituency, that school boundaries did not coincide with the constituency boundaries. It is always a difficulty. We know that it is the election commission that sets the boundaries, and equally we know that a high school does provide a very important community component for a constituency. It is one element of community pride, and I can understand the difficulty that the Member would face in that. Aligning boundaries is a very difficult issue, and in the best of all possible

worlds we would have community boundaries, historic boundaries, boundaries of communities of interest that accorded with all the wishes of the appropriate citizens and were based upon watershed boundaries as well. It is a difficult task. I remember, in fact, at the AMM meeting, meeting with two municipalities who came to discuss this issue, looking in particular, they had concerns about the regional health authority boundaries which did not necessarily coincide with the patterns of communication, the patterns of transport, the patterns of education, the patterns of commercial activity in their particular area. Once, of course, you looked at the map, you could see that that indeed was true, and that did pose difficulties and anomalies for that community. So I recognize the principle that the Member is arguing for, and I hope perhaps over the years that we can develop better alignments on this.

On the specific issue, I am advised that four of the conservation districts are on watersheds, and I think the Member made reference to that as well. But eleven of the subdivisions of the conservation districts are on watershed lines. So, although only four of them in the large picture are on watershed lines, once you get down to the subdivisions within each of the conservation districts, there has been a relatively successful effort to ensure that they are formed along watershed lines.

So I think the principle that the Member is speaking of is recognized. Some of these conservation districts go back a long time, but a little difficult to realign them in that sense, although I understand the point you are making.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just to finish that issue. I do want to clarify one thing. It is not, in my opinion, an issue of boundaries regarding the high schools in my constituency. The issue really there is that when those communities were planned, even though there was lots of land around them at the time, empty land, the planning was done in such a way that the communities themselves were built too small to support a high school. So I was suggesting that if the planning had been done right in the first place and land that is now commercial had been set aside to expand these housing developments, we would have had an area that, regardless of what the boundaries

were, there would have been an opportunity to have a high school. The issue was not the boundaries. It is the fact that the communities are too small to support a high school in the long term, so it would not be appropriate, from I guess a taxpayers' perspective on the economic side, to put a high school in there for a few years and then have it sit empty.

The reason I raise this issue, as well, is in regard to Bill 15. We touched on changes to The Municipal Act, but certainly AMM gave their conditional support, based on the formation of, and I will quote: The second condition is that the Province introduces new legislation that would provide for a long-term, comprehensive land drainage and water management strategy, based on the concept of watershed districts, which they outlined first.

Hopefully, the Minister or someone in her department can advise AMM that maybe the two conditions that they had requested in their conditional support of Bill 15 are not likely to happen in the near future. They might want to reassess their position on that bill.

\* (17:10)

Having said that, I appreciate the Minister's comments. I think that is basically all the questions I have on that. I apologize to—I am sorry, I did not catch your last name, Mr. Monnin, Morin. I am sorry. I did not catch your staff's last name. *[interjection]* Menon. Sorry for your making the long trek down here for that short a question.

**Ms. Friesen:** Perhaps I should clarify for the Member. I did not say that these would not happen. What I did say was that they were difficult things to do, and I am sure the AMM understands that as well. I also indicated I think, in a previous answer, that we would be reviewing the situation as part of the water rights review that the Conservation Department is initiating and that we were committed to the principles enunciated in the COSDI report of the large area planning, part of which applies to this particular issue.

So I would be happy to continue discussions with the AMM on the specifics of this issue, but

I did not want the Member to draw the wrong conclusions, as I had done from his answer on high schools and planning in his area. I did draw the wrong conclusion, so my apologies.

**Mr. Loewen:** I apologize for this. I have skipped over just one quick question on sub-appropriation 13-4D, in particular as it applies to Economic and Community Development Services. I notice the budget has actually been reduced and the expenditures, I presume, will be reduced. Is there a specific reason for that, or is that just overall? It is a quick question I have. If the Minister needs other staff here to answer that question, I would be prepared to receive it in written form at some point, if that is easier.

**Ms. Friesen:** In either case, Mr. Chairman, we will do our best to answer it. But I think we did not quite get the question. The line that you are on and the actual question again.

**Mr. Loewen:** On page 61, sub-appropriation 13-4D, 13.5 Economic and Community Development Services. Expenditure last year was \$36 million, and this year it is \$36.6. Some savings in administration, I guess, accounts for it, on further review. But I guess the major decrease is a \$570,000 decrease in Regional Development Services. I am curious to know how those savings were achieved, and in fact whether that will have any effect on the ability to provide economic development services to rural Manitoba.

**Ms. Friesen:** If the Member would look at page 67, he will see that Recoverable for Regional Development Services is, in fact, I think, a slightly increased amount, so that is the answer.

**Mr. Loewen:** I thank the Minister for clarifying that.

If we could then move to sub-appropriation 13-5E on page 77. I note that the amount budgeted for the Urban Economic Development Initiatives remains the same, the same in total, the global number, although I do believe, when comparing it to previous years, there are quite likely some changes on the individual amounts. I am just wondering—it does not have to be today—if the Minister and her staff could advise me of any changes in individual budgets regarding the

organizations that are listed this year versus the previous year.

**Ms. Friesen:** I think the general answer to this is that the funding in this area for the ongoing projects, those that I made reference to in my introduction, Economic Development Winnipeg, Urban Green Team, Tourism Winnipeg, the Convention Centre, et cetera, that the funding for those remains as it was last year. There has been no change in that. From each year, UEDI also has specific projects as they come up, but the basic ones are the same.

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Chair, I have a little more leg room back here, so I am taking the opportunity to stretch a bit.

I guess I would like to have a few questions on 13.6, more of a general nature, but I notice in particular that when one factors in the Recoverable from Capital Initiatives that took place last year, actually year over year, there is a decrease in this total appropriation. I am not sure if that is a contradiction to the Minister's statement which indicated an increase in some of those areas. "Contradiction" is not the right word, but I guess I am just looking in my own mind to clarify because she did mention in a couple of cases, I think she mentioned anyway, increased financial assistance to the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. Is there agreement that he speaks other than the first row? because the Hansard will have some difficulty recording. Is it working? Yes, the agreement usually is that the critic sits in the first row. Is there an agreement now that he can sit wherever he wants? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Loewen:** I believe I asked a question.

**Ms. Friesen:** He did pose a question, but I am going to have to ask you to do it again because I do not think I grasped it. On 13.6.(c) was it that you were looking at? Sorry, Mr. Chairman, that the Member was looking at. I am not quite sure of the question.

\* (17:20)

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Chair, actually, first I guess look at 13.6.(a) with regard to Financial Assistance for the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It is 13.6.(a) Financial Assistance for the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Loewen:** I am on page 79. That has actually decreased \$2.5 million, and I am just wondering if that is as a result of a particular change or just overall different program funding?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, we are talking about page 83, I think, are we? There are two decreases that the Member will find. Maybe we can just speak globally about it. There are two decreases. One is formula driven essentially by the payroll tax, and as the payroll tax is reduced so are the payments to the recoverables from the Province to the City of Winnipeg. That is also reduced.

There is a reduction, as the mayor and others have noted, in the residential streets funding. It was last year and the year before. The previous government provided \$5 million additional. This year, we provided \$3 million additional for residential streets, and we also provided \$3 million for Neighbourhoods Alive!, not all of which is for the City of Winnipeg, an additional \$2 million in the housing component and \$2 million for ambulance and medical services in the city of Winnipeg.

I should take this opportunity to introduce Mr. Jon Gunn, who is the new staffperson who has joined us and deals with the finances of the urban affairs section.

**Mr. Loewen:** I thank the Minister for that. Sub-appropriation 13.6.(a)(1). I am just wondering if any studies have been done regarding the effect of the possible opening of new casinos on VLT revenue or whether the Department simply expects that it will continue, I guess, with a slight increase as it has before.

**Ms. Friesen:** The VLT unconditional grants to the city, which the Member is asking about, are based upon a formula. It is 10 percent of the total VLT monies that are generated in the city. I should say that we have not changed that

formula. That formula remains the same in both rural and urban Manitoba.

In 1994-95, those revenues were approximately \$6 million. I can read them out. It is \$6,017,600 in '94 and '95; \$6,372,600 in '95-96; \$6,896,600 in '97; \$6,666,200—it always reminds me of a New Zealand joke, but I will not tell it, not suitable. In 1998-99, \$7 million—there is quite a jump there between '98 and '99, \$7,226,900, and then \$7,469,000. Then it drops in the 2000 and 2001 Estimates to \$7,100,000.

Again, it is always dependent upon what the actuals are, because it is formula driven. The Member can see that over the last six or seven years there has been some variation within a million dollars essentially, between six and seven million dollars.

**Mr. Loewen:** I would say it is probably safe to assume then—maybe not safe to assume at any time— but I will take it from the Minister's answer that there are no plans to either reduce the number of VLTs, thus affecting the revenues in the city of Winnipeg, nor are there any plans that her department feels would impact on the revenue. By way of an example, if a casino were to open in Headingley, certainly that would have some impact on VLT revenue in Manitoba, as would a cut in the VLT revenues transferred to the City of Winnipeg, certainly a cut in the number of VLTs as well. I can only assume from these numbers that neither of those situations has been planned for by the Department.

**Ms. Friesen:** I appreciate the questions of the Member, but I think those are questions best directed to another minister. The allocation of the VLTs is not the responsibility of this department. It is, in fact, the actual transfer of the money and maintaining the connection with the City of Winnipeg. It is, as I said, formula-generated, and it is not a formula that we have changed. On the broader question of allocation of casinos and VLTs, those are things that are best answered by a different minister.

\* (17:30)

**Mr. Loewen:** I would like to jump ahead, given where the clock is, to 13.8. Neighbourhoods Alive! program, and I have a few questions on

the Neighbourhoods Alive!. The first one in particular dealing with some election commitments and other issues we have heard about from time to time in this House during Question Period and at other times is that there is a strong commitment from the Government to open schools longer hours, and I am not sure if it is anticipated that the costs for that would come out of the Neighbourhoods Alive!. There would be certain costs for supervision, janitorial services, et cetera; and, when the Minister talks about improved recreational initiatives, I am assuming that the open schools promise dovetails. I just wonder, I do not necessarily need an answer today, but if the Minister could provide me with a list of which schools have, as a result of their policy, opened their doors longer and are providing more recreational services to the communities than they were prior to her government taking office.

**Ms. Friesen:** I think, Mr. Chair, there are two answers to this, and I appreciate the interest of the Member in this particular aspect of community development. One of the principles that we intend to base this on is responding to needs that the community itself identifies and regarding that process of community identification of its needs as in fact part of the revitalization movement itself. We do put quite a high store on that.

The program also, secondly, is intended to pull together the strengths of a number of departments. For example, lighthouse schools may have components in it that would come from recreation that is in Culture, Heritage and Recreation. It might have components from Education and Training as well as from the Department of Justice. As we look at this over the next year, the Member may well look for pulling together some of those strengths across departments as well.

Thirdly, we announced the actual formal part of Neighbourhoods Alive! very recently. We are still receiving submissions from community groups. We are looking at them, and we intend to begin the awarding of those program grants probably early in September.

**Mr. Loewen:** I guess just for clarification, I certainly agree with the Minister's intentions

with regard to the Neighbourhoods Alive! program. Certainly there are areas that need our attention, and I am very hopeful that we will be able to focus on some specific results as these programs get off the ground. I am understanding from the Minister's response that in fact planning is still in the works. There have not been any schools opened for extra hours at this point, but perhaps we can look forward to that happening in the not-too-distant future.

**Ms. Friesen:** I do not have that information with me, but I can provide it to the Member.

**Mr. Loewen:** I would appreciate receiving that information. The Minister is aware of my interest in some aspects of recreation services in the inner city. One other issue that was certainly a very significant part of the election platform, and as a matter of fact, when I look at the press release from September 6, it was the first item issued. Yet I noticed that it was totally absent in the announcement. That has to deal with the promise to offer six days leave per year, I guess what was titled at the time, unpaid family responsibility leave. The question I have is really twofold. I am wondering if the Minister and her department are working with other staff to implement this promise in the near future. That is question one.

My second question would be if there has been any consultation with any of the major business groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, small business representatives, or the Manitoba Business Council with regard to the advisability and the economic results of passing legislation that would see every family receive six days, or, I guess from the reading of the promise, every individual receives six days of unpaid family leave. Could she expand upon that?

**Ms. Friesen:** I think the responsibility for this area would rest with the Minister of Labour.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. They cannot hear one another.

**Ms. Friesen:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just saying to the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen) that I think the responsibility for that type of legislation would lie with the Minister of

Labour. I am interested by the Member's question and his noting of this in the platform, particularly in view of the current proposals, which I am not sure if they are actually before the House in Ontario or not, but I gather there has simply been some discussion around—

**Mr. Chairperson:** The Member for St. James.

### Report

**Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (Chairperson of the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255):** Mr. Chairperson, a recorded vote has been called in the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255.

The Estimates of the Department of Health, the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mr. Driedger) moved a motion to reduce the Minister's salary.

The motion reads as follows. I move, seconded by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach)

THAT, due to the recognition by Manitobans that the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) has failed to live up to his election commitments of ending hallway medicine within six months, immediately hiring 100 new full-time nurses, opening 100 new beds, and reducing waiting lists, the Minister of Health's Salary, budget line 21.1(a), be reduced to the amount of \$4, equivalent to \$1 for each month the patients still lie in the hallways since the passing of his self-imposed April 6 deadline.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that consideration be given to reallocating the Minister of Health's remaining salary towards breast cancer research in the province of Manitoba.

### Formal Vote

**Mr. Chairperson:** A formal vote has been requested. Call in the members.

*Both sections in Chamber for formal vote.*

**Mr. Chairperson:** In the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 to consider the Estimates of the Department of

Health, the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) moved the following motion:

THAT, due to the recognition by Manitobans that the Minister of Health has failed to live up to his election commitments of ending hallway medicine within six months, immediately hiring 100 new full-time nurses, opening 100 new beds, and reducing waiting lists, the Minister of Health's, budget item 21.1.(a) Minister's Salary, be reduced to the amount of \$4, equivalent to \$1 for each month that patients still lie in the hallways since the passing of his self-imposed April 6 deadline.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that consideration be given to reallocating the Minister of Health's remaining salary toward breast cancer research in the Province of Manitoba.

The motion was subsequently defeated on a voiced vote, and two members then requested that a formal counted vote be taken.

The question before the Committee is: Shall the motion of the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) pass?

*A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 19, Nays 29.*

The motion is accordingly defeated.

The hour being after 6 p.m., committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

### IN SESSION

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave for the Honourable Member to make committee changes?

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leave has been granted.

### Committee Change

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** I move, seconded by the Member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The Maples (Mr. Aglugub) for Dauphin-Roblin (Mr. Struthers).

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been moved by the Honourable Member for Selkirk, seconded by the Honourable Member for Radisson, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The Maples for Dauphin-Roblin. Agreed? [*Agreed*]

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being past 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 31, 2000

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