



Fourth Session — Thirty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

29 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Harry E. Graham
Speaker*



VOL. XXVIII No. 68B - 8:00 p.m., THURSDAY, 29 MAY, 1980

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty - First Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, A. R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANDERSON, Bob	Springfield	PC
BANMAN, Hon. Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BARROW, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
BLAKE, David	Minnedosa	PC
BOSTROM, Harvey	Rupertsland	NDP
BOYCE, J. R. (Bud)	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
CHERNIACK, Q.C., Saul	St. Johns	NDP
CORRIN, Brian	Wellington	NDP
COSENS, Hon. Keith A.	Gimli	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CRAIK, Hon. Donald W.	Riel	PC
DESJARDINS, Laurent L.	St. Boniface	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOMINO, Len	St. Matthews	PC
DOWNEY, Hon. Jim	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
EINARSON, Henry J.	Rock Lake	PC
ENNS, Hon. Harry J.	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FERGUSON, James R.	Gladstone	PC
FILMON, Gary	River Heights	PC
FOX, Peter	Kildonan	NDP
GALBRAITH, Jim	Dauphin	PC
GOURLAY, Hon. Doug	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Hon. Harry E.	Birtle-Russell	PC
GREEN, Q.C., Sidney	Inkster	Ind
HANUSCHAK, Ben	Burrows	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd G.	Portage la Prairie	PC
JENKINS, William	Logan	NDP
JOHNSTON, Hon. J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
JORGENSON, Hon. Warner H.	Morris	PC
KOVNATS, Abe	Radisson	PC
LYON, Hon. Sterling R.	Charleswood	PC
MacMASTER, Hon. Ken	Thompson	PC
MALINOWSKI, Donald	Point Douglas	NDP
McBRYDE, Ronald	The Pas	NDP
McGILL, Hon. Edward	Brandon West	PC
McGREGOR, Morris	Virden	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., Hon. Gerald W. J.	Osborne	PC
MILLER, Saul A.	Seven Oaks	NDP
MINAKER, Hon. George	St. James	PC
ORCHARD, Hon. Donald	Pembina	PC
PARASIUK, Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PAWLEY, Q.C., Howard	Selkirk	NDP
PRICE, Hon. Norma	Assiniboia	PC
RANSOM, Hon. Brian	Souris-Killarney	PC
SCHROEDER, Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SHERMAN, Hon. L. R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
STEEN, Warren	Crescentwood	PC
URUSKI, Billie	St. George	NDP
USKIW, Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, D. James	St. Vital	NDP
WESTBURY, June	Fort Rouge	Lib
WILSON, Robert G.	Wolseley	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Thursday, 29 May, 1980

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY
SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): I call the Committee to order. Resolution 12, 7.(d)(1)—pass; 7.(d)(2)—pass; 7.(e)(1) — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAM USKIW: Mr. Chairman, we are still on (d) I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I passed it.

MR. USKIW: It is recorded but . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is all I go by.

MR. USKIW: We are going to have to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we will make the exception. Return to 7(d)(2).

MR. USKIW: What is the quorum, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There isn't really . . .

A MEMBER: No quorum.

MR. USKIW: Is that the rule?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. You don't count by numbers here.

MR. USKIW: You mean you can go with one person, just with the Minister?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe so.

MR. USKIW: Heavens, we've got to change the rules.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are lucky you just let me pass (d)(1) and (2), when I really was on to two or three more.
Seriously, 7(d)(2).

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know — do I have the floor, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: I would like to know what the Other Expenditures are in Agricultural Crown Lands, 1.109 million?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Chairman, I will have the reply as soon as I get my paper work organized here.

MR. USKIW: If he are not organized we are going to pass these items.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if I could have the member repeat the question again please?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Other Expenditures under Agricultural Crown Lands amounting to 1.1 million, what is that for? What is the program for this year?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the moneys that he is asking is for Crown land improvement programs, which is a consistent amount with last year. That is basically the additional planned expenditures, Mr. Chairman, are for Crown land improvement.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister tell us just what the formula is for retiring the improvement costs then, as it reflects itself through the lease rates over a period of time, and (b) for those that don't use public funds for improvement of Crown lands, what is their formula for recovery of these capital costs on improvements?

MR. DOWNEY: First of all, the Crown retains ownership of the improvement where we do the improvement, and recovers the investment through the rentals on the developed areas.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, does the Crown continue to charge rates, rental rates, in perpetuity on the basis of the improvement costs, or does it phase down after the capital costs are recovered from the lease rates over a period of years?

MR. DOWNEY: The rental, Mr. Chairman, is based on the animal units that the unit will carry, and improved land will carry more than the unimproved land, so it is repaid because of the ability to carry more livestock.

MR. USKIW: So that in essence the charges are in perpetuity related to productivity.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. USKIW: That is true, Mr. Chairman, if you use the land for the production of meat. But if you are using it for other purposes, then I believe there is a different system if I am not mistaken. At least there is with respect to Crown lands which are improved by the lessee at his expense. There is a two-tiered, not two-tiered, there is a system of lease rates that reflects that additional investment on the part of the lessee for a time period. In other words, a discounted rate for a time period, after which there are then full rental rates applied. So I am wondering whether there is a difference in the way this operates between Crown improvements and lessee improvements?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the member refers to a difference between the two types of recovering of funds basically is what he is saying, whether the

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

individual puts the moneys in or whether the province does. The specific difference I will have checked out, Mr. Chairman, but the basic objective is to recover on a fair and equitable basis the input costs over a period of time so that there aren't any major difficulties put on those people who are trying to farm the land.

MR. USKIW: Yes, but with respect those lands that are improved at the lessee's cost, where the Crown is not paying for the improvements in other words, as I recall it there was a system in place where for a time period, a number of years, the lease rates were set at a rate to account for the fact that the lessee paid for his own improvements, and those were depreciated over a period of time, after which full rental rates were then instituted. I am trying to recall that formula and I want to know if it still exists or

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, basically the individual who develops Crown land, those development costs are reduced from his rent that he —(Interjection)— Over a period of years, that's right. There's been no change in the formula or the policy, Mr. Chairman.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether I should take satisfaction from that or not because I don't know if that was a good system. I know it was set up during our term in government and the fact that it is still the same rules, I suppose it has withstood the test of time. At least I hope it has. I was never satisfied that we were completely right in terms of how to arrive at those rates. I thought we were reasonably right, but you could never get a confirmation from farm people as to whether your rates were too high or too low, especially you would never get them to say they were too low.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think the objective, as far as the basic objective, is to make sure that the land is being developed and the people that are developing, whether they are paying it or not, that they have the opportunity to do so and pay the cost of doing so over a period of time. It's like the actual purchase of a piece of property, that to charge it all against one year could cause a hardship.

So basically, Mr. Chairman, I think the program as it is being carried out is working in the favor of the farming community and still being responsible to the taxpayers of the province.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, now to get into the aspect of the meat price formula, has there been any change in that formula at all, or is it still the same one that was there three years ago?

MR. DOWNEY: No change, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to go back to some of the questions that I raised before supper and ask the Minister whether there is a time limit for an appeal against an allocation made by the Crown Lands Section?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, there is a time limit. If a person applies to lease Crown land, or if it has been allocated and other farmers appeal against that allocation, there is a time limit to notify the department. I believe it is 30 days, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is 30 days.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, if the matter of non-notification of the change in allocation in terms of the change of the way the land is to be leased is alleged and there is no knowledge of it and the land is allocated and has been leased, for example for one year now, would there be an opportunity to appeal, or what is the mechanism to bring this problem forward?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is an opportunity to appeal. For example — I think you are referring to if there is a change in the actual classification or the type of permit — you are asking the question could in fact individuals who were not, at least they allege that they were not notified, that there would be no way other than them requesting, I guess, what the status of it is because the land would be advertised. Yes, they would be informed, because if the status of it is changed, the land is readvertised as that new type of lease. And if it was allocated, then those people who had applied would be notified if they weren't happy with the initial allocation. So there would be a form of notification going out when the land status changed.

MR. URUSKI: It is also my understanding that before a longer term lease is entered into, if there is a change of lessee, a one-year trial period is normally put into place. If the land use in effect, the land type lease is changed, is that normally the case, Mr. Chairman, that if the type of lease changes, there is usually a one-year waiting period before the use and, of course, lease is changed.

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, if there is a lack of use or any particular evidence appears that the individual is not using the land, or for some other purpose that wouldn't be along the lines of what the land was leased on, then the lease could be revoked, the same as anybody else. But, really, there is no trial period. If he enters into a long-term lease agreement, that's a long-term lease.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, is the department able to allocate a change in lease pattern without — and what I'm referring to is from, say, a casual hay permit to a renewable hay permit — without advertising it for the benefit of other farmers? Can that lease be made directly to a farmer who is leasing it or about to lease the land, automatically? Is that normal practice?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(d)(2) — the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A.R. (Pete) ADAM: I wanted to ask one more question on the allocations, which is, the allocations are done on a point system and the department is doing that. They are looking at the point system and

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

they decide which person has the most points and should qualify for that land.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ADAM: If they are doing that, why then are there so many changes when the appeals are made? Is the advisory committee not following that rule of the point system? Is it that the department is unable to read the point system correctly? I find it odd that there are so many changes after the department made a recommendation.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, some of the reasons that sometimes cause the appeal committee to make the change, is that it is possible more information is brought to the surface at those particular hearings. I really don't know why that would be the case. It's the committee that hears the case and they make their judgment.

MR. ADAM: Out of 72 appeals that were made last year, 40 were changed, and I find that an extraordinary large number of changes for the department. —(Interjection)— Well, you know, I find it odd that if the department people, the staff people are out in the field —(Interjection)— Somebody is wrong somewhere.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman —(Interjection)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister was speaking. Maybe he wanted to clear —(Interjection)— Well, I thought he quit and I recognized the Minister. One speaker at a time. The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: The person out in the field, Mr. Chairman, is the fellow that makes the first recommendations, the guy that goes out and interviews. He is out there every day or every week, and he's out in the field talking to farmers. He knows them all by their first names and so on and so forth, and he makes the recommendations, which come into Winnipeg, and they make the final decisions. I want to know why the staff is making so many errors that the advisory board is supposed to correct.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think it should be brought to the member's attention that the board that made that change to reverse the department's decision were still the board that was carried over from the last government. The new board was appointed on January 1, 1979. In 1979-80 appeals, we saw 65 appeals heard and 23 reversed.

MR. ADAM: In 1979? When did the board change in 1979?

MR. DOWNEY: The board was changed January 1 of 1979. In the year prior to that, the year of which that particular time falls, we had 72 appeals with 40 reversals.

MR. ADAM: January 1, 1979?

MR. DOWNEY: That's right. Let's take the time period from 1978-79, in which there were 72 appeals heard and 40 were reversed. In 1978-79, 72 appeals with 40 reversals.

In the period of 1979-80, we had 65 appeals with 23 reversals.

MR. ADAM: So it's getting better; it's improving.

MR. DOWNEY: I don't know the argument the member is trying to make.

MR. ADAM: The point is that I think that if the allocations are properly done by the staff, there shouldn't be that much need for changes.

MR. DOWNEY: It appears, Mr. Chairman, that the staff are doing their best, and it is indicated to me that there is more information that is brought forward to the appeal committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, just on that point, to satisfy the Member for Ste. Rose, perhaps it might be worthwhile finding out what percentage of the allocations were appealed successfully prior to this government. I suspect what he is trying to say is, there's a departure. I don't know that there is; there may not be and I don't recollect the figures.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I use the only figures that I have available to me here. We can provide them; there's not difficulty in doing so. But an appeal tribunal or an appeal mechanism is a body that is put in place to make their decision on certain evidence put before them. I have no question of them. I think they do their job, whoever is in office, that their job is to make their judgement to the best ability with the information available.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, it is very easy to conjure up some ideas and revelations on why events take place. The Minister indicates that this high rate of successful appeals occurred prior to the change of the board. I would hope that we aren't concluding from that that there was something happening that should have not been happening. You know, one could draw the conclusion, with the new government in power, that there were preferences made at the staff level, friends of the Minister type of idea, or friends of the government type of idea, which was then bounced by the appeal board, over which then the appeal board was dismissed and replaced by a new appeal board.

You know, one could make that comment. Now, whether it is valid or not, I wouldn't be prepared to make that statement, Mr. Chairman. But I think that's really what is perhaps behind the question of the Member for Ste. Rose is, is it coincidental, or is there a history of that high a percentage of successful appeals right back to when the program was launched. If it is so, then we can remove that doubt. Otherwise, I suppose it is always in doubt.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there certainly wasn't any intent to indicate anything else. I believe it was a matter of the committee's time had expired, their date had expired and there was a change. But, you know, the questioning coming from the Member for Ste. Rose would almost lead me to believe that he was trying to make some kind of a case for some deviation from normal practice one way or the other,

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

and that isn't the case. As I indicated, when a committee is put in place, it is to judge on the information that's made available, and that's how it is handled.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister whether or not there has been any change in policy with respect to assignment.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the policy, as indicated from the staff, they have been carrying out the same as prior. There is no change, other than there is a unit transfer, an in-family transfer.

MR. USKIW: I am just trying to understand what the unit transfer implies. Is that a case where someone wants to retire or leave the industry, in which case the person's assets are sold and the buyer then assumes the lease rights. And the question that arises there, and this is what we always try to prevent, is whether or not the vendor is attempting to capital gain on the assets of the Crown. I know it's a problem, and I don't know that you can entirely prevent it. My question is whether or not the government is encouraging that, or whether at least they are consistent with policies that were adopted some years ago in trying to remove that element to the extent that it's possible.

MR. DOWNEY: There's been no change in policy there, Mr. Chairman. That is, it's a matter of trying to keep together a viable unit on the retirement of . . .

MR. USKIW: No, I understand that, a valid reason . . .

MR. DOWNEY: . . . basically there's no change in policy.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the reason I raise that is, I recall an incident prior to the firming up of regulations in this connection, where we witnessed an actual figure shown on the face of a lease for assignment privileges, which was contrary to our regulations, but which was approved by the government at that time. And that's when we came to realize that there is a problem here and that, if it's widespread, it could end up with leases being sold as private land without the individuals having invested a dollar into them in the first place. You know, which is selling public assets, in other words, or the use of them. And therefore we try to impress upon our lessees that it may be that the Crown has to have the option of requiring the return of that lease as opposed to an automatic assignment provision if there is some feeling that there are assignment benefits in the price of the transaction.

That doesn't mean that you can prevent it entirely, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that, but I think the psychology has to be very negative towards that practice to the extent that one can make it known and persist with it.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it was more of a statement than a question.

MR. USKIW: I just hope that we're on the same wavelength, that's all.

MR. DOWNEY: There's not many wavelengths, we're not on many of the same wavelengths, but in this particular item, I have indicated that there haven't been any changes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just on another item . . .

MR. DOWNEY: Point of order, Mr. Chairman. It's Mr. Chairman, not Mr. Speaker.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems that you're incurring the wrath of some members of this committee, Mr. Chairman, that you likely don't deserve, Sir.

I want to ask, through you, Sir, the Minister, whether or not there is any expansion of the community pastures contemplated in this year.

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, there was at one time at least some thought of one in the interlake, where there is sufficient Crown land in the vicinity — I believe the pasture's name is Sylvandale community pasture — where there were Crown lands withheld from lease because of the possibility of expansion of the pasture. As a result, the land was not really being used to its full capacity because, although it was offered to lease to some farmers but on a very short period of time, not allowing for any developmental work to be done on the leases, is there any expansion going on at all? Was there any expansion, say, in the year 1979, and we see nothing in 1980. What is the thinking of your government in this respect in areas where there are lands that are available in terms of Crown lands that could be developed to a greater extent?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in a general sense, not on a regional basis, coming into this particular spring, as I indicated, we had somewhat of a surplus of spaces available in our community pastures, and had, with the somewhat decline in livestock numbers that we've seen in the past, we in fact have not seen the need to go ahead and expand in the community pastures. However, I think that's one of the areas that there is room for some development to look at in a year or so, particularly when we run into seasons like this. It isn't a bad idea to have a fair amount of reserve range land on hand and through the community pasture program is one of those programs that we can expand to in fact do that. Plus encourage more of the marginal land that could be used for pasture to be done on the community pasture program. I think that's an economical type system, I think it's a good livestock management program, that more people probably will use in the future, as the more developed lands become more intensively farmed and less livestock kept on them.

It gives the people an opportunity to have diversified operations. So it's not that we aren't looking at it . . . in fact there is one area in the southeast corner that has been looked at and a possibility of moving on, one that has been proposed some time ago but just hasn't been moved on. But

again, I think it's a good idea, it's a good concept, and we'll be proceeding as the need appears to be there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: I presume, Mr. Chairman, that funds in terms of allocation for the development of land could be utilized for either community pasture or for the approvals that are now undertaken on Crown land leases. Some of that could be likely shared in terms of the total budget. Is it expected that the entire amount of money that is being allocated for other expenditures in terms of the development of Crown lands will be utilized this coming year? Are there expectations and applications to cover that amount, or is there likely to be more applications than funds to cover development?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it pretty well balances off, the funds that we have available are about the amount of applications that we've been getting, so it seems to be pretty well in balance at that number.

MR. URUSKI: The applications that you have been receiving have been fairly consistent year in and year out and you've been moving on that. Have any of the funds in this budget been used at any time, or is this where you would use funds for developmental work on community pastures for expansion of community pastures? Where you don't have to actually purchase land, where say, Crown land is available and you would be just having to do the developmental work and the fencing and things like that.

MR. DOWNEY: Not for community pastures, Mr. Chairman. These funds wouldn't be used for development of the community pastures. These are basically for the Crown lands and development programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(d)(2) — the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I want to get back to the allocations on which the Minister said that . . . what I am reading here was the former appeal board. I would like to read it out, because it says here that the Agriculture Crown Lands Advisory committee was established by Order-in-Council in December of 1978, not January of 1979, and to replace the agricultural Crown land allocation appeal advisory board and its responsibilities are similar to the former appeal board, and include the hearing of appeals for agriculture Crown land allocation and the board, it goes on to say how many they . . .

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if I didn't indicate earlier, I should have indicated the effective time for the appeal committee was January 1, 1979. That was the effective period. If I didn't say, I should have said effective period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(d)(2)—pass; 7(e)(1) — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister explain the nature of the expenditure here in the agricultural land utilization section?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The appropriation here is for the soil survey and for conservation districts.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister indicating watershed conservation districts? What kind of conservation districts are we talking about, and could he explain whether there have been any set up or what are we talking about?

MR. DOWNEY: There haven't been any new conservation districts set up, Mr. Chairman, this last year. First of all, they were transferred from the Department of Natural Resources to the Department of Agriculture. They were formerly in the Department of Natural Resources and this just basically covers their salaries.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming those are the watershed conservation districts that I'm speaking about?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, there are several now in existence, I believe the White Mud was the first one that was established, I think in 1975, somewhere around that year, and I think the Turtle Mountain Conservation District, there are two or three, I believe, that are now in existence. Are there any discussions that the Minister can tell us for other conservation districts under way now? Is there any thought of establishing others in this coming year?

MR. DOWNEY: At the present time, Mr. Chairman, there aren't any discussions with my department on any more conservation districts, but not to say that there wouldn't be before the end of this year, but at this particular point, there haven't been any discussions on any more conservation districts with my department.

MR. URUSKI: Would this section also fund some of the cost-sharing with respect to the province's input in the administration of those districts at all?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: What about the staff from Water Resources Branch that were handling the conservation? That money is in this section as well. Could the Minister indicate the extent of the soil survey that is being undertaken and conducted? To what extent has the work been carried out?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the member asks to what extent it has been carried out. It's been basically carried out in the area of some of the central parts of the province, in the extreme northwest part of the province. When I say that, I am referring to the Swan River area, and when I say the central part, we're referring to the west Portage la Prairie area, the south Riding Mountain planning district, the west interlake planning district, town of Swan River, town of Dauphin, the area of Hadashville, the Rat River area, and in the Whiteshell Provincial Park area. Those are basically the last year's soil survey program.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I am assuming that this is the province-wide soil survey that is to provide soil resource data and information for the planning districts for their land use policies. Is there a program, while at the present time you are likely surveying soils in areas that may be developing planning district on sort of a priority basis, but is the intent to complete and update the data for the entire agricultural portion of the province, or does it go beyond just the agricultural portion of the province?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, it goes beyond the Agricultural Department and services the Departments of Municipal Affairs and other departments that land surveys would be needed in — the area of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, and those basic areas, as well as the agricultural soils for agriculture purposes.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, is there a target for the extent of the program in this coming year? Has the department some analysis and target that they are looking towards?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, some of the work that is planned will be to complete some of the projects that I mentioned. They weren't all completed. That's the majority of the work that would be done. There is a new area to do some resurveying and some ongoing projects. The field work, as the members are aware, a lot of the field work is done in the summertime, the documentation being done during the winter months.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, is there a target in terms of the number of, I guess the word now is hectares, but in acres, does it vary from year to year, or to what extent do you propose to proceed this year?

MR. DOWNEY: Basically, Mr. Chairman, the numbers of acres, and I refer to them as acres rather than hectares, because I think the majority — at least I have a better understanding of what I am talking about — basically the program is fairly consistent and last year there was in the neighbourhood of a quarter of a million acres surveyed and the same kind of target is in place for this year.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know from the Minister just how this whole program encompasses water management, because as I understand the old conservation districts under resources included the whole bundle, including water management. How are we tying in with water resources?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that is still within the other department, although we're in the process of making the transfer from Natural Resources to Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: No, the staff man years is what we are showing here. These are the agronomists, not the Water people, not the engineers. We feel it is in the best interest of delivering of the programs that the agronomists be in the Department of Agriculture

and, of course, work with the other department very closely, through the committee system, on the delivery of the program.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, as I understood the program, it involved a number of municipal corporations in the setting up of districts for soil and water and resource management, if you like. Water Management, though, was a very hectic component of the packet. Who is the operating department here now? Is it Agriculture or is it still Resources?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it is still Resources.

MR. USKIW: Okay, just a split function? I see. I'm not sure if it makes sense, but maybe it does.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Henry J. Einarson (Rock Lake): 7.(e)(1)—pass; 7.(e)(2)—pass — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, there is an increase of approximately 46,000 in Other Expenditures. Is there any significance with respect to that increase?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the increase is basically to pay for the publication of one of the areas on soil survey.

MR. URUSKI: Just to understand that, the report that the department will compile will be published and it will cost roughly 40,000.00?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 7.(e)(2)—pass; 7.(f)(1)—pass — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us a report on the workings of the Agricultural Lands Protection Board in this last year. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that there was an annual report published at one time, I believe, of the board, but I don't recall seeing one from the board, or at least a report from the board that has been made available to members, Mr. Chairman.

Could the Minister, when he makes his comments, clarify that.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I understand the report was made available last — June, is when it has to be made. I think that's the time that the report has to be in. It is not in the Act to have it tabled in the House, but I think that's the reporting time; the last report was out last June.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, is there a report that the Minister can give us on the workings of the board, to bring us up-to-date before they publish their annual report?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, I guess the main items to report on are the fact that we have had some concern from the board, first of all that they were in need of an investigative officer to investigate some of the land purchases. That position has been filled and is now supporting the director and the board. Certain concerns from the board: It was brought to my attention, and from other areas of the agricultural

community, that there was need to review the Act, and certain areas of concern that were brought to my attention. I think it's the numbers that the individual is looking for; the numbers of land transfers in the last year were in the neighborhood of just over 5,000, and that was approximately the same as the year prior, with a million, one hundred-and-some-thousand acres being transferred, for a total of 297 million, almost 298 million for the calendar year.

I go back to some of the concerns of the Farm Land Protection Board, and that was the fact that there were some corporations who they were finding hard to identify whether they were in fact Canadian or not. I indicated that we would review the legislation, and in fact we are now in the position of finalizing our decision on whether or not we will proceed this particular year to make amendments. I think, again, the major concern was to identify if in fact they were Canadians, or landed immigrants, who were desirous of, or actually buying land.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, of those 5,000-odd land transactions, can the Minister tell me how many of those were by owner-operator farmers?

MR. DOWNEY: No, I haven't got that information, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, what kind of information does the Farmlands Protection Board collect when they are investigating a land transfer? What kind of information do they seek from the prospective buyers of Manitoba farmland?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the purchaser has to fill out a declaration stating — well, the declaration is a public document — I can provide it if the member wishes that I do so. I haven't got one with me, but I can get it. It totally lists everything that has to be stated before the board.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the reason I asked the question, I would like to know from the Minister as to the how this 1.1 million acres that has changed hands, how the changing of the hands affects the character of the holdings and the pattern of who is holding the land within the province of Manitoba. Are we now annually going to transfer in excess of one million acres to non-resident farmers, whether they be corporations, whether they be foreigners, or whether they be owner-operator farmers?

Mr. Chairman, the Minister himself has indicated that he believes that the best type of farming is done by the owner-operator resident on the farmland. I think there is general agreement in the Legislature from all sides that that is likely the best form of land tenure and operation and holding that one could have within this province. However, we are unable to find out which way the land is moving. Is land being purchased? You know, it's a fairly sizeable amount. In this past year over one million acres at an average value, it seems, of close to 300 an acre as an average price of land. It may be slightly less, but if you look at the amount of money that changed hands, the increase in land prices, I would have to guess at this point, far exceeds its productive capacity in terms of what the land can return the

investor, because I am sure of those one million acres, a good portion of that land will be very marginal land which would not even be productive land by our standards. I would like the Minister to tell us what kind of an analysis he is doing and what monitoring he is having of these land sales?

MR. DOWNEY: The member asks what kind of an analysis, I think it is a matter of No. (1) the fact that we have been controlling to the best of the Board's ability and the system available to prohibit non-resident investment in agricultural land. Without having the specific details here with me, I would suggest that the majority of the land transfers have been from farmer to farmer transfer, retiring farmer, or that basically being it, but some new entrance into the agricultural community and we can go back to some of the figures that we talked about during the loans put through the Manitoba Credit Corporation, that there is a good indication of the numbers in that particular area that are buying farm land. Basically the majority of the land transfers, I am sure without going too far out on a limb, I can assure him that there are from farmer-to-farmer transfer and that is why we are considering making changes in The Farmlands Protection Act to assure them that they aren't subject to unfair competition from foreign investors who are not going to be residents of this country, and who have sources of capital that our farming community don't have available to them.

As far as his comments on the fact that the average price being close to 300 an acre is above the productive value of the land, I would think that in certain areas we have seen that particular situation develop, but mainly in an area where a farmer might be adding an additional quarter or a half-section onto his present holdings and the additional land bought is not expected to totally pay back the amount of money that is invested in it, that in fact it is spread over a larger holding of land that is already either owned or partially paid for by those particular individuals, and they aren't in fact depending on that one particular newly-purchased piece of property to totally pay for itself.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, that is certainly an interesting comment from the Minister. He doesn't have the figures and I hope that he gets them, because he knows that we won't be on this section all night and yet he tells us he believes without going too far out on the limb that most of the transactions are from farmer to farmer. However, he also says that he is going to amend The Farmlands Protection Act. If his earlier statements was correct, that the transactions are from farmer to farmer, then what is the reason for amending The Farmlands Protection Act —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, most, if they are most then likely there isn't great concern or there shouldn't be great concern on behalf of the government that there isn't an unduly great shift in the land ownership within this province. But we know, Mr. Chairman, that the latest, or at least the latest statistics that I have been able to — there must be some later ones — that as of five years ago we had approximately a million-and-a-half acres of Manitoba agricultural land owned by people who were not residing on that land, or were not farming that land, they were non-resident owners.

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

I would venture to say that trend has ever increased, and yet the Minister, I believe, is concerned, because he is contemplating changes in The Farmlands Protection Act. I believe the changes that he brought about in terms of reversing and allowing corporations, Canadian corporations, to purchase the land, he is now realizing that move was very detrimental in terms of having farmlands owned and operated by farmers, because I believe he has not been able to pinpoint and be able to reveal who the prime movers behind Canadian corporations are. Because frankly the Canadian corporations could very well be dummy companies fronting for foreign capital and the department and The Farmlands Protection Act would have a very difficult time and I think are having a very difficult time in tracing the ownership or the source of capital and who the real backers are of these corporations.

I hope that the Minister would be candid in this area and say, yes, this is the greatest problem that we face, we can't pin down the type of corporations. We really don't know how much land has been bought by non-resident owners and we are very concerned about that. I think, Mr. Chairman, the Minister, if he believes that farming should be in the hands of owner-operator farmers, that he has a duty and I believe there should be clear government policy to say it is our intention to keep farmland in the hands of farmers and we will then do and provide whatever government policy is necessary to achieve those means. If he says that is not a great priority on behalf of his government, he is prepared to allow farmland prices to escalate, and likely they will even between farmers, that there should be thoughts given to changing government policy as to which way he deems agricultural land to go.

He also mentioned, Mr. Chairman, that — (Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson says we will straighten it out. Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have really screwed it up in the last two years with the changes in The Farmlands Protection Act because we have now got such a hodgepodge that we really don't know where the land is going.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated that he would like to have farmland farmed by farmers, but it appears the way the system is going, there will be fewer and fewer opportunities for young farmers to enter the farming business primarily because of the way we are allowing farmland prices to escalate. In other countries there have been moves to control the price of land, if we are really interested in allowing new people into the farming area, because what we will find, Mr. Chairman, is that we will have eventually in this country the very same situation as our ancestors had when they moved from Europe. The land will be controlled by fewer and fewer people, and certainly the way the legislation is now set up certainly is escalating that process and will prevent young people from entering farming.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 7.(f)(2)—pass.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I thought you were finished.

MR. URUSKI: No. It appears the Minister isn't about to provide any information as to . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George has been making statement, is making a speech, and he has been expressing his own views. I have not heard him ask a question, and the Minister has not been asked any questions in the past couple of minutes.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister to provide details on the basis of the transactions that — he indicated we had 1.1 million acres. I wanted to know how many of those were purchased by corporations. He indicated that he thought — he thought — that the bulk of the transfers of farmland were from farmer to farmer. What are the statistics? What are the problems that The Farmlands Protection Act has found that he wants to amend the act? In what way is he thinking of amending the legislation? What problems has he foreseen in the last year of operation of the legislation and the problems that the board has seen? Those are the kind of questions and the resume that we would have wanted, that we haven't gotten from the Minister, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I was just saying, on a point of order to the Member for St. George, he spoke for the last about seven minutes and he is making a speech expressing his own views. I thought the purpose of this Committee is to seek information and I did not hear the member ask any questions. Now if the member has questions to ask, I will then turn it over to the Minister.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. SAUL M. CHERNIACK (St. Johns): Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns on a point of order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I don't know where the idea came about that the purpose of this Committee is to ask questions. I have never heard until this moment that a member of the Committee may not express his opinion on any subject whatsoever dealing with the resolutions before us. Are you saying that is not in order? I need clarification from you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me say to the Honourable Member for St. Johns that I will give him a clarification.

MR. CHERNIACK: Good.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: After the Member for St. George had spoken for about seven minutes, he was expressing his own views, I did not hear him ask one single question of the Minister. He was expressing his views, so then I went on to carry on with the Estimates. The Member for St. George then interrupted me and said, just a minute, Mr. Chairman, I am looking for answers from the Minister. He did not ask a question, so I thought that we would carry on. There is a difference in expressing your own views as opposed to seeking

information by way of questioning. That is all I am saying.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, on that point of order, if you will check the record you will find, I believe, that you said the purpose of this Committee is to ask questions, not to make speeches. I think that is what you said and if you agree with me that that is an incorrect statement, then I will drop it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. To answer the Member for St. Johns, I have not given any indication that anyone is not allowed to make comments to their choosing, but the Member for St. George interrupted me when I was going to proceed with the Estimates and I understood he was making comments, he was not asking for information. When the Member for St. George interrupted me on proceeding with this thing, then I said to the Member for St. George if you want answers, information, then by all means asks questions. I was not deterring the Member for St. George to making his views known any way he wanted. I hope that is clear to the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it very much. It is clear and it is important that it be clear. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That's fine. So 7.(f)(2)—pass — the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Could I ask the Minister, in The Land Protection Act, where are the weaknesses in the Act? Does it allow non-resident buyers, foreigners, to purchase land? What do we have to do—close it?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the changes made in 1978 strengthened the Act in certain area, one by reducing the numbers of acres that foreign investors could purchase and that was reduced from 160 down to 20 acres, because they were buying it in multiples of 160 acres and we weren't accomplishing what the initial intent of the Act was. The main problem that has been identified at this particular time is to clearly keep track of the Canadian corporation buyers, or those people who are desirous of purchasing farmland. That's the basic area that has to be strengthened.

As far as the Member for St. George is concerned, and his comments about the fact of whether information is available, he has last year's report from the Farmlands Protection Act. I have indicated that that will be available from the board of directors this coming year. I don't have a complete update at this particular time. I suggested that those people who were buying land, the majority of them were farmers. He goes off on his hypocritical path of suggesting that Manitoba farmers don't have the right to buy farms, that they are going to be restricted from buying farms. —(Interjection)— Well, I believe that's what he said in his comments.

Let me just lay it on the individual who himself is involved in a particular type of farming that is very restricted, and why is it restricted? It is restricted to

give him protection, Mr. Chairman, and how many farmers in Manitoba can get into the production of dairy or into the production of poultry or eggs. I don't say it's totally wrong that there shouldn't be some protection for those producers, but, you know, when he suggests that we are restricting or that there isn't an opportunity, it's fairly limited what certain individuals can get into, not only because The Farmland Protection Act is maybe not working the best way it could, but let me assure the honourable member that I am doing everything I can to make sure that the opportunities are available for farm people in Manitoba to buy land. I believe that we are doing so and we will continue to do so. I strongly support the concept of the family farm but I also believe, Mr. Chairman, that as an individual who is a Canadian, that the resources that are in this country, such as land, if he wants to buy land in another province, that he has the right to do so. I think that is what I feel strongly about and will protect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Does the Minister intend to bring in legislation at this session to tighten up this Act in regard to Canadian corporations?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that decision has to be made yet, but I said I am giving consideration to it and when the decision is made, will proceed on that basis, and it would be at this particular time, or very shortly, that we would be proceeding on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, while the Minister has given us some general information, he indicates that the report will be out very soon, there must be some basis to his statements that he makes in order to want to change The Farmlands Protection Act. I agree that there has to be changes, Mr. Chairman, because I think the Minister now recognizes that the amendments made have not worked. In fact, they just opened the door to the purchase of farmland by non-resident farmers, whether they be from Manitoba, whether they be from anywhere in Canada, whether they be from across the ocean, Mr. Chairman. That amendment, because of the way the legislation is set up, the Minister, it appears, doesn't want to be very candid with us to tell us that, look, we botched it. While we tried to raise the flag in Manitoba against the spectre of foreign ownership, we opened the door to corporate takeover of farmland in this province, to the detriment of all the producers, and now he is trying to find a way around his dilemma and doesn't want to really say and come out clear as to what the problems are. How much of those 1.1 million acres were by corporate purchases? How much were they from farmer to farmer? He speculates, or at least he says, I won't be far out. At most, the majority of those transfers were made from farmer to farmer.

If they are made from farmer to farmer, then, Mr. Chairman, there is no need for The Farmlands Protection Act to change, because then his legislation will be working very well, because the intent of the legislation was to allow farmlands to remain in the hands of farmers. It appears, Mr.

Chairman, he is trying to back out of a difficult situation, but he doesn't want to give members of the committee to be candid with them and say, Look, there are problems. What are the problems, Mr. Chairman? He admits that there are problems. But at least be candid with the committee and come clean and indicate what the problems are, how much of that land went into corporate holdings, who those corporations are, what are the problems with those corporations, why can't we trace the origin of those corporations, or the origin of the funds behind the corporations, and come clean with the committee, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have indicated, and if we go back to the 1978 amendments to The Farmlands Protection Act, we have in fact made changes that were far in the best interests of the agricultural community by reducing the numbers of acres that a non-resident could buy from 160 to 20, and that has, to a large extent, curtailed a lot of the foreign investment. I make it very plain that I don't believe that it is in the best interests of Canada, or as an individual in this country, that an individual should be restricted from investing in this country.

I can also indicate to the member that when he suggests that what we have done has in fact opened up the door, I would say it has very much done the opposite. We have moved, Mr. Chairman, to make amendments that are in the best interests of the agricultural community, by restricting from 160 to 20 acres for non-residents, and that's the objective of the bill, Mr. Chairman, to stop foreign investment, that's number one. Number two, we have moved to hire, and have hired a farmland investigator, which was not in place several months ago. We have had the Farmland Protection Board make recommendations on the strengthening of the Act to further clearly identify those Canadian citizens or landed immigrants who are in fact eligible to buy Manitoba farmland. Those are the areas that we have to move in, Mr. Chairman, and moves have been made and we will continue to make them so that we have the Act so that it does in fact prohibit non-resident foreign ownership of Manitoba agriculture land.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the Minister kind of hung his hat on his main thrust on the changes to foreign ownership, reducing the acreage of 160 to 20 acres as being very significant. What he failed to tell us, Mr. Chairman, is that change, coupled with the allowance of corporations to purchase farmland, as the Member for Ste. Rose mentioned to me, he plugged a hole and opened the flood gates, Mr. Chairman. The 20 acres was a real red herring, Mr. Chairman. If we are really interested in farmland being farmed by resident owners, that's the kind of amendment we should have, that farmland shall be purchased by resident operators. Mr. Chairman, then I don't think we have to worry where they come from. If they are going to come and live on our farms in Manitoba and farm them, because most of our ancestors, of all of us, come from somewhere outside of Canada. We are all foreigners, Mr. Chairman.

Now, I believe that 20 acres is a red herring. If we are saying that farmland is for farmers of Manitoba,

then we should not restrict to any citizenship, provided that citizen comes to this country and is prepared to reside on the farm and farm it. It should be open for wherever the person comes from, if he comes to reside and live in the province of Manitoba and farm that land, it should be open to him. But now we restrict that, Mr. Chairman.

What we have done, Mr. Chairman, is that we have allowed the non-resident ownership, in effect, to multiply by the virtue that corporations are allowed to purchase land. Now an individual doesn't have to — he can still get around the residency by setting up a dummy Canadian corporation, and I think that's the problem but the Minister won't admit it — (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe that farmers of Manitoba . . . the only persons who should be able to own farmland. In the long run, we will come to that position. We will come to that position that only resident farmers are the ones that will own farmland. — (Interjection)— Whether he calls himself a corporation or whatever he wants, as long as he is living on the farm, he can call himself whatever he likes, I don't care, provided he is living on the land and going to farm it. We will come to that position, Mr. Chairman. We may not agree on it today, but I venture to say in the next number of years, we will come to that position, because farmland will be controlled by fewer and fewer people. It will come to that the majority of the farmland will be controlled by people who have no interest in the direct operations of the farm.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Rock Lake says, What about the Hutterites? If ever there was a resident ownership of farmlands, of owner-operator operations of farmland, there is the true operations of owner-operator, Mr. Chairman. There is no doubt about it. In terms of the amount of land per individual on farmland, the Hutterites probably own the least amount per individual per colony. Mr. Chairman, I would say for the number of families that are supported by the farm unit in a Hutterite colony, it is far greater per acre of land than the majority of other farmers in this province. There are many one-owner farmers, Mr. Chairman, in the province, that are 3,000 to 4,000 acre farms, by one family. There are very few Hutterite colonies, Mr. Chairman, that I believe have in excess of 4,000 acres, and there are usually 15 to 20 families in a colony, approximately, I would say, 100 people who are supported by 3,000 to 4,000 acres or even less, Mr. Chairman. I know the colony near my home, they own approximately, I think, less than 2,000 acres and there's roughly 70 people who are farming less than 2,000 acres and are supporting themselves.

Mr. Chairman, you know, there are lots of red herrings that are coming across the way, but I believe the Minister should really indicate what information he has. He is being very very secretive in terms of really coming clean and telling us what the problem in terms of his legislation is. And what is the basic problem? Why does he want to amend The Farmlands Protection Act? Where has he seen the pitfalls in the legislation and what is the problem?

I want to agree with him that there likely has to be amendments, but let him tell us what the problem is, because he has told us that most of the transactions are from farmer to farmer. If that's the case, why are

we amending the Act, or why are we talking about amending the legislation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(f)(2)—pass — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Does the Minister need time to provide this committee with the information that I have asked, Mr. Chairman, or does he have no intention of providing that information that we have asked?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have indicated to him that the last report for the Farmlands Protection Board is available. We haven't got the update; it doesn't have to be reported until the end of June, I believe. I can read from last year's report, if he would like to, it's on Page 6. The board has indicated identifiable trends from board records, and I'll quote from the report: The agricultural land purchases by non-farming Manitobans do not seem to have any significant effect on land prices. Large Canadian corporations, insurance companies, banks and agri-business companies do not appear in the board's records as buying agricultural land. That information is available to him in the report, and it's available to the committee. I'll continue on: In the short term, there is low return on investment for these corporations in purchasing land. As a result, large institutional investors and pension funds have not been putting money into farmland.

That was last year's report that I quote from. It's available to him. I have indicated to him since that time I have had input from the board, I have had input from the Farm Bureau. I have had submissions from the different organizations suggesting that they have identified problems with the administration. Let me assure the member that I am giving it serious consideration and as soon as it is prepared and a decision is finalized on the necessary changes to block the loopholes, if in fact it is possible, and I'm sure it is, that in fact we will move.

Now let me also assure the member that when he suggests that we're all foreigners, I don't feel that we're all foreigners. I think we're all pretty much Canadian. I think that's one of the basic things as an individual, that we have the right to do, and that is invest in this country and become an individual who wants to farm or not farm. He makes certain statements that all the land will some day be owned by fewer and fewer people.

Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that to be the case. In fact, I believe that the times we're going through at this particular juncture in the agricultural industry, we are in fact seeing the key to long term sound business investment in the agriculture community is a diversified agriculture, that we can't measure the strength of an agricultural unit in size of acres. I think we have to measure the strength of an agriculture unit in the numbers of diversified crops or livestock units that are associated with that farm, and he uses an example of the Hutterite colonies.

There is two things involved there; one is the fact they are operating on a communal type basis and a lot of families living on one particular enterprise, but they are pretty much diversified and self-sustaining, and I think that has been the traditional history of a lot of our original family farm operations, of which I

would have to say I am pretty pleased and proud of being a part of, that in fact the stability in the farm that I was born and raised on, for the honourable member's information, was one that we milked cows, we kept chickens and we kept hogs and we were very much a self-supporting type operation, something that I think has been removed from the agricultural industry. In the days of specialization, we have become more dependent upon outside elements, but the more self-sustained a farm operation is, the more self-sustained the unit is and the more diversified it is, the more stable it is, and that goes back to the basic principle that I support throughout the full agriculture community, is to encourage that kind of diversification so that in fact we can see those family farm units operate and operate in the protection of their own self-insurance kind of programs.

I think — and what I can see taking place in the next few years, that we will see people become more conscious of becoming more self-supporting, that some of the larger units will become more vulnerable to difficulties in financing their operations, that the key of course, and we've made our change in direction as far as the government is concerned, and it's somewhat opposite to the policies of the philosophy of the members opposite, that instead of the government buying farm land and becoming another competitor to that young family farm operator, —(Interjection)— well, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Ste. Rose says, come on — well, really with a state farm program that they were offering to the farm community, and for the first two or three years, Mr. Chairman, there wasn't an option for that young farmer to buy it. They had to move on to that farm that was owned by the government, there wasn't a dollar to put into that farmer's pocket on a loan basis, no, Mr. Chairman, it was a straight purchase with the objective of becoming the big land owner. The resources of this province were to be taken away from the farm community and kept in a land bank. —(Interjection)— No, Mr. Chairman, there was no freedom of choice. The Member for Ste. Rose says there was a freedom of choice. They couldn't buy agriculture Crown land. We have allowed them to buy agriculture Crown land. They couldn't borrow money from the province to buy land. And if they did, Mr. Chairman, it was for machinery or livestock. It wasn't for the purchase of land.

We have changed that whole policy 180 degrees, Mr. Chairman. We now have farmers coming — well, Mr. Chairman, we sure have. You can now go and borrow money from the province to buy land from a farmer. Mr. Chairman, the other point that I want to make is, that now they can borrow money from the government to buy land. They couldn't from the last government. And I think that's a pretty important principle that we want to debate here tonight.

Another point I want to raise, Mr. Chairman, is the simple fact that when we're talking about the foreign land investment . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister. One man at a time.

MR. DOWNEY: The fact, Mr. Chairman, that we have got in place an Act, that I will agree, and I said it in 1978 when we made the amendment, may have

to have further changes made. I think the members will agree when they introduced it that they didn't introduce a perfect piece of legislation. I don't know what government ever has. We indicated at that time, and I'm sure it's on the record, that we said if there were further amendments needed that we would make those amendments.

But let's make this point, too, Mr. Chairman, that for every buyer of farm land, there is a farm seller; and, Mr. Chairman, is the Member for St. George advocating that those particular farm people who are retiring do not deserve to receive a fair and equitable return for what I consider their lifetime savings? Mr. Chairman, I think we have to keep the thing in balance, and that's really what we're looking at. I think we can keep it in balance within our own country, within our own nation, but it is uncontrollable when we have the influence of people from offshore that have other sources of funds that our farm people don't have.

But let us remember that basic point, Mr. Chairman, that in most cases, those people who are buying land, those people, be they whoever, and it's desirable that they're new farm people, the best system and the best kind of community we could have is if every section of land in this country had a farm family on it. I think that's a nice objective, and I think we have to work, the more land we have occupied by farm people, the better off it is. But Mr. Chairman, I don't believe there is an ability to legislate that. You can encourage it through trying to diversify your agricultural industry, by trying to encourage people to stay on the land, to not cause undue hardships on them, but give them the opportunity to, and I believe, Mr. Chairman, they will remain. But you cannot legislate people on or off land. I think you can create a balance that will help those people who are desirous of selling and retiring, and you can also encourage those young people who, I feel it's desirable to have on the land, and I say, Canadian, I don't think they should be strictly reserved for Manitobans, I think that Canadians, it's one of the basic rights that we have, it's a freedom we have in this country, and I believe that we should retain that. I don't think we should continue to draw barriers or put up barriers between the different provincial jurisdictions when it comes to the movement of agriculture goods, when it comes to buying or owning of agriculture land. I think, Mr. Chairman, we have to broaden our scope just a little bit when it comes to the overall long term best interests of the nation and the agriculture community.

I think, Mr. Chairman, we can do that, and I would suggest we are going to do it through the kinds of policies that we are implementing and seeing supported in the province. But to go back to the basic principle of restricting non-resident foreign investment in land, I feel very strongly about it, that we are going to move, when we make the move, we want to make sure that we accomplish — (Interjection)— well, we made one in 1978, Mr. Chairman, at least it was a better move than what was made before that time.

MR. URUSKI: And what did you stop?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we stopped the province buying land in strict competition to the young farmers. That's No. 1 No. 2, we reduced the numbers of acres that an individual foreign investor could buy from 160 to 20, —(Interjection)— the member says, well, it's a red herring. It wasn't a red herring, Mr. Chairman, it worked very well. The directors have indicated in last year's report.

I, Mr. Chairman, feel very strongly that we have a very competent board, we have a very competent director, we've added investigation staff, we are prepared to finalize the decision on the changes that further have to be made, and Mr. Chairman, I will guarantee, or assure that as far as I am concerned, every move will be made to further restrict, in fact, completely eliminate, non-resident foreign investment in Manitoba agriculture land.

MR. ADAM: I heard the Minister in Dauphin say that the land-lease program was a good program, the land lease program that we had introduced, and I'm sure there were 400 or 500 people that heard the Minister make the same statement as I heard. And the Minister is trying to tell us, and he's been telling us that for a number of years, that we were somehow, with the land-lease program, inflating the price of land. And the average price of land, as I recall, a couple of years ago, the average price was around 110 an acre.

MR. DOWNEY: You're trying to steal it from the farmers.

MR. ADAM: Now he says, we're trying to steal it from the farmers. Mr. Chairman, now he says that we were trying to steal land. The land that we were purchasing, Mr. Chairman, was marginal land, land to a value of 60,000, I think it was, whatever, and it was a very successful program. It was aimed at a certain group of people who could not get financing, people who would not have been farming otherwise. The fellow that's farming my land today, part of my land, because I farm some of it, but there's a fellow that does rent some acres from me, and Mr. Chairman, this fellow would not be farming today had it not been for the farm land lease program that we introduced before this government was elected. And he is now farming about 2,000 acres, he probably outfarms a lot of these fellows here, he's got big machinery with eight tires on that are like this, I don't know what they call these big tractors, but they steer from the back and the front, four wheel drives and eight tires, and he's just bought an air drill that's worth about 25,000, 30,000 behind it, he's just bought 100,000 worth of equipment this spring. That fellow is in farming because of that program Mr. Chairman,, and he's very successful and he's a very good farmer. And he produces good, too. —(Interjection)— No, I didn't. No, of course I didn't sell land to the government. He's leasing from me. He's leasing some land from me. This fellow that originally bought this land through the land lease program has sold it to his brother. He sold it to his brother, Mr. Chairman, and here we have to listen to a lot of garbage from the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, some of the statements that the Minister has made certainly, not only is away out in left field, it's totally wrong. What's really happened in the province of Manitoba over the years in terms of size of farms. The Minister says that the government was going to become the biggest land owner in the province of Manitoba. Mr. Chairman, all we have to do, and I hope and pray it doesn't occur, but frankly the cash position that most farmers are in at the present time in the province of Manitoba, who actually, in effect, owns all the land, Mr. Chairman? The lending institution own the bulk of the land. What will happen is that we will have one big —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, we will have, should a real crunch come into play in terms of declining incomes — and it's certainly evident, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the situation in the cattle industry, in the hog industry — should all those loans have to be called, Mr. Chairman, I wonder where this Minister will be in terms of helping those farmers out. He has made statements to the effect that we expect the banking institutions will not repossess the land. Mr. Chairman, I want the Minister to assure me and the farmers of Manitoba that when a loan comes due that he can show me how he intends to prevent that very thing from happening in terms of the repossession of the bulk of the farms in the province of Manitoba should the situation worsen beyond where we are today, Mr. Chairman. What has really happened over the years, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the size of farms? You know, the Minister says the family farm is the most optimum size. When we look at the size of farms, Mr. Chairman, for example, farms around 3,000 acres or more, those are not small family farms, Mr. Chairman, but they have more than practically tripled in the numbers from 1961 to date. We have more of the large farms over the 3,000 acre per farm size, from 1961 to date we have three times as many of those farms, but what do we have in terms of farms of the one section or less, Mr. Chairman? There has been a decrease in the numbers of farms of one section or less. Well, Mr. Chairman, but the Minister indicates that it is his target to allow the family farm to flourish. Exactly the opposite has been happening, Mr. Chairman. What we have is the consolidation of land into fewer and fewer hands, so the family farm that he speaks is disappearing, Mr. Chairman. Is disappearing because, Mr. Chairman, one of the policies was an option was taken away from people in terms of getting into farmland, an option.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister said there was a new principle this government established that they could borrow money from the government. Mr. Chairman, is the Minister telling me that loan capital is not available from the government and never has been? Mr. Chairman, we have the Federal Farm Credit Corporation has always been in the lending business, the government, whether it be the provincial or the federal, it is still the government. Moneys were always made available to borrow and buy land, in terms, from the government, whether it be provincial or federal. —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson says you took the provincial away. Mr. Chairman, that was a duplication and now we are duplicating, but, Mr. Chairman, there was no one, and now there is no one, to allow the transfer of

land from the retiring farmers who may have a viable unit, who may have a section of land or less and are wanting to retire, but are unable to sell; or if they sell they have to sell to someone who likely is either consolidating into the larger and larger units, or if it is a young farmer he is not able to set up because he does not have the capital. If he has the capital, Mr. Chairman, he requires that capital to put it into equipment and machinery to farm that land.

We have taken away an option, Mr. Chairman, a real viable option, where we have allowed more than 500 families over the number of years to start farming. Now we are going to reduce them. Mr. Chairman, we have, we are handling agriculture in the way that the Conservatives want to handle it and have handled it.

Mr. Chairman, there is no Conservative policy that says that the family farm shall continue. The statistics don't bear it out. We look at the decline in numbers of farms, Mr. Chairman, in the province of Manitoba over the last number of years. Our decline in the number of farms is four times that of the province of Saskatchewan and the province of Alberta, the number of farmers declining, Mr. Chairman. That is what is happening by the Conservative policies.

Are we against the farmer who wants a fair and equitable return on retirement, Mr. Chairman? I believe that every farmer, he would, I believe, and I think if you talked to a farmer he would be far far better prepared to receive an adequate return for his produce that he produces and have an adequate income during his lifetime, than to be poor all his life and retire a millionaire, because that is the position that farmers in Manitoba are being put into. They may be paupers during their lifetime and when they die they are rich as hell, Mr. Chairman. A helluva lot of good that money will do them when they are retiring and dying, rather than having an adequate return on their investment throughout their years, an adequate income.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, what we see in the legislation, the Minister says we are going to cover the loopholes in The Farmlands Protection Act. He is not saying what loopholes there are, but we know there are loopholes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One member at a time.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, what we will see is the continual — by the lack of direction by this government in the land use policy — we will see the further decline of the family farm. We will see, as we are seeing in the statistics that we have before us, that the numbers of farms will decline, the numbers of farms of 3,000 acres or more per farm will increase, and we will have a greater and greater consolidation of farmland in fewer and fewer hands, not to the expansion of the family farm, but to the detriment of the family farm.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't often disagree with the Member for St. George, but this time I think I am going to, because he suggests that this Minister is not at all sympathetic towards family farming

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

enterprises. I don't think that is an accurate assessment, but I think there is quite a distinction between the perception of what a family farm enterprise is on the part of the members on this side, as compared with members on the other side.

Mr. Chairman, I would remind the Minister that what the Member for St. George is probably alluding to is the fact that if you want to use some illustrations that, you know, the Romanov family in Russia were family farmers. It was a family operation. The Hapsburg family was a family operation in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and all of the nobility of Europe were family enterprises, and so that is perhaps what separates the thoughts of the Minister as compared with the thoughts of the Member for Ste. Rose. Mr. Chairman, I think that is the true distinction. The Minister is sincere when he is suggesting that he prefers family enterprises. The only problem with that is that his family, one or two families might want to gobble up half of the province and that is the area of debate, Mr. Chairman. I think that the Minister is right, I think the Member for St. George is wrong. The Minister believes in family enterprises, but the size of those enterprises are not what is sort of commonly accepted in the prairie region or in Manitoba, the size of those enterprises is not something that is acceptable to the majority of people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(f)(2)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I was wanting the Minister to at least give us some rationale for the continuation of this legislation, just what is attempted to be achieved by his department here? Why do we need that kind of intrusion into the marketplace system with respect to the question of land sales? I raise this point, Mr. Chairman, for obvious reasons, and that is that there is a case to be made for the proposition that some farmers put forward and that is they are poor all of their working years, and then when they want to cash in by selling their assets the state then interferes with their right to receive the highest return for those assets that are available in the marketplace. There is some validity to that criticism, Mr. Chairman. I would like to know from this government —(Interjection)— Oh, I have always known it, Mr. Chairman. I was not the greatest enthusiast of the legislation that we brought in, I can assure my friends opposite, but notwithstanding that it was brought in. I am not sure that ultimately it is the right thing, because you are interfering with the marketplace to the extent — you know, if you are in a marketplace system all of your life and then you want to realize on your assets and you are taken out of the system, there is some argument to be made that maybe it's a bit much. I have talked to a number of people who don't like the market system, but since they live under it they don't want to be precluded from gaining from it as well when the occasion arises.

That is not what this legislation does, this legislation prevents the Member for Emerson from selling his property to the highest bidder, you see. It is restrictive in that sense. I don't know that what it is going to achieve is going to be worth the sacrifice that the Member for Emerson has to make. So I

would like to ask the Minister, in brief, just what his assumptions are as to what might be achieved by the continuation of this kind of legislation as far as his thoughts are concerned, as far as his thoughts go.

MR. DOWNEY: It is unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, that the member was not in the room when I made my speech a few minutes ago on this point.

MR. USKIW: It wasn't very clear.

MR. DOWNEY: As far as the concept of him suggesting what my concept of a family farm or my feelings what a family farm mean, I would have to somewhat disagree. I think probably you can not measure a size of a farm by the numbers of acres that we are talking about. I think you have to measure — I went through the whole outline of what I felt was somewhat the best kind of a family farm operation that is probably in the best interests of the agricultural community and the province of Manitoba, that a diversified agricultural industry or a farm that is made up of, whether it be one or two or three different enterprises on that particular farm, but basically and mainly controlled by those individuals who are a part of that family, whether they be father-son arrangements, whether they be brother-sister, or any combination of that kind, or an extension of that kind of a system.

The member asks me what I feel is the intent or what should be the intent of the legislation. I indicated some time ago in the debate tonight that for all those people who were, in fact, buying land there had to be a seller, and it was a matter of trying to keep a balance in place that could, in fact, continue to encourage people to remain on the land and be people who are involved in agriculture production; and yet affording those people the opportunity to retire who were desirous of retiring, that we had to not totally restrict the opportunities that were available to them. I again suggested the way that I see would be, and are proceeding to move, is the allowing of individuals to sell, first of all, to Canadians. I think that basically is the principle which I feel strongly about, that has to be subscribed to; that we have to retain that freedom for not only Manitobans but all Canadians; that, in fact, the legislation, as it is in place now, is to restrict individuals who have sources of capital available to them from other sources, from outside of this country, that will, in fact, remove from the total community the title of the property and probably the way in which that land is used. The direction of the production may somewhat not be in the best interests of the total provincial community.

I think it is important that a government try and maintain that balance, and that is basically what we are doing. We are continuing to put in place legislation that will protect the farm community, will protect the people who are trying to continue on in the agricultural community without being put out of business or restricted from entering into the business with individuals that have an available source of capital that aren't available to our Manitoba farm people.

It is a matter of clearly putting in place the kinds of restrictions that will accommodate that without

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

leaving what you may refer to as loopholes that appear to have been used by individuals who can put in place mechanisms, whether it be mechanisms or systems, that may circumvent that Act and not live up to the spirit of it. It's difficult to do, as I'm sure the Member for Lac du Bonnet has indicated. He, number one, did not support in total the basic introduction of it. I, Mr. Chairman, support it on the fact that I believe that there is an obligation by the government to restrict those people, again, who have available sources of capital and who are not going to become a part of the Canadian community and the Manitoba agricultural community. That's basically the balance that I think we have to try and accomplish.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to simply ask the Minister whether he truly believes, that since his amendments have become operative, that he has prevented from occurring what he says the legislation is intended to prevent. Does he truly believe that his legislation is not being circumvented at this stage?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the information available is that it has curtailed to a large extent. I have no factual, documented material available to me, that's been presented to me, that the Act has been circumvented. There are suspicions or the board has felt in certain cases that there has been a possibility but haven't really been able to press or document the kinds of things that there is a feeling that it is taking place. That, Mr. Chairman, as I have said earlier, is one of the areas that we are prepared to move on to strengthen the board's hand.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I guess what the Minister is saying is that he doesn't really know, and I suppose that's fair enough. I'm not suggesting that he could know. My impression is that nothing has changed. From the people that I have discussed the issues with, I'm led to believe that the sales are just as heavy, foreign capital is pouring into the marketplace for land in Manitoba as much as it ever has done.

MR. DOWNEY: . . . document it.

MR. USKIW: Well, I know, the Minister says, yes, but you've got to document it, and that's just what I am talking about. I don't know that the Minister has an airtight system; I don't believe he has. I just wanted to know whether he believed he had an airtight system.

MR. DOWNEY: Not at this point.

MR. USKIW: He admits that he hasn't and that's really not surprising to me, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(f)(2)—pass. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 4,108,100 for Agriculture—pass — the Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Is this the last item?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Resolution 13, 8. — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate the nature of the agreement?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the Canada-Manitoba Value-Added Crops Production Agreement basically is split into two major components, really, the one being drainage programs, which would be administered by the Department of Natural Resources, which make up about half of the initial agreement that was introduced. The component which falls within the Department of Agriculture is basically made up of expanded crop production, a variety of crops to be produced, with the objective of providing a greater opportunity for the agricultural community to produce a wider variety of crops to further expand the processing of those crops produced in the province and to further expand the red meat industry, or the livestock industry, through the use of those crops, further utilizing the resources that we have in the province, creating job opportunities for the total Manitoba community, whether it be through job creation in processing industries, transportation, or related areas.

I think the delivery of the program has been very successful. We have worked very closely with the University of Manitoba in the use of their staff that are available in the demonstration of different crop varieties throughout the province to inform the farmers of the different types or varieties that are capable of being grown in the different regions, and expansion of, again, I'll indicate some specific crops, in the area of expansion of such crops as development of soy beans, which I would have to indicate last year was a difficult year to try any new crops; but on the other hand, I think it's a good kind of a year, it was an extreme year to try some of the crops that may be able to be grown in the province. If it had been an ideal year, then we might have run into some difficult times and the extent of the difficulties that farmers could have run into years down the road, we are finding out in the beginning stages.

I think it is also important that the development of our irrigation technology to further expand the production of our forage crops and other crops that can be irrigated, the types of soils that are available for irrigation, are a pretty major part of the overall thrust.

The continuation of some of the grassland projects that were carried forward from the previous government, those kinds of programs now fall within the Agri-Man Agreement, on a cost-shared basis; programs that will have a major impact on the types and varieties of forages available to the livestock industry, again with the objective of further encouraging the total development of the Manitoba economy. I think it's the base industry of agriculture that we can do it through and these are the kinds of programs that support that kind of objective.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Albert Driedger (Emerson): The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman, specifically with respect to the amount, can the Minister break out the various amounts as they relate to, say, crops, livestock and the various components of that agreement? Is it a very long list, Mr. Chairman? I'm

not talking about the specific areas, but the various segments of that agreement.

MR. DOWNEY: I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, it's a matter of trying to keep a balance between the difficult agricultural production sectors, that emphasis is placed on crop production that will encourage further processing. I guess I could say that we are looking at, as I indicated earlier, the drainage programs, not of the moneys we are indicating here but of the total Agri-Man Agreement, which is 18—some million over a five-year period. It is approximately a 50-50 split. But to be specific on this last amount of money we are looking at, or the amount of money we are looking at here, I would say on a percentage basis that we would be looking at probably close to a 50-50 split on those directed at livestock production, or related to livestock production, and 50 percent going to crops, that some of them could find their way into livestock production but basically more directed at further processing, whether it be in the oil seed crops or the potato industry or those kinds of crops. Basically it works out to about a 50-50 split.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a)—pass. Resolution 13: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 1,363,400 for Agriculture—pass.

Resolution 14, Item 9. Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets. 9(a) — the Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the main amount of moneys that we have here are for sewer and water funds, Water Services Board. Basically that's it, plus the drug purchases, semen purchase and those kinds of . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Can we just get the breakout for each group in global dollars. They don't have to be . . . just rounded off.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, to do with the sewer and water, we are looking at approximately two-thirds of it to go into sewer and water.

MR. URUSKI: 6 million?

MR. DOWNEY: In that neighborhood, 6.5 million to 7 million. Drug purchases, semen purchases. That's basically it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: The remainder amount of 1.3, roughly, for drug and semen purchase.

MR. DOWNEY: No, I should indicate, Mr. Chairman, there is 1 million for the lease of the hopper cars in here too.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a)—pass; (b)—pass; (c)—pass — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate the Northlands Agreement.

MR. DOWNEY: That, Mr. Chairman, is all sewer and water for the northern communities.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (b)—pass; (c)—pass. Resolution 14: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 8,305,000 for Agriculture—pass.

We revert back to Resolution 6, Item 1.(a) Minister's Salary—pass — the Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, it's really not a very important question, but I was away from the city and I think I read, and I just want to check with the Minister, that the Minister is expending 40,000, I believe, with regard to control of rats. Is that correct?

MR. DOWNEY: That's correct, Mr. Chairman. We have had requests from the Union of Municipalities over the last two years to implement a rat control program, and that is the initial amount of funds to start that program, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, are we to assume that since the Conservatives took power, Manitoba has become a rat-infested nest?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman. It's being put in place so that it cannot return to being a rat-infested province.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a)—pass — the Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, what we have seen in the estimates of the Department of Agriculture this evening is that we are finding that the programs that have been in place over the last number of years are not changing. In fact, very little has changed in terms of the direction of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, there are a few areas that I believe that I believe that while the Minister and this government is basically continuing the programs that have been in place, it's a stand pat department with respect to ongoing programs. With respect to direction and innovation, Mr. Chairman, and assistance to farmers in general, this Minister is one that can be criticized roundly by members of the Legislature, especially by members of his own party. What we see, Mr. Chairman, is, we have the hog industry in great difficulty, and I, with respect to this Minister, was one who went around and wanted to encourage the production in all sectors of livestock industry, and he wanted all kinds of expansion in the marketplace before he would sign any agreements in this country in terms of market share agreements, he wanted his farmers to gain the bulk of the production.

Now, what we see, Mr. Chairman, is, we have as one example, we have the hog industry in trouble. And this Minister comes before the Legislature and says, look, it's really not my responsibility; it's really an Ottawa responsibility and we're really after national stabilization plans and that's where the

problem should lie and that's who the prime mover should be.

Mr. Chairman, I have to agree with the Minister, but his members that we haven't heard a word about, especially the Member for Rock Lake, with respect to assisting of farmers, you recall in 1975 the plight of the cattle producers in this province, and I think the members opposite should recall some of their words with respect to actions to be taken or not to be taken by the province of Manitoba. Now, we have the Conservative caucus mum. They're not going to help the hog producers; they're not going to help the cattle producers. What did they say in 1975, Mr. Chairman? The Member for Rock Lake, on April 10th, he's one of them, Mr. Chairman, To preface my question, and I quote from Hansard, Page 1129, Mr. Speaker, but I understand the Minister of Agriculture, I'd like to ask him, if during his discussions with the federal Minister, did he deal with the problems of beef producers, and particularly cow-calf producers of Manitoba? And then he says, I then direct a definite question to the Minister then, and ask, insofar as the cow-calf operation, has the Minister anything to report in the way of providing them assistance at this time? And then he goes on, he said, I thought the Minister understood the intent of my question. I'm not concerned about Ottawa now. I am asking the Minister of Agriculture of the province of Manitoba if he has any intentions of making any assistance to the cow-calf operators of the province of Manitoba at this time?

Can you imagine, Mr. Chairman, the position of the Conservative caucus in 1975? What do we hear from them now, Mr. Chairman? We have the Minister of Government Services of the province of Manitoba, and he says but I know the Minister knows that it's a critical situation for cow producers, time is of essence. Can he indicate, a lot of people will be out of business. What is he going to do to help the cow-calf producers of this province? The Minister of Government Services.

Then we have, Mr. Chairman, again the Member for Rock Lake. He was the most vociferous of the Conservative caucus, Mr. Chairman, and I want to indicate the position that he took. And we haven't heard a word from him. And I quote, on March 5, 1975, he indicated, I'd like to get back to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him one further question. Could the Minister advise this House whether or not he is going to bring, or can bring in legislation providing for funds that cow-calf producers have requested, which is similar legislation that he brought in a few years ago with regard to acreage payments? Can he state whether he's going to bring in this kind of legislation to provide those funds for this session?

Mr. Chairman, that has been the position of the Conservative caucus with respect to whether the federal government has been and should become involved in stabilization programs. Mr. Chairman, what do we hear from the Minister of Agriculture and the Conservative caucus today? Well, farmers of Manitoba, you know, we really think that the income stabilization program is not so good, so we're getting rid of it, but really it's an Ottawa responsibility and we really don't intend to do anything now. Mr. Chairman, of all the hypocritical positions that we can find in this Legislature today, we have the

Conservative caucus mum, not saying a word, with the hog producers facing near bankruptcy with respect to the low prices, asking for assistance in terms of income support, and what do we hear from the Minister? He's going to go to Ottawa. He's going to go to Ottawa and ask the federal Minister of Agriculture, and not only that, he has tried to take credit for an Ottawa payment with respect to the hog industry. That's the kind of assistance the farmers of this province are receiving from this Minister of Agriculture. That's the position this Minister takes to the farmers of Manitoba. We are going to give you absolutely nothing, that is his position. You deserve nothing, you supported us in the election, but we're going to give you exactly what you deserve, sweet nothing. And that has been the basic position of the Conservative government in the province of Manitoba.

What do we see with respect to the beef producers, Mr. Chairman? What do we see with respect to corporate intrusion in farming, Mr. Chairman? The Minister gets up and says, well we hope that the packers will not take advantage of the pricing situation and the distress that farmers are placed in. The market drops, what does the Minister say to that? Well, he really can't interfere in the open marketplace. He certainly has no intention on not calling in the corporate sector, Cargill Grain, and say, look, we don't believe that you should be involved in vertical integration of the hog industry, Mr. Chairman. No, he's not prepared to do that. Because he says, I'm a friend of the farmer, and the farmers can take that competition. He is continuing the move that farmers, you know, they can withstand all this market depression that they have been faced with in the last year, and Mr. Chairman, I believe that is the policy of the Conservative government, to tell the farmers of Manitoba that they can expect from them, in terms of good policy and good government, especially, nothing.

Mr. Chairman, in grave areas with respect to transportation, we have this government now waffling on their position with respect to transportation. With respect to the Crowsnest rates, we have this Minister of Agriculture, now that the Conservatives are out of power in Ottawa, completely reverse his position, Mr. Chairman, completely reverse his position. In July of 1979, this Minister of Agriculture, when the Conservatives were in office in Ottawa, what did he state with respect to the Crows rate? He said, the Crow benefit would be paid directly to western farmers. That was his government's position. What did he say the other night, Mr. Chairman? Exactly the opposite. He no longer now wanted the farmers of western Canada to lose that benefit, and he felt that the Crow benefit, if there was going to be any subsidy, it should be paid to the railways. Well, Mr. Chairman, that's what he told us the other night.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister on a point of order.

MR. DOWNEY: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I will not leave left on the record what that member has just indicated, because what he said is not correct at all.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the Minister can squirm all he likes. The other night in this committee,

and he can deny what he said, he was not prepared, he said, farmers of western Canada should have the total benefit of the Crow rate, they should not pay any additional cost, and in terms of a simpler system, that there should not be in excess of 100,000 cheques mailed out in terms of subsidies to the farmers. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, now the Minister says, he didn't say that. Well, Mr. Chairman, he has reverted his position.

I want to tell you why he has reverted his position. He will want to use the federal government as the whipping boy in any issue that they can have, Mr. Chairman, because now we have a provincial government that is in trouble with its own producers; we have a provincial government that is prepared to do nothing for their producers in terms of assistance, so what is the next best move to try and take the heat off themselves? We can blame big brother. We can blame Ottawa for not being prepared to help our producers in a time of need; we can blame Ottawa for screwing up the transportation system, we can say, well, we've been fighting, and to try and make themselves look good in a bad situation, they will use the federal government as their scapegoat, Mr. Chairman. That will be the policy of the Conservatives in Manitoba. They will use the federal government as a whipping boy in terms of trying to salvage their position to rural Manitoba.

The total lack of direction, Mr. Chairman, that this Minister has given with respect to the problems that we face with respect to transportation issues; the problems that we face with respect to the plant breeders rights issue, Mr. Chairman; the problems that we face with orderly marketing of grain and the positions that have been taken by this Minister and this government, can be summed up in saying, no less than disastrous, Mr. Chairman. They will lead to the detriment of all producers of Manitoba in terms of loss of income, in terms of the plant breeders rights; it can only mean that in the long run. Mr. Chairman, this Minister has denied it. He indicates that he will support plant breeders rights legislation, and it can only lead in the long term, not only to farmers, Mr. Chairman, to higher cost of seeds to farmers, but in the long term effect of the cost of food in this country, Mr. Chairman. Not only in this country, but around the world.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this Minister has failed in his task to provide leadership to the farmers of Manitoba in terms of direction taken. He has fought every progressive move that farmers have tried to make with respect to strengthening of their position in the marketplace, of providing themselves with decent incomes based on their inputs into production. He has been backward in all these issues. All that he has done, Mr. Chairman, is, he has left in place, and he has not been able to, even though he is philosophically opposed to many of the programs that are in place, he has still left those in place.

Mr. Chairman, this department, I believe, will continue to float along with the traditional programs without any definite direction, and if anything, a backward stance in terms of providing leadership for the farmers of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)(a)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: I gather from the comments of the Member for St. George that the jury on that indictment ought to be on this side of the table, but in any event, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask one or two final questions before we complete the estimates. The Minister indicated that he would be reviewing his position with respect to BIAP. He said in the House this afternoon that we would have a chance to discuss it here. I don't believe it was discussed, so I presume the Minister has some statement to make.

Secondly, I think that we're probably in a position at this time to get some idea from the Minister, at least, or from the department, as to what their expectations are with respect to the dollar damage of the current drought, and what expectations the department has with respect to what that will mean in terms of compensation to agriculture in 1980, some time later this year, in terms of programs that may be implemented or that the Minister is considering implementing.

I think everyone appreciates the fact that it's now virtually the last day of May and that if we are going to get any amount of moisture that will salvage the situation, it's going to have to come fairly soon, without which we have a very, very serious disaster. There's no question about that. The Member for Rock Lake says it's only another week and it's all over, well practically. I think it is not far out. Perhaps the Minister has some comment as to what he is thinking in terms of how to cope with that problem should we not receive an adequate rainfall in the next several days, what he anticipates that he might do in order to alleviate the economic problems that will ensue as a result.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, to answer the last question. First, to quantify the numbers of dollars that may be lost because of drought conditions, it is too early at this particular time . . .

MR. USKIW: It is not lost, it is cost to the province.

MR. DOWNEY: Cost to the province, it is too early to quantify them. That is No. 1. I think really we are in a position and particularly, the Member for Rock Lake had asked earlier of the loss of the rye crop, which may have taken place or at least parts of the province could have been affected. We are still, of course, in a position of having several days yet as far as the deadlines on the seeding of crops under crop insurance are concerned, and I think we have also seen the last two or three days some rainfall in certain parts of the province, in different regions, that will have alleviated some of the problems in those immediate areas, not totally, but it will give us a first hay crop of alfalfa in those areas where rainfall has been in the neighbourhood of an inch of rain.

MR. USKIW: A small percentage of the province.

MR. DOWNEY: I think we have still have seen certain areas of the province that haven't received any rain and when you assess the overall impact, I think that assessment won't be able to be done until probably two to three weeks, well into June until we see what is happening with the weather conditions, or what will happen with the weather conditions over the next few days.

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

I think that the other question, if I can refer to the Beef Income Assurance Program, the deadline has come for the producers to make the decision as far as opting out and paying up their accounts. There has been no change to this particular point, we have assessed it, there could be some individuals who maybe somewhat strapped for cash. I think if those individuals can indicate to department staff that they are totally up against it, that their intent is to pay, or can indicate that there is some means being worked out to provide payment, then, in fact, they aren't going to be in a position of being put out of business because of that payback to the province, I can assure him. There has been no basic change in policy in that particular area, although we did review it and we have seen, I believe, a different situation develop in the last few days that we, as I indicated, wouldn't force people to go out of business because they had to make that particular payment. However, it is just a matter of the deadline has to be established and we have reached that particular point.

Again, I know, as the member has indicated, we suggested we would review it and I indicate right now that we still have 24 hours left to make any change, but still have a bit of time to get an indication, if there is any individuals that have indicated today that they are having trouble meeting that commitment in a large way, then we will have to deal with it immediately.

Does the member have another question before I sum up on the . . .

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister wants to sum up, I don't mind him having the last word. I just want to draw to his attention that the Conservatives, in opposition, were much wiser men in 1977 than they are now in government, because in 1977, during the course of the Budget Debate around the 5th of April, the Leader of your government or your party at that time, now the Premier, indicated a great deal of dissatisfaction over the fact that we were not able to quantify the cost of the drought in 1977 and what that would do to provincial revenues and what that would do with respect to production and compensation programs for the lack of production, and so on. This was April of 1977. It made for a very interesting Budget Debate, but his expectations at that time were that we should have shown a huge deficit to cover those expected shortcomings because of the expected drought of 1977, which by the way didn't materialize to any significant degree, but that was April. We are now on the verge of the 1st of June and the Minister is not able to tell us in 1980 just where he is at in terms of the damage that has already occurred, even though he agreed that it has occurred, or what he might expect in the next several days, and what that will do to the provincial economy and what that will do to revenues to his farmer clients, and what that might do with respect to necessary compensation programs.

I just point it out that two years down the road, with two years of experience in government, they are not quite as wise as they were in 1977.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in concluding, without — the Chairman says, without creating any

controversy. The Member for Ste. Rose has a comment he would like to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I wanted to ask the Minister if the department made a study on the branding of cattle last year? The Minister shakes his head in the negative, and it is my understanding that a survey was made last year when the brand registration applications were sent out. Now the Minister is nodding his head, so I believe now that he is saying that there was a study made.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, there was a leaflet went out with the brand registration forms requesting some information, as far as a study is concerned, I wouldn't classify it as a study. I would suggest that it was a matter of collecting some information from those people who have brand registration.

MR. ADAM: There was a kind of a questionnaire with a survey being made and asking questions as to people who had branded their cattle, how many they had lost, and how many had been recovered, and it was found, I believe, that those cattle that were branded showed a smaller number of losses than those that were not branded. Some of the members are asking, not myself particularly, on behalf of some of the members who are not in this Committee, we are wondering what type of program does the Minister envisage in allocating some funds to the Cattle Producers Association? Could the Minister elaborate on the programs of 33,000, I believe, allocated to an outside group, farming out some work that perhaps could be undertaken by the Minister? I understand that the cattle producers are going to undertake to study when they hold their annual meeting in the different regions, and that they are not going to be actually having any extra hearings to look into identification of cattle, but rather they are going to do their studying and they are asking people to make suggestions at their regional meetings. Actually there will be no cost involved as I can see to the Cattle Producers Association to make these studies.

The questions that some of the members are asking, as to why this money is being allocated, rather than not having been done by the department; the second question I would ask is that — I think the Member for St. George has raised this question before — I received two or three complaints from people who are trying to get back their checkoffs and they have not been able to get the checkoffs back, because they don't have the forms in place, they are not getting their refunds. My advice to members who object to the Association is to stay in it, regardless of whether they like it or not. They are better to be a part of it, since they are going to be financing it anyway, they might as well be part of it, if you can't beat them, join them, and take it over or do what you like with it. Anyway, this is my advice to them. At least when you are there you can see what is going on, if you are out they are going to use your money and you won't have any chance to make any decisions on it.

If the Minister could perhaps give us some enlightenment on the two or three questions that I have asked him?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, again to answer the last question first, the point on the sending out of the checkoff funds. I can assure him, as I assured the Member for St. George, that I will be urging the Association to make sure that they carry out that particular part of the Act, they are compelled to do that. I, Mr. Chairman, am going to proceed to communicate that information to them, so that people who are desirous of getting their funds back can do so.

No. 2, Mr. Chairman, as far as the identification study that is being done for the livestock industry through the Cattle Producers Association, I am sure the member is well aware, through his questioning, that he has questioned the House earlier, his concern for any loss of livestock that cattle producers incur or anything that may help and assist the RCMP or the law enforcement officers, that we should be, in fact, proceeding to look at or implement a program of security for those people. The reason for the using of the Cattle Producers Association, they have a good broad representation, they are the people that are going to have to be a part of the overall program. They have a good understanding and good input from all their membership on those kinds of things, and it is a matter of us working with them to meet the targets that should be met. I think the overall report that they give us will be probably more accurate and have more meaning than one that would be done by any other group. I think that is the basic reason and they are more qualified to do it.

MR. ADAM: I know that the legislation that is in place in other provinces, such as Saskatchewan and Alberta, is available, and I think I have a copy of the Saskatchewan one somewhere in my files, and there may be copies here of the legislation on file with staff. The information is already there available to the Minister, all he has to do is get it from Saskatchewan, what has happened in those provinces, other jurisdictions, as to the best method of trying to control rustling of livestock. There is a reluctance on the part of the RCMP to investigate cattle rustling anyway, they don't want to do it.

A MEMBER: You've got to bring back the hanging system.

MR. ADAM: You know, he better not speak too loud that you bring back the hanging, because if I told him who some of the rustlers were in this province he better watch out, he might lose some strong supporters.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the only comment I have to that is that it takes one to know one.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, on that point. I am glad the Minister has made that comment because he is giving 33,000 to the Cattleman's Association to find rustlers, and I say he hires a thief to find a thief. Is that what he is saying, Mr. Chairman, because cattle disappear among farmers most of the time.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I some time ago in the Estimates suggested that I had copies of the PAMI Report, which I will distribute to the members of the Committee. I would like to just thank the members of the committee for some constructive debate, in general, but I would have to go back to making reference, in concluding my remarks, and I guess I would have to say this for the benefit of the Member for St. George in his comments and not agreeing with what we are doing, a well-respected past Minister of Agriculture for the province of Manitoba and a well-respected Premier of the province of the Manitoba had suggested to me, and it's in the person of D.L. Campbell, who I certainly respect, who suggested that as long as the members of the NDP Party were in opposition to what we were doing in agriculture, then we were pretty well doing the right things and he fully supported us. I would take his comments a lot more seriously, Mr. Chairman, than I would the Member for St. George.

So with those, Mr. Chairman, I thank the members for their participation in the estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)—pass. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 2,067,100 for Agriculture—pass.
Committee rise.

SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): Committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 39 of the Main Estimates, Department of Education. Resolution No. 50, item under discussion is 1.(b) General Administration, (1) Salaries—pass. The item under discussion is still response to the Minister's Salary.

The Honourable Member for Churchill was going to speak. —(Interjection)— Well, I think we will pass and we'll get onto the actual item at hand.

The item is (b)(1) Salaries — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Minister knows that I am anxious to discuss with him his manner of discharge of a certain case. I asked the question earlier today as to whether he has fired anybody in the last 12 months summarily.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, then I would ask him whether he fired Dr. Marvin Blauer in a summary fashion?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, the Member for St. Johns refers to a former member of the department, who was dismissed. He is quite correct.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the reason I am asking that is I want to know the policy or the practice of the government, but particularly this Minister, in dealing with employees in his department. Dr. Blauer, I believe, was an Associate

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

Deputy Minister, and I think he was not only discharged but I think he was discharged without notice and given a matter of hours to clear out of his office. I would like to learn from the Minister if that is correct or if I am misinformed.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I believe I discussed this at some length last year in estimates with the Member for St. Johns. I think to go over that same discussion again is really repetitive and probably a waste of our time.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I have the impression that at that time there was a legal discussion taking place between the government and Dr. Blauer and that we did not discuss this extensively last year for that reason. That's my impression. I am talking really about this Minister, not only how he dealt with this matter in the past but how he is likely to deal in the future, and therefore I want to know whether it is correct or not, whether my information is correct or not that he called the Associate Deputy Minister, Dr. Blauer, into his office and told him that he was fired, and fired immediately, and he was to get out that day.

That's the impression that I received as to what happened. I would like to know, is it true or is it not true?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, in part, that is correct.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, now we are told in part that is correct. The Minister has not told us what part of what else he would like to tell us. Let me then ask him whether it is true that he was not given a letter, or any written form, setting out the reasons for the discharge.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I understand that when someone is employed under Order-in-Council, they can be dismissed in the same fashion.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I was not asking the Minister for a legal opinion; I was asking him whether it is true that Dr. Blauer did not receive a letter or other written formal statement as to the reason for his discharge.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of what written communication he may have received.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister confirm that he is the one who did the discharging, and no one else?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, the person in question was dismissed by Order-in-Concil.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll get to it. I wish the Minister would tell us what happened but if he doesn't want to tell us what happened, then will he confirm that he was the messenger of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, who informed the Associate Deputy Minister that he was fired?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I certainly would confirm that. As the Minister responsible for the

department where that individual was employed, I performed that particular function.

MR. CHERNIACK: Would the Minister also confirm that as the Minister responsible for that department that he did not, in writing, or let me add orally, give reasons for the discharge as to whether or not Dr. Blauer performed unsatisfactorily and to what extent? Is that not correct?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, again, I can't confirm what written communication may have been passed on to the gentleman in question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, surely the Minister can confirm that he didn't do it.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I notified the gentleman in question that his services were no longer required.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, it is as apparent as the light shining down on us to brighten our evening that the Minister did not give to Dr. Blauer the reason for the discharge. He didn't say so, but it's clear that he didn't.

May I then ask the Minister whether he was requested to give a letter of recommendation, and refused?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I have some problem recalling what may have happened; this is some time ago. Such a request may have come to my Deputy Minister. I can't really say that's correct or incorrect.

MR. CHERNIACK: I appreciate the forthright manner in which the Minister is answering my questions. I wish he would just tell us what happened, but since he is not sure, may I ask him whether he would confirm that he never gave a letter of recommendation, or even a letter setting out the positions, the service which Dr. Blauer gave to the government?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I would have to check my files to really answer the honourable member in that regard.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, we can conclude this fairly rapidly if the Minister would agree to check his files and let us know in due course. Would he do that? He's nodding his head, Mr. Chairman, so I accept his undertaking. I presume that means it will be before his salary comes up for discussion. Is that a fair request? Yes, he confirms that it's a fair request.

May I ask him whether, in hiring his present Deputy Minister, he gave him a no-cut contract?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I know the question is not facetious; I think the member is probably being reasonably genuine in the question. I am not aware of what type of contract people receive who are engaged by the government. I am more concerned in the quality of person that we are hiring for particular positions. I do understand, and I think it is understood by the honourable members opposite, that someone who is appointed by Order-in-Council can, of course, be dismissed at any time

at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, and I suppose then there is no such a thing as a no-cut contract for those who are engaged by Order-in-Council.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I want to confirm the Minister's impression, as I know it, however, it is not unknown and it is certainly possible that a contract could be entered into, with any person hired by the government, guaranteeing that he would be kept by a minimum period of time and, if discharged, would then receive a certain notice or certain payment in lieu of notice by way of severance pay. That is not unknown.

I must tell you, Mr. Chairman, and through you to the Minister, I have a definite recollection that recently there was such an appointment made. Whether it was made with the Chairman of Hydro or some other official appointed by this government, I can't remember for the moment; I suppose it will come to me. But it is not unknown and it is certainly possible that the Deputy Minister of Education was given an undertaking as to the term, minimum term of his employment, as to manner of separation because, Mr. Chairman, a person who goes from one job, gives up his tenure in one job, may feel entitled to some kind of an undertaking or guarantee in relation to the job to which he moves.

The reason I raise that, and it's not facetious, Mr. Chairman, it was well known to the general public of Manitoba that the Premier of this province fired three Deputy Ministers before he was appointed Premier; called them to the office which he did not really have the right to occupy yet, and dismissed them summarily and gave them 10 minutes, in which time he told them that they had to get out and they should be out — I think he told them on Saturday they had to be out on Monday, physically out of their offices. That is not unknown. It know also — I don't know the extent to which it became known but it is known today anyway — that this Minister, acting as he says as the Minister responsible for his department and for the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, fired an Associate Deputy Minister in the same sort of a way. He called him in and said, You're out, today, tomorrow. Get out and physically remove yourself and your personal effects from this building.

With that kind of a record, with that and what I have already termed as a callous and almost vicious way of dealing with human beings, I would not blame any Deputy Minister, or any other person who is about to be engaged by the Conservative Government, from questioning very much as to what kind of tenure he is likely to have, aside from performance, because, Mr. Chairman, the point I brought out with this Minister is that Dr. Blauer was not given, to his knowledge, and I tell you that if he was given this Minister would know it, was not given reasons for dismissal. Not being given reasons for dismissal, then clearly, how does a person know what his chances are of keeping on working with this government if they already have a record of that nature? So, I repeat my question in this way: I ask the Minister whether he knows, or will ascertain for us, whether his Deputy Minister has been given any kind of undertaking that what happened to, not his immediate predecessor but to one before that, will

not happen to him as a result of the decision of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council of the Conservative government, or any other government, that he would not be treated in the same way?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I am informed that the present Deputy Minister does not have a no-cut contract, in the words of the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Which means, Mr. Chairman, just to spell it out, that the Deputy Minister was taken from his former occupation, or lured, or enticed, or in any event, convinced to leave his former occupation, come to work for the government of Manitoba as a Deputy Minister, being appointed by Order-in-Council, knowing full well that this coming Wednesday, which is, I assume, the next normal meeting of Cabinet, he could be as easily dismissed as those of others. I assume that that is correct and that he knowingly took that chance, and that's confirmed, and that is the way I interpret what the Minister said, about it not being a no-cut contract. If I'm wrong, I'd appreciate the Minister telling me the extent to which I am wrong.

MR. COSENS: No, I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for St. Johns is correct in that assumption and I don't think it's really anything different than has held for some years and for some time with people who are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I want to confirm that to the extent that, in my experience, that is exactly the way it was. But I have to tell him that in eight years of New Democratic Party government, I'm not aware of any person, any one individual in eight years, having been dealt with in the way this government, this Minister, the Premier of this province, dealt with human beings who were hired in that way. And I have to tell him that that is the record, as I know it, and I think I know it pretty well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the fact that the Minister has responded to my questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass; (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering whether the Minister could advise as to whether he expects Bill 31 to be in operation by the fall school term, and if so, what impact he expects that to have on the costs of school divisions with respect to children with learning disabilities, children with various learning problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the honourable members, before I allow the Honourable Minister to answer, would that question not be better suited under a different category, rather than General Administration? I think that under General Administration it includes the Deputy, the Assistant Deputies, people of that category. Do you have an association with this group in your questioning?

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, this is my first crack at it. Maybe I'm out on this one. I'll try another one. I recognize, Mr. Chairman, that education is a very costly item in this province, it's 399 million this coming year, but I have here a little booklet, *A Week in Sight*, and the inside cover gives the names of all the Manitoba Department of Education field representatives for the province of Manitoba, and there's a calendar, and there's weights and measures and various other interesting things at the back of it. I'm just wondering whether these field representatives are being forced to sell these nice little calendars in order to raise money for the Department of Education, and if not, if they are public relations gimmicks, then I'm just wondering what the rationale for them is.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, we are into really heavy debate here. But let me say, without checking further, that if I remember correctly, I received one of those calendars as a Christmas gift. I believe they were purchased personally by the Director of Field Services, at his cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I have problems, too, in attempting to determine where to discuss certain items here in this large department. I ask your guidance and the Minister here, in terms of the general question of aid and policy towards the city of Winnipeg in regard to special needs and special grant, whether we can discuss that matter of policy here.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, could I suggest that that properly belongs under Item 3(a), School Grants and Other Assistance. I believe the member is referring to the core grant, the special needs grant to the Winnipeg No. 1 School Division; that falls under that particular heading in School Grants and Other Assistance, 3(a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister advise as to the number of contract staff on staff? He may have provided that this afternoon. I can't seem to get my hands on that document that he handed out, the number of contract employees in the last two years.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, that will take a minute to get that information. Perhaps we could proceed to other items or other questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass; (2)—pass; (b)—pass. (c) Statutory Boards and Commissions—pass — the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Chairperson, I wonder if the Minister would explain this. Does he have a list of the statutory boards and commissions that are covered by this item?

MR. COSENS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the following boards: The Board of Reference; the Advisory

Board of the Department of Education — I wonder while I'm doing this, if the member requires more information, perhaps I could give it to her at the same time. I'll sit down and if she wishes me to expand as I go along, I can do that. — (Interjection)— All right. The Board of Reference; the Advisory Board; the Collective Agreement Board; Boards of Arbitration and Conciliation, the Discipline Committee, the English Language Advisory Committee, the French Language Advisory Committee, and the Language of Instruction Advisory Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (c)—pass; (d) Field Services 1. Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister advise as to what the nature of Field Services are?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I would be very pleased to discuss this item. I would say, in one short sentence, the main purpose or the main thrust is for the Department of Education and the government to have people out in the field to interpret government policy to those who work in the educational system and those who have an interest in it, and to provide feedback to the department as to the efficiency and effectiveness of programs, grants and support that are being provided by the government to the system as a whole.

Now, that encompasses many different facets. The liaison facet, of course, I just touched on, but once again, there are many questions regarding government policy that these field representatives are able to answer to the people in their particular region. I believe it solves the problem of government at times becoming too remote from those it serves. Of course, the other valuable aspect from the liaison point of view is the feedback that these field representatives can provide, not only to myself but to members of my department in the different sections of my department.

Of course, in order to provide that feedback, there are a number of other functions that they would perform, one of them being the appraising of the system as they see it from day to day. They can take a very close look at how government policies are being implemented and how useful they are in relation to the system; they can analyze the general climate of education in the different regions of the province, again looking at the effectiveness of programs; they can assist with administrative procedures at various levels and provide information to those who act as administrators, make people in the system aware of services that are provided by the department and make sure that those services do fall into place on the request of school divisions; they can help school divisions with their assessment procedures, on request, and these things are being done; they, of course, can analyze, from their point of view, the effectiveness of the grant structures and so on that we are using relative to the programs that are being offered; they can analyze the space requirements submitted by school divisions, make recommendations on the proposed building plans that are put forth by different school districts; they

can conduct particular reviews at the request of school divisions, of the system's operation and, of course, they are there to assist people at all levels of the system, including parents who may have problems or questions that they wish to take to people who are in their system, but in a way removed from it. In other words, problems that parents may perceive in their school system that are of a nature that they would like to discuss with someone who is not hired or employed by that particular system.

That, Mr. Chairman, is a bit of an overview of some of the functions that they perform. I say, once again, I think it is doing away with that criticism we often hear that government is too remote from the people it serves, and in fact, they are doing something to dispel that type of opinion.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These people sound like super people. I hope that the Minister has been able to find people who each individually can perform all of those functions. I am asking this in all innocence, because I don't know the answer, could the Minister tell me what the difference is between these field representatives and the old inspectors?

MR. COSENS: I suppose the basic difference, Mr. Chairman, is that the school inspector that the Member for Rossmere remembers was required to inspect teachers and determine whether they should receive their certification. The school inspector was the person who appraised teachers as to their effectiveness. The field representatives do not have that as their function, that particular function is performed either by school superintendents or by senior school administrators.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I recall the system in a one-room school we used to hope, apparently there was some of an electric feeling, we used to know about five minutes ahead of time that the inspector was coming and we all had to sit up straight and we were supposed to raise our hands and that sort of thing when we wanted anything while the inspector was there. I take it that these people, the field representatives, are not individuals who pop into classrooms to see what is happening with respect to our current curriculum. Is that correct?

MR. COSENS: Partially correct, Mr. Chairman. They are concerned about curriculum and its effectiveness and ways in which they can assist teachers or the staffs of certain schools who may request help with the curriculum. If the member is wondering if they carry with them that policeman image that perhaps the old school inspector had, although I never really felt that was his particular image, that is not their main function.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister advise us as to how the field service individuals receive their information? That is, can they press a button somewhere and find out how

many grade one kids there are in this province; can they see by touching another button or phoning somebody find out what kind of transportation problems there are? For instance, computer services, what kind of things like that are available to these people so that they will be informed and up-to-date as they are making their rounds in the school divisions?

MR. COSENS: All of the information, of course, that is contained in the Department of Education regarding school enrolments, number of buses in schools divisions, and so on, is available to these individuals.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, the recent situation arising at George V School in Elmwood serves to illustrate the problems facing parents and students when a school faces closure or education services are disrupted at the local level. Circumstances have been compounded by a series of conflicting engineering reports and the absence of discernible lines of communication. Does the Minister see the advisability of assigning staff officers or field representatives to monitor these situations and to facilitate their resolution?

MR. COSENS: As part of their duties, Mr. Chairman, the field officers make a point of visiting school board offices, division offices and establishing communication with the personnel there. They also meet with school superintendents in the divisions over which they are responsible, and with senior administration, and as far as possible with the teachers on staff in the school divisions.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister advise as to the specific role, for instance, played by these field representatives at King George V or, for instance, at Reston and Kola and those various school districts where you had the difficulty with the children staying out of school for some period of time?

MR. COSENS: Once again, Mr. Chairman, the field representatives are in the position of being consultants as far as situations such as the honourable member mentions. They are available to be consulted by the school board, by parents groups, by groups of teachers, in any particular situation, and would supply whatever particular advice and information they might have at their disposal.

If the member is suggesting that they would become the judge of a situation and the jury, that is not the way our school system works, Mr. Chairman. The school boards of this province are elected by the citizens of their particular school division. They are responsible, they have the jurisdiction over the type of decisions that the honourable member alludes to and any controversy arising over those decisions, between the citizens and their school board, is something that has to be worked out between those two parties. They may call on an outside party to act as a mediator. They may call on outside parties as

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

they do for consultation, but in the final analysis, if our democratic system is to work, and if our school board system is to work, the problems have to be settled between the citizens and their elected representatives.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, I certainly agree that in the final analysis the decision has to be made between the citizens and their elected representatives. What I am asking, however, is exactly what the field representatives did to solve the problem in Fort la Bosse? What exactly was their role, if any? If they didn't do anything then please say so, if they did something, hopefully whatever that was, was constructive. I didn't expect them to be either judges or juries. I would expect that these people, with all of those qualifications listed by the Minister, would be able to go to Fort la Bosse and at least talk to these people and see whether they can come to some common understanding. That is an area where a problem has been solved, at least for now. It may be that within the next year or so that will blow up again.

The other one in Elmwood is, I believe, still ongoing and I am wondering whether the Minister can advise as specifically what his field representatives are doing in Elmwood. If they are not doing anything, say so.

MR. COSENS: Once again, Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable member has to understand that these matters are between the citizens and their elected representatives, the school board. The function of the field representative would be certainly in a consultative nature to provide information on request to either party, and the type of request they might receive and do receive would perhaps, if I could think of a particular example, would be the particular rights that parents might have under The School Act; the particular responsibilities of school boards under The School Act; what The School Act may say about the conduct of school board meetings. This is the type of thing, Mr. Chairman, that could be asked of field representatives by school boards or by parent groups involved in a controversy of that nature. But I repeat again that in the system we have had for many years I feel serves us quite well, and I would hope that we have for many more years, it is between the citizen who elected the board and that particular elected school board.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister advise as to what, if anything, was done by administrative support people, or field service people, in either Fort la Bosse or in Elmwood. I agree with you, Mr. Minister, that it is ultimately up to the local authorities and the people. We don't have to go through that each time you answer. What I am asking specifically is, what happened? What did these people do? If they didn't do anything, say so. But if they did something, tell me exactly what it is that they did?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of any particular overt action taken by the field representatives in any of those situations. And I'll keep repeating, for the Member for Rossmere, that

this is a matter between the citizens and their elected representatives; and the function of the field representative is not to become a judge and jury and take away from what is the democratic function that we have out there at this time.

I am not aware of these people going in, judging the situation, saying to the school board you are right or you are wrong, or saying to a parents' group, you are right or you are wrong. They very well may have been consulted by either group or both, and I would see that as their chief function.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take it, then, that at least overtly nothing was done and possibly covertly something was done, and if these people did something under cover, I would appreciate the Minister telling us exactly what it was they did under cover.

It seems to me, though, that people who are being asked to go to the local school boards or to the local schools and talk to all of the people involved in education should, if they find something wrong with the system, make some suggestions. I don't suggest that they should be a judge, as I said before; I don't suggest that they should be a jury, as I said before. The Minister has now twice repeated the proposition that what we are alleging is that these people should be a judge and jury. We agree, Mr. Minister, that they should not be a judge and jury.

However, when these people go out to the schools and see something which is, as far as they are concerned, something which is an impediment to the provision of the best education possible, surely they will say so. If not, could the Minister say why they would not say so?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I think the simplest way of describing it to the member is that they are not going to order school boards to take certain action where that falls under the particular jurisdiction of that school board. If the school board has made a decision as to the disposition of particular classes in a school or a school division, that is the school board's decision. Whether, in their judgement, it is the wisest decision or not, it was made by the school board, who are responsible to their taxpayers, and the field representatives of my department are not going to attempt to reverse that decision.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take it, then, that the field representatives are out there to provide information on demand. If there is no demand for it, there is no information.

I would ask the Minister exactly how many of these people he has on staff?

MR. COSENS: We have 17, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SCHROEDER: Are each of these 17 assigned a specific district or are they allowed to go anywhere they choose or are asked to come to?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I think I mentioned that in my introductory remarks, that we have the province divided into regions, the Metro Region, the Southeastern Region, Northeastern Region, Western Region, Thompson Region, Dauphin Region.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Chairman, just on the point of the school board, and the citizen, and the relationship, and the democracy, and the department not riding over the school board, two years ago the Minister brought in a bill which said that school boards will decide whether moneys will be paid in its division to schools other than the public schools. The Minister said, The reason we are doing this is we believe in local option. We believe that the school board should decide, and he said four or five times tonight, School boards will decide. It's between the citizen and the school board and my department will not override the school board.

I take it that the Minister is going to tell the school board, or at least not tell them, he doesn't any more believe in local option which he said, and his words are on the record, that now it will not be between the citizen and the board. The Minister will be able to go into that division and provide money to children within that division who are attending a school other than the public school system. Is that not what he is planning to do?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Inkster is quite right. That is what will result. However, he is not right when he says that we are overriding school boards in taking this particular action. By resolution passed at the Manitoba Association of School Trustees Convention, and on presentation by the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, not only to my office but I'm sure to the caucus of the honourable gentlemen opposite as well as our caucus, the school trustees have urged us that we take that particular action.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, but somebody has been overrun, because the Minister spoke a few moments ago about the citizen and the school division, and that the school division has a relationship with the citizen and the Minister has a relationship with the school board. What the Minister is saying is that the school division, not wishing to accept the responsibility for voting money to private schools, has said to the Minister, if you pay money to private schools you are to pay it directly by the department; we don't want to vote money to private schools. That's what they have said.

The Minister, two years ago when he brought in his legislation, and the words are there, Hansard is a wonderful thing, that; we believe that the local option is the way to do it and if the school division wants to give the money, it will go, and if they don't want to give the money, it won't go. So they now have told the Minister that they don't want to have the responsibility for this and, therefore, local option has said; we don't want to do it. The local option has said they don't want to do it, and the Minister has overridden the local option and says he is going to do it.

How does he square that, Mr. Chairman, and I'm not going to take up this evening on it? I do want to indicate, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister is a cheat, that he said that he was bringing in this legislation to clear up a legality; he is a cheat because he didn't bring in this legislation to clear up a legality. He

brought in this legislation so that he could siphon public money to schools teaching ideology, to schools that are distinguished on the basis of race, creed, and religion, and to schools which form an elite system within the province of Manitoba. The Minister said at that time, Mr. Chairman, that he was doing it to overcome an illegality, and then he said that he believes that the local school division should have this option. When he said that, he was a cheat, Mr. Chairman, because that's not what he believed. He recognized the school division as a means, as a conduit pipe, so to speak, through which he could funnel taxpayers' money towards the teaching of one ideology or another, towards the segregation of the school system on the basis of race, creed, color and religion, and towards the creation of an elite system to the ultimate degradation of the public school system.

Mr. Chairman, again tonight, he said that he would not override the local division. Well, the local divisions have told him they don't want to do this. That's what they have told him. So he said, Well, if they don't want to do this, I will do it. It's not, Mr. Chairman, because he wanted to give a local option. All of that was sheer duplicity, Mr. Chairman. The facts are now out and it will be, Mr. Chairman, to the ultimate detriment of the public school system in the province of Manitoba because, Mr. Chairman, there are no two ways about this. The parent who says that I want my child to go to a different school and I am willing to pay money for it, has said and will continue to say that if my child is going to a school outside of the system, why can I not get all the money that I am paying in education taxes and transfer it to the school that my child is going to? Mr. Chairman, that is what the Minister is going to do, because when he says this year that all he is doing is changing what was done from the school boards to himself, he is cheating just as much as he cheated in the last two years; in the same way as he cheated, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister on a point of order.

MR. COSENS: I don't believe this is the item, Mr. Chairman, under which we discuss funding of private schools. We are discussing Field Services at this time.

MR. GREEN: I concede that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we go on a little bit further, the honourable member has been making some accusations as to the Minister being a cheat on what the Minister believes. I would hope that the honourable member would choose his words a little bit more wisely. I do recall the statement where he was called a cheat on what the Minister believes, and I don't think the honourable member does know what the Minister believes in this regard.

MR. GREEN: I'll look for a better word than cheat. How about a faker? How about, Mr. Chairman, one who makes fraudulent misrepresentations? — (Interjection)— You don't think either of those will do. I am trying, Mr. Chairman.

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

Mr. Chairman, I will concede that this is not the item under which this will be discussed. I brought it up because the Minister got up and blatantly said, Mr. Chairman, said it four or five times as I was listening to the Member for Rossmere asking him his questions, and I hadn't intended to speak on this item tonight, but he was talking about the local school board as being the one that he would in no way interfere with. I am suggesting that what he is saying with regard to this item, he is doing otherwise with regard to another item, and we will get to it. By the time we will get to it, Mr. Chairman, I will think of the proper words.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must apologize to the committee for coming in a few minutes late this evening and missing the first couple of items.

Do I assume from my colleagues' questions that we are on 1.(d) Field Services?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is correct.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister answered a question that I raised in my earlier remarks about the Capital Facilities Review box, which is given on the inside of the front cover of the departmental report, and if he did not, perhaps he could advise then which section of the estimates that comes under and perhaps give us an idea of what Capital Facilities Review consists of.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, that's the particular section of the department attached to the Public Schools Finance Board that advises the Public Schools Finance Board as to proposals and recommendations on new school buildings, additions, remodelling, etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could the Honourable Minister suggest under what item it will be discussed?

MR. COSENS: I suppose it should have properly come under 1.(b), Mr. Chairman. However, I am quite willing to pursue that with the member at this point if he wishes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that rather than going back to particular items that have already been discussed, because I know that there were some other items that could have been discussed when they did come up, you know, I'm a servant and I will allow it if the Honourable Minister is suggesting it. By leave, we can go back to 1.(b), or would you prefer to answer your questions at another time?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned before, I would be quite prepared to follow this particular item. I know that we are still on 1.(d), but if the member wants to refer to that particular item, we can deal with it at this time and return to 1.(d).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to get out of order and I would like to see the estimates proceed efficiently.

I would, if I may, perhaps put that item off until maybe number 3. Financial Support. I wasn't aware of what it consisted of and I would like to just refer back before I ask any further questions on it.

I did have a couple of brief questions for the Minister, if I might, that perhaps should have been asked under General Administration, and that has to do with the Reconciliation Statement. Would the Minister just run through those items and explain to the committee what is transferred to and from his department, please?

MR. COSENS: I'll have that information for the member in a minute, if you would like to move onto other items.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I would further like to ask the Minister if the department is likely to have spent the 369.5 million that were approved for the 1979-80 year. I realize it's not too long after the end of the fiscal year and that final figures are probably not yet in and almost certainly have not yet been audited, but can the Minister indicate whether he believes that that amount has been spent in the last fiscal year?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I would have to check with our finance people to get the exact figures. There may have been some lapsing; I think that's what the member is inferring. If so, I'll ascertain that after referring to the members of our Finance Department.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, that was a second question as to how much had lapsed for the year, but I had a further question for the Minister also on financial matters that he might wish to take as notice as well, and that is, can he tell the committee whether there are any special warrants issued for the Department of Education in the past year; and since he probably would take that as notice, Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to ask him about the increase that was announced for last year of some, I believe the amount was 12.9 million. That was an amount increased for the fiscal year just ended, and I wanted to know from the Minister whether all of that amount has been expended or whether it was some lesser amount.

MR. COSENS: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the member could expand on the particular moneys that he refers to. I'm not familiar with the sum that he is mentioning at this time.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I had referred earlier to an amount of some 20.6 million that the Minister announced back in January as being an increase for the coming year. The corresponding amount for the previous year, and I'm just going from memory, was some 12.9 million, as an increase. What I want to know from the Minister is whether that 12.9 million was totally expended. I have been informed from other sources that an amount, several millions of dollars less than that was in fact expended by the end of the year.

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, the honourable member is referring to Item 3(a), School Grants and Other Assistance. And I think we should properly treat that item in some detail at that time. In a word, I can assure him that that moneys is included in school grants, and those grants are paid out in full to school divisions across this province.

MR. WALDING: Again, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to get out of order, if the Minister would have the information for me when we get to Item 3, that's fine with me.

I did have just a couple of questions on the item that we are presently on, Field Services. There is an indication in the annual report that this division has been expanded or upgraded. The Minister has also indicated on the sheet that he distributed earlier that there is an extra staff man year for this department. I'd like to ask him, did he inform my colleague from Rossmere that there were 17 field representatives or education, whatever they're called? Perhaps the Minister could explain what the other SMYs are for this year, and could he also explain to us why it is that the annual report indicates, as of December 31, 1979, that there were in fact, 15 of these EACs, and the Minister is now telling us that there are 17. Would this indicate that two of these positions were vacant for last year, or that there are two more new positions authorized as of this year; could he clarify, please?

MR. COSENS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, to the Honourable Member for St. Vital, the figure 17 is correct; the figure 15 is correct for last year. We have had two staff members added through the area of secondment. They are people who come out of the school system to work in the department, and of course the additional SMYs are support positions for those 17 that I mentioned earlier to the Honourable Member for Rossmere, giving us a total of 24 SMYs in that particular section.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister inform us whether all of these positions are presently filled?

MR. COSENS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I've heard these positions referred to by several different names. I wonder if the Minister could inform us, what is the correct term for these people.

MR. COSENS: Field representatives, Mr. Chairman. That's what we're calling them this year.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to remember the term, field representatives — (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister says from his seat that it's rather like agricultural representatives, and I wonder if this is the position where certain preferred persons are put out to pasture? Further to that . . .

MR. COSENS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, surely the honourable member isn't inferring that the agricultural representatives of this province are people who have been put out to pasture. I'm sure

the Minister of Agriculture would take real umbrage with that.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the debate in this House is of great seriousness most of the time; I'm sure that you and the Minister both would not object to one small portion of levity creeping into the debate at some time. I must admit, Mr. Chairman, it was something that I just could not resist saying.

Further to that matter, could the Minister explain to the committee whether these field representatives are Civil Service positions or whether they are, as indicated in the bills last year, positions that are filled by Order-in-Council?

MR. COSENS: They are Civil Service positions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WALDING: Just to anticipate the debate on another topic, Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister can tell us whether it's his intention for them to remain that way under the two new bills he's bringing in, or whether he intends to repeat the proposal of last year that they be named by Order-in-Council.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to appear devious, but I would just refer the honourable member to the new bills, and I think the answer becomes quite apparent when he looks at the first page of Bill 19, I believe, under Definitions.

MR. WALDING: A couple of more questions on this area, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister confirm that these field representatives have the power to suspend teaching certificates or suspend teachers at a moment's notice?

MR. COSENS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I do question the Minister's policy in this regard. Is he dealing with adults and with trained professionals? Mr. Chairman, this is 1980, it's not the 1950s or the 1940s, when an argument could possibly have been made for having inspectors judging the conduct of teachers, when many of them were, as I understand, permit teachers — Is that the correct expression, permit teachers? — who had not the benefits of the superior education that so many of our teachers have now. I don't recall the actual figures, but I seem to recall a figure in the 90 percent range of teachers having university degrees in this province, and a figure of something like 70, 75 percent had more than one degree. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that those teachers are professionals, can be expected to have a degree of competence and responsibility that surely obviates the need for an inspector poking his nose into a classroom and having that power to arbitrarily suspend a teacher. I would invite the Minister's comments on the need in 1980 for those sorts of powers to be vested in his field representatives.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, that particular power that is referred to by the honourable member has existed for many years in The Public Schools Act. To my knowledge, it has only been used under very extreme emergency conditions where the welfare of

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

the children in the particular school or classroom was in jeopardy, or, in fact, the welfare of the particular teacher was in jeopardy, as well.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The fact that it has been in The Public Schools Act for many years is not that good a reason, in my opinion, for having something that is not necessary or is redundant. The Minister states that the power is used only in emergency situations, and very rarely. Perhaps he could give us some indication of the rarity of that power being used. Can he tell us over the last year or two years, or five years, how many times that has been put into effect and when he speaks of the welfare of the children again perhaps he could give us an example of this, but more so when he speaks of the benefit or the welfare to the teacher? What sorts of circumstances could be in place that could need the teacher's certification to be lifted for the benefit or for the safety of the teacher himself?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I can inform the honourable member that there are no cases of this in the last three years, to my knowledge. I suppose if we go back far enough in time in Manitoba, there have been instances where that particular action was taken, but I am not aware of it having happened in recent times at all. Again, I am not prepared to judge whether in fact it is still not necessary for someone to have that particular power, in cases of emergencies that may happen several hundred miles from this particular city, so that very rapid action can be taken to protect the welfare of the children, in particular, in a particular school or classroom.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I ask this question out of ignorance, because I simply don't know. Can the Minister explain to me what the situation would be and what circumstances would prevail in the event of a teacher being suspended immediately by a field representative? What would then happen? Would there be a hearing? When, where, and could he explain the details of the procedure please?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, there has been in place for many years an Appeal Committee where questions concerning the removal of certificates or lack of certification of individuals can be treated and can be appealed. This is something that has been in place for many years and continues to be in place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the Minister, on those matters in Elmwood and Fort la Bosse again, did the Minister suggest to the field representative for those districts, or either of those districts, that they check with the people involved to see whether they could be of assistance, and if so, what was the result?

MR. COSENS: No, Mr. Chairman, I did not give them that type of direction at all. In fact, I do not provide directions directly to members of that particular branch, they have a Director. If I have any particular concern, I would pass it on to the Director,

who in turn, I am sure, would relay it to members of his particular branch. But in this particular case, I did not send any directive to members of the Field Services Branch, probably because I did meet with both parties to the particular controversy in western Manitoba that the members refers to.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier the Minister talked at length about the independence of the local school boards. He talked about these people not being judge and jury. He also said, as I recall, that it wasn't the function of the field representative to go out and evaluate the teacher, but now he is saying that the field representative can come along and lift a licence of a teacher to teach. He can suspend someone or she can suspend someone from teaching. Those people, teachers out there, are not the employees of the department. They are the employees of those local school boards for whose autonomy the Minister was fighting half an hour ago. Suddenly now, although there is no inspection of those teachers, and the purpose of the field representative going out is not to see what the teacher is up to, we discover that the field representative can cancel a teacher's right to teach. It seems to me that it would only be logical in this day and age, when we are talking about local autonomy, that the autonomy be exercised by the local school board or by the superintendent who is in charge of the teachers. Surely that would only seem logical.

I am just wondering why it is that an individual who is not out there to supervise the teacher can lift a teacher's right to teach.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I guess rather than answer the question I could ask the honourable member if he knows who certifies teachers in this province. They are certified by the Minister of Education of the government of the day, and I suppose we can then look on the field reps. as extensions of the government of the day, as employees of that government. They do not lift the certificate, as has been mentioned here; they can only suspend certificates temporarily until the situation has been researched, investigated, and in fact, as the Member for St. Vital has asked, appealed. I suggest again to the Member for Rossmere that this happens in only very rare and very extreme and cases that are very much emergencies in relation to the welfare of the children in the classroom. It would not require the judgement of a sage to decide at what point that should be done. It is only done in extreme emergencies.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister whether he could advise as to specifically which section of the Act gives the field representatives that power. That is question number one.

The other thing is that it seems to me that if the occasions upon which this power is going to be exercised are very few and far between, and if, in fact, this is only going to be in situations of most flagrant violation of teaching standards, then surely in that type of situation it would be the principal of the school who could remove his or her teacher. It could be the superintendent; it could be the school

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

board; it could be anybody locally. I am just wondering why it is, if there is that authority and I assume there must be that authority, why it is that it is necessary to continue with that type of authority, and I recognize that it is the Minister who does the licensing of the teachers. I am just wondering whether the Minister would be prepared to comment on the proposition that maybe now is a good time to reassess that policy of having the Minister do the licensing and consider the teachers as a professional body.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I allow the Honourable Minister to answer, it would appear that the questions are becoming repetitive and the answers also are becoming repetitive. I would hope that we could ask questions that are not repetitive. I say it appears that the questions are becoming repetitive and it's maybe because I am sitting here and they appear that way to me.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. COSENS: The member has asked me if I have reviewed this particular piece of legislation. I can say to the honourable member, Mr. Chairman, that if I had any indication that this has been abused in recent years, I certainly would have severe second thoughts about it, but I also have to be aware that there are many situations many miles removed from this particular city and from the offices of my department where situations can arise where judgements have to be made concerning the welfare of children. I would have severe second thoughts about removing the legislation, as far as that is concerned.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, again, the Minister explained earlier the difference between field representatives and school inspectors. My understanding of his explanation at that time, Mr. Chairman, was that field representatives are not there to assess the qualities of school teachers. Now, if they are not there to assess the qualities and capabilities of school teachers, if they are not there to jump into classrooms like super people and find out what is going on, to see whether the windows are polished and the desks are clean, if that's not their purpose, then what is the purpose of having these same field representatives, who are not there to assess teachers, what is the purpose of allowing them the continued right to suspend teachers?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I would have to rule it out of order. That question is repetitive.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'll try another one then. There has been great commotion in the background here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Transcona on a point of order.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Yes, could I raise a point of order. I came in and I listened, Mr. Chairperson, and my colleague, the Member for Rossmere, is pointing out a contradiction between what the Minister has said just a few minutes ago and what he

has now said in response to what the authority of a school inspector was, what the authority and the function of a field representative is today. The answer that he has just given us is completely contradictory to what he said a few minutes ago, and that's why my colleague is pursuing this matter, which seems to me to be completely legitimate under the rules and procedures that we operate within. The only reason why it is repetitive is because he is contradictory.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Regardless, to the honourable member's point of order . . . The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J.R. (Bud) BOYCE: On this point of order, Mr. Chairman, I think it is necessary for us to understand what the Minister does intend to spend these funds . . . that for which he wants to spend the funds. I can't end a sentence in a preposition with the Minister of Education. But it is important for us to understand what a field representative is. This is the item that is under discussion and it may seem or appear to be somewhat repetitive, but nevertheless there is a contradiction in what the Minister is telling us. So I think it is important that we clarify this before we can vote this item, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the honourable members, when I ruled on whether the question was repetitive or not, in my opinion it was almost word for word from a previous question, and that was the reason that I ruled it is repetitive. Whether the answers were the same the two or three times that the questions were asked, I can't really rule on that. There could have been a difference in the answers, but the questions were certainly repetitive.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I am a novice at this. What I would like is some guidance from the Chairman. I would like to know whether, if I don't receive an answer to a question, whether I am permitted to rephrase that question in order to get an answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the honourable member, most certainly.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the Minister, in view of the fact that just within the last hour or so he indicated that the difference between a field representative and an inspector is that a field representative is not out there to assess the qualifications of teachers, although an inspector was out there to do precisely that, can he advise us as to why it is that the field representative needs the power to suspend teachers, who are the employees of locally-elected autonomous school boards and who are under the control of principals and/or superintendents?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, at the danger of sounding repetitive, I would repeat to the honourable member that there are situations, and there have been situations, albeit very few in the past history of this province, where it has been necessary to remove

an individual from a classroom and to suspend their certificate. It would appear to me that if we removed that particular provision, that in those emergency situations that very rarely occur and to my knowledge have not been abused by field officers. In fact, Mr. Chairman, I pointed out to the honourable member that there have been no cases, to my knowledge, in the last three years. In fact, I'm not aware when the last case did take place, although I'm sure those who have been in the department for many years could probably tell me at what point in history there have been examples of this in our province.

In spite of this, Mr. Chairman, I think it is necessary that this provision exist; again, strictly in consideration of the welfare of children in a particular classroom or school. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the honourable member has a rather tenuous argument. He is somehow trying to tie this minute provision that is so seldom used and would only be used in a most extreme circumstance, he is somehow trying to tie that to the idea that field representatives have some policing action that they carry on incessantly out there and that teachers see them as walking around prepared to lift their certificates. That's a slippery slope, Mr. Chairman, a tenuous argument indeed.

I would suggest to the member that if he wants to keep asking the question, then I will keep giving him the same answer.

MR. SCHROEDER: I would have appreciated an answer to the specific question. But the Minister earlier told the committee that these people are not the judge and jury. He talked at great length about local autonomy but I am sure that at some future time further down here we'll get some more explanations on this.

Again, previously, the Minister indicated that the service of these field representatives is provided on demand. I don't know whether he said it exactly in that fashion but I would ask him, if that is the case, to confirm it. That is, if one of these individuals shows up in River East School Division, is he or she there by invitation or do they come in unannounced? What is the procedure? Do they phone ahead and say, could we come and talk to you and, once they are there, do they not offer any advice, as they do not offer advice with respect to Fort La Bosse, or do they just there sit and wait until the superintendent or the principal or the teacher says, what do we do about this, and then they provide advice? How exactly do they operate once they're in the system out there in field?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, again, at danger of being repetitive, I think at the beginning of this discussion I outlined in some detail the particular function of these people and I said it was a liaison function in part, an appraising function in part, an evaluative function in part, and as far as their visits to particular schools and so on, to my these knowledge these are all arranged through the particular division office. They, again, are not sneaking around, as might be inferred by some members opposite, peaking here and there. They are there to discuss the program that's being offered, to inform the particular school authorities of new

programs or new legislation that the department may be bringing out. They may be there to inform them about curriculum developments that are being considered at this time. They may be there to in fact discuss with the school personnel their views on particular policy matters that are under consideration in the department. It is that type of feedback and that type of liaison, Mr. Chairman, that is most valuable.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister advise as to precisely where on our agenda the matter of aid to private schools will be dealt with?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, that particular item would come under 3.(a) School Grants and Other Assistance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, just on that point, surely that is, speaking to about the Minister's answer, it's time for a change. I mean, the Minister is telling us that aid to private and parochial schools, which are outside the public school system, are listed under financial aid to public schools. Surely the time has come to separate that item out and to distinguish between the kind of grants and support that is given to the public school system and the private school system. I think the time is now, and I wonder whether the Minister would agree now that in the future we'll see a separate item, at the very least a separate line, in regard to that. It's a bit of a contradiction.

MR. COSENS: I can take that suggestion under consideration, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, one other point on the field reps. I've been trying to follow the, as my colleague says, circuitous logic of the Minister here. In the old days the inspectors went around and presumably sat in on the classrooms of new teachers and wrote several reports which were some kind of an evaluation of their ability, gave them advice and criticisms of their skills. I always have to think of my own experience, that first tremendous opener that came from an inspector to me when he said to me giving me my evaluation, The blinds in your room are straight. If you looked at those five windows, those blinds were all lined up perfectly as opposed to one being out of order, so it showed an organized mind and a disciplined background.

Mr. Chairman, my impression of the field reps. is that they are useless. I think that has been fairly well established this evening that there is little or no value in the field representatives. If the Minister is telling us that they write reports, evaluate teachers and so on, does he mean in the old sense, in the time when he was teaching and so on, that they had discussions with teachers, wrote reports, discussed the reports with the teachers, showed them to the principals, presumably filed them with the division, and possibly filed them in the Department of Education, and at a later point in time, the teacher could even see those particular reports? So when he

talks about them writing reports and evaluating, is he suggesting that they are performing the same function as before?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, in line with the questions being asked by the Member for Elmwood, I was in the other committee and I would not want to be repetitive here, but I was given to understand that the Minister said that field representatives have the power to suspend teachers' licences. If that's what he said, I can't understand how that could be because, looking at the legislation, I don't even see — and I may be overlooking it because The Public School Act, we know, is quite a complicated difficult document — I don't see any reference to field reps. at all and I don't see how they have any power to suspend a teacher's licence if they don't exist. Now they may exist in the department but I don't see the legislation that gives them the power to deal with it and possibly when the Minister responds to the Member for Elmwood he would answer this dilemma that I have and clarify, if the statement reported to me is correct that he said the field reps. do have the power to suspend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, first of all in reply to the question of the Member for Elmwood, I don't think at any time that I said field representatives write reports on teachers. In some cases they are asked by particular school divisions to conduct an evaluation of a total program that may be offered in the school division. They then would evaluate that program and write a report on the program, not on the individual teacher. That report, of course, would be available to the school division and the administration of the school. In no way have I said during our discussion here this evening or at any time that they are writing reports on teachers, and I feel that the Member for Elmwood misquotes me.

In reply to the Member for St. Johns, it's my understanding that it is stated in the present Act that there are people called — it may be in the old Act, they are probably called school inspectors or field officers of the department. These people do have that right to suspend teaching certificates in extreme and what I would call emergency situations, where the welfare of students are in jeopardy.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I say again, I see no reference to field representatives. If the government employs field representatives, then my interpretation is that they have no powers of any kind whatsoever except as possibly investigators on behalf of the Minister if he employs them, then I suppose they have certain powers. I don't see, and as I say, Mr. Chairman, I'm not that familiar with the Act; although I spent many years as a solicitor to a school division, that's still a difficult Act to deal with that. I see no reference to field representatives. If there are field representatives, I see no authority for them to suspend a teacher.

What I do see is the authority which I think makes sense and that is that the Minister may make

regulations authorizing the superintendent of schools of a district or the principal, or a teacher deemed to be the principal of any school, to suspend a pupil for conduct injurious to the welfare of the school. I also see that the Minister has the right to suspend or cancel a certificate for any cause that he deems sufficient. It's not, as the Minister said, for some exceptional act of the teacher, it's for any cause that the Minister deems sufficient, and need I, Mr. Chairman, remind the Minister that an hour-and-a-half ago he admitted that he fired an Associate Deputy Minister without any reason given at all. But then under Section 8(2), it says, An inspector of schools may suspend, for incompetency, misconduct, or violation of this Act, that's the Education Department Act, or The Public Schools Act or of any regulation made under either of those Acts. Mr. Chairman, the inspector of schools has tremendous powers, almost arbitrary powers, clearly discretionary powers, to suspend a teacher. Not for any exceptional circumstance, not if there's a danger to the students, but for whatever reason he has, just the same reason that the Minister may have had when he fired an Associate Deputy Minister. That is the way I read the authority. I don't read that the field inspector has any power whatsoever. That's why I again ask the Minister, by what authority do field representatives have the right to suspend a teacher?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I would have to check that particular item out. I don't have the wording in front of me nor my officials have it in front of them at this particular time. I'd like to check it out and respond to the Member for St. Johns later.

MR. CHERNIACK: I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman, although the Minister has field representatives, he really ought to know where he gets the power to appoint field representatives and what the power is. But obviously he has to check it out. I am beginning to suspect, Mr. Chairman, that these people called field representatives are, in truth, inspectors and I would suggest further that if they are not officially entitled inspectors, then they don't have any power at all. And if any of them has assumed any power to suspend anybody, that it may have been an illegal action and I'm saying that off the cuff and it's a legal opinion I am giving for which I'm not charging because I haven't supported it and I couldn't get paid either. If I were, I'd be out of the Legislative chair and I wouldn't like to risk that.

Mr. Chairman, as I say, on a superficial view, there is no such position as field representatives in the legislation, and since only the legislation can give the power to suspend a teacher, then surely no field representative could have that power. Now the Minister clearly has that power but it doesn't say anywhere that he can delegate that power, at least nowhere that I can see. So he has undertaken to find out what goes on in his own department and how people within his department appear to have powers which he thinks they have but which he now feels he's going to check on and he will, as I understand it, investigate and report back. I'm really looking forward to learning how this power arises because, as I say, do they call it a dog's breakfast? I never knew what that meant, but it means quite a mess, and I know our Public Schools Act is difficult to deal

with, so I hope the Minister can clarify his role, his employees, their powers, so we can understand better how the Minister is managing his department.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, when I'm dealing with the Member for St. Johns on legal matters, I like to double check and make sure that the wording and my understanding of the situation is quite clear, so I will reserve my answer in this particular regard until I've had a chance to check it out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, just a few questions here. Can the Minister indicate the salary range of the field representatives, and again I gather that there are 17 representatives and some seven staff for a total budget of 668,000, which strikes me as some pretty fancy salaries of the order of 30,000 for the field reps and then the supporting staff. So, could he provide us with that now and then I would ask him one or two more other questions?

MR. COSENS: I understand these people are at a PO 8,9 level, 8 or 9 level. —(Interjection)— I'll have to get the exact sum, Mr. Chairman, I don't have that available at this time, the exact amount, and I would hesitate to make a guesstimate. I'll reserve that answer.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, as I said, I'm assuming it's of the order of some 30,000 and we will soon know. I also want to clearly understand one other point and that is that the Minister conveys the impression that the field representatives are sort of free spirits, and when they go into a division, they work for the division. He's sort of intimating that they do not work under the direction or for the department, but they go in there and they are given tasks almost assigned by the superintendent or the principals in the various schools.

I am not really quite clear on how that can occur because that is the impression he is giving. Is he saying that they are not working on behalf of the department and reporting to the department, or is he saying that they simply are independent, free spirits and they go into an area, somebody has a little job for them, they will do it, run out and get a couple of hamburgers or assess the standard of some particular course or attempt to ascertain whether something is being properly implemented? I would assume at the very least, Mr. Chairman, that these representatives are double agents, that they must be working for the Minister, they have their salaries paid by the Minister, they must be reporting to somebody within the department. And yet, if I understand the Minister correctly in the last few minutes and in the last hour or so, he seems to suggest that they do evaluations and reports, but that they somehow or other do this at the beck and call of the divisions. So I wonder if he could clarify that point.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, once again at the risk of being repetitive, I can go over the particular functions of the field representatives as I did at the beginning of this discussion where I talked about the liaison aspect where they explained policies of the

department to the people out in the school system across the province, where they interpret those policies, if necessary. They also, of course, conduct a number of other functions for the department, whether it be appraising the effectiveness of certain government policies as they apply to curriculum, to the grants that are paid to support certain functions. They also evaluate the administrative procedures at the various levels to see if there is any way that in fact, as a government, we can be assisting those particular parts of the system. They follow with some interest and report back to the department on the implementation of programs at the school level. They give us a careful report of the effectiveness of departmental support services out in the school divisions to let us know how well these are working.

So when the member infers that these people work for school divisions, I suppose that's correct, they do work for school divisions just as all of us in the department in the final analysis are working for the school divisions and for the schools. But their function is a dual one in that they work for the department and their feedback to the department is a very important aspect. I would see it as perhaps one of the most important, but also in the same way I would see that their liaison with the local people is also a very valuable function. Having said that, Mr. Chairman, without going into great detail on the minute functions that may be performed by these people, perhaps that in part answers the member's question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, my concern is we're spending 668,000 here and that's the question, what for? Are we getting value for our money, because I think there is a large question mark on this side of the Chamber as to the value of the function and therefore the value of the expenditure. I'm saying to the Minister in all seriousness, if we eliminate these position and if we eliminate Section 50(d), what would the effect be within the department? Because my impression is that they are not performing a useful function and consequently this is an expenditure that is not warranted. So I say to the Minister, if he didn't have these people and he hardly has them anyway because they apparently are somehow or other autonomous, they are somehow or other reporting to his department, but they are somehow or other reporting to the divisions and they are somehow or other evaluating teachers and programs and somehow or other not evaluating teachers and not evaluating programs. I say to him, if they were not there and if he did not have them in his department, what would the loss be?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Bob Anderson (Springfield): The Honourable Minister.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to answer that because the honourable member apparently misses something that is most germane to the whole discussion. I mentioned at the beginning of the discussion of this section that there is a tendency for people out there to feel that they are in many cases remote from government, that they are isolated from government. And I can tell the member that at the time that the Department of Education did not have people out in

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

the field performing the very functions that these people are performing, that that feeling of isolation and remoteness from the department did exist. I heard people utter those very words. So when the member said, what use are they, what value are they, then I say to him they are fulfilling that function of government that enables government to become closer to the people. They are interpreting policies out in the field. They are not sitting back here in the city of Winnipeg and deciding that the province of Manitoba ends at the Perimeter Highway, but they are going out beyond the Perimeter, they are going out to all parts of the province and interpreting the policy of the government, and in this case of this particular department, as I am sure field officers, field representatives of other branches of government do in their particular function, whether it be Natural Resources, Agriculture or any of the other particular branches, Health, that have representatives out in the different parts of the province.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me the Minister is getting into a deeper hole here. He's digging a deeper hole than before. He's now telling us that these people go around and hold hands with —(Interjection)— well, I'm telling you what I hear in my words. I'm telling you the way I hear it and I am the master of overstatement and you are the master of understatement. So I will tell it in my own words.

The Minister is saying that these people are a visible presence. He's saying that's it, that's very important, and I can hardly believe that in today's world. I could have believed that maybe in the 40s or the 30s or the 20s or before we had the large divisions. I could believe that when there were some 700 odd little red schoolhouses in the 50s and so on before we had the new, modern educational system which I think was begun by the Roblin administration and is a credit to that administration and the predecessor of the Minister, Dr. George Johnson. But he's saying that they need this visible presence, that they need people to go around and to say that they represent the Minister. They are the personal emissaries comfort —(Interjection)— That's what I'm saying, they are like the parish priest visiting his flock, going around saying hello to people, asking how good old Uncle Harry is, shaking hands, have a cigar, have a cup of coffee and so on, kiss babies.

It sounds really very much like what the Minister himself does when he goes home to Stonewall and goes to the curling bonspiels, drops into the local pub, drops into the old collegiate to see how his old buddy, Ed Wood, is, and Frank White and so on, all the old boys who were there back in the early days. He's telling us that these people in effect are hand-holders and I'm sure that every Christmas they probably get an autographed picture of the Minister because they feel lonely and they are clutching at straws and looking for some human contact because they're so far out of it.

Mr. Chairman, that isn't the way it is any more. I mean, you know what it's like in Springfield. It's not the old one-room schoolhouse any more. There are large divisions; there are large schools. In the old days, I guess the country high school probably was a little place with four or five rooms. Maybe, in fact, we had some schools where you had Grades 1 to 12 and so on in a couple of rooms, but that isn't the

way it is. All throughout the rural areas there are large high schools with hundreds of students and programs that generally compare with urban standards, etc. You know, in an age of television and in an age of radio and school broadcasts, modern communications, cable television and so on, is it really necessary that we have these emissaries of the Minister going around to perform. What he is obviously suggesting is a PR function.

I'm hearing different words thrown around here on our side, commissars or gauleiters and so on and so on. But I'm just saying, in effect, to me they are PR men and the Minister, if he reads his own words in Hansard, he will see what he has said, in effect. They are the visible presence of the department but yet they are like people who are walking around with six guns with no bullets. They have power but when you ask what the power is, it appears that there is no power. It is simply the power of personality and the power of presence, the annual or semi-annual or quarterly visit and so on. I'm saying to him, if that's it, if that's what it comes down to because that's just what he just said, that's the bottom line and we don't need these people. The Minister can send out Christmas cards every Christmas and he can make a broadcast on the school broadcast network and so on. We don't need 668,000 spent on what is at best, Mr. Chairman, a dubious expenditure for a dubious purpose.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Chairperson, the more questions that are asked, the more I am beginning to feel that this is not a very desirable item, but so far I'm confused. I would ask the Minister if he could tell us, please, if these field representatives are working for his department but are working for the school division, from whom do they receive their instructions? Do they go into a school only on a complaint? The Minister I think said that someone phones up and says they're coming, or something to that effect. Are they to respond to complaints? Do they walk in, if something's going on in the classroom, they can summarily lift the licence of the teacher without responding to a complaint even if everyone seems perfectly content with what's going on? Can a field rep., just on the spot, lift the licence? That's what I think I heard the Minister say. That on what bases, because they've strayed from the curriculum or because they're having a behavioural problem, perhaps they've been drinking or something. I can understand that. We were told they're not judge and jury and yet, apart from the remarks of the Member for Elmwood which made them sound like teddy bears, before that I had the impression that they were some policing body. I want to know what they're terms of reference are; from whom they receive it; do they respond only, or in the main, to complaints. How do they get to where they're going?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I will state again, that these people certainly take their direction from the director of our department. They are assigned to regions. They have so many schools within these regions they are responsible for, so many particular

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

school divisions that they must visit within that particular region. They are responsible to our department, to their director. They perform a whole variety of functions — and I have repeated them, I think, three or four times tonight; I can go through them again for the honourable member, if she so desires — all the way from liaison to appraising, to evaluating, explaining. They conduct certain analysis, evaluations, both for the department and at the request of school divisions on occasion. They will assist in problem solving in certain situations and they also serve in a consultative capacity. I don't know if that's touched on all of the questions of the honourable member but that very quickly, Mr. Chairman, covers the main areas of responsibility.

MRS. WESTBURY: Right, Mr. Chairperson. When somebody from the department phones and says, this field representative is coming to your school to explain the policies, to appraise policies, to evaluate policies and to help you solve any problems, and the principal of the school says to the department, Thank you, we're doing very well in our school, we don't need anyone to explain the policies, we understand them and we're teaching them, we can give you an appraisal of the policies and we'd just as soon the field representative didn't come. — does he come anyway?

MR. COSENS: Well, that's a very interesting situation the Member for Fort Rouge describes. I must tell the honourable member, Mr. Chairman, that the reception that these people have received in the educational community has been most positive and that they are welcomed at the schools that they visit. Administrators, in particular, welcome the opportunity to discuss particular problems, opinions, concerns and to put forward suggestions that they may have. In some cases they say it's the first opportunity that they have had to talk to someone from the Department of Education in a number of years.

MRS. WESTBURY: What else would the Minister expect them to say when they can have their licences to teach lifted on the spot? They're not going to slam the door in their face and lose their licence. What else do they expect? Do they have an evaluation policy for the field representatives, unsigned or something that's not reflecting back on who the teachers and principals are who are doing the evaluating? How do we evaluate the reps?

MR. COSENS: Well, Mr. Chairman, this is almost getting to the point of the ridiculous because certainly these people are not viewed as policemen by the teaching staff of this province; they are viewed as people who are there to help, to provide assistance, to provide information. And for the Member for Fort Rouge to imply that no one would let them in the door because they're afraid they would lift their licence is preposterous.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't want the matter that my colleague from Rossmere

was dealing with to drop. It was suggested to him that his questions were becoming repetitive and I suggest that it was just his natural politeness that he was trying to put the point across by means of questions when he should have been making the point, perhaps, by means of accusation to the Minister.

The Minister has asserted on several occasions that it's the function of the field representatives to give consultation and advice, transmit policy, to liaise with the school boards, to conduct evaluation and hold hands and various other things that have been suggested as the policy, but the Minister was quite vehement in telling the committee that the field representatives — and shouldn't call them inspectors — had no inspectorial function or any sort of police function, yet at the same time he defends their right to conduct a police function in that they still have the power to suspend a teacher's licence.

Now, Mr. Chairman, he can't have it both ways. If they are not conducting that police function, then they should not have police powers. The same with our police force: We don't hire people to be policemen and give them no powers to conduct police activities and neither do we have those activities taking place by people who are not empowered to do so. So let us accuse the Minister of being inconsistent on this point, that either he has inspectors or he does not have inspectors and if his inspectors are not have inspectorial and police functions, then clearly this power to suspend a teacher's certificate is simply a redundant remnant of a school system of 30 years ago and should be done away with.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rossmere. The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister for some reason or another does not wish to respond to that; maybe he has a guilty conscience or something, I won't impute motives to the Minister for not replying to that accusation. But let me ask him a question now. We are on (d)(1), having to do with salaries, and we notice that there is an increase of over 60,000 requested for this year and yet he indicates that there is to be only an increase of one staff man year. Is he indicating to the committee that the new inspector — I'm sorry — field representative will be paid in excess of 60,000 for this year?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I believe I pointed out to the honourable member earlier, or perhaps it was another honourable member, that there's an increase of two staff in this regard, from 15 to 17, and that would account in part for a large portion of that particular increase.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I was quoting the Minister's own figures on the sheet that he distributed this afternoon where the Minister indicates that the adjusted vote, 1979-80, under this heading of Field Services, was 23 staff man years and that he is asking for an increase of one staff man year for 1980-81, and I'm asking him whether that one staff man year is worth the 60,000-plus that he is asking for approval of.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I would think this is probably explained by the fact that we have added two people in the field branch, field representatives, and the difference in the total brings it to 24 and may be accounted for one or more less secretaries, or secretarial support, in this regard. But we have in fact added two people to the field branch.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the Minister wasn't too clear as to the exact reason for this apparent discrepancy of one. He suggested it might have something to do with one or two secretarial staff. I wonder if he would like to just confer with his officials for a moment and perhaps give us the precise figures of just exactly how many persons there are and how many staff man years, and is there a difference there; and perhaps he can indicate, the difference between 17 and 24 being 7, are all support services or whether there is any other category in there.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, if this is any help, we have 16 field reps., one director for a total of 17 plus seven support positions, bringing us to a total of 24.

MR. WALDING: I accept the Minister's explanation of this, although I'm still not certain how he can explain the increase of 60,000 as being the increase of two field representatives, and yet at the same time he is explaining to us that there is only one staff man year. I'm still not clear as to just what the difference is, this year over last year.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I'll get that particular information for the member. I think it may be a bit complicated, in that we have added people by secondment and so on. There's certainly a logical explanation. I don't have it at my fingertips. I'll get it for the honourable member.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has introduced a new factor into this particular section when he speaks of secondment. I don't recall hearing him mention that before in relation to field services. Can he explain to us, please, how many people are involved in this secondment? Are they from somewhere else within his department? And if so, are they paid out of this resolution or out of this line in field services or are they paid under some other appropriation?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I believe I mentioned earlier that there are two secondments to the staff here from the school system of this province, and they are paid on this particular line.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister clarify for us please, whether those two secondments are categorized as field representatives or in some other category? Are they among the 16, in other words?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, they are two of the 16.

MR. WALDING: Can I ask the Minister whether any of this increase of 60,000 is to be part of the general salary increase or is that all taken into account in the one extra staff man year?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I'll get that particular information for the honourable member. My officials don't have it at this particular time.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I didn't have any further questions under this particular line, unless the Minister's answer to my previous questions would give rise to further questions. If we can have an understanding perhaps that when the Minister supplies us with that information that we would be allowed to ask any further questions arising from the answer, I'm willing to move on to the next line then.

MR. COSENS: I'll agree with that approach, Mr. Chairman, I'd be quite prepared at such time as I supply the information to the Honourable Member for St. Vital, I believe he had some question on the Reconciliation Statement on lapsing, special warrants and on another item that we'll deal with in 3.(a) that I'd be quite prepared to discuss those when I bring the information in, hopefully tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, in the same light, there are questions, I think vital ones, that the Minister undertook to answer which I posed, dealing specifically with what authority does a field representative have as compared with the old inspector. And since I think that is vital to this entire item, you can't pay a salary to a person who has no authority to do what he is purporting to do, is it understood then, Mr. Chairman, that we are not passing this item?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're passing this item but — (Interjection)— If I could just, from my understanding we're passing the item then when the Honourable Minister brings in the report —(Interjection)— If you are not going to pass this item there's no way that we can proceed.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, that's correct, we can hardly pass this item unless we get answers to the questions posed so that we may consider whether or not we agree to the passing of this item. It may, theoretically, Mr. Chairman, I'm saying that in a proper parliamentary sense, we surely can't be expected to pass an item on which some, I think, pretty germane questions have not been answered and therefore I don't see how we could possibly pass this item. And possibly, Mr. Chairman, in the light of the time, possibly an adjournment would be in order, although if there is more to be discussed under this item then by all means, but other than that, until we get answers to these questions we don't really know how to deal with the amount requested in this item at all. That's why I'm suggesting we can't really pass the item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, if anybody could make a suggestion as to whether we could leave this item and proceed on to the next item.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, just on that point, I think it would make sense to adjourn and to resume the item and complete the item tomorrow. Otherwise

Thursday, 29 May, 1980

you'd get into a preposterous situation of not completing the item and yet moving on, I don't see how you can do that. So I would therefore suggest to the Minister that we stop for the evening and resume in the morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I don't get a motion I must proceed the only way that I can. Committee rise.