

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 22 July, 1986.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. C. SANTOS: Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report same, and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Member for Kildonan, that the report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Madam Speaker, I beg leave to table the Proceedings of the 67th Annual Meeting of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, held at Halifax, Nova Scotia, August 1985.

MADAM SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

MTX - hiring discrimination, Saudi Arabia

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

I wondered if he had had sufficient time to review the issue of the discriminatory hiring practices that involve MTX, the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Manitoba Telephone System and Saudi Arabia Datacom Limited, a 50 percent-owned corporation under Manitoba Telephone System; discriminatory hiring practices which prevent the hiring of Jews and women to work for those corporations which are funded by Manitoba, the Manitoba Government, to do business in Saudi Arabia; and will he now withdraw the MTS investment in Saudi Arabia?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, this morning I was in contact with MTX, and also my office was in contact

with the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, in regard to alleged discriminatory practices pertaining to hiring.

MTX advised me, Madam Speaker, that there has been no discriminatory practices on their part, insofar as the hiring of anyone based upon religion or sex, insofar as recruitment for the projects in the Saudi Arabian countries. Nor has there been, in fact, at any time since 1978, insofar as the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa are concerned; they advise that the practices are within the laws of Canada, that the Saudi Arabian Embassy assure them that they do not process the applications for work permits on the basis of either religion or sex. That has not been the case according to the Saudi Arabian Embassy, Madam Speaker.

Also I am satisfied that the guidelines of the Canadian Human Rights Commission that dealt with this matter, after this same matter was dealt with in this Legislature and in the Federal Parliament in 1978, the Canadian Human Rights Commission found that there was no discrimination; that still stands, Madam Speaker. If any doubt remains, then certainly we're prepared to ask the Canadian Human Rights Commission or Gordon Fairweather to further enquire into that.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the Premier telling us that the word and the testament of the president of MTS, and the president of MTX, given in an interview last week is incorrect, at which time they said that banning Jews and women is the only way the MTX can do business in Saudi Arabia or in other Muslim countries. Is he now saying that that's incorrect and they were wrong in having said that?

HON. H. PAWLEY: That is not the information certainly I received from MTX this morning, nor is it the information I received from External Affairs in Ottawa.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is he saying that what Mr. Holland said in response to this matter - Mr. Holland being the President of Manitoba Telephone System - on Friday, when he said, "It would be a major discourtesy if we don't observe the local laws, culture and the religion of the host country," that that too was incorrect?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, that is what Mr. Holland is reputed to have said, not what he may have said to the media.

A MEMBER: Oh, come on.

HON. H. PAWLEY: There's a big difference.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is he saying that the president of MTX was not correct, Mr. Plunkett, when he said and I quote from the story, "Plunkett said everybody at MTX knows Jews can't go to Saudi Arabia and women can't work in a Muslim country." Is he saying that too was an incorrect statement?

MADAM SPEAKER: May I ask for a clarification? Is the Honourable Leader of the Opposition quoting statements from Hansard from a committee meeting or from press reports?

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, I am quoting statements that are attributed to these individuals in a news media report, and these people happen to be the president of MTS and the president of MTX, respectively.

MADAM SPEAKER: May I remind the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that it is the member's duty to ascertain the truth of statements before he brings them to the Chamber.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the Premier telling the Legislature that anyone can be allowed to work in Saudi Arabia under the aegis of MTX and Saudi Arabia Datacom Ltd., companies that we, the taxpayers, have funded and set up to do business in Saudi Arabia, that anyone is eligible to work there, is allowed to work there under the laws of that country today?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Yes, Madam Speaker, in fact, that's what Mr. McGill even indicated to this House back in 1978, 1979, that that was possible. Insofar as women are concerned, Madam Speaker, my advice is that there have been no applications, but I would hasten to advise members of the House that there are quite a number of Canadian women involved in professions, in health and in teaching, including Manitoba women right at the present time in Saudi Arabia.

MR. G. FILMON: As a matter of fact, I have had that confirmed as well, that nursing and education are allowable professions for women. Is the Premier telling us that it is just coincidence that of the 100 or more people who have gone to work for MTX and Saudi Arabia Datacom Ltd. from Manitoba, that none of these people are women and that none were Jews, that that is just strictly coincidence, Madam Speaker?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I, in fact, inquired of Mr. Holland this morning if any women had made an effort, as engineers, to Saudi Arabia. Apparently a number of engineers are very small who are female, regrettably, but there have been apparently no requests, no rejections.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the Premier then saying that is just strictly coincidence and it isn't, as was stated earlier by Mr. Plunkett, that everybody at MTX knows that Jews can't go to Saudi Arabia and women can't work in Muslim countries?

MADAM SPEAKER: That question is repetitious.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my question to the Premier then is: Is he fully satisfied that the policies that are being pursued by Saudi Arabia Datacom Ltd. and MTX, companies in which investment has been made by the people of Manitoba, by the Government of Manitoba, are not in any way adhering to

discriminatory policies in allowing people to work in those countries.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, as I indicated a few moments ago, I am satisfied that they fall within the guidelines as established by the Canadian Human Rights Commission in its hearing of 1979. I would intend, because I think the honourable members have raised certainly a matter that concerns us all in this House, I'd be prepared to consult further, either with Mr. Gordon Fairweather, or to refer the matter for further determination as to the updating necessary since the 1979 finding to be doubly satisfied that there is no discriminatory practice.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the Premier telling the people of Manitoba that the policies and the hiring practices that are being adhered to by these companies in which we have a significant financial investment, MTX, Saudi Arabia Datacom Ltd., that those policies are the policies of the Government of Manitoba, fully supported by him and his entire administration.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, as I have already indicated, I'm satisfied, on the basis of conversations with External Affairs in Ottawa, plus MTX this morning, that there is no discrimination based upon religion or sex.

I am prepared, Madam Speaker, to again refer this matter to the Canadian Human Rights Commission which, by the way, is a much more objective body than I'm sure honourable members in this House would pretend to be, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, chaired by Mr. Gordon Fairweather, who's a well-respected human rights personage in Canada, to further review this matter, subsequent to their findings in 1979.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, if the Premier is fully satisfied with the policies that are being adhered to these corporations, why would he then refer this to the Canadian Human Rights Commission?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, because I know that if I don't do it honourable members, including the Leader of the Opposition and others, will continue to suggest there's discrimination when there isn't discrimination.

I refer, Madam Speaker, to remove all doubts, refer this matter to the Canadian Human Rights Commission so honourable members can't continue to yell discrimination, when in fact there is none.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, if indeed we are concerned about discrimination, the Premier has expressed concerns in the past with respect to policies concerning South Africa. We're not just talking about some airy-fairy kind of application of moral standards. We're talking about whether or not the Premier . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. G. FILMON: . . . and his colleagues are committed to the eradication of discrimination against employment, against women and Jews in Saudi Arabia; so I just

wanted to be absolutely clear that the Premier is satisfied with the policy and he supports fully the policies that are being adhered to by these corporations owned by the taxpayers of Manitoba.

HON. H. PAWLEY: I thought I'd already dealt with that question, but so that honourable members can't continue to raise speculation as to discrimination, and because I don't have any reservation, Madam Speaker, I will see to it that this matter is referred to the Canadian Human Rights Commission so that this matter is not kicked around as a political football in this Legislative Chamber. I'll be referring it to the Canadian Human Rights Commission or updating.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the Premier suggesting that the issue of discrimination against the employment of women and Jews is a political football?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, it would be a political football for honourable members to continue to level charges when I've indicated that, in order to remove any doubt on a very serious matter, I want an objective body dealing with human rights, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, to make a ruling that will satisfy us so we remove this from the political arena.

I am satisfied, on the basis of the information that I have, no discrimination, that will not satisfy the Leader of the Opposition. Understandably, I want to refer it now to the Canadian Human Rights Commission so the Leader of the Opposition cannot continue to holler "discrimination" for political purposes.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Member for Pembina has the floor.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System.

Can the Minister indicate whether qualified employees of MTS who may be seconded to the MTX operations in Saudi Arabia are given an orientation course in Saudi Arabian religious law, among which are implicit the bans on alcohol and bans on Jewish and women employees.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I do want to confirm that those MTS employees who want to apply for posting in Saudi Arabia, as they have since 1978, are given an orientation briefing which does outline the differences in the law and the customs and traditions in Saudi Arabia and those in Canada; and, of course, they include such matters as alcohol, the role of both men and women in society, a great manner of customs and traditions that are vastly different than here. It does deal with religious artifacts and religious practices.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, possibly the Minister did not understand my question. My question was specifically: does the orientation amongst applicants who may qualify for MTX posting in Saudi Arabia include, specifically, an orientation on Saudi religious law which specifically prohibits and bans Jewish and women employees? Is that part of the orientation program given by MTS to potential workers to be seconded to MTX?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I think the short answer would be, no, however, I know the honourable member is not going to be satisfied with a short answer. The requirements of foreign employment, whether it be through CIDA or External Affairs or any other foreign employment, does require orientation on the part of a Manitoban or Canadian who is going to work or be involved for any length of time in another foreign nation, and that does include briefings as to what the customs and traditions are in that country in respect to a wide range of things including religion.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, given that the orientation given by Manitoba Telephone System to potential qualified employees who may be interested in work in Saudi Arabia through MTX, would the Minister not investigate with MTS as to whether the explanation of Saudi religious laws which prohibit Jews and women from working in Saudi Arabia is not in fact telling those Jews and women qualified in Manitoba Telephone System that they need not apply for work in Saudi Arabia?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, maybe I could cast a little bit of light on this for the Member for Pembina. The Manitoba Telephone System advised me that they have no record of applications from Jewish people, since in the application form that is completed by those that apply for the positions through MTX, there's no request for information as to one's religion or race or any other basis; so there's no record insofar as whether or not any Jewish people had been refused or not because religious faith is not asked for in the first instance.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, the Premier's answer begs a further question. If, in fact, there is no record in the applicant's form for employment of religion or sex, why then does the orientation course, given by the Manitoba Telephone System, include informing employees of Saudi religious laws which ban the employment of Jews and women if, in fact, the application form contains neither reference?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, the honourable member, I think, would recall that in the debate in 1978, the Honourable Member for St. Johns, Saul Cherniack, finally, after extensive questioning, did obtain confirmation from the Honourable Mr. McGill, who was then Minister responsible for the Telephones, that there was an orientation briefing in respect to employment in Saudi Arabia.

I have learned what the orientation course says about religious taboos and I'll read it. It says: "Don't discuss

religion, this is a very sensitive subject with some Saudis; don't stare at someone who is praying, you may see people praying almost anywhere; don't walk in front of someone who is praying; don't step on a prayer rug if someone is preparing to pray; don't attempt to enter a mosque; don't go to the holy cities of Mecca or Medina; don't call a Saudi a Mohammedan, the proper term is Moslem. Be discreet if in public during prayer times."

Madam Speaker, they are orientation instructions in respect to the customs of that country and I would say, Madam Speaker, that every country in the world establishes certain laws and traditions and customs, and when we go and work there, we do our best to be good citizens and conform, and not be offensive when we are in another person's country.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, in providing further elucidation as to the briefing provided, can the Minister indicate whether that briefing includes the premise of Saudi religious law which prohibits the employment of Jews and women? Is that also part of the document that he has just quoted from?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I don't believe that to be the case.

Federal Tripartite Program re beef

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Many cattlemen in this province are concerned about the short period of time that they are being given to consider the options from the Beef Commission and the relationship that we have with the Federal Tripartite Program that's being offered.

Has the Minister had time to decide if he will reconsider the deadline and allow more time for consideration?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, I want to indicate to my honourable friend that, as I understand it, the second quarter support level under the National Tripartite Plan is now being calculated and is final. I want to indicate to my honourable friend that the support payment, or differential between the federal plan, which is now \$2.64 per cwt., as compared to our present program, under our program before the changes, or the options that are there for producers, is \$13.87, having a net producer difference of over \$10.00 a cwt.

Madam Speaker, even with the Alternative 1, with the reduction of support and reduction of premiums, and that takes into account the premium cost, the net benefit to the Manitoba producers under Alternative 1, which is the reduction in support, is still a difference of \$9.16 a cwt. on Level 3, on the highest premium and highest level. As well, under Level 2, which is the increase in premiums and the increase in support, it would still be on Level 3 a net benefit of \$9.46 a cwt.

Madam Speaker, clearly indicating to honourable members that what they have raised is, in fact, not very factual in terms of the information that they have received.

It should be pointed out that in the Province of Alberta, which has a cattle industry about five times the size of Manitoba, only 3,000 producers have joined the federal program. We are asking the Commission to monitor the situation and if, in fact, there is need to allow another window for entrance into the federal plan, we will consider that.

MADAM SPEAKER: I remind honourable ministers to keep their answers brief.

The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: A supplementary, Madam Speaker. Given that the Minister has just stated that the increase in coverage that is available federally, as compared to provincially, does that mean that he's prepared to give a commitment to the cattlemen of this province that the provincial premiums will not change in the near future?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, the proposals that are being put into place by the Manitoba Beef Commission are clearly an option to producers. They have a choice of either having a reduction in support, ranging from about 5 percent to 8 percent, with a corresponding reduction in premiums between 25 percent and 33 percent. That is the choice of one side of the question, or increasing the support level; leaving the support level where it is and, of course, increasing the premiums from - and I'm quoting on slaughter animals - 12 percent to, I believe the figure is to 18 percent. That is the choice that the producers have in a program that was originally designed to be as actuarially sound as possible. That's the nature of the program.

No one, even the honourable members opposite could not predict that we would have four years of below cost-of-production prices in the marketplace. In fact, everyone, including us, had hoped that the marketplace would in fact return producers more than their cost of production.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The actuarial soundness of the program that the Minister just referred to makes the case that this was not discussed during the meetings this Spring . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a supplementary question?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Madam Speaker, I'm asking the Minister if he will reconsider having a series of meetings because that kind of information was not available?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, I wish honourable members opposite would not misinform the farmers of Manitoba.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I was not misinforming the farming public of this province. The Minister, I would expect, will withdraw that remark.

MADAM SPEAKER: Misinform is not on the list of unparliamentary words. The member does not have a point of order. The term has been used by several members, including the member himself, and I have let that go.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, last week members opposite indicated in this House that the federal plan would pay more than the provincial plan in terms of producer support. If that isn't misinformation, Madam Speaker, what is?

Madam Speaker, it was this government that attempted to change the mind of the Federal Government when they brought in tripartite stabilization which included hogs, beef and sheep all in one. It was an all-or-nothing program. It was this Minister and this government that changed the mind of the Federal Government to separate those programs. We, in fact, have asked the Federal Government to consider several options, even under the Beef Program.

Madam Speaker, we will continue to press for those changes to make the federal program much more meaningful. If honourable members wish to go out and promote the federal program, absolutely, let them go ahead.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: A new question for the Minister, Madam Speaker.

If he is prepared to consider the Tripartite Program, and it appears that he is rejecting it out of hand, will he then reconsider the option of convening a series of meetings in the province and allow his people on the commission, or his staff people, to go out and explain the changes that are being proposed in the Beef Commission, and explain what he means by actuarial soundness.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, there is another form of misinformation. Here we have a member getting up in this House, after this government went ahead and presented details of the federal proposal when it really wasn't our job. It was either this job or their party's job.

Madam Speaker, we are always open to having producers - if they wish to change their mind and join the federal program, I will be the last to prevent the farmers of this province from joining the federal program. Let the honourable members go and sell the program; tell producers what the facts are. Let them come to me and say "we're prepared to join the federal program." Madam Speaker, I will be the first to receive them.

High School Program Review Committee

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education.

Since the Minister of Education has indicated to the House some time ago that he will be proceeding with the High School Review, and since he's now had some time to get the panel together, will the Minister of Education now table the list of members who will be making up the High School Review Panel?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I'm in the process right now of contacting some of the people who will be serving on the High School Review Committee and I hope to be in the position to announce the names of those people within the next couple of weeks.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, can the Minister also table the qualifying criteria which will help those people who wish to make representation to the panel? Will he table that criteria for us in the next little while?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I can tell the honourable member that I will be making a full report on the High School Review and the terms of reference in due course.

MR. L. DERKACH: This process is taking such a long time, Madam Speaker, and I'm wondering if the Minister can tell the House whether interested parties and individuals throughout Manitoba will, in fact, have an opportunity to make personal representation to the panel as it goes through the province, or will the panel only be receiving written submissions?

HON. J. STORIE: Much of what the member has asked, of course, will be determined by the Review Committee as they decide what form of subcommittee system they — (Interjection) — Madam Speaker, I have tried to indicate to members opposite that the committee of course will be conducting its own affairs.

I have indicated, on other occasions, and specifically to the Member for Roblin-Russell, that this committee, in my opinion, will be travelling through all of the regions, either itself or its subcommittees, to receive representation from individuals and from groups.

And that, in addition to that, I intended to do travelling throughout the province and the regions to meet with interested groups, including parents and students, so that the final result of the High School Review, which comes from the committee, can reflect in a fair and accurate way, the real wishes of the people of Manitoba.

Day Care Centre - Health Sciences Centre

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services.

The day care called Children at the Centre, formerly the Health Sciences Centre, is presently advertising that it has government-subsidized spaces while, at the same time, charging fees ranging from \$21.00 for infants to \$15.00 for children aged four and over. Can the Minister explain how such fees could be charged at a public day care?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Madam Speaker. This particular day care has had a different history than other day

cares. It was an employer-sponsored day care under the Health Sciences Centre. It caters primarily to employees in that centre who, on average, are more highly paid. It is our expectation that as the system develops, we will have increasing numbers of employer-sponsored day care. They have, as a result of this, been permitted a higher fee level, but the actual subsidy available from the public is on the same basis as any other centre.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Can the Minister tell us if we are, in fact, now going to get two levels of private day care, those that her department sees as suitable and those that the department sees as unsuitable?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the use of the word "private" is quite misleading. To the extent that all the day care centres are run by parent boards, they can all be considered private. The more relevant discrimination is between profit and non-profit. This particular centre is a non-profit centre.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Can the Minister explain why day care charging \$21 for an infant would not end up at the end of the year with a profit similar to other private day cares?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the higher cost for giving infant care is based on the higher requirement of staffing per children. The centre's budget is on a break-even basis. They would not be allowed, if they end up the year with some slight surplus, to remove that surplus, it would be plowed back into the next year's operation. There is no mechanism for any slight surplus to flow to the board.

Canadian Nazarene College

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

On September 5, 1985, the then Minister of Municipal Affairs, Andy Anstett, wrote to Mr. Neil Hightower, president of the Canadian Nazarene College and indicated: "I am now able to report that the Minister of Education, the Honourable Maureen Hemphill, and I have directed our staff to prepare an amendment to The Municipal Assessment Act. This should ease economic difficulties faced by colleges such as yours."

Can the Minister indicate whether he is planning to bring forward legislation to amend The Municipal Assessment Act to help these colleges in this Session?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I do not have any plans to bring in such legislation during this Session. However, a letter is going out very shortly to Mr. Hightower to meet with him and with the three other principals. Hopefully the Minister of Education will be able to be present at that meeting and we will discuss this issue with that group at that time.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Madam Speaker, to the same Minister.

Can the Minister indicate when there was a change of policy from last year to where he is not bringing legislation forward, whether there is a change of policy and when this change of policy took place?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Yes, my understanding is that, subsequent to that letter, the department took a look at the issue of exempting property and it is by far more complicated than was anticipated. Secondly, as members opposite know the Weir Commission had recommended that the number of exemptions be minimized, and we are reviewing that particular request in light of both situations.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: A final supplementary to the same Minister.

Can the Minister indicate whether there is any possibility that the four colleges that we're making reference to can get some kind of financial relief for this coming year, or do we have to wait another three years of writing and begging for appointments with this Minister?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Madam Speaker, I very much resent the words "begging for an appointment."

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: For the members information, I received a call from, I believe it was Mr. Eichhorn, I can't remember the name, and within a matter of two or three days, I had set an appointment. Unfortunately, at the last moment, I couldn't make it and I have not heard since until about a week ago. I received a letter which alleged that a number of efforts had been made to contact me. I can assure the member that I am quite willing to meet with Mr. Hightower and his group and that will be done. A letter is going out in the near future, but there will be no legislation during this Session to exempt their property as requested.

Flooding in Manitoba - result of Alberta floods

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. It follows upon the fact that there have been high water levels on the Saskatchewan River, reported in Alberta, high water levels have led to flooding in that province. My question to the Minister is as to when that high water level is expected to reach Manitoba and as to whether there is any danger of flooding, particularly in The Pas area, which is on the Saskatchewan River banks?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Staff from the department have been monitoring water flows

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in light of the attention given to this issue in the media. The peak for flow in the Saskatchewan River at The Pas is expected to arrive about July 30th and it is expected to be at a level of some 2 metres above current levels, and that would put it at a level comparable that it was in April of this year, but below the levels of spring runoff that were experienced in the year previous. With that level, it is expected that there will be some flooding in the low lying agricultural lands in the vicinity of The Pas, but we do not expect at this time that any communities would be affected.

Manfor - projected loss

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question to the Premier.

I wonder if the Premier has been informed that his Minister responsible for Manfor in his statements earlier this year has somewhat misinformed the public when he indicated that the projected loss for Manfor for this year would be \$5 million, rather than \$12 million when you include depreciation?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Manfor.

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I believe the member has used an unparliamentary word and . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, if it isn't unparliamentary, it is certainly inaccurate.

Madam Speaker, I indicated some time ago, when I tabled the Annual Report and in questioning prior to that, that the cash loss of Manfor would be \$5.2 million, exactly as was reported this morning in committee.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, I would ask the First Minister to check into what the Minister had indicated and report to this Assembly.

I have a further question dealing with Manfor, Madam Speaker. Would the First Minister reconsider his priorities, Madam Speaker, when it comes to dealing with the people of The Pas and take just a little bit of the money that he's putting into the support of Manfor to maintain an agriculture representative's office for the farm community in that district?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, let me assure the Honourable Member for Arthur, with the Honourable Member for The Pas, the Minister of Northern Affairs, that there is continued good stewardship insofar as the constituents of The Pas are concerned.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I would like to have permission to proceed with a non-political statement.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister has leave.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I am sure that all members of this Chamber were saddened this morning to awake to hear of the unfortunate death of one who is known by us all, including members of the media present, in the personage of Jack Kusch.

I would like to take this opportunity to pass on to Jack's friends and to his family and loved ones our deepest sympathy at this his untimely death at the age of 48.

Mr. Kusch spent many years as a journalist and as a legislative reporter here in Manitoba. He was well-liked by us all as an individual, as a professional. He will be, I know, missed by those in the profession and by his friends.

Democracy in Canada and in the Province of Manitoba is not only served by those of us who sit in this Legislature, but also by an informed electorate and by the media and reporters of the personage of Jack Kusch. He was dedicated and committed as an individual to the democratic process and, in that role as a journalist, he participated deeply in that process. Fairness, accuracy and responsibility were the goals that he constantly strove for. I know that he will be missed by all who worked with him, all of us who were reported upon, by those of us who listened to him, by his friends, by his relatives.

Again, particularly to his family, our deepest sympathy goes to them at this time.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to join with the Premier and members opposite in expressing sadness at the passing of Jack Kusch. Indeed, I believe that I speak for all on this side of the House when I say we've lost an old friend. Jack covered this Legislature for a period of seven years and many of us got to know him on a personal basis, on a social basis, and spent many happy hours together. We enjoyed his company; we enjoyed his good humour. We enjoyed his general good nature in dealing with people and the way in which he covered this House in a fair and a balanced manner, and one that I think did credit to him at all times as a journalist.

I guess that all of us recall hours spent together with Jack, trips that I like to recall, going to Brandon to the annual excursion to the Winter Fair, his coverage of Cabinet tours when we were in government and all of the times that we were able to spend together, aside from the professional opportunities, professional relationships that we had.

So I say, on behalf of all of my colleagues, farewell to an old comrade and friend. We will remember him well, and indeed we wish to join in expressing sincerest

condolences to his daughter and members of his family at this very sad time.

Thank you.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: The Economic Development Committee changes: the Member for The Pas substituting for the Member for Seven Oaks; the Member for Gimli substituting for the Member for Rossmere.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: I move that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, seconded by the Member for Ellice.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I wonder, has the Government House Leader indicated that there will be a committee meeting this Thursday.

HON. J. COWAN: I'd like to discuss with the Opposition House Leader following the question period what business we'd want to bring forward on Thursday.

I'd also like to indicate that we will be continuing the discussion of Health in the Chamber, and moving into a discussion on Education in the Committee Room.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the Honourable Member for Kildonan in the Chair for the Department of Education.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, M. Dolin: Committee please come to order. We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Education. We will begin with a statement by the Minister.

The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't intend to make a lengthy statement at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hear, hear.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson says, "Hear, hear." I did want to make a few comments about, I guess, the year that was and the year that will be and, in doing so, perhaps reflect on some of the important current

issues which face the department, and I suppose the educational system throughout Manitoba.

If you want to reflect for just a moment on the past year in Education in terms of funding, I think it's important to recognize that, since 1981, provincial support to education has increased from 432 million to 608 million, reflecting a significant concern for and commitment to the provincial system of education.

Despite that fairly significant increase in funding to education throughout the province in the public system and I believe an equal level of commitment to our community college system and our university system in many respects, funding is still an essential and an overriding concern for many of our school divisions, our university boards of governors and our community colleges. Clearly, each of those sectors within the educational system are facing continuing increasing demands on the part of the public that they serve and, at the same time, are facing ongoing, increasing operating costs, the majority of which tend to be salaries in each of those sectors. Whether you're talking about the universities or the community colleges or the public school system, you will still find that anywhere from 80 and more percent is directed at salaries. So funding continues to be a concern.

Certainly in my short tenure as Minister of Education to this point, I have had every indication that the expectations continue to grow. School divisions, regardless of whether they consider themselves to be low-spending school divisions or high-spending school divisions, feel that in many respects the current level of funding isn't adequately addressing all of the needs that they have.

I should say as well that the demands on the public school system, I think everyone understands, continue to escalate. There are expectations which go much beyond the simple expectation that the curriculum will be implemented in such a way as to prepare our young people for the future.

We have additional expectations come about that are faced by the system because of the fact that we have many recent immigrants, the fact that English is a second language to many of the people entering our school system. We still have, I suppose, barriers to overcome as far as many Native Manitobans are concerned in addressing the needs that they bring to the school system.

We have an increasing array of educational incentives, programs, to meet the needs of the handicapped, those with very special needs in the system. If we look at the funding increase to the special needs area over the last few years, you can see a dramatic emphasis on meeting the needs of the multiple handicapped and those with special needs of differing scope and variety.

We have a need to make school at all levels, education at all levels, more accessible, and that continues to be a concern in much of rural and Northern Manitoba, accessibility not only to post-secondary education institutions, which is an obvious concern, but, as I've indicated on other occasions, in 1986 there are still students who at the age of 13 and 14 are expected to go to residential school for their high school education. There are still students for whom the expectation that they will receive a high school education isn't particularly realistic because of their remoteness, because of the financial circumstances of their families, etc.

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We have many small schools in the province who continue to look to the province for leadership through, I suppose, funding arrangements and support services to allow them to provide their students with an adequate and an appropriate education.

So on the one hand we have a legitimate concern about the level of funding and I believe a government which has certainly attempted to live up to the expectations that the public holds for funding to the school system. On the other hand, you have expectations that continue, apparently, to rise faster than our ability to fund them.

We have the other side of the coin, I suppose, represented by the concerns of taxpayers. I have received representation from many different groups over the last couple of months, not the least of which is the Union of Manitoba Municipalities who expressed concern on behalf of property tax owners, farmers, who are concerned about the relationship between education and funding of education and property taxes.

I think that we've attempted to hold the line and, as members of this committee I'm sure know, that since 1983 the residential and commercial educational support levy has remained constant. However, that is not to say that the concerns that they expressed aren't legitimate, and I know that as we move through the sections dealing with funding to the public school system that those will also be addressed.

Over the last few years, as well, we have spent considerable capital on school upgrading and new construction in the province. Some \$37 million has been targeted for this fiscal year and I believe that is similar to what was expended in the fiscal year 1985-86.

If we look to the universities, we can see, again, a considerable emphasis on capital expenditures as we have a number of new buildings at the University of Manitoba, a new field house at the university and, again, an emphasis on the construction of educational assets for the Province of Manitoba which will last long beyond the impact that this committee has on the course of educational events.

The community colleges have expanded very significantly their outreach activities over the last two years. I have said on many occasions that accessibility is an important aspect of the delivery of education in the province, and the new satellite stations and regional offices that have been established by Keewatin Community College in Flin Flon and Norway House, and Assiniboine Community College is also extending its outreach with a satellite in Dauphin, which I hope will be open this fall. Again, some additional outreach activity in the northwestern part of the province, and Red River Community College, as well, extending its services to communities in southeastern Manitoba.

In terms of priorities for the coming year, I suppose a couple come to mind. One, of course, is the high school review, which I hope to be able to make some announcement on in the very near future. The high school review has a list of tasks before it already as individual groups and representative groups in the educational field have made their concerns known about the high school system.

Clearly, I could list a range of topics that I think the high school review should and undoubtedly will review as part of its mandate, and they include issues like the core subjects that are taken at high school; the

vocational needs of Manitoba young people; the question of science and technology and the adequacy of that particular section of our high school system; the credit versus alternative systems in the high school; student assessment; and again, the question of accessibility which is still very much a problem, particularly in rural Manitoba. So those issues, I am sure, will be addressed and the public will have an opportunity to present their particular perspectives on those issues and others, as they see fit, over the course of the coming year.

In addition to that, the previous Minister of Education announced, I believe in January, that we would be initiating a series of activities designed to improve the quality of education in Manitoba. I have referenced a couple of those in my comments to questions in the House, and I would like to outline just very briefly some of the areas in which the department, in cooperation with - and I emphasize "in cooperation with" - the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, etc., will be dealing over the next few months.

One that I have referenced already is the question of in-service for professional staff in our school system. An inter-organizational consultation paper has already been prepared and I think it's refreshing in its frankness. In-service has been a bone of contention, I think, on the part of some teachers, some administrations, some school divisions, certainly some parents, over the course of many years. I found it certainly gratifying to see a frank look at the question of in-service, the value, the need for it.

It's my hope that in each of the initiative areas there will be that kind of inter-organizational cooperation because I think we recognize that the educational system is large and cumbersome in a sense. It is certainly well ingrained, which makes it difficult to change direction, to the extent that reform and improvement and progress is going to be made in the system; it's going to require the dedication, the commitment of more than just the Department of Education. I think we're off to a good start with the consultation paper on in-service and there are a number of other areas where we will be working with these groups to foster improvement within the system.

One of the areas I think that most members of this Committee will be interested in is the area of parent-teacher, parent-school contact and collaboration, another area where the cooperation certainly of the Teachers' Society and the Trustees Association is going to be critical. The initiatives include activities designed to highlight the successes of projects, programs within schools and make these successes better known to other schools within the province. We're hoping to create a network of successful and innovative schools to demonstrate to other areas, other school communities that educational change is possible and productive and worthwhile.

In addition to that, the initiatives include action to retrain teachers, to make sure that the current teaching staffs in our schools are prepared and ready to support our efforts at curriculum development and curriculum change as it occurs.

Initiative is also needed in the area of training both teachers and administrators on the use of student

assessment. Student assessment has been a concern of many parents and has been a public issue for some time and I think there needs to be a joint review again of the issues surrounding the controversy and surrounding the scope of student assessment.

Finally, some work has already been done - in fact, a guide has been prepared and distributed to school divisions, I believe, on local planning efforts to insure that local school divisions have a well-defined educational policy, a well-defined set of objectives which they and their administration and teachers are implementing and the department is providing support staff and assistance to local school divisions in their efforts to create the atmosphere necessary for the continuing development of education within our school divisions.

There are a number of other areas that I could touch on, Mr. Chairperson. There's only one that I would like to touch on briefly before we commence. I'll leave the others aside. I'm sure that they will come up in questions over the course of the Estimates review, and that is the question - and I believe a serious one - with respect to federal actions over the past couple of years which need to be of great concern to all of us here with respect to funding for post-secondary education.

I think members of the committee know that myself and the Minister of Health attended a Standing Committee of Parliament to present a brief on behalf of Manitoba on the implications of Bill C-96. In short form, I suppose the analysis has to be something like this.

The provinces, not only in Manitoba but I think most provinces in the country, most jurisdictions in the world have found that the costs of education and health, but in this case we're speaking of education, have increased generally beyond the rate of inflation, beyond the growth of our provincial and national economies by 2 percent to 3 percent. The impact of Bill C-96 is essentially to lock in federal contributions to 2 percent less GNP, which is going to create a shortfall of funding over a period of time. As time goes by, the implications become more onerous and more difficult, particularly for provinces without the financial resources to deal with it.

In addition to that, there have been a number of other changes which have come about in a unilateral way which are going to affect the post-secondary system. The Department of Employment and Immigration, through CEIC, has made a unilateral decision to cut back on the number of direct spaces it purchases in our community colleges. The end result of that, over a three-year period, is going to be about a 40 percent reduction in the direct federal purchase of spaces in community colleges. It's going to leave a serious shortfall in our community college system and leave us with the difficult prospect of, in effect, covering that loss over that period of time and into the future. It also means that some 1,000 to 2,000 students are going to be looking elsewhere for training, or not have training opportunities made available to them.

So that is something that the department's going to face. My intention in bringing this up at this time is not to create so much a political argument about whether it was or wasn't necessary. I've said many times that the Federal Government faces its own set of circumstances with which it's trying to deal. But it is

important that it be on the record, because the educational system in Manitoba is going to have to cope with those changes. It's something that we are prepared to do, but it is going to create some difficulties and it is going to mean some adjustment and some shortfall, I suppose, that the province may or may not be able to cover.

Apart from that, Mr. Chairperson, I turn the floor over to my colleagues.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister.
The Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, first of all, would like to extend my thanks and appreciation on behalf of myself and my colleagues for the cooperation we have received from the Minister to date on supplying us with certain information. I know he's had some difficulties in getting one or two publications through his department, but he has tried his best to provide it and, for that, I would like to thank him.

I also would like to welcome him to the large debate of education. This is the first time he has taken the front seat and this is the first time I have been involved in the debate on education and its financing and how it should proceed in this province.

I also welcome to this debate several new members that we have in our caucus. A number of my colleagues in the past have been involved in the debates on education, some have shared the responsibility of being chief critic; but we now have in our caucus four new members, primarily from Springfield, Riel, Roblin-Russell and Ste. Rose, who've all been school trustees or chairmen of their school divisions.

I think they bring a unique point of view in the sense that in many instances they, like the Minister, have had to juggle the responsibility of raising money, providing services and trying to provide a quality level of education in their constituencies. That will be a welcome addition in reviewing the Estimates; in fact, in developing the debate on education and hopefully the policies for the future in Manitoba.

I also would like to take the opportunity to welcome the Member for River Heights whose experience in education is well known. I think she, too, will contribute to these debates.

In my statement, I would like to deal with some of the concerns that we have as a caucus and it will be asking questions either now or in the House on. The foremost or the most important one in the minds of many in this province is a funding formula for the education. At present, I believe there are three formulas in place and they apply to different portions of the province. There lacks a degree of common sense or equity in any of these formulas; in fact, why there should be more than one formula is a mystery.

It is time for a major overhaul of the funding formula in education. This does not necessarily mean the review of taxation or tax assessment, though it goes hand in hand. I think it's important that the Minister initiate a review on this whole issue because he has been inundated by a number of individual school divisions. A number have come in the group, in particular in Western Manitoba, to deal with this whole question of the funding formula.

I find it surprising that as the Minister touched on this issue in his opening remarks that he has not, on his own, initiated steps to be taken to try and clarify and resolve some of the inequities in the whole funding formula process. Now we're not talking about the supplementary financing programs, but we're talking about the basic formula for funding the school divisions in the province.

I believe that the Manitoba Teachers' Society will be making representations to the Minister some time this year on this issue. The Minister has alluded it's the municipal trustees that have made representations. I know we, as politicians, have made representations either through questions in the House or arranging meetings with the interested people with the Minister. So I'm surprised that the Minister has not taken an initiative at this time to start this whole process.

The other interesting aspect of it is that it may not require additional funding. It may require just the reallocation of the monies going on the funding formula so that there can be more equity in the system. I think this is the underlying issue in this whole problem area is the inequity that exists in the current funding formulas.

The second area of concern that we have is the funding or the lack of funding as it relates to the universities and the post-secondary universities. It's interesting that the Minister raised the question of the debate as to whether or not the Federal Government has or has not impacted on the educational scene in Manitoba or will in the future.

It is interesting to note that there was an increase in the transfer of funds to the province for post-secondary education in the neighbourhood of some 6 percent or 6.5 percent; yet the amount of funds allocated to education was 5.8 percent, but to the universities, in particular, they only got 3.8 percent, and when you boil it down to their current operating level, they only got 2.78 percent of new discretionary funds.

As we've seen in the newspapers, one university in particular has to cut back dramatically. So I will be pursuing with the Minister why there has not been at least an equivalent transfer of funds to the post-secondary education institutions in light of the large and reasonable funding increase that was received from the Federal Government.

The debate as to whether or not the Federal Government should be changing the funding formula as it affects its priorities or needs, I agree, do not fit this particular Chamber; but it's the allocation of the resources that this province has or should be applying to its universities and post-secondary schools that is important and I intend to pursue that here.

Another area of concern is the quality of appointments to universities and the involvement of this government in the running of the affairs of the universities of this province. One of my colleagues will be raising questions in this particular area.

We have a dichotomy, or at least a dual policy, being enunciated by this government. One is that it's a hands-off situation, they're autonomous, they can run their own affairs; yet at the same time this policy was being enunciated, you have a government appointing the majority of members to boards and, in some instances, being involved in the running of the affairs of those universities. So if they are to be autonomous, then the government should not have any political appointees

to their boards and those institutions should be responsible for their own election of board of governors.

If the government is to make its own appointees, then why shouldn't they be in the minority and not the majority position? But if the government chooses to continue to appoint the majority of the members, then it has a direct involvement in the universities, albeit maybe through a surrogate, but it is still involved in running the affairs of the universities.

Another concern that I have, and that we have, is that the Minister has not seen fit to enunciate any policy or any review for the role of the universities and colleges in the latter half of this decade and, in particular, as it leads up to the year 2000 for this province. In fact, I was rather surprised and disappointed that during the campaign the Minister's party did not enunciate any specific policies relating to education.

But in today's age of high technology and rapid change, I find it surprising that the tools that one is given to meet the challenges of today are not being reviewed and upgraded constantly. I believe that there were some changes made in one of the community college structures, but what we're talking about is the allocation of resources to make sure that these resources are properly utilized and that the institutions are giving the right type of training or education to Manitoba youngsters to meet the problems of tomorrow. But there is not, from what I can determine, any policy or any attempt to identify these needs, these concerns, and where these institutions should be going.

Another concern raised by our caucus is the question of independent schools and its funding. This issue will not go away; it will be with us. We must deal with it fairly and equitably, and I will be dealing with this issue during the debates.

Another issue that is of concern to us is the role of parents in the educational system. The Minister has talked about two potential reviews: one dealing with the high school review and the other dealing with the quality of education. He specified specific items that he wanted to deal with, but nowhere in there is there a role for parents in the school system.

To make the schools function properly, to remove the alienation that parents feel toward the public school system, to ensure that the schools, the teachers, the administrators, the principals receive the support that they should get, one has to work back in the idea of the community school and get the support and involvement of the parents.

I can agree that in some instances or in some school areas, this is successful but on general it is not. There are home and school organizations but they seem to beg the question, or don't go far enough, in helping give support to those people who are trying to provide education; and I'm surprised that the Minister has not made any announcement or identification of trying to get the parents back into the system so that they can become useful and helpful partners in providing education today.

The Minister has touched on the high school review, but as we enunciated in the campaign and are most concerned about, is the number of compulsory core subjects that are required for a student to graduate out of high school. It is our position that the current plan is inadequate. We look forward to the debate, the review proposed to be undertaken by the High School

Review Commission, but one cannot help, in fact one does not wish to prejudge what they may find; but I think it is a given that students cannot succeed today in the present situation where they only need five basic subjects, one in Grade 12, to graduate.

It is important that employers be advised as to the type of degrees that students get when they come out, whether it is a top-of-the-line course, whether it is not just a general pass, but the type of education so that employers can know, when they hire people, whether or not those students are qualified for the jobs that they want them to be. It's only with the involvement of the employers and with parents in this area that we can get a good, sound, basic training in education.

There is also a concern for the development of departmental exams and/or the question of student testing or student evaluation because parents want to have some form of report card or testing measure on the schools, the teachers, their trustees. It's not, in any sense, to be a destructive process, but one that can be used in a positive sense, one that can early identify failings or shortcomings and the allocations of resources to help shore up or reinforce those areas of weakness. This is not meant to focus the teacher spending a whole year just so they can pass an exam at the end of the year and learn nothing else. For some \$400 million or \$500 million being spent on a public school system, they feel that they have a right to know how that system is functioning.

If it is functioning well, then this type of either exams or testing process will allay any fears, but as I pointed out earlier, the key in all of this is to try and determine any shortfalls or shortcomings and to reinforce and remove those shortcomings.

In any exercise, the review of the high school review, it is important to involve representatives in the universities and colleges because right now they are highly critical of the quality of graduates that are coming out of the public school system. It is important that they not only be involved in any question of review but also be used in a continuing, consultative basis to ensure that the public system is giving the proper training for those who wish to go to them, because I would surmise - I've not seen any statistics on it - but the bulk of students finishing Grade 12 go on to some post-secondary educational level.

If they are in fact not providing the right type of training, then these other institutions should not have to waste time, talent or energy to upgrade those students. They should be working cooperatively together to make sure that the student who's graduating out of Grade 12 is in fact ready to meet the particular discipline that is needed. Therefore, we need to include them in the process.

The one area that has not been touched on by the Minister and is of concern to myself and my colleagues is the whole area of curriculum development. Granted, it may be addressed in the proposed reviews for high schools or in the quality of education, but probably one of the largest flash points in the educational system today is the lack of involvement or consultation with parents.

Generally speaking, in any curriculum development or any review, you get professionals involved, and that is terrific, but you have to start getting the parents involved someplace. This is an important area, and I

think it's time that we started consulting them, not on an occasional basis but on a regular basis, and they should be part of any ongoing development process.

That concludes my opening remarks, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask the Minister for two to three pieces of additional information that I didn't have an opportunity to ask him for and that some time during the course of these Estimates he could provide them.

One of them would be a list of consultants employed by the department and their job descriptions, and it need only be brief, and any fees being paid for them. I'm not talking now those people who are involved in voluntary or receive minimal compensation for, say, curriculum development things, that sort of thing; it would be in a consultant type of process or actually with the department.

Secondly, the Minister made reference to the reduction of some 40 percent in spaces at the community colleges because of the reduction in the way the Federal Government is providing training in the province. I'm wondering if the Minister has some documentation or factual evidence that I could see or refer to, because in any public statements he's made he's used these general statements, but I've yet to find any background or support material for them and I'd appreciate seeing them.

The other area of information I would like is that I believe that the Province of Manitoba, and in particular the Department of Education, works in recommending jobs-gratitude programs to the Federal Government and then the Federal Government either approves or disapproves them. I'm wondering, if this is correct, if the Minister can provide the process by which it comes about, how much money is allocated to this area, what staff are involved and, generally, a general explanation for this area.

Now I may have the names wrong, but I think there is a consultative process dealing with other job training or whatever it is. If I'm wrong in the terminology, I apologize, but if there's any problems, maybe we could clarify it later.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We will begin on Page 50, Resolution No. 46. Deferring Item 1.(a), we'll begin with Item 1.(b) Executive Support: Salaries.

The Member for Fort Garry.

I'm sorry, if the staff would like to come forward, belatedly.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, before going into the specific clause by clause, as we're into, I take it, 1.(b) which is Deputy Minister's Salary and office, I would like to ask some general questions. Hopefully we can deal with them, then move on to the specific items.

My first question is approximately a year ago, I believe, the Cabinet approved two individuals in the Department of Education, one Dr. Glenn Nicholls, and Mr. Guy Roy, to review the impact of the Charter and its effect on the Department of Education, its statutes and its school boards. It makes reference I believe that a Cabinet Order was passed. I'm wondering if there was an order, there is a criteria or terms of reference for this committee, and if so, could the Minister provide me with a copy of it?

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HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I believe I've dealt with this in question period a number of times. The review is essentially - again the two individuals - the member is quite correct in that two individuals were recommended in a Cabinet paper to undertake the review. As the member knows and as I've indicated previously, the Attorney-General is in the process of bringing in compliance legislation and there have been two separate bills dealing with Charter compliance.

The Public Schools Act is a large act, encompassing many different sections, and the review is intended to look at The Public Schools Act with reference to three sections of the Charter: Section 2, Section 15, and Section 23. It is an internal review.

The report recommended changes, or whatever, to bring The Public Schools Act into compliance with the Charter of Rights. It probably won't be completed until later on this year, early next year, and if there are any changes to be made - and I emphasize "if there are any changes to be made" - I would expect to be introducing them to The Public Schools Act through Public Schools Act amendments in the next Session.

MR. C. BIRT: I take it from the Minister's answer then that there will be no amendments coming forth at this Session relating to this particular review?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. C. BIRT: Is it just these two individuals that are conducting the review or do they have an advisory team or body in place to assist them?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the only assistance would come by way of the A-G's Department.

MR. C. BIRT: Could the Minister advise how often the A-G is involved? Is the Attorney-General's Department conducting the primary review? Do the members identify the concerns; do they refer them to the review in the A-G's? Could the Minister elaborate exactly how the A-G's Department is involved?

HON. J. STORIE: Well the intention would be to flag areas of concern. Obviously the A-G's Department would be providing the legal technical advice and following up with any of the pertinent amendments and drafting of amendments, etc.

MR. C. BIRT: To this point, what areas of concern have this Committee discovered or felt would be a problem?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, to be honest, I have not sat down with them and discussed at this point their particular findings and concerns. I would anticipate - and I'm sure members have already done so - that areas of special needs would obviously be an area under consideration; the question of religious exercises in school. As the member knows, there have been a number of court cases - a recent one in Ontario I believe - with respect to that issue.

However I point out to the member, and I have said before, that the Charter is a relatively new document and before moving precipitously to act to amend our legislation, I would certainly want to be assured that

there was a necessity for it. That may involve waiting for further determinations to be made by the courts in some cases and see whether there in fact is a general consensus developing around a number of those issues before proceeding to amend the legislation.

I'm not a lawyer, however, I certainly understand that courts, from time to time, reflect quite differently on the same issue under different circumstances. I wouldn't want to presume too much in making amendments in an attempt to deal with Charter compliance.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the Minister aware of any challenges in Manitoba that fall within his jurisdiction relating to the Charter?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not aware of any at the present time.

MR. C. BIRT: Has there been a number of issues raised by the public or individuals in the public relating to the Charter that have caused some review and maybe some findings by this Committee?

HON. J. STORIE: Two that I'm aware of raised in an indirect fashion would be the rights of parents' access to information issues, the religious exercises issues which the Human Rights Commission reviewed. Those two in particular come to mind.

MR. C. BIRT: I believe the Minister has been quoted in at least a recent newsletter by MAST - if it is an incorrect quote - but the reference is I believe that any Charter questions you believe should go to the courts. Now is this the government's position or is this review attempting to head off any questions going to court?

HON. J. STORIE: I can't remember the context in which those remarks were made exactly, however, I believe I was indicating that there may be in fact challenges or the question of a challenge of a particular section of The Public Schools Act may be raised from time to time by a group with the assumption that there is support from the Charter. I was indicating that because the Charter is used as reference in an argument does not mean that argument is infallible. Clearly, the issues that the Charter raises implicitly will be dealt with over the next several generations probably in the courts as politicians and, unfortunately perhaps in some people's views, courts come to grips with some of the issues such as the question of rights, the rights of parents and the rights of special needs children, etc.

What I was trying to indicate is that I don't think one should act in haste for fear of the Charter. A course has been set already in some of the interpretations of the Charter. There has been very little by way of Charter review of public schools acts, similar acts across the country at this point. They may or may not set some precedents in those decisions when they come.

MR. C. BIRT: Is this committee in consultation with the other provinces to learn what may be happening in their jurisdictions?

HON. J. STORIE: The answer is yes.

MR. C. BIRT: Two areas of concern to me are the rights of parents and the religious exercise question.

I'm not quite certain whether or not the new Freedom of Information Act, if and when it ever comes in, would allow parents access to certain information. Is there a problem in not allowing parents access to information involved in the decision-making process?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not clear if the member is asking me a legal - I think I've indicated on a number of occasions that, in my opinion, parents should not only have access but be encouraged to have access to most of the assessment information that teachers compile during the year. I believe that is a good educational practice. I believe that many schools encourage that practice. The sharing of information, as long as it's done in a judicious and professional way, can do nothing but enhance the potential for individual growth.

Again I mentioned that would be one of the areas in which the department would be involved with MAST and MTS over the coming year in the Quality of Education Initiatives. It is an area of concern. I think there needs to be some opening up, a better understanding on the part of parents and perhaps on the part of teachers and administrations of the usefulness of that information in creating a rapport between parents and the school.

MR. C. BIRT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has given sort of two answers, and maybe they flow one from the other, but I didn't take it to mean that. He had indicated that, late this year or early next year, he will be moving on certain changes, if needed, to The Public Schools Act, and he identified the rights of parents and the access to information. Yet he has now indicated that's going to be an issue of review and consultation by the Quality of Education Review.

My question to the Minister is: is he prepared to bring in some form of legislation outlining parents' rights at the next Session of the Legislature, or is it to be the basis of an independent review or consultation process with the public over the next year or so?

HON. J. STORIE: Well I don't think I would indicate that there is a need to bring in legislation, obviously not unless there was a specific challenge based on the Charter and that was sustainable. I have no idea whether that would be or not. I guess it would depend on what kind of information was being requested.

I think what I indicated and what I hope will happen as a result of the interorganizational review of the question of student assessment generally is that we will come to an understanding amongst the major organizations that the sharing of assessment information is a useful educational practice. If for no other reason, not being concerned at this point with parents' rights and Charter challenges and all the rest of it, it's a reasonable thing to do, and it leads to a better understanding of how an individual is progressing.

MR. C. BIRT: So, as I take it, there are going to be two independent inquiries. One is going to be a public review or consultation process to determine the merits of establishing either legislative changes or no legislative changes, and the other one being the review of the Charter to see whether or not there are any rights there

for parents that may or may not be affected if they go to the courts.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairman, not exactly in either case. In one case, two individuals are doing a review of The Public Schools Act internally. That's the extent of it. In the other case, there is, within the department, staff who have established a number of initiatives, one of which will be the review of student assessment and the involvement of teachers and administrators in student assessment and the uses of student assessment material.

The organizations involved, MAST, MTS, the superintendents, need to review that amongst themselves, and see how student assessment is being used and whether it's being used appropriately and what kind of information can and should be shared with what groups. So that's a separate process involving groups involved in education.

MR. C. BIRT: When will the parents or public get to have any say on the policy or legislative change that may evolve as a result of this departmental review that you've just made reference to?

HON. J. STORIE: I can't say specifically. The organizations are planning, first of all, to develop a position paper, a point of departure for discussion purposes, on those questions. The intention is, at this point, to work with professional staff. Whether there will be some outreach to involve and inform parents, I guess, is a question that has yet to be answered. I presume it will.

MR. C. BIRT: Doesn't the Minister think that, if you're dealing with the question of access of parental rights or access to information by parents, they should be consulted - not maybe, not if - but they should become part of the debate, part of the process, that the professionals can have their input? We're talking about the public having some degree of supervision or involvement in their children's lives. I would ask the Minister that he set up the consultative process with the public after perhaps the professionals have looked at it, reviewed it, made sure they've had all the parameters. I think it's important that you get them involved, not maybe.

HON. J. STORIE: I don't have any disagreement with what the member is saying.

MR. C. BIRT: My next question touches on the question of religious exercise. Is the department in the process of carrying out a review of this whole area of religious exercise in schools and individuals' rights as they relate to religious exercises?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, as you know, the issue has been raised and, as a result of that issue, I did meet with the representatives of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission and the focus of our discussion was around a particular incident that the member is aware of. I have indicated as well that there is no immediate plans to change The Public Schools Act, not in this Session, and obviously any decision to

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make any changes would be dependent upon further discussions with the Human Rights Commission any similar relevant issues which are raised in other jurisdictions and how they're resolved, either by the courts or in other areas.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the question of governance, especially as it relates to French education, French Immersion being examined by this committee within the department and how that question is affected or may not be affected by the Charter?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Chairperson, that particular issue was originally foreseen as one of the questions that could be raised under the Charter - I forget which section - Section 15 of the Charter, one of the three anyway, and it's an issue that has been raised as well by a number of parent-teacher organizations, Francophone parent-teacher organizations. Again, similar issues to that have been dealt with by the courts in Alberta and Ontario without much satisfaction I think. I don't think there's been much resolved from those, but clearly there is a view amongst some that there is room for a Charter challenge on the issue of governance and particularly of Francais schools, not of immersion or other schools that are involved in the Basic French program.

MR. C. BIRT: I believe that there was correspondence, in fact, a report given between the SFM and the Department of Education dealing with this question of governance. My question to the Minister is: is it still being studied by the department, and if so what will they be recommending on this issue?

HON. J. STORIE: Certainly I don't think while I've been Minister there has been — (Interjection) —

MR. C. BIRT: No, it was your predecessor, I'm sorry.

HON. J. STORIE: . . . direct involvement or consultation or discussions or whatever with the SFM. I did meet with a group of, actually representatives of six different groups, all Franco-Manitobans and discussed a broad range of issues, one of which was the question of governance. I indicated to them as I have here that that issue has been raised in other jurisdictions. There is no easy solution and that my intention would be to review the issues and hopefully come to some conclusion in the next few months, I believe I told them, as to whether there was any intention to proceed to make amendments at the provincial level or whether leave open the door of a court challenge.

MR. C. BIRT: Is the Minister telling us that no one in the department is currently reviewing the question of governance and the various forms that it may take and how it relates to the regulation of the French and even French Immersion programs being offered in Manitoba at the present time?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, there is no review of any of the questions that the member raises with respect to French Immersion. I've indicated that that was not part of the discussion. I believe it was with

respect to Francais schools. Yes, there have been various options put forward within the department for resolution of this issue. They range all the way from doing nothing to going to court, or allowing or encouraging a challenge under the section.

There has been no decision to this point. As I've indicated there have been a number of, at least two other, challenges based on similar circumstances which have been dealt with by the court, and neither one of them were resolved, I don't think, to either parties satisfaction.

MR. C. BIRT: I've been advised that I believe the Minister gave an undertaking that he would respond to this question in some three-month time frame. I'm just wondering has the Minister responded to this particular group and if so what was the response.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I have not responded to date and I've indicated that the department has brought forward a number of options ranging from do-nothing status quo to encouraging a court challenge, and no decision has been made to date. I expect that I will be meeting again in the near future with the group to review the issue and see whether there's any further information that needs to be added to the mix before a decision is reached.

MR. C. BIRT: The Minister is indicating that it's still under review and no decision one way or the other is presently taking place.

I might move to a slightly different issue, but again something that the Minister's made reference to, I believe, in the interview with the MAST - at least it was in the most recent newsletter - and he makes reference to making the educational system more efficient in its programming. I'm wondering what the Minister means by that particular phraseology and what steps if any he's undertaking to bring that about.

HON. J. STORIE: I'm sorry, I missed the first part of that question - efficiency in which system?

MR. C. BIRT: Efficiency in educational programming, at least, that's the phrase that's used both in the newsletter and, I believe, in the School Teacher, the MTS newspaper.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I referred to two different aspects of efficiency. One of course is that most students spend many years within the school system, public and otherwise, and unfortunately we still have people who, for whatever reason, don't experience the degree of success within the system that we would like. By efficiency I mean that we can see all students who enter the system leave the system - leave the system with a quality education.

The second aspect relates to efficiencies I believe that are possible between institutions, particularly the secondary system and the community colleges. I think there are also efficiencies that can be had between the colleges and the universities, that in fact there are overlapping programs, courses, course content, which can be eliminated. There is an example of a high school in Winnipeg offering courses which have been approved

by the community college. The end result is a student receives both a high school diploma and a certificate from a community college, in effect providing both a high school education and a certificate for employment, if you will. Those kinds of things, I think there is some room for that throughout the system.

MR. C. BIRT: The Minister is talking in a general sense, sort of in a global concern. I'm wondering what steps, if any, he has instituted or will be taking in relation to this question of efficiency in the delivery of educational programming.

HON. J. STORIE: A number of the Quality of Education Initiatives, of course, but also the High School Review, which I expect will deal quite thoroughly with the question of vocational education. I think that's one of the areas where there may be some efficiency and we can eliminate, in some respects, the duplication of effort that goes on at our high schools and our community colleges, or our high schools and our universities, or between the community colleges and the universities themselves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: With respect to this same area that we're talking about, are you suggesting that the courses that are being offered in high school now are also being offered at community colleges and universities at the same level of expectation?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I think that there are courses that could be offered at the high school level which would complement or replace courses being offered in our community college system. I have one example where an arrangement has been worked out between a high school and a community college, and that was with respect to, I believe, child care worker certificates at Tech Voc. Obviously, that isn't going to be possible in every case. I'm just saying that there are some possibilities there.

MR. L. DERKACH: You're not talking about any core courses in high school; you're talking about the electives. So what you're saying is students are going to be able to take courses in high school and get credit for them, the same as they are getting credit for it at a university or a community college at this time.?

HON. J. STORIE: We're only talking about community college at this time.

MR. L. DERKACH: No, you said universities as well.

HON. J. STORIE: The International Baccalaureate Program is an example where some universities recognize courses taken under that program. So it is possible.

What I'm saying is that the High School Review, I think, should look at that question seriously. I'm not holding out the prospect that this is going to happen immediately. I'm saying that there are some tentative steps. We will await, I guess, further evaluation of how successful they've been. But I had indicated that I

thought that was an area where we could proceed and perhaps make some progress.

MR. L. DERKACH: Again then, what kind of a credit would that student receive? You're talking about efficiency of programming and allowing students to take in high school programs that are currently being offered in community colleges and possibly in universities. Then what type of a credit would that individual receive? Would it be a credit equal to that being received in a university today?

HON. J. STORIE: In this case, the community college. I'm telling you as a specific example where high school Grade XII students, I guess, take just one year, an advance credit basically, and receive recognition from the community college.

I would indicate too that there's another aspect to this in that some high schools are or would like to include adults in their vocational streams, in their systems as well, another area where we have extensive, in some cases, exceptional facilities for vocational training, and yet we exclude adults. We build another facility. Some school divisions have indicated an interest in pursuing the possibility of adult training. I think again that's a question of efficiency.

MR. L. DERKACH: So what we're talking about is overhauling the entire high school credit system, offering and deleting programs which may in fact, in the department's view, be ineffective, and putting in a roster of courses which, in the department's view, are more efficient and more effective.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, the member is sounding particularly Orwellian here. I wasn't suggesting the department was going to do that. I was asked the question about efficiency and an explanation for my remarks to MAST, and that's the explanation. The High School Review, I think it is a legitimate question. It's being raised not by myself necessarily but by school divisions and educational groups. We have some experience now that tells us that there is a possibility, and I would hope that the High School Review, in its review, would be dealing with the question of the appropriateness, the efficacy of providing training at different levels and utilizing our facilities to a greater degree.

MR. L. DERKACH: With regard to student assessment programs that have been going on, the Minister seemed to indicate in his comments that, to this point, there has been very little information received from superintendents of schools regarding their sort of assessment of the whole process. Is this what the Minister was saying?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not sure I get the gist of the question.

MR. L. DERKACH: I think the Minister indicated that the student assessment process is going to be reviewed as to how you can better utilize it. Now are you suggesting that, to date, there has been no input from superintendents of schools and from school divisions regarding that student assessment?

HON. J. STORIE: No. I don't think to this point there has been a thorough and consistent review of the question of student assessment amongst the organizations, and I have to emphasize that the thrust of the Quality of Education Initiatives is the interorganizational aspect of it. It involves not just the teachers saying, what are we doing for in-servicing? It involves MAST, the superintendents, the trustees, the Teachers' Society; it involves the principals and the universities. It involves the major groups within the educational system coming together to look collectively at a problem, whether it be student assessment, teacher in-services, parental involvement. It's a collective, collaborative approach, and it is new and unique. It has not been done, at least not in a definitive way.

MR. L. DERKACH: That's the point. I think, to date, there's been nothing done or very little done in that way. I'm wondering what the problem is. Why is it taking so much time and why is the process so slow in getting started in terms of getting these Quality of Education Initiatives and Quality of Education Review going?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not sure that I accept that it was slow. The Quality of Education Initiatives have met on a number of those seven different areas that they're going to address.

One position paper, the one on teacher in-servicing, has been prepared already. The groups have met, they've come to some consensus about what the problems are at least, and I have asked staff to get ready copies because I would like to circulate that paper. I think it's very instructive.

So we're dealing with those questions and I want to separate what I'm talking about here quite distinctly from what's going on in the department in the area of curriculum assessment. The member and I have had some discussion about the department's activity with respect to curriculum assessment, but that's the department's role.

The question of student assessment, individual assessment and assessment mechanisms is something that is of great direct concern to the groups that I've mentioned. They will be trying to come to grips with the problems and the possibilities of student assessment.

MR. L. DERKACH: When are we going to get some information with regard to who these groups are and who the names of these groups are and the criteria, and that sort of thing?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I believe I have given the member and members that information. The inter-organizational papers that are produced as a result of this joint addressing of problems will be public documents. There is no intention of keeping them secret. The whole intention is to bring out some of the problems we had within the system and make them public and say, collectively, how we are going to address these. As I've said, I will be circulating the one on teacher in-service and it's quite unique, I think, as a planning document.

MR. L. DERKACH: What avenue is there then for participation by individuals and groups throughout the

province outside the profession itself to submit ideas, proposals and make representations?

HON. J. STORIE: Well, along with most of these issues, there will be workshops. In the main, I expect that the intention is for them to be professional workshops, but the Member for Fort Garry had indicated in his remarks that he felt that while it was useful and perhaps necessary for the groups to come to some consensus about what the problem was, and what we intended to do, and at that point solicit views from the public, from parent groups and so forth, that seems to be a reasonable suggestion; although, again, I haven't discussed that with the superintendents or the trustees or whatever, but it seems to be an important suggestion.

Apart from that, of course, I mean parents have access on an ongoing basis to school divisions, to school administrations, to individual teachers about assessment, about curriculum questions, about all of those other educational questions.

I get the feeling somehow that there's some sense among the Member for Roblin-Russell that the education system is secretive. Certainly, the system that I came from is not particularly secretive. To my knowledge, the question of access to information, access to teachers, the ability to have frank interviews with teachers about student progress and student assessment was an everyday occurrence. There were few if any problems that I was aware of. Certainly, as a teacher, I know that I never refused any information requested by any parent about any student.

MR. L. DERKACH: I don't think the Minister was listening in terms of he says that I'm suggesting that the department or he is secretive about information.

HON. J. STORIE: No, the schools.

MR. L. DERKACH: Or the schools for that matter. That's not what I'm suggesting at all. But, by the Minister's answers, it is obvious that there appears to be lack of leadership in terms of which direction this whole process is going. There seems to be a lot of floundering in terms of how we get this thing rolling and started.

HON. J. STORIE: It is rolling.

MR. L. DERKACH: It is, but it isn't, like there isn't any input yet from superintendents. You haven't bothered to discuss it or haven't had the opportunity to discuss it. In your comments just a moment ago you said that you hadn't had the direct input from the superintendents to this point.

That's what I'm suggesting is that when you talk to superintendents, they don't even know which direction the department and the Minister is going right at the present time.

HON. J. STORIE: I don't know how the member has misconstrued what I've said. I have indicated that MASS, MAST and the Manitoba Teachers' Society are all involved and have been involved in each one of those areas. They, collectively, are going to be producing the review of the problems associated with in-servicing, planning, student assessment, effective schools. To my knowledge that's a first; I thought that was leadership.

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MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, I have some questions about the type of direction that is, but I can defer my comments with regard to the assessment and the high school review to a later time because this is going to be a more specific question and I think we want to cover it and this will be the time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At the moment we're on 1.(b) Executive Support.

MR. L. DERKACH: I don't want to prolong the discussion in this area.

HON. J. STORIE: It's been very flexible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Since we've gotten into the issue, I'd like to go back to the questions asked earlier by the Member for Fort Garry with regard to Charter questions.

To some degree, I take issue with the Minister's statement, which he says that there is great access to school administrators, principals, teachers. I think he will find that that access varies a great deal from school board to school board where many school boards in this province who go in camera for any controversial issue whatsoever.

There are school administrators who refuse to allow parents to have access to any testing other than a strictly academic mathematics test. They do not allow, for example, access to CTBS test results. They certainly don't allow access to any I.Q. tests which are taken.

I have difficulty with regard to the Charter because if I take my child before a doctor, I must first of all give permission for each and every test that that child has done on them, and then I am given the results of those tests.

Despite the fact that I perhaps don't understand the white blood count number better than if I was not a trained professional I might not understand the I.Q. number, I am given the white blood count number. I think that we're going to be in serious problems in this province if we do not address the very serious Charter issue of rights of parents.

I'd like to know how the Minister intends to approach that access and if we are going to, in this province, in fact come up with a Bill of Rights for parents?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Chairperson, I know that that question has been raised and perhaps there is merit in reviewing that kind of a suggestion.

What I have indicated is that I don't have the same sense - obviously I didn't work in the same school division as the Member for River Heights - however, I know people in the profession from across the province and I think the general philosophy is that kind of information should be shared.

As a teacher, I certainly shared, in this case, the California Achievement Test scores with parents. I don't think there is anything wrong with that as long as one appreciates how the testing was done, the purpose it was designed for, and you make that clear in any kind of evaluation or assessment of those tests.

What I would like to see, and I agree wholeheartedly that there is no consistency amongst divisions in the

way that assessment is dealt with, assessment information. Probably within school divisions there is no consistency because the tone of parent-teacher contact is very often set by administration.

But I believe that if there is a greater understanding of the need and the desire of parents to have that kind of information, that the professional groups, those involved, and the elected officials of our school division are in the best position to come to some better understanding of the need for openness and also the utility of having a more open system.

I think it is a good educational practice and I'm hopeful that as these groups work together to come to grips with the problems of assessment, generally, they'll come to that conclusion. I think they will.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: In terms of the religious rights of both parents and students within the Charter again, and Charter compliance, the Chris Tait affair was, I think, an isolated event in terms of one child's reaction or a student's reaction to the need to listen to a prayer he chose not to listen to; but certainly we have many Jehovah's Witness children who move out of our classrooms and into the hallways while both prayers and the singing of Oh Canada takes place.

I wonder why the Department of Education has not moved to providing school divisions throughout the province with a series of readings and prayers which would be multi-dimensional, in fact, that they would make reference to all religions and also readings that would be applicable to agnostics and atheists, that school divisions could, in fact, use at their discretion in their divisions.

HON. J. STORIE: I believe that area, that question, has been raised with the Manitoba Education Advisory Committee who has responsibility for dealing with the question of religious exercise. I know that they have reviewed the issue and have, in essence, I believe, attempted to come to grips with the problem in the way that the Member for River Heights has outlined.

I'm not convinced at this point that that in itself would satisfy the strict terms in which some people would review the requirements under the Charter, that in fact, without going into all of the denominations and sex of each denomination, it might not comply. I mean, recognizing that while there may be only 5 or 10 or 15 or whatever specific denominations, that there are so many varieties of each denomination and groups with any denomination that you may still be violating that principle. So I'm not sure that would resolve the issue. I guess that's what I'm saying.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Finally, and still on the Charter, the rights of special needs students, and I want to get into this in much more detail when we come to actual funding for special needs students; but is the department doing any kind of evaluation and relationship to the rights of - for lack of a better word - ordinary students in terms of there not being special needs students?

I think there is a general concern here that as more and more money must be provided for special needs students, what effect does that have on the remainder in the class who are by far the majority, and what rights

do they have under the Charter, and is that being also looked at as the needs of the special needs children is being looked at?

HON. J. STORIE: Why is she asking me these questions?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because that's what Estimates are all about.

HON. J. STORIE: I wish I had an easy answer to that. I guess anybody who has ever sat on a school division and has seen the escalation of costs with respect to special needs students and tried to come to grips, and my colleague from The Pas, who was the chairperson of The Pas-Kelsey School Division for a number of years, knows how difficult that issue is, because while parents have rights, and I think those rights need to be respected in terms of accessibility to the educational system, it's clear that the cost has to be of concern and there are, unfortunately, only so many dollars to go around.

All I can say is you raised a legitimate question and perhaps that too is an issue we're going to have to deal with. We're going to have to decide.

I believe the Charter provides for reasonable limits, and perhaps it's going to be left to a school division, a province, to test the reasonable limit of what we are expected financially, never mind the other questions, financially to provide.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: A final question. I'd just like to make the point that it's not just cost involved here. It is also the quality of education for each and every child in that room. That's the issue that we must look at very carefully.

HON. J. STORIE: I acknowledged that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time being 4:30, it is time for Private Members' Hour. We will reconvene at 8:00 p.m.

SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee come to order.
The Honourable Minister.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I have a number of answers that I took as notice and promised to give them later on during the debate of the Estimates.

I have the answers to two of them now, and I wonder, with the concurrence of the members of the Opposition and Mr. Chairman, I'd like to suggest that not to delay the work of this committee, I would like to table the answer with you, Mr. Chairman, and give a copy to Hansard and a copy to the Opposition and accept it as read.

The one is on the directorate, it's quite lengthy, some of the work we're doing, and the other one is on the out-of-province travel of Dr. MacDonald. So if there's any doubt about that, can I suggest that I send it to the member, I think that if people are too suspicious around here and if it meets with their approval; if not, I'll read it in the record because I want it in the record also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed?
The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I take it that we're going to avoid a lengthy answer. It's simply going to appear in the Hansard as read. I'm getting a copy of it right away.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, right, sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreed? (Agreed)

HON. L. DESJARDINS: So this is a copy for the Clerk and a copy for Hansard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The documents will be tabled; it will appear in Hansard. The member will get a copy as agreed to by the committee.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Right. I'll give him a copy of these anyway. I've got a copy for Orchard, Bonnie and Mrs. Carstairs.

In response to your question regarding the out-of-province travel of Dr. Sharon MacDonald, subsequent to her appointment, Dr. MacDonald has been out of province on the following occasions:

September 1985, Dr. MacDonald travelled to Ottawa respecting the Federal Provincial Advisory Committee on Community Health on September 18, 19 and 20 for a total provincial cost of \$164.20. No provision was made for air fare as it was billed directly to the Federal Government.

December 1985, Dr. MacDonald travelled to Ottawa, related to the Federal-Provincial Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health on December 17, 18 and 19. The cost of this trip was \$191.75 for hotels, meals, etc., and \$547.20 for air fare, with the total cost being \$738.95.

May 1986, Dr. MacDonald was required to travel to Hamilton for a two-day conference on May 1 and 2 related to the Canadian Perspective on Health Promotion and Aging. Costs related to this trip include \$286.65 for air fare and \$79.95 for the other costs, for a total of \$366.60. The purpose of this trip was to present a paper on behalf of the Province of Manitoba.

June 1986, Dr. MacDonald was required to attend the Canadian Public Health Association Annual Conference on June 16-18 in Vancouver and the Federal-Provincial Advisory Committee on Community Health Meeting on June 19 and 20, also in Vancouver. The air fare for this trip was paid directly by the Federal Government. Costs for the CPHA meeting amounted to \$338.46 and \$223.78 for the Advisory Committee meeting. Total cost for the trip was \$562.24.

The total provincial cost for all trips was \$1,831.99. Prior to her appointment as Assistant Deputy Minister, Community Health Services Division, Dr. MacDonald was employed as the Chief Medical Officer of Health. For the honourable member's information, the following out-of-province travel relates to Dr. MacDonald's previous duties:

June 1985, Dr. MacDonald attended the Canadian Public Health Association Conference in St. John's on June 24, 25, 26 and 27. Hotel, meals, etc., totalled \$373.18, while the air fare added \$601 for a total cost of \$974.18.

January 1985, Dr. MacDonald was required to travel to Ottawa respecting a Federal-Provincial Community Health and Health Promotional Advisory Committee Meeting on January 16 and 17. The air fare was paid directly by the Federal Government, while hotel, meals, etc., cost \$166.70.

On September 12 and 13, Dr. MacDonald attended an earlier meeting of the Federal-Provincial Advisory Committee on Community Health and Health Promotion which I've just mentioned. Again the air fare was paid by the feds with hotel, meals, etc., adding \$157.50.

Dr. MacDonald had no out-of-province travel in 1983-84.

She was appointed to her position as Chief Medical Officer of Health on November 29, 1982. Our records for 1982-83 are in storage. The total cost for trips for this position was \$1,298.38.

The total cost for all trips while working for the department was \$3,130.37.

The Research and Planning Directorate, 1985-86:

The Research and Planning Directorate was established in 1982 to consolidate research and planning for Manitoba Health and the Manitoba Health Services Commission. The Directorate coordinates the planning of insured medical and institutional services funded through the Manitoba Health Services Commission with public health, home care, mental health institutions, community mental health and other regional services provided by Manitoba Health.

The Health Services Review Committee, formed in 1984 to provide the Minister of Health with information on a wide range of health topics, continued its investigations in 1985-86.

The Health Services Review Committee's terms of reference were:

- to identify major cost areas and explore consolidation;
- to look for alternatives to in-patient services such as more ambulatory care;
- to review current bed allocation and utilization;
- to review criteria of hospital admissions in both urban and rural hospitals.

The structure of the Health Services Review Committee was based on representation from a variety of health care interests. These included 15 acknowledged experts from:

- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba
- Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses
- Manitoba Health
- Manitoba Health Services Commission
- Manitoba Medical Association (rural and urban)
- Rural hospitals
- Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba
- Urban non-teaching hospitals
- Urban teaching hospitals

The Health Services Review Committee assigned 15 sub-committees to specific investigations in areas selected according to urgency or because they consume an excessive number of hospital days and medical services.

The sub-committees reviewed the following areas: Administrative Impacts, Cardiovascular, Community Health, Critical Care, Emergency Health Care, Elderly, Gastrointestinal, Indian Health Services, Not-for-

Admission Surgery, Obstetrics, Oncology, Out-Patient Medical Services, Pediatrics, Respiratory, and Terminal Illness.

On December 16, 1985, the Minister of Health announced that the Health Services Review Committee Report would be made available to the public through the Queen's Printer. Copies were sent for comment to a number of health institutions, professional associations and health organizations. Responses from health professionals and the public were requested by June 30, 1986.

In conjunction with the two teaching hospitals and the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the Research and Planning Directorate is defining the intensive care unit service population. This will provide information for the intensive care nursing manpower analysis being carried out by the two teaching hospitals.

The Medical Manpower Working Group, representing the Manitoba Medical Association, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, the Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba, and the Research and Planning Directorate, analyzed physician manpower data. Estimates of the province's future physician manpower requirements were based on various scenarios of medical school enrolment and physician migration.

The directorate attends manpower-related committee meetings at the interprovincial and federal-provincial levels. Examples are: Federal-Provincial Advisory Committee on Health and Human Resources; the Working Group in the National Physician Database.

After several months' review, coordinated by the directorate, the report of the Mental Health Management Information System Committee was completed in October 1985. Committee membership included representatives from both institutional and community-based mental health services who were asked to examine appropriate means for establishing a comprehensive, automated information system for all types of mental health services.

In federal-provincial relations, the directorate reviews and assigns provincial priority ratings to Manitoba submissions to the National Health Research Development Program. A member of the directorate serves on the Scientific Review Committee and the Committee Reviewing Provincial Priorities.

The directorate provides consultation on the development of federal dental hygiene standards and on nursing standards to the World Health Organization, European region.

The final report of the federally funded research project to evaluate the quality of nursing care in Manitoba was completed. This was co-sponsored by the directorate and the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses.

The directorate served as secretary to the Manitoba Nursing Review Committee, established by the Minister in January 1984, to examine the utilization, preparation and supply of the various categories of nursing personnel. Chaired by Justice J.F. O'Sullivan, the committee's report was submitted to the Minister of Health in April 1985.

Assessment of sociodemographic and nursing acuity of all medical and psychiatric patients in the nine urban hospitals was conducted by nurse raters in November and December 1986. These data will be compared to data obtained in 1984.

Other directorate activities completed or in progress include:

Development of an evaluation protocol for the Seven Oaks Psychogeriatric Program;
Data collection for the evaluation of the community-based management of Pregnancy-Induced Hypertension Program;
Review of the Manitoba Pharmacare Program to identify the major factors responsible for escalation of the program's costs;
Development of a day hospital database for the evaluation of provincial day hospital activities;
Offered residents from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine's Community Medicine Programs, the opportunity to rotate through the directorate for two-month periods, and assisted University of Victoria Health Information science students to complete two four-month work practicums;
Provided consultation for a study to assess the difference in treatment and outcome of elderly patients admitted through emergency who were randomized to receive treatment in the geriatric units or internal medicine at St. Boniface General Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre;
Prepared final report on the evaluation of the Maternity Early Discharge Program has been completed;
Coordinated a utilization review for one of the urban hospitals;
Developed an interdepartmental submission to Social Resources Committee of Cabinet on residential care funding for the province;
Provided a directorate representation on the Manitoba Health Research Council;
Participated in an interprovincial study on the needs of organ transplantation;
Appointed a directorate member to represent the Minister of Health on the Advisory Council of the Manitoba Nursing Research Institute;
Appointed a member of the directorate to review grants for the St. Boniface General Hospital Research Foundation;
Published articles in two journals;
Conducted reviews of relevant literature in key health care areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm now calling Item No. 2.(h)(1) Medical Equipment and Supplies: Salaries; 2.(h)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(h)(3) External Agencies. The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, what external agencies are funded under this appropriation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The external agencies of the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, Inc.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I'm sorry, I was reading another paper. I missed that answer, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Canadian Red Cross Society and the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, Inc.

MR. D. ORCHARD: In the latter grant, the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, Inc., No. 1, what's the size of that particular funding to that organization and does the organization use that money for the provision of mobility aids to disabled in Manitoba?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The amount is 488.6 and it is for the Manitoba Wheelchair Service Program. It's kind of a contract or an agreement, the Wheelchair Program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So that basically, then, there's only \$10,000 to the Red Cross?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Right.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Other Expenditures, does that include the purchase of the supplies, all of the various crutches and other medical supplies, oxygen concentrators, you name it, that are available to Manitobans by medical referral? Does that Other Expenditures contain a capital component of a purchase of those supplies to keep inventories up to date?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Other Expenditures are actually, as we mentioned, for home care equipment, manual wheelchairs, motorized wheelchairs, ostomy supplies, respiratory support systems, intrauterine contraceptive devices, medical supplies, warehousing, delivery and general office.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The IUD's that the Minister referred to, it's always been my understanding that those birth control devices are the responsibility of the individual.

Is the Minister saying that some groups qualify for these as part of government provided equipment? I'm not clear on that.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: For a number of years now, the custom has been that the government, the department, has purchased the device and given them to the doctors on request and the doctors have prescribed them.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I want to just pose a few questions, but first of all, when I follow the organization chart of the Department of Health, we have medical supplies and home care equipment reporting to Mr. Maynard, ADM, Administrative Services. Yet it appears under the general provisions of the ADM for Program Support.

Would it not be clearer to have this particular line so it more clearly reflects the reporting schedule to Mr. Maynard rather than to Dr. MacDonald?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The chart is correct now. This was never meant to reflect the chart. It is for a reason we'd want this near Home Care and so on for better presentation of the programs, but it reports to Mr. Maynard.

I think you'll find another one. You'll see also Provincial Gerontologist on the chart reporting directly to the Deputy Minister, and she does, and then you'll find it somewhere else in here. In fact, we dealt with it yesterday, reporting to Dr. MacDonald, but the

Provincial Gerontologist reports directly to the Deputy Minister.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, there's one individual that possibly is receiving assistance through this medical equipment and supplies, and that's Bonnie Chromy who has been subject to a number of articles in the newspaper, and the problems that her mother was incurring in terms of finding a suitable, I believe it's called a stretcher bed, a stretcher wheelchair or bed wheelchair. I know that the Minister undertook, at the behest of his leader, to attempt and resolve that problem approximately a year ago now.

Recently - and I haven't got the newspaper clippings with me - but I did have a phone call again some short while back from Mrs. Chromy in terms that the modifications didn't change the serviceability of that - I don't know exactly what to describe it as because it is a very unique sort of a wheelchair-stretcher.

Mr. Chairman, I guess what I am having difficulty finding out, in terms of providing that piece of equipment to Mrs. Chromy for her daughter Bonnie, surely that isn't the only individual in Manitoba that needs, from time to time, that sort of a piece of equipment. I'm finding it difficult to understand why we can't come up with something that is more appropriate and suitable.

Are there no other jurisdictions across Canada or even the United States where there is some expertise developed in providing these kinds of wheelchair equipment? I know that those are difficult circumstances to resolve but I'm just finding it difficult to know why we can't come up with something that is more suitable because I don't believe that there were significant modifications made to make the device more accommodating and more comfortable. Has that been explored adequately by the staff in medical equipment to see if they can't come up with a more suitable accommodation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it is quite a unique case. I'm not saying there is nothing that resembles that, but that case itself, for the nature of the illness, it's been quite difficult. We've tried everything. We've tried to get it changed; we've tried to build a ramp outside at the residence; we've tried to bring material in.

To be really frank with the members of the Committee, the lady refused to talk to the technicians for some reason or other and there was no other way. These people would do their best; they've been very good. They've been certainly well regarded here in Winnipeg with the work they've been doing. For some reason, the mother will not talk to the technicians. We've tried everything we could and we don't know what else to do.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, okay, Mr. Chairman, given if that's the current circumstance, if discussions were reopened with Mrs. Chromy on behalf of the daughter, has the group responsible got any idea whether other jurisdictions have? Obviously, that isn't the only case in the world; it can't be. They attempted to investigate to see whether there are other types of wheelchairs available that would more suitably accommodate the daughter in this case. In other words, I'm looking for

an avenue of reopening discussions on behalf of Mrs. Chromy's daughter so that we can hopefully resolve and end up with a more comfortable facility for the girl.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: To reopen the discussion, we'd be only too pleased to do that. Now the staff that I was talking about is not our staff, it's the staff at the Health Sciences Centre, and there's no other shortcut. It's not a wheelchair; it's a bed. These things will have to be made to order pretty well and there's no other way. These people are doing their best is to discuss this communication. You're not going to get something especially as difficult as that if there's no communication at all. Whenever the lady in question is ready to discuss with the technician, we'll be only too pleased to arrange a meeting.

It's been very difficult. There is a lot of sympathy going to that family. It hasn't been easy at times. We realize that the people are doing their best. A woman being fed up or so would say I don't want to talk to you and it's been very difficult. We'd be only too pleased to reopen the discussion and try to get a rational discussion with the technician to try to find a solution.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that would be good because I'm sure the Minister can appreciate the frustrations that the mother has gone through over the number of years. That hasn't been an easy circumstance for anyone.

Mr. Chairman, I just have a final point I want to make before passing on the Medical Equipment and Supplies line. It seems to me that what we are doing here is basically providing a warehousing service for medical equipment and supplies that are from time to time made available to Manitobans as they may require a wheelchair temporarily, etc. Now, in the External Agencies . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: And repairs also.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And repairs also, that's right.

Now, in terms of the External Agencies, the department is providing almost a half-million dollars to an external agency to provide them with the funds to provide specific types of wheelchairs and the servicing and repair of them.

Mr. Chairman, would it not be an area of investigation for the Minister to take a look at this line in here, Medical Equipment and Supplies, given the fact that Winnipeg is a fairly major centre for the availability of those supplies and to see whether a further farming-out of the roles and responsibilities of medical equipment and supplies couldn't be done to outside organizations, including some private sector suppliers, to avoid — (Interjection) — no, but the Minister says that's it.

The External Agencies are only getting \$488,600 worth of funding and we've got some \$2.5 million in Salaries and Other Expenditures in this line. Has it been investigated to see whether there is an appropriate role for more external agency involvement and even some private sector involvement because obviously this group, Medical Equipment and Supplies, are maintaining a building for warehousing, etc.; they're maintaining office space, all of which is currently being

maintained in the private sector because they are supplying, no doubt, to this group in government, the various medical supplies that are needed.

I make the proposition to the Minister that is somewhat of a duplication of service that could well be available external to government and availed on through a direct program where you fund external agencies, or you provide the opportunity for external agencies to provide directly to Manitobans, on the recommendations of physicians, the various wheelchairs, etc. that are needed.

To me it seems that there could be some savings to the government by doing it this way because you wouldn't be maintaining an extensive inventory. I think if we know that Other Expenditures are slightly over \$2 million, which are going to include cost of repairs, etc., but also include a certain dollar value for purchase of new supplies, now that would seem to indicate to me that the Provincial Government has a substantial or fairly significant inventory here already. That inventory may well be duplicated outside of government and not necessarily be maintained in government and could be more economically farmed out to external agencies or private sector suppliers that are currently operating in Winnipeg and Manitoba for that matter.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, in effect, this is not a private sector, a profit-motivated group, but it is an outside agency who deals directly with the patients, in this instance with the Wheelchair Program. We provide the wheelchairs and then the funds for the staff and they run it. That is by far the biggest part of our program under this directorate.

There's nothing that would prevent us to look to see if there could be more on that and then to look at the possible savings if any could be done. I'll be very frank; I would not have any ideology hang-up in this instance, on the question of the private setup for profit, but I think this non-profit organization is achieving the same thing. It is very satisfactory and satisfactory to the patient, also.

I'd have no objection to have a comparison in that when it's the same as a personal care home or anything like that. I think my views are known on that. It's certainly not a priority that we have here, but, as I say, we'd have no objections. We can look at that if anybody's interested.

We would probably favour a non-profit organization, which is set up just to look after it exactly, those kind of things, these people. As I say, it's the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. In fact, there have been some discussions with groups. The Society for Manitobans with Disabilities also has been discussing with us. They've made some quite interesting suggestions in repairs and so on. They feel that they should be more involved in that and that, I think, is certainly worth looking into also. They give examples of how there could be savings and better service, and we'll continue to discuss with them.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the reason I broached this topic is because it doesn't, in my estimation, represent an ideological battleground. This group is providing medical supplies on recommendation of the doctor. Often those medical supplies are

purchased by this government agency from naturally private-sector suppliers. They are acting as an intermediary but there is, you know, .5 million staffing cost. There's, no doubt, an inventory of equipment and supplies that are there.

The reason I broached the topic is because, if you can take a look at some of the more recent developments in terms of the retail field in terms of provision of medical assistance and medical supplies to assist Manitobans, for instance, living in their home and that sort of thing, you have a number of firms that are moving into the field, particularly with supplies to senior citizens of various aids and conveniences to help senior citizens with foot care and a number of different areas. It appears to me that there is a growing availability, if that's the proper way, of retail outlets that are providing similar services to Medical Equipment and Supplies.

My point being to the Minister, rather than have government continue to meet those needs from an in-house line of the department, I think that two things could be accomplished. We could have a removal of investment by the government in terms of a large, fairly substantial inventory with costs associated, as well as a significant number of employees who are there providing more or less a parallel service to what may be available in the private sector. I think it's an area where we wouldn't be sacrificing and compromising quality of service to Manitobans.

As a matter of fact, in terms of the wheelchair repair, I know my honourable friend has had a call, no doubt, from our old friend in Transcona about wheelchair repairs, where they're not up to snuff from time to time. There appears to be some need and some avenue of participation here that, I believe, could serve the people of Manitoba well, serve the Minister and his department reasonably well in terms that there may well be a significant saving in dollars. That's why we're here, to try to streamline the delivery of health care and try to make the best available use of our dollars.

In this particular line in the Estimates, even last year, I tried to find out more about what they do, who they serve, and what role they perform. I see a very good and open avenue for farming this particular service of government out, as they do with the external agency now or at least the one major external agency now, and further pursuing that. I think there would be dollar savings to the department.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I also have no ideology hang-up on that, providing it's not a direct service, as I mentioned earlier, like a personal care home. We might disagree in that area.

The only thing is, I think, that you'd have to remember that the quantities that we buy, I doubt if the private operator, unless they handle everything, could purchase at the cost that we do. But I'd have no objection at all to having them talk to our people and, if we can have any savings without reducing the service, it'd be no problem. In fact, I'd be only too pleased. My honourable friend talked about our mutual friend from Transcona. If they want to try a pilot program and turn it to the private sector, I'd issue a directive this afternoon if this is helpful.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You're a good friend, Larry. Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(h)(1) Medical Equipment and Supplies: Salaries—pass; 2.(h)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 2.(h)(3)—pass.

2.(j)(1) Dental Services: Salaries; 2.(j)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(j)(3) External Agencies - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister owes us a fairly substantial explanation as to why, in this particular line, Salaries are going up and Other Expenditures are going down, by my calculation, \$1.6005 million, a 54 percent decrease in Other Expenditures and a 5 percent increase in Salaries and, as well, a decrease of 15 percent in the funding to External Agencies.

Mr. Chairman, when we first started discussing this whole line of Community Health services and programs, I mentioned to my honourable friend, the Minister of Health, that with the advent of changes at the top of the department, morale had declined. There were substantial and severe morale problems within the various branches of this line.

The first question that may belie this as an argument is, I don't know where Dental Services report to. It doesn't show in the Minister's chart. Does this report to . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It shows on the chart.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I've tried to find it on the organization chart of Manitoba Health and, unless it's disguised or I'm blind, I can't find it.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's right in the middle, right under Deputy Minister.

MR. D. ORCHARD: There we are. This one reports directly to the Deputy Minister then?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Right, that's what I said.

MR. D. ORCHARD: That is interesting.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The same as Gerontology and all the others.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister then explain to us how he is requesting a Salary increase when Other Expenditures are dropping by 54 percent and funding to External Agencies is dropping 15 percent? What's happening here?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think my honourable friend knows that there's - we need an explanation, yes, because this could be misleading. In fact, it is misleading. The situation is this, and I'll be as candid as I was yesterday on the other one. The situation is this that, during the Estimates exercise, the Cabinet review and so on with one of the programs, always endeavouring to watch the deficit and so on and still give the best quality care that we can and retain what we have, the services that we have, we've looked at different programs.

We've had some problems, honest problems I would say, with the Dental Program for the children. I think

I've related the story quite a few times when we went through it the last four or five years, but I'll do it again. The situation was that, when we first started in the years - I was the Minister of Health then. When we first started the Dental Program, it was a program pretty well modelled after Saskatchewan, where we were using primarily dental nurses. This was a program that went well. We were fortunate in recruiting a director for that program, Dr. Lawton, who was one of the better-known dentists in the area or more successful young dentists, very well recommended. He came in to administer the program.

During the few years that we had that program, things went quite well. The people were satisfied the program was improving all the time. The idea was, it was supposed to be a universal program of education and certain work done by the dental nurse, then referrals supervised by our government dentist, and then certain other work referred to the personal dentist. Now that went quite well,

There was a change in government and a different party, as we know, took over the reins - yes, my honourable friends - and there was a different ideology. It was felt that this should be done by the dental profession or Dental Association, and more and more as much as possible some of these programs were turned over to the Dental Association. All the new ones went to the Dental Association on contract.

I'm not going to today discuss and argue which one is better or if one is better than the other. I'm just relating what had happened. Nothing would be gained. All we have to do is read Hansard, and we'd see the pages and pages of the speeches on that.

So the situation was that there was a reversal of that. In 1981, there was another election, another change of government, another party, and the public were bracing and the people involved in that program including the Dental Association were bracing themselves for another fight and another reversal of things. That did not happen.

I stated that I had no ideology. I wanted certain givens, no ideology hang-up on that personally. I stated, first of all, that the standards were important, the utilization, the rate and also the cost. For four years, there was a very, very good relationship; in fact there's still a very good relationship with the Dental Association.

Now there were a lot of talks, there were different talks about having the program. I suggested that we should have a program that would be a Manitoba program, not one of dental nurses and one of the dental profession. Let's see what we could do to have a good program so that there wouldn't have to be this battle every four years or every time the government changes. They quite readily - the work and the relationship, as I said, was very good personally and also with the department and staff. It was lengthy though. Knowing what I know now, maybe we would have tried to speed that up a bit, but we wanted to give full cooperation to the Dental Association. This was done. We talked about maybe having a certain age delivered by the dental nurse. We felt a certain obligation also to retain the dental nurse. We felt that, with the utilization in the schools, it would be better if we kept it in the schools, and we felt that the dental nurse probably would cut down on the costs.

That was never accepted by the Dental Association, and they could never convince us that it was different.

So we said, all right, we'll have a comparison, and everybody agreed to that. The situation was then that certain areas would be delivered - but under the same conditions. The data that we had on one side or the other wasn't good enough. Some of it was not under a certain condition and so on.

So we'd agreed that we would have the certain urban sides done with the Dental Nurses' Program. The dentists, as I said, said it's not a good idea to go by age; it's not a good idea to divide cities and so on. So we went along with their recommendations all the time. They talked and we agreed that there would be though a way to compare. Then we'd go with the best. We all agreed to that, the best and whatever the less costly was and so on. So that was agreed, and we bent over backwards to work and to go with the Dental Association.

Now the situation was that we said, well why don't we divide Winnipeg? They said, no, that's not a good idea. So it was decided for the urban thing, they would get Portage; they would get Steinbach; they would get Thompson; they would get Winnipeg, and we would have Brandon.

We can't be accused of not discussing before bringing anything forward. We were discussing, not with every single dentist in Manitoba. That's why you have associations. We dealt with the Dental Association, and everything was going well.

We retained some of the dental nurses of course, and we also went along with the idea that the work would be done in the dentist's office, not in the school, providing of course - they were trying it their way with the understanding that, if it didn't work, if they didn't get the utilization rate that was acceptable, then they would try something else or we would go with the schools.

So as I say, things were rolling very well. All of a sudden, when this was announced that we would do Brandon and the Dental Association went to Brandon to try and discuss that with their dentists, we did not accept that. So there was a bit of a war in the association. The Dental Association backed away. We were stuck with something that they could not deliver. That was unfortunate. I'm not for one minute suggesting that this was done purposely. I think they did their best. The only thing that I would reproach them with is that they should have delivered after four years of negotiating.

During that time, it was felt that program was studied a bit. There were changes in nearly every province. I don't know one province that did not reduce the program up to a certain point or change the program or abandon the program. It was also felt, with some evaluation, that we weren't really hitting the target that much. Also, the program was changing. There were new methods of doing it that they weren't doing in Saskatchewan, and changed it completely under a Conservative Government.

It was a difficult situation. So one of the options that we presented to Cabinet that we would discontinue this program, that is that we would not renew the dentists' agreement, the contract we had with them. This had followed all the years of work that had not been able to produce, because they couldn't deliver Brandon after we had done everything else to play ball with them. They recognized that. Of course, it was a

pretty tough situation. They weren't too happy with that. I was unhappy. I had lost four years negotiations. I'd failed completely, and my Cabinet colleagues weren't too happy with me either because I had made a commitment that we would develop a program that would be acceptable to all. So the situation then was that we agreed that we would not renew the contract, at this meeting with the Cabinet, with the Dental Association. Because we had some dental nurses that were graduating also, we would continue the program, not bring any other new school division in it but take over what was left with the Dental Association.

We met with the Dental Association to discuss that with them also, and they were quite saddened by that. They still felt that we could get together and develop something. So there were some discussions with them. At their suggestion, I arranged a meeting with some of my Cabinet colleagues. It was a very interesting meeting, a good meeting, and there was a decision made after it. The recommendation of the department after this meeting was that we would try again. Now we had lost that money. The message was passed. I met with them, I think last week or something, to inform them of that. Then we will change the program somewhat and still try to have savings. They will help us on that. We will try for another year to see if we can come back with a modified program, a program that the people of Manitoba can afford, and a program where we can all participate. So it's an extension of one year to keep on working at everybody's insistence. We are not that far away that we shouldn't be able to develop something. So that's it.

Oh, excuse me. I should, at this time, tell you that there is 1.2 million that would have been saved too if we'd cut immediately. We prevailed on my colleagues not to have it cut immediately, to keep on. That was a couple of months ago, while this discussion was going on. So then there was \$1 million. We made a commitment that we would save some of that, but we will have to go back for supplement funding somewhere when the program starts, maybe \$0.5 million or so.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I have to tell the Minister that, after listening to his answer very carefully, I don't know what his answer was. So I'm going to have to ask him some questions as to what is happening.

For instance, the first question is: how many school divisions under last year's appropriation, under Other Expenditures where I presume that was the operating cost for delivery of the Children's Dental Health Program by the dentists and the Salaries line was the delivery of the program presumably by the dental nurses, and part of the Other Expenditures would have been the cost of supplies, etc., etc., used by the dental nurses, so that Other Expenditures include both the private dentist delivery of the program plus whatever supply costs and support costs the dental nurses required?

Now given that you've got roughly \$5.2 million in fiscal year, March 31, 1986, two questions: how many school divisions had the dental services last year? What was the maximum age in which school children received dental care under the program, because I realize that's variable? The first school division, I believe age 14 is the maximum now, and it drops down to age five or six, but I'd like to have that information.

Then I'd like the Minister to indicate to me how many school divisions, with this reduction of \$1.6 million in the Estimates, are going to be cut off from their Children's Dental Program this year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The age is from 6 to 14. Seventeen and two-thirds divisions, the work is performed by the Dental Association, and nineteen and one-third by the dental nurses. With the arrangements that we have, the program might change. This is continuing to be reviewed. There might be a change in age; there might be a change in the service; there might be a change in the time that these people are seen. No decision has been made on that, but no school division will lose the service, certainly not this year.

Excuse me, there's something else. The new one, those who started - it was supposed to be part of the agreement - they were allowed to continue. They are 6 to 10, that's Portage and Thompson.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister saying then that last year the \$5.2 million, excluding funding to external agencies, was not fully expended last year? Because the Minister is telling us that, with now \$3.7 million, he's going to service all the school divisions that there were last year, and provide services to two new divisions, Thompson and Portage. Was the money all expended, the 5.2 million on Salaries and Other Expenditures fully expended last year?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, all the money wasn't spent last year, because I said that we didn't do Brandon for one thing. No, this will not be enough for this year. As I stated, we'll have to come back for a supplement. I stated that very clearly.

Now the situation is that the service with the dentist, I think, was 1.8 million. We were going to have to employ nurses to give that service, if we had discontinued the agreement with the dental profession, but keep on serving the same school division taken over by the government program, the Dental Nurses' program. They could have done more with the same staff, but we still would have had to hire more nurses. It would have been \$0.5 million out of this 1.8 million, and then there were 300,000, I think I said, or 200,000 if we had stopped immediately.

As I stated, I prevailed on my colleagues to keep on at least while the discussions with the Dental Association were going, not to stop at that time, to keep on until the end of the school year, the end of June. There was a saving; there is \$1 million less. As I said, we will not be able now - we have reinstated what we had. We will not hire more dental nurses. We will work with the dentists. The dentists and the government are trying to work together to see if we can accommodate. More of them are hiring dental nurses. This is one thing that we would like to do.

In the meantime, as I say, we'll have to come back for a Special Warrant, but we will still try to save part of that \$1 million, as much as we can. The program was going to change anyway. We're looking at the situation of maybe the age that will be affected, maybe the question of how often they are seen and maybe the nature of the program itself, maybe go more in an education and prevention and sealing which is done

in Saskatchewan. So I can't tell you more than that, because the final decision hasn't been made.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Currently, Mr. Chairman, then because the Minister's original answer left me with the impression that - and I thought I made a note here - they did not renew the contract with the Dental Association. Now does that mean that, this fall, the Dental Association in the seventeen and two-thirds divisions that they are currently operating in right now will no longer be there? The Minister is shaking his head. Okay.

Then the program, if I understand the Minister correctly, is going to be continued as it was in the same number of school divisions with Portage and Thompson added, starting this fall's school year presumably. It will still be a combination of delivery by the dental nurses and by private sector dentists, and the Minister is going to go back and get some additional funding through Special Warrant.

Now this is a most confusing way to present Estimates. I mean, you've left the clear impression in your Estimate Book that there is going to be a massive reduction in the program. The Minister is now saying that there is no reduction in the program; that, in fact, there's an expansion in the program and he's going to have to go back to get more money to fund it.

Now I'd like to find out from the Minister as to whether - he just said that they're not going to hire any more dental nurses to pick up the services that were in the seventeen and two-thirds divisions supplied by dentists, that dentists are going to continue to provide that service. Then can the Minister indicate to us whether there are going to be any changes, other than maybe lowering the age so you don't treat 14-year-olds and you treat more divisions from say six to 10 years, and not have the program carried through to age 14? That might be an option. He talks about prevention; he talks about sealing of teeth. All of those are options.

But basically, what I'm trying to find out from the Minister is whether there are going to be the nineteen and one-third school divisions and the seventeen and two-thirds divisions that are served by dentists plus the two new ones availing themselves of the program this fall; and that the monies that are necessary to do that are going to be sought from Cabinet by Special Warrant; and that the the decision that was made presumably some several months ago when the Estimates were printed is not the decision that we're supposed to be debating now. That decision in fact has been reversed.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it's quite clear that my honourable friend is not as confused as he would like us to believe he is. You're right and the first thing I did when I stood up, I said we need an explanation here, because this is wrong. It was something that was printed at a certain time and I said that we would not renew the contract. I was saying that was the first decision, the first time the Cabinet discussed that, while we were looking at the overall Estimates in the discussion. I thought I explained quite clearly also that there was further discussion.

Of course this was prepared the way it is and I finished explaining again what the situation was, and at the

request of the Dental Association, and further meetings I've had - one that they've had with the Premier and some of my colleagues - it was agreed that we would renew and extend the contract for another year, but with the understanding that we would get together to try to save some of the funds knowing we couldn't do just with this, that I would have to go back for a supplement and there won't be any change this year. There might be change in age later on, or some time there might be a change in the number of visits they will have and those kinds of things. We don't know.

That's where I'm saying that the final decision is not made but it won't be the same people that were covered and include - those two are not new ones. Those two were there in 1984 and they're part of the 17 and 19, that will not change.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thompson and Portage?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, that will not change.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I simply want to before we pass this line, now that we've got it established that there's no cutback, that the decision that was made has been reversed.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, there's cutbacks. They'll be cutbacks in money.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But that's only if you change the level of service you deliver to the children . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . so that you may well opt for the option, if I can put it in layman's terms; you may well reduce the level of service to a given age group currently served in order to bring in more students for some basic services. That may be an option you consider.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, right.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay, that's an option that when it happens, we'll debate whether it was right or wrong.

I don't disagree with that kind of an examination, but, Mr. Chairman, the one thing that I want to reiterate and place again on record is that when this program - when we came to government in 1977 - the program was set up to go strictly the Dental Nursing Program, an in-house government program. The dental profession pointed out to us, as they had been pointing out presumably to the previous administration prior to 1977, that they could deliver the program as cost effectively, and they believe with a better adherence to high quality standards.

Now that was a proposition that in 1977-78, we believed was worth pursuing. It was pursued. The numbers exist for the Minister to clearly indicate that indeed the dental profession deliver a program as cost effectively - and some statistics that I've seen indicate - at a lower cost than the Dental Nurses Program, an equivalent or better program and that the government, whether it be a New Democratic Government or a Progressive Conservative Government, receive good

value for the dollars they spend on behalf of the taxpayers by having the private dentists administering this program in school divisions.

Now, I want to forewarn the Minister, in the course of the negotiations, if there is any attempt to remove the private sector dentist involvement in delivery of this program, it will meet with considerable opposition from us, because we believe they have proved that they can deliver the program as economically and certainly with every bit as good and better a quality as the in-house Dental Nurse Program.

Furthermore, we come from a little different perspective in the Progressive Conservative Party, in that, by and large, we represent those areas outside of the City of Winnipeg; that's where the majority of our caucus comes from.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's where the work is done.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Minister is quite correct, that's where the work is done, and by having the private dentist involved in the school Dental Program, has assured many communities in rural Manitoba that we not only have one dentist, that we have two dentists in communities throughout rural Manitoba, where this program has been fit into the private sector dentists' program. That is extremely important to providing throughout rural Manitoba high quality dental services and any attempt by the government, in their negotiations to remove those dentists from involvement in the school program, will be considered by us on this side and the communities involved to be a direct assault on the availability of high quality dental services in rural Manitoba.

The two programs have fit very well together. They have been cost effective; they have been efficient; they have been high quality in their delivery; and they have the added advantage of providing professionals to rural Manitoba, a problem that the Minister currently had when we started talking about the medical doctors in rural Manitoba.

There are problems in making sure that doctors stay in rural Manitoba. Three communities now are without physicians. We don't want to see a repeat of that because a government - and maybe this Minister - won't be the lead idealogue in it, but certainly some of his colleagues may well be, in trying to get the professional dentists out of this program to return it to the very narrow perspective that it was in 1977 and previous to that. We do not want to see that happen. We do not believe it could be justified from a service standpoint or from an economic standpoint. We totally and completely support the involvement of the private sector dentists in the delivery of this program in rural Manitoba.

To further go along with the Minister's explanation of a difficulty involving Brandon and the rest of Winnipeg, there was a difficulty there and it was a major difficulty. The Minister ran into a lot of problems in his consultations with the Dental Association, in trying to determine how he was going to split up the service pie of Brandon versus Winnipeg, chose to inform everyone of the negotiations except the parents and the school division in Brandon. When the information came out that they were to be not receiving or even having the

choice as to which program they received, the Brandon School Division - backed completely by the parents - told the Minister that they weren't interested. The Minister chuckles from his seat, but he knows that's right. That is absolutely the way the parents viewed this program and they considered that they were being treated as second-class citizens, in that Winnipeg would receive dentist-delivered programs, whereas they would settle for dental nurses and they weren't happy with that.

Brandon, although it's a bigger community in rural Manitoba than say the Boissevains and the Mordens and other communities - and the Thompsons and the Portages - still have a very viable and growing dentist population in their community, which would not be well served in the long run by having a program delivered by dental nurses. That's why the community agreed to support the Brandon dentists in having the program of children's school dentistry delivered by the dentists in Brandon, rather than by an in-house service that would require renovations to schools, etc., to accommodate the dental nurses.

Mr. Chairman, that argument will still be there in the Minister's negotiation. Anyhow I made the suggestion to him last year - and he's indicated now that he made the suggestion to the dentists - that they chose a school division in Winnipeg and have their comparison there. I suggest that if he needs that comparison — (Interjection— Pardon?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I had done that before but they refused.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, the Minister indicates his thoughts on that.

Mr. Chairman, if you're wanting a comparison of two populations, it would be very, very easy to do it within the City of Winnipeg where your water is the same and all other factors which affect health in the global issue are the same. The Minister and the Dental Association probably don't want to do that because then the Minister would run into the political problem of his own colleagues, who may represent a school division in Winnipeg that was singled out for the dental nurses, objecting to be treated like second-class citizens.

Whether that's factual or not doesn't matter, because in politics perception is reality and that's what the people of Brandon thought; that's why they objected; and that's why the Minister can't bring a school division in Winnipeg into the program for the comparison purposes. Even with that argument, Mr. Chairman, I don't believe the Minister needs a school division for comparative purposes because the experience from 1978 to 1981 have clearly given him the numbers he needs to demonstrate the program is delivered more efficiently and as high quality or higher quality by the dentists.

He's already got those comparisons. He doesn't need to set up a further comparison. He could just as easily accede, if he wished, to have this program expanded to Winnipeg and Brandon school children, provide the money. Then he could farm it out to the Dental Association, and the children would be well served and the taxpayer would be well served. We don't need to have his comparison to show which program is better

than the other, because that has been done, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I was warned by my colleagues that we should be very careful, that there was an agreement to try to work together in the Estimates and not to prolong the Estimates any longer than necessary. I will bite my tongue on this, but I want my honourable friend to know that I disagree with him in many instances.

It was a situation where they completely ruined the program or practically ruined the program because of that change, this ideology change that they did. It was a very successful program. It was a program that the director, the dentist that I mentioned before, left the province in disgust because of that. It was quite obvious.

I don't think anything would be gained - you know, my honourable friend is changing this to please himself. You can just imagine that, with the population in Winnipeg where you have more than half the population, had I been trying to push things to the dental nurses, I would have said we'll take Winnipeg. But the dentists - and I did state and it's true. My honourable friend mentioned that, the same as he's mentioning it today. The first thing, we were talking about different ages, and that wouldn't work. We took the word of the dental profession on that. Then it was, dividing Winnipeg. That wouldn't work for some reason. We were ready to take Brandon, which was a much smaller place. My honourable friend said, well you didn't discuss it with the parents. Of course not, we were discussing it with the Dental Association who - and I'm not going to go into the details of that - could not deliver Brandon. So it's no use.

I stated before that I wasn't going to start an argument at this time. We can pull out Hansard, and sometime we can discuss that. But I am trying to keep an open mind to see if we can get away from this thing of changing every four years, exactly what I said earlier, so we can have a Manitoba program and take advantage of both.

So I will refrain at this time from going into any more details. The fact is, we're looking at the situation. We haven't got the facts. We're looking at the utilization. That is being a problem right now. The last information that we have, that has slipped.

My honourable friend, I can't resist that - I said I'd bite my tongue. My honourable friend said, with the program that they brought in, there were more dentists who opened their office. That's absolutely true. But in the areas where the dental nurses were supposed to take the business away from the dentists, when the dental nurses were delivering the service in the rural areas because they had no cities at the time, they had 15 dentists and they went to 29. In the areas where the dentists were delivering, there was one more dentist, one more total — (Interjection) — yes, my dear friend, one more.

So, you know, why doesn't my honourable friend go along with what the association is trying to do and the government and say, let's not have an ideology thing. Let's look at the best program. Let's look at the cost of it, and see how it can be delivered. This is all I'm saying. This is why I don't want to start knocking or praising any program. I want us to look at the facts

and compare apples with apples, and oranges with oranges, which wasn't done in the past.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what I've been exhorting and colleagues on this side of the House have been exhorting the Minister to do. By the fact that we made this horrible ideological change and brought private-sector dentists into this program in 1978, and by the very fact that when this Minister assumed the responsibility for the Department of Health in 1981 and didn't revert back is proof that there was room for both programs. That's what we want to see, and I'm glad the Minister says that's what he wants to see, because then we agree, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(j)(1) Dental Services: Salaries—pass; 2.(j)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

2.(j)(3) External Agencies - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, before you get down to External Agencies, did you give me the numbers on what the External Agencies decrease was?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This money wasn't all spent. This is brought down to what was actually spent.

Now this is an agreement, as my friend probably knows, with the Churchill Health Centre for the Town of Churchill, the St. Amant Centre with the patients there, and also the Swampy Creek Tribal Council. They've been delivering the service contract for a number of years now. Nothing's changed on that. That's the actual amount of money spent last year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(j)(3) External Agencies—pass.

2.(k)(1) Environmental Health: Salaries; 2.(k)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we've got a massive increase in Salaries here in Environmental Health. There's no change in the number of SMY's; there are still three. Why have we got an 18 percent increase in Salaries for three positions?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, that's the qualification pay, as I already explained in another area before. When a doctor gets a certain qualification, there's an increase in pay to go pretty well with the agreement between the MMA and the government.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, where does this group work and with what departments? Do they coordinate with the Environment Department in terms of hazardous wastes, hazardous workplace environment, those sorts of things? Do they provide support to those various departments or do they simply duplicate and parallel what's done in other departments? What's the function here, Mr. Chairman?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That is an area where the inspecting and the medical advice is given by these people in our department. As Minister of Health, I have the responsibility for The Public Health Act, but they are, in effect, a station in our department working at their request and with the people in the Environmental Health. There's no duplication at all. They're the only

ones. The inspectors and so on, medical inspectors, are in my department.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Would these individuals have been involved most recently that I can recall, in terms of an environmental hazard in the workplace, with the Heritage Foundry in Winkler? Is this the group that monitored the lead in air levels at Heritage Foundry? Did they have any involvement in that?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, we weren't involved in that. This group was involved only as medical consultants at the request of the Occupational Health.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, as well, I believe we've got legislation before us this Session - correct me if I'm wrong - about the potential for a hazardous waste disposal site. The Minister of Environment is pursuing that.

Will this group in Environmental Health be providing their expertise and coordination in terms of the standards that are going to be set, the location, the disposal methods? Are they doing the research? Are they finding, compiling and providing information to the Department of the Environment in terms of their efforts to set up a safe disposal centre for hazardous goods in the province of Manitoba?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: They are working with the Department of Environmental Health and they are providing the input, working together with them as consultants, providing the professional medical component of that . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Is this also the group that monitors water quality at our public beaches and, if so, how is the water quality of our public beaches, particularly, Grand Beach and some of the major Lake Winnipeg beaches?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think it would be preferable if this was asked - not what our people are doing, but the condition of the water at the beaches with the Minister of the Environment. Again, we're providing the professional medical input on that. The testing could be done by the department and provide the medical advice, consulting, and so on. But the information, as for the condition of the water, no, that's one of the main responsibilities of my honourable friend.

MR. D. ORCHARD: If this group of three is involved in the monitoring of our water quality of our public beaches — (Interjection) — Are you telling them when it's safe, is that what you're saying? That when the E-coli count is up to so-and-so it's not safe and you'd put up the warning signs. Is that what the Minister is saying, that they would tell the Department of the Environment when the beaches aren't safe if that condition were to be determined?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The testing is not done by a medical person or medical personnel. I think the advice is there; that testing is done and many decisions will be made without coming to us at all. If for any reason they wish to consult with, in this case, just for the

condition of the water, or get the advice of a medical doctor or medical personnel, that's where we'd step in. But we don't have the responsibility for testing the water. It might be in a certain case where they're not sure, right on the fence, that they would ask the advice - I'm sure they would - of our medical people.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Pass, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Environmental Health: 2.(k)(1) Salaries—pass; 2.(k)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

2.(n)(1) Health Information Resources: Salaries; 2.(n)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, where does this group report to? I didn't really find it on the flow chart here of the Minister's department. Where does this one fit in and to whom does it report?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It reports to Admin and Finance, to the ADM, Mr. Frank Maynard.

MR. D. ORCHARD: It's indicated by the Minister's Staff Summary that there are nine individuals here at a salary cost of \$204,000.00. Now, a quick figure, what's the staff breakdown here? - because that is seemingly a very low salary line for nine staff positions. What's involved here? Is this basically sort of a mail order house for information? You don't have a director in here who has supervisory responsibilities and the salary to commence with those duties?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's mostly clerical. There is a supervisor and one librarian and the rest are staff at the library and resource clerical staff. So it would just be the ordinary annual increment and it could be that some of these people are at the top of their pay scale or whatever.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under Other Expenditures, presumably the majority of those costs would be in the preparation of some of your audio-visual materials, pamphlets, posters, etc. Did this health information resources group provide any of the printing services and pamphlet printing for the health promotion group for the home ec group that was in health promotion? In other words, I'm asking the Minister if this quarter-million dollars serves the entire pamphlet-poster information requirement for the entire Department of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, any pamphlets in the Department of Home Ec's, we have given up some of the funds; as you see, there's been a reduction in communications expenditure of 11.5. I think some of the funds aren't going with those that are going in agriculture. The general operating reduction is down .7 and .1 reduction in professional services. So it would be mostly in funds to be able to do this work and that will go with . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(n)(1) Health Information Resources: Salaries—pass; 2.(n)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

2. (p) Manitoba Health Research Council - there's no money in there.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I beg your pardon, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, there's a lot.
The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I think probably the Chairman of Committee inadvertently probably identified one of the problems here in that there was no money here; \$787,000 is the same amount of money that was provided in fiscal 1985 to the Manitoba Health Research Foundation. Now, Mr. Chairman, there is some confusion, in terms of discussion, with the Research Council. My colleague will probably be posing some additional questions to you. What I'd like to find out from the Minister is whether the Manitoba Health Research Council is the coordinating vehicle for the department's and the province's research into health. I've got their annual report in front of me where they, for 1984-85 they indicate a total available revenue of some \$1.5 million. But it's my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that the Federal Government provides some direct funding on research into the health area, in different matters in terms of health, heart research, cancer research, etc.

A question being to the Minister: Does the Manitoba Health Research Council only supervise the monies that come from the Province of Manitoba in Lotteries? I realize the Annual Report says that's all they do, but who is the supervisory committee to make decisions on where, for instance, federal monies in health research are channelled? Is there a parallel organization set up by the Federal Government that's operating similar to the Manitoba Health Research Council?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: My honourable friend remembers a few years ago it was felt in the provinces, rightly or wrongly, that that was a responsibility of Ottawa. In all the funds, there was nothing going to research, very little going officially from the Provincial Treasurer's Consolidated Fund to research. That was changed last year, I think.

In the middle Seventies, there was a modest amount of \$100,000 in the first year and that was supposed to go for research mostly in the two teaching hospitals. Then in the change of government that was pursued and there had been some discussion about the possibility of setting up the council. That was started just before there was a change of government. That was continued with Mr. Sherman and finally in 1982 or so I brought in an act forming this council about 1982 or so.

Now at the time we took office there was \$200,000 that was in research. So you brought this thing up, about two years ago, to this amount, the same amount that is there. These people now are dealing with only the money that comes from Manitoba. Any money that comes from Ottawa, the decision is made in Ottawa. Well, they do I guess the same work that these people are doing to decide who gets the grants, which researcher gets the grants and all that.

Now besides that, this was supposed to cover everything that came from the province instead of saying, well, we're going to decide who should do the research, we have no expertise in that. These people were going to do it, and they're doing a very good job.

But there was a difficulty because there's another act dealing with mental health research. At one time they were supposed to take care of that but there were some problems for the time being.

We've made between \$40,000 and \$50,000 anyway which at first that they had, I think, \$15,000.00. So now the situation is - I might as well give this information now though - that part of the Lotteries money is going. That's why the amount doesn't change here. There's been a big increase, practically doubling last year, and eventually it'll be an awful lot more money than that for research. So this amount of money for the present is staying, we're not cutting that. They will receive, but I think the first year it'll be about that just for this year for the Manitoba Health Research Council approximately another \$800,000.00. So eventually it'll go over, and maybe there was some difficulty with that umbrella group.

But let me add also that that is only 45 percent of this fund. There's another 45 percent for the time being because we inherited a situation. St. Boniface Hospital was working on their building, Health Sciences Centre wanted to put another floor for research, and then the Children's Hospital wanted some equipment and so on. So the arrangements that we made that seemed to be very satisfactory was that immediately 45 percent of the fund would go to the Manitoba Research Council and the other 45 percent would go for research again.

So if you're going to show that, add another 800,000 at least for capital this time, but with the understanding that when that was finished that was it and everything would go to the council who would decide what to do with the funds. The capital has to be matched by the teaching hospital, the Children's Hospital. Now they had agreed to finish St. Boniface, that building will be open; I think it'll be opened anytime anyway.

A MEMBER: It was opened during the election.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No. — (Interjection) — No, it was opened for Howard, but it wasn't opened officially — (Interjection) — well, no, I took him there. Where do you think I got more money for home care for? So anyway, you threw me off again, but who cares.

Anyway the St. Boniface Hospital will be finished with the capital, then it's the Health Sciences Centre, and eventually, as I say, the money will go to the Research Council. So there have been more than double in a few years. Maybe in five years or four years, there'll be - well, the way it's going up now, it'll be more than that, but in that year that part of it will be doubled.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, what is the format under which Lotteries money ends up in the Manitoba Health Research Council?

The reason I pose the question is following on the report of the chairman from the 1984-85 report. It says: "In the fiscal year 1984-85 monies became available from Manitoba Lotteries Fund. The income from this source was projected at \$972,000.00." Now further down in the report of the chairman, it said: "Council based its expenditures on an estimate of Lotteries revenues as provided by the Department of Health. Actual revenues were \$263,000 less than anticipated, and this resulted in an overcommitment of

approximately \$200,000.00. This overexpenditure will be recovered in the coming fiscal year and will result in a corresponding reduction in funds available for distribution in the fiscal year 1985-86."

Now my question being that given it appears as if there was a projection given by the Department of Health, if I'm reading the chairman's statement correctly, that the income from Lotteries would be in the neighbourhood of 972,000, whereas the actual was some \$709,000, could the Minister explain the formula, because the Manitoba Research Council must have some sort of an idea of what their cash flow is going to be as they're making ongoing commitments during the year.

Is there a formula that is used by the Department of Health to give to Manitoba Research Council a projection of what their income will be, or is it simply a number that's picked out of the air, if I'm reading the last annual report of the Lotteries Foundation, given that there is some 35.5 million of revenue over expenditure?

In other words, I'm trying to determine how the Research Council determines their share in Lotteries and what it will be.

Don't confuse him anymore, Judy.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, and I won't let you confuse the committee either.

It's very simple. When you discuss Lottery money, you can't guarantee any money. That was made plain to everybody who gets revenue from the Lotteries. The bottom can fall out; it could be that a government decides there are not going to be any lotteries. That can change and people know that. Now that's probably why we kept the same base in there.

At their request, they said, well, approximately what can we expect. We got this information from the Lotteries, looking at past performances, looking at what was done. At times they underestimated and at other times they overestimated. They were different products, and some products there were some changes in that area and that was it. Now we certainly don't accept any responsibility for that. It was at their request. We hesitated and said we didn't know, but what's the closest we can get.

Now there's only one way to deal with that. It's the same thing with the department. My department gets a certain amount of money; I can't spend it before I get it. The Sports Department for years, what we did is we kept the money one year ahead of time or at least a certain amount of money. I know that the council has realized that and they're doing some of that now. They've deferred some of the funds to do that, so that's where the estimate comes in. I'm told that the minimum was around 800,000, I guess, that they got. It shouldn't be more than that.

Eventually in a few years, when the capital is finished, there won't be anymore money unless the Government of the Day decides to change it, but then that would be double that share. In other words, instead of 45 percent, they'd get 90 percent.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I guess I'm having difficulty correlating the chairman's remarks because the department obviously provided a projection of

972,000, and if I'm following the Lotteries Report, the annual report for the same year, the Minister said your revenues can vary, they can drop right through the floor, they can change, they can do this and they can do that. But in the year we're talking about, which is fiscal year '84-85, the Lotteries' revenue increased year-over-year from about 10.5 million to 35.5 million, massive increase, and yet it seems as if the projection that was given to the Research Council of \$972,000 was not achievable and in fact was some \$260,000 less. The two sets of circumstances don't add up. I mean, if we have a basic commitment in this province, which I don't think anyone on this side of the House disagrees with, of using Lotteries' revenues to promote health research, or to augment health research in the Province of Manitoba, an area that we haven't used Lotteries' funds before but, rather than see it go into line departments and simply have Lotteries as an additional tax on mainly the lower income Manitobans who are presumed to be the buyers of lottery tickets, we've decided, or government has decided, this government, decided that we should dedicate some Lotteries' funding into health research. We don't find any difficulty with that.

As a matter of fact, I would urge that there could be some pretty good use of additional funds of Lotteries going into health research. There is no question about it, that could be one of the best uses.

No. 1, I want to indicate to the Minister that I have a great deal more faith in the fact that some \$1 million of Lottery funds go to the Manitoba Health Research Council and have them distribute it to various research projects to benefit the health care system and the health of Manitobans, rather than to have that money go through the current Minister of Lotteries hands and go out to a number of groups that may well be there for the political purposes of the New Democratic Party. I'd far sooner see monies used out of the Lotteries to do reasonable and needed research on health matters in Manitoba. I find it difficult to correlate how an expectation for the fiscal year 1984-85 by the Manitoba Health Research Council of some \$972,000 ended up at a little over \$700,000 at a time when Lotteries' revenues went up by 3.5 times, from 10.5 million to 35.5 million.

The only thing I can speculate, and this might prolong Estimates is that as we approached an election, there were too many of the politically associated groups of the NDP that needed some Lotteries' money as a little purchase-the-vote campaign in terms of the Lotteries' funding that her predecessor took advantage of in preparation for the election. That's a concern that we've always had on this side . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Who me?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, you.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I took advantage of that did you say?

MR. D. ORCHARD: That's what I'm suggesting, because you took monies away from health research that were expected. Where did they go when you had 3.5 times the revenue to work with? I mean that does

not allow the Minister to come up with a logical explanation.

You see, the Minister said, well, you know, that his Department of Sport has always operated on the fact that they don't know what their revenues may be and therefore they had to keep a certain percentage of their funds in advance for a year because the funds vary and don't necessarily materialize. I can accept that argument in some regards from the Minister, where the revenues didn't actually materialize. But such is not the case when we're dealing with this particular line.

We have, as I've said, when we take a look, the two reports are for the same fiscal year 1984-85. The Minister's department gave an indication that the monies available for medical research would be in the neighbourhood of \$1 million - \$972,000.00.

The Minister has to have some sort of idea during the year that he has achieved \$35.5 million of revenues to the Lotteries Foundation over and above 10.5 the year before . . .

A MEMBER: What increase did they get?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, the 1984 revenues, the revenues to the Lotteries Commission for March 31, 1984 were slightly over \$10.5 million.

In that year I am told that the Minister, if I go back to the 1984 Health Research Annual Report, there were no dollars come from Manitoba Lotteries in 1984 when the revenues reached \$10.5 million. The commitment was made to use some of that money for health research; revenues increased to \$35.5 million, and a guesstimate, a projection from the Department of Health, was unable to be achieved in that they received almost 30 percent less than what they expected.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I think that the Minister may not be able to determine clearly this year what Lotteries' revenues would be, for instance, for the fiscal year that's ended March 31, 1986. He may have a pretty good estimate, and maybe the Minister someday might share that with us, but if Lotteries' revenues continue to grow at the enormous multiple that they have in the past two years that I have just identified, then surely the Minister can prevail upon the Lotteries Minister, and with his knowledge in Lotteries because he was the Minister responsible while this was going on, with his knowledge and experience in the way Lotteries work, surely he could prevail upon his Minister responsible for Lotteries to share some additional dollars, some multiple of the \$708,000 in the most recent year, and get that number up substantially because Lotteries' revenues are tripling and yet we seem not to be able to find them available in even a doubled or a 50-percent higher form for the very valuable and worthwhile goal that we support on this side of the House of research into matters concerning the health of Manitobans.

That would, Mr. Chairman, in some way go towards removing what is perceived to be by those in the health research community something of an inequity in terms of provincial support of health research. Whereas the Federal Government has poured fairly substantive dollars into health research in the Province of Manitoba, other provinces, we are told, are at least matching, or coming very close to matching, federal dollars into

health research. To date, the Province of Manitoba has not been doing that.

I can understand the Minister's problem in going to Cabinet and getting line dollars from his department dedicated to health research. That's difficult because he has to make choices between personal care home expenditures, hospital expenditures, home care expenditures and any myriad of other demands within his department.

But, clearly, Mr. Chairman, there is no such conflict when you come to determining how to dispense an increase of \$25 million in Lotteries' revenues. That could easily be taken by this Minister and the Minister responsible for Lotteries, go to Cabinet and say other provinces are matching the federal contribution on research, we can do the same by simply using some of our Lotteries' revenues to achieve that.

That, Sir, would be a laudable goal supported by this side of the House, and supported by all Manitobans who are interested in seeing such research go on in the Province of Manitoba. It would give us an equivalent medical research capability that other provinces have in that they and other provinces are matching, or close to matching, the federal contribution on health research.

I think that that is a goal that we would urge this Minister to undertake, a goal that we would want the Minister of Lotteries, and I'm glad that she's here for this part of the Estimates, a goal that we hope she will take to heart and seriously come to Cabinet with a recommendation that more monies go from the Lotteries fund to health research in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30 p.m., it's time for Private Members' Hour. We are interrupting the proceedings of the committee. The committee will return at 8:00 p.m.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Before we leave the committee, I wonder if both the critic for Sports, and so on, can assist me in getting staff here. We're on Manitoba Health Research Council and I'm sure my honourable friend is talked out on that so it should go fairly fast. Then we have Community Regional Services . . . No, there's no way we will finish Mental Health tonight, so could I ask . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Not unless you have a breakdown, Larry.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Could I ask help from my friend? I'm ready to go either Sports, or after the department, go with the Sports Directorate or to go without, because there's a different Minister for the Alcoholism Foundation, and the Commission right away and Sports at the end. What is your preference?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, hopefully we'll be able to discuss that and then indicate to the Minister when we can do Sports. We'll get back to you on it, but it won't be today.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: Debate on Second Reading, Bill No. 6, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Labour.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

BILL NO. 6 - THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

HON. A. MACKLING: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the one or two members who encouraged me on to say a few words about this bill.

Madam Speaker, this bill proposes a significant change in reporting requirements in respect to fiscal reports. While I think this government has made it abundantly clear that we believe in accountability and we believe in providing as much information as possible, we believe in a greater openness of government; nevertheless, we are concerned to continue to be good managers and responsible in respect to the systems we employ to provide accurate information.

Really, Madam Speaker, that is the concern that I think governments must hold when dealing with financial reporting. Those reports are looked upon by others in society as very significant indicators of the economic health and well-being, not only of the government but of the province itself, so accuracy of the information contained in those reports is very essential. It is out of a concern for accuracy that this government is not prepared to see tight time frames established in which reports must be produced.

Now we're not an exception, Madam Speaker, in holding those concerns. I note from an article in the Winnipeg Free Press of May 20th, that other jurisdictions hold similar concerns. The article confirms that four provinces, including Alberta and Saskatchewan, don't publish Quarterly Financial Statements at all; and none of the five provinces which do issue three-month updates on the government's performance is bound by law to release them within a set time.

Now obviously, Madam Speaker, the concerns that the department have is in respect to accuracy, and some of the reasons for concern about tight time frames are that there are a significant number of variables changing the input of information in those reports. Variables changing federal forecasts because, as you know, we rely as a government on the forecasts of anticipated revenues from tax arrangements of longstanding with the Federal Government. Fluctuations in public debt projections, due to uncontrollable changes in foreign exchange rates, are another factor. These fluctuations, in both amounts of income and of expenses, can result in major fluctuations in year-end forecasts.

So it's not always possible, Madam Speaker, to refine these variables within very restricted time frames. Timing, therefore, is very critical and it would be unwise for any government to place itself in a position of having to present information which may be inaccurate. I note, Madam Speaker, that no previous administration in Manitoba has been constrained by time limits that are suggested in this bill and, of course, that includes numbers of administrations in the past.

It is not a political matter; it is not a partisan, political issue, it's a concern for accuracy because if, as I've indicated, there is inaccuracy in those projected forecasts, it could do significant harm, not only to the province itself, but to all who look at those forecasts

and rely upon them for an indication of the state of well-being of the province.

So it's for those reasons, Madam Speaker, that the government is not prepared to accept the amendment proposed to our financial reporting, and therefore, I urge honourable members opposite to reconsider their position, because it is not in the best interests of the province to have that kind of restrictive time frame in which to operate.

I underline again, Madam Speaker, that many jurisdictions do not provide those quarterly reports. Those who do, do not have tight time restrictions in respect to them. It would be a mistake to impose those kind of restrictions here in Manitoba.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert is closing debate?

MR. G. MERCIER: Yes, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I regret that . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Is there other . . .

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am closing debate, Madam Speaker, and I . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. If there are other members that want to talk, it's . . .

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I've been recognized and I'm concluding debate . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: I asked the honourable member if he was closing debate, to give other members an opportunity before debate was closed, to participate.

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I have risen to speak . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: I was making some notes, Madam Speaker, and did not realize . . . Madam Speaker, I have just been given some additional information and I wondered if I could stand this bill while I had a chance to review it, in depth. Is it possible at this point to stand this bill?

MR. G. MERCIER: On a point of order, it's impossible for the member to stand the bill. He stood up and started speaking. If he wants to quit speaking, which he has to do now . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member at this point, once he starts to speak, can either complete his 15 minutes or lose his turn at speaking on this bill.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue that is raised by this particular resolution motion is one that has had serious and deliberate debate in the Legislature through questions and through opportunities that the Opposition have used from time to time on many occasions. I believe members opposite have spoken about their concern about the reporting

of the financial affairs of the province in speeches, whether it be related to Estimates Debates, Budget Debates, the Throne Speech Debates. There have been many opportunities.

While it is a legitimate concern, Madam Speaker, I believe that the explanations that have been provided from time to time for the delays, occasional as they may be, of the delivery of financial reports, that on average the information relating to the financial affairs of the province have been delivered in an acceptable and in a timely fashion.

Madam Speaker, the Opposition tries to make the point that this information is somehow fundamental to the points that they make. However I think, if one were to seriously review the comments that have been made on the record about the issue of financial reporting specifically, on other occasions in other debates you would find very little reference to that matter. The issue was raised, and I suppose someone would have some serious questions about the motivation for its being raised at this particular time, but I think that we have indicated and members on this side have indicated that this is something that needs to be taken seriously and will be, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I would like to move that the debate be adjourned and stand in my name, seconded by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

MOTION presented and carried.

RES. NO. 2 - FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL COST-SHARING

MADAM SPEAKER: On the proposed Resolution No. 2, the Honourable Minister of Education has five minutes remaining.

The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In the remaining five minutes, Madam Speaker, I would perhaps like to provide in my own way an epilogue to this particular chapter in federal-provincial relations.

Madam Speaker, as most members will know, the changes which were being contemplated to Bill C-96 have, in fact, been passed through Parliament. I, for one, and I hope members opposite join me in a moment of silence for the passage of that particular piece of legislation, because in my opinion and I believe in the opinion of many Manitobans it is regrettable, Madam Speaker. It is regrettable in not only its deed in what it will do to the ability of provinces to fund post-secondary education, it is unfortunate in the manner in which it was brought forward, in the manner in which it was shuffled, forced through Parliament, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, Bill C-96 was a unilateral change of a federal statute, which has significant implications for our community colleges, our health care system. The unilateral nature in which it was done, I think, does a disservice to the whole question of a confederation.

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Madam Speaker, the changes that were implemented, the changes that were passed came about not as a result of consultation, not as a result of any attempt on the part of the Federal Government to understand the real concerns that individual provinces had with this bill and with its implications.

Madam Speaker, I and several of the other Ministers responsible for education across this country have made representations through the Council of Education Ministers for Canada and through our respective Finance Ministers to attempt to have the Federal Government sit down and, in a forthright way, discuss our very real concerns. Madam Speaker, that did not happen, and Bill C-96 was passed over the objections of the Province of Manitoba, over the objections of virtually every other province in the country.

Madam Speaker, in my consultation and discussion with other Ministers and other Provincial Governments, I think I can say categorically that there is no joy, there is no silver lining to this particular piece of legislation. It is an extremely unfortunate event in that it is going to sacrifice higher education and health care in the name of financial expediency, in the name of the federal deficit which, while we acknowledge is a problem, we - and when I say, we, I'm speaking not only of myself but of other Provincial Education Ministers - believe could have been done in other areas of the Federal Budget, in other areas of federal spending which would not have had the same impact on the sick and the aged and young people and people looking for training and retraining in our province and across Canada.

So it is unfortunate, and the sad part of it is that, despite the best efforts of my colleague, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health and the support of many other Provincial Cabinet Ministers across the country, we were not able to effect a change, if not effect a change, at the very least have the Federal Government delay passage of C-96 until there was an opportunity for us to present our best case and see whether jointly we could not come up with some alternatives to deficit reduction which would not have had the kind of impact on those segments of our society which need to be a priority, which should be a priority for governments at all levels.

So, Madam Speaker, the issue, I suppose, in the minds of many is that this issue is dead. The passage of Bill C-96 concludes the issue, but I want to lay at the feet of members opposite, who took every opportunity to poke fun at this government's desire, intention, will, to see Bill C-96 forestalled; the blame rests on their feet, on their heads, and perhaps on both.

Madam Speaker, the implications of Bill C-96 are going to be felt in Brandon. They're going to be felt in the Member for Fort Garry's riding. They're going to be felt all across Manitoba, Madam Speaker. The \$86 million, Madam Speaker, that the Province of Manitoba is going to forego is on their heads, Madam Speaker. When the post-secondary education system suffers and when we can't meet the needs, I'll remind members opposite of their complicity in this offence and their inability to stand up for Manitoba when it really counted.

Madam Speaker, it's an unfortunate day, and I can tell from the howls opposite that they are beginning to reflect on their inaction, on their inability to stand

up for Manitoba, for their inability to understand the real serious implications.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

All members who wish to put some comments on this issue on the record will have an opportunity to do so in due course. May we please hear from the Minister of Education? Order please.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, the record is clear. Members opposite chose to follow the unfortunate political dogma, priorities of their masters. I believe that their constituents, the young people, the aged, the senior citizens in this province are going to be the losers. Madam Speaker, it's unfortunate that we could not have collectively made it otherwise.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

MR. J. ERNST: Thank you, Madam Speaker — (Interjection) — thanks, Al, I told you I'd vote for you for leader, and I will.

Madam Speaker, this resolution, going over the content of it, brings to mind the story that's going around the Ottawa Airport about the last plane in from Winnipeg. Of course, the last plane in from Winnipeg is the one that keeps whining after the engines are shut off.

Madam Speaker, when that anecdote came forward, it was intended to be humorous but I was embarrassed, quite frankly, to be from Manitoba and have that kind of a story going around Ottawa. I was embarrassed that we had to put up with that kind of anecdote coming forward because this government, Madam Speaker, has created Manitoba as the laughing stock of the entire country.

We have, Madam Speaker, gone through this Session with a whole litany of rhetoric, of NDP complaints about cutbacks from the feds. Excuses for their own inability to act always fall at the doorstep of the Federal Government. Virtually every time a member opposite stands up, all we hear about is the feds did this or the feds are not doing that. The feds are cutting back, and this, that, and the other thing. They're covering up their own inabilities, Madam Speaker, by trying to blame the Federal Government for all and sundry types of ills.

Even the resolution, Madam Speaker, the "WHEREAS" in the preamble is wrong. It's designed to be critical of the Federal Government: "WHEREAS federal transfers have declined," that's in the preamble.

Basic EPF Funding, Madam Speaker, was set in 1983-84 at \$408 million. Payments for 1985-86 increased by \$50 million. In 1986-87, those same transfers will increase to \$65 million.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba is the only province in the entire country to receive this additional funding, and yet the preamble says: "WHEREAS Federal transfers have declined." Madam Speaker, I don't know what school members opposite went to. I don't know

what school the member who introduced the resolution went to, but obviously his arithmetic was not very good because federal transfers have not declined.

We also don't hear about the other federal funding programs that have come along in the interim. Nobody wants to talk about those. They're quickly grabbed up. They're quickly implemented; agreements are signed; press conferences are held. But no, they don't want to bring them up in the same breath as saying that those federal transfers have declined.

There's an additional 37 million to a total of 94 million for the Canadian Jobs Strategy, no mention of that, Madam Speaker - it deals with the Canadian Jobs Strategy, with Challenge '86, dealing with student unemployment - \$18 million for employment training; \$120 million for projects in transportation, boxcar rehabilitation, prototype grain cars. The Minister of Transport has taken credit for a lot of these that have been, in part, funded by the Federal Government. But they don't bring out those factors, Madam Speaker. They don't bring out those kinds of numbers when they're talking about federal transfers declining.

Madam Speaker, because the Federal Government wants to exercise some fiscal restraint, some fiscal responsibility, something this government knows precious little about, I might add, they are being attacked. They want to relate transfers to ability to pay, a foreign concept to this government, ability to pay. They want to relate funding to the gross national product and to provincial populations, something that's reasonable, Madam Speaker, but foreign to this government. They want to relate it to how well the country is doing financially. They don't want to deal with that either, Madam Speaker, and instead they intend to attack the Federal Government.

Because, Madam Speaker, the Federal Government has decided to use firm data with a responsible formula that's not based on handouts, not based on continually increasing programs with absolutely no control attached to them, not based on a theory or not based on a want list, Madam Speaker, but based on firm data with a responsible formula, a sound program of living within their means and meeting basic needs, they are criticized by this government. As I indicated earlier, an increase in 1986-87 of \$65 million, Madam Speaker, in transfer payments.

Bill C-96 was not designed to reduce the existing levels of funding in a cutback situation, Madam Speaker. It did not reduce the level of funding that the province was getting from those funds. It was intended to keep transfers growing, at least at the rate of inflation, so that there is a reasonable amount of increase ongoing, Madam Speaker. It was intended to protect it by statute for the very first time. There was no guarantee; there was no iron-clad agreement. There was virtually nothing in writing, Madam Speaker, that said that the Federal Government had to provide those transfers at all, but instead they decided to put it into statute. They said, we'll make it a law that we'll have to at least give you the rate of inflation in terms of increases in those payments, for the very first time, an iron-clad guarantee.

There's been criticism of the Federal Government by this government, Madam Speaker, as a smokescreen for their own ineptness, for their own inability to manage. The federal contribution to health-care expenditures in 1985-86 increased to 52 percent from

51 percent, a 1 percent increase, Madam Speaker, of the total sum, while the provincial share of the same health-care expenditures declined. Here they are talking about the Federal Government cutting back transfers. To use their words, Madam Speaker, "transfers have declined." Yet in fact, the Provincial Government's share of health expenditures in 1985-86 declined 1 percent, and the Federal Government's share increased that same 1 percent.

Madam Speaker, almost every time members opposite have stood up, they have said we can't have it both ways. Well, Madam Speaker, they're trying to have it every way. Madam Speaker, they've blown it every way.

Federal contributions grew at a rate of 8 percent per year over previous years. The provincial growth rate was only 6.2 percent. That was the provincial expenditure growth rate for 1985-86. They're blaming the feds for cutbacks, blaming the feds for their own cutbacks, as a matter of fact, Madam Speaker.

Funding to municipalities, funding to other agencies, Madam Speaker, for the past two years has been at or close to zero. I sat, as a member of the Winnipeg City Council when the now Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, then Minister of Finance, came and said you're getting nothing because of federal cutbacks. That was two years ago, Madam Speaker. Two years ago, that Minister told the City of Winnipeg Council, you're getting nothing because of federal cutbacks, cutbacks that have not occurred, Madam Speaker, and in fact increases have taken place. Yet that Minister said, no, you're cut off, no increases for you. Madam Speaker, I don't find that, quite frankly, very laudable on the part of the government.

Now they're accusing us of wanting it both ways, Madam Speaker. There was a classic example of their having it both ways or trying to have it both ways, trying to pull the wool over somebody's eyes, and saying that the Federal Government was cutting back when it wasn't and that we are going to have to now not give you an increase because of the federal cutback that didn't occur. Madam Speaker, I find that reprehensible.

Madam Speaker, this government is blowing it always. This government, with its legacy of inability and financial incompetence, that receives increased federal funding, as I've demonstrated, that implements cutbacks on its own funding agencies, the agencies that request funding from the Provincial Government. Madam Speaker, it gets the increase, it cuts back those agencies . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

MR. J. ERNST: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: You're welcome.

MR. J. ERNST: Now, Madam Speaker, as I was saying, before we were collectively, rudely interrupted, that this government is blowing it all ways with its legacy of incompetence, its legacy of mismanagement, and its ability to control the financial affairs of the province.

Madam Speaker, they received increased federal funding, as I've demonstrated; they cut back on municipalities and other agencies that seek funding from the province; and they still have a higher deficit than last year. Now, Madam Speaker, that's having it - or not having it, in that case, all ways.

Madam Speaker, notwithstanding the fact the bill has been passed, I think our amendment points out an error of reality in this economic mess. The bill is passed certainly but, quite frankly, Madam Speaker, when the Minister of Education spoke, he said they've given up. Well, Madam Speaker, I don't think that need be the case at all.

I think negotiations with the Federal Government ought to continue, whether it's under that particular funding formula or not, at least they should not give up. They are the government; they have the responsibility to deal with it, so let them get on with it. Let them not throw up their hands and try and blame it on the Opposition, Madam Speaker. They told us earlier, they won the election. Well, if they won the election, let them get on with governing the province and get on with negotiating a reasonable agreement with the Federal Government.

Madam Speaker, our amendment I think brings a breath of reality, of common sense, of stability in this whole morass that the government opposite has put before us. For too long the words, "ability to pay, affordability, living within your means," have been absent from the vocabulary of the members opposite.

Madam Speaker, we've seen deficit after deficit. We've seen their cutbacks after cutbacks in the face of increased transfers from the Federal Government, and yet they say, sorry, but it's all the Opposition's fault. Well, Madam Speaker, I think it's time that we got on to look for the future. It's time we got on with some reasonable negotiations. It's time to quit bashing the feds over the head and to sit down in a reasonable manner and try and negotiate an agreement. Madam Speaker, if they can't do that, then they ought to resign as a government and let somebody else try.

Madam Speaker, it's time that they did that. It's time that they quit whining; it's time they quit complaining; it's time they quit fedbashing; and it's time they sat down and negotiated a reasonable settlement with the Federal Government.

Thank you very much.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

You know, it's very entertaining to listen to the members opposite. For example, the Member for Morris, in discussing this resolution, made some conclusions about the Member for Kildonan, and the Member for Morris said this: "Madam Speaker, the speech that we have just heard from the Member for Kildonan has done nothing but incite those of us opposite." When it quotes back comments that were made years ago, when indeed it attempts to embarrass the whole political process, I find it totally reprehensible.

I find it very upsetting too that the members from the opposite ranks can say something one year and change their tune the next year. I think it embarrasses all of us when you do that because people don't

distinguish - when they hear you misrepresent the truth, they blame all politicians for misrepresenting the truth. It really is important to act responsibly and to say exactly what you mean and not change day by day.

Now this resolution is important. First of all, one third of Manitoba's revenue comes from cost-sharing and block transfer payments. What is the reason for that? The reason is that no matter where you live in Canada, it was meant to ensure adequate health care, adequate education, and that's why we've had, for example, in Mr. Manness' speech, he said something like — (Interjection) — Oh, the Member for Morris' speech said something like this. He said, well, how come the other provinces aren't shouting the same way Manitoba is? - and they all are. He hasn't been listening.

Let me quote even some interesting things that the Conservatives have said one year. For example, Brian Ransom, May 1981, he said, "The western provinces are aware the Federal Government stated concerns about the size of its budgetary deficit and we are on record as sharing these concerns. Clearly action to reduce the federal deficit is essential, but such action should not simply involve a shift in tax burdens to provinces and municipalities. It is important to emphasize that the same taxpayers support all levels of government and federal efforts to offload obligations unto other levels will not reduce overall tax burdens."

Now, Mr. Ransom said this, too, the same month: "The Federal Government's intention to reduce financing for health and post-secondary education is unjustifiable and unacceptable. There is no doubt that the Federal Government has the fiscal capacity to maintain their support for these essential social programs."

Now Michael Wilson, the current Finance Minister, said this - it's interesting to note that the current Finance Minister, Michael Wilson, when in opposition described these cutbacks as: "cutting spending and shifting the burden," which he further described as, "predatory federalism which will not and cannot work in this country."

What has changed since that time? What has changed since the political position of the person who has stated it? Brian Ransom is no longer here; you're no longer the government. Michael Wilson was talking when he was opposition; now they're in government. Not only that, but Mulroney - this most famous of all quotes - in the last election this headline says, "Mulroney seeks 50-50 split on Medicare costs. 'A Conservative Government would restore the original 50-50 split in Medicare.'" Then he goes on to say this also, "National health care is not a political issue," he said, "You're entitled to the same kind of quality, service, irrespective of place of residence." That may mean in certain cases a higher percent than 50 percent.

So what has changed his position therein? There was another change however, the population is changing. People are getting older and technology has changed as well, so there's more expensive equipment, too, and new programs required.

But what is the actual financial picture? I agree with the Member for Charleswood that the federal funding, in dollar terms, has increased, but the share of funding has decreased and that is the important thing. It's like someone getting a hike in their pay, maybe a significant hike, but if inflation or costs of the program have gone

up, it is very, very difficult for them to meet their costs. So it is a problem, even though increased dollars amounts are greater.

Now the important thing, by the way, I noticed in today's paper there's a letter from the Honourable Jake Epp, and he says that it's priorities. He says it's priorities, and he's saying, in effect, that we should decide and you should decide when you say everything is rosy in the sense of financial help, either you should be calling for the 50-50 split in health care costs and post-secondary education costs or you should be saying what programs we should cut. I haven't heard any suggestions like that.

Basically what is important is what the Federal Government is funding. Programs have changed and all provinces have improved to meet the new conditions of society and it's important that they be adequately funded. If the Federal Government doesn't want to fund them 50-50, tell us exactly - you could tell us yourselves what programs in health and education you'd like to see cut.

I would like to close by citing a reference of a news release from the Canadian Medical Association. The doctors of this country are not NDP members.

A MEMBER: Some are.

A MEMBER: Oh yes, a few.

MR. H. SMITH: On the whole they — (Interjection) — a growing number are. As he says, they're very smart people and here's what they say to their association:

"Proposed federal legislation will create a two-tier health care system in Canada," says Dr. Bill Vall (phonetic) of the Canadian Medical Association. "We will have one quality of health care in the rich provinces and second or third rate services in the poor provinces. The dream of Canadians of having access to reasonable, comparable health services, no matter where they live or travel, appears to have been abandoned by the Government of Canada."

Why have they abandoned this? They've abandoned it because they want to go ahead and get rid of their massive federal debt and they want to shift that debt to the provinces and the municipalities of this country and that is what is so shifty about the Conservatives. They believe in shifting the debt to the other levels of government. That's what so shifty about the Conservatives. If they actually got down to work out how to reduce their debt by looking at their programs and figuring out new and innovative ways to give those programs, that would be different, but they taxed higher and went ahead and got rid of the debt; but instead they want to cut our programs by cutting our funding to us and that is just not acceptable.

And you people across the way, I wish you would stand up for Manitoba instead of sitting on your hands. It's about time that you stood up and did something worthwhile instead of just saying fed bashing and waving it aside.

The fact is what programs would you like us to cut in health care and education costs?

A MEMBER: You should save that speech for your caucus or in your Cabinet.

MR. H. SMITH: Well, I'm not in the Cabinet, but I think it's important to recognize that there is increased funding, but it's not sufficient. You're saying that the world is static, it's not changing. It is changing and you should be picking up your proper share at the federal level and you're not doing this.

You're serving the status quo. You don't wish to improve things. I, for example, in the last campaign called on a foot doctor, and he said that people in our area require greater attention to their feet because there's a health problem there because they're older.

You don't recognize those situations. I think it's important to recognize the change in society and the increased need for new programs and not to be stationary and status quo. Do you want to go back to 1957? I would suggest most of you are mostly running at the mouth rather than going ahead and looking at the situation.

The facts are there. I've acknowledged there's increased funding but there's decrease in support.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, if the Honourable Member for Ellice has time left in his speech, I wonder if he would entertain a question.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice.

The Honourable Member for Brandon West has a question.

MR. J. McCRAE: I believe I heard the Honourable Member for Ellice agree that federal transfer payments to the provinces and to the Province of Manitoba have increased.

I would ask him how he can say that and still support a motion where in its first WHEREAS says that federal transfers have declined. Would he like to move an amendment to his colleague's motion?

MR. H. SMITH: You're talking about dollars; I'm talking about percentage share of funding.

MR. J. McCRAE: I thank the honourable member for that clarification, Madam Speaker. I now rise to participate in the debate.

HON. A. MACKLING: Tell us about the Brandon airport.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, as I begin, the Honourable Minister of Labour has decided to get into the act early into my speech before I've said a thing. I might ask him a few questions about the policies of the Provincial Government respecting discrimination against women and Jews with respect to MTX. Perhaps he'd like to take the floor when it's his turn and explain just where he stands on those issues.

Madam Speaker, I maintain that the motion put on the Order Paper by the Honourable Member for Kildonan is a declaration and it's an admission of failure by this government. It is admitting very, very early in its new mandate that it doesn't know what to do, Madam Speaker. It cannot solve the problems facing Manitoba.

So I ask: Why did they campaign in the last election? Why didn't they just stay home and allow themselves to be defeated and let a government who was prepared to tackle the problems facing this province take over and do those jobs?

This motion seems to tell us that we can't do anything, the Federal Government isn't giving us enough money, and we can't take any initiatives in our own hands and try to do something in Manitoba that will improve our situation and improve the situation for the people of this province. We're unable totally to improve the health care system by way of efficiencies in that system and in the educational system. We're not able to work with the funds that are available and so now we must blame the Federal Government because the people are looking to us for answers and we don't have any. That's what this motion tells us, Madam Speaker, that the honourable members opposite don't have the answers; they don't have the solutions to the problems facing Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I was as surprised as anyone, maybe not as surprised as honourable members opposite when they won the election, but they were surprised as I think anyone could ever be, in view of their record of failure and mismanagement, but what surprises me more is that we bring new members into this House, the Honourable Member for Elmwood, the Honourable Member for Kildonan, the Honourable Member for Ellice and a very few others who are here, who I thought would do their best to try to encourage the previous members or the longer-serving members of the government to put their house in order and to face the problems head on and to show a little political courage.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan quickly joined the pack and said to himself: Failure is all we have ahead of us so that we better start looking to other levels of jurisdiction in this country because we are failures, so let's blame our failure on somebody else.

We've been getting that since long before the election, Madam Speaker, and I'm frankly getting pretty tired of it. The people of Manitoba are pretty tired of it, too. Honourable members opposite have lost that battle over Bill C-96. They've lost the battle in the media; they've lost the battle in the hearts and the minds of Manitobans, so why must we keep hearing more about this?

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Kildonan, in his motion, he tells this House in his speech that federal transfers have declined. Well, how can that be? How can he say that? I believe he's joined with the exercise of the Minister of Education and so many others on that side, Madam Speaker, in jiggery-pokery when it comes to federal and provincial cost-sharing formulas. There's not a tittle of truth in what the member says when he talks about declining transfer payments and the facts speak for themselves.

In the current fiscal year, Madam Speaker, the post-secondary education contributions from the Federal Government will increase 6.2 percent. That is hardly a decline. Well, they must divert attention away from places like Brandon University, places like Brandon General Hospital. We're getting 6.2 percent from the Federal Government of an increase this year, Madam Speaker, and what's happening? Brandon General Hospital told the Manitoba Health Services Commission that it needed 4.5 percent of an increase this year to

enable it to carry on. What did they get - 3 percent. 6.2 percent from the Federal Government, 3 percent to Brandon General Hospital.

If you want to talk about fairness, Madam Speaker, I'm here to talk about fairness. If the honourable member opposite wants to talk about prevarication on the part of his colleagues in telling Manitobans that they're not getting their fair share from the Federal Government, let's look at what goes on in Manitoba; let's put our own house in order, Madam Speaker.

I think I heard the voice of the Honourable Member for Thompson, Madam Speaker. It's a voice I've come to wish I didn't hear so often.

According to a report done for the Secretary of State for Canada, Established Programs Financing for post-secondary education contributions in Manitoba represented 102.9 percent of operating grants to colleges and universities in 1984 and 1985. Well it was just 80.3 percent in 1974-78, in the height of the Trudeau years, those years that honourable members opposite felt were such progressive years for our country, the years of growth in our country when all things were right. Honourable members opposite need only look to their own leader, the First Minister, who spoke so highly of his relationship with the Trudeau government.

Well I cannot go along with that kind of thinking, Madam Speaker. They shake their heads today that maybe those years, those Trudeau years, weren't so good, but they talk about us wanting to have it both ways. Well they can't have it both ways.

Instead of debating the kind of relationships we have with the Federal Government vis-a-vis transfer payments and the EPF financing, which is on the increase, Madam Speaker, we should be talking in this debate about the priority setting of this NDP administration. I talked a moment ago about education, Madam Speaker. Well let's talk for just a minute about health.

This is the government that does all the complaining. Well I happen to live in a city which is very much a part of this province, even if most members opposite don't even know what the name of the city is. In my city, we get headlines like, "The province rejects Brandon General Hospital bid for more money." That was this year and, as I said a few minutes ago, Brandon General Hospital received an increase this year of 3 percent in the face of a 6.2 percent increase in payments from Ottawa - "The hospital strain," Brandon Sun; "Rationed health care," Brandon Sun. — (Interjection) — who said that?

Somebody said that just Brandon or Brandon West elected itself an ineffective MLA. Was that the Minister of Labour who said that? I understand, Madam Speaker, the Minister of Labour says that the Member for Brandon West is an ineffective MLA. Well we'll let the voters decide that. It'll likely be very soon, and it may very well be, Madam Speaker, that the Minister of Labour will be leading his party to certain disaster in the next election. You don't have to wonder, Madam Speaker, why I am in support of the Minister of Labour for leader of his party, because I would just love to see him lead his party into an election. Certainly I'd love to have him come onto the hustings in Brandon and say the kinds of things he's saying this afternoon about the Member for Brandon West, because there are some 5,500 people in Brandon West who will not agree with him.

Madam Speaker, in 1985-86, federal contributions for insured health services accounted for about 52 percent of Manitoba's expenditures for hospital insurance and Medicare. I said that the federal share in 1976-77 was about 51 percent. How that amounts to a percent decrease, as the Honourable Member for Ellice says, I don't understand that either.

So the only reason we have these debates is to give honourable members opposite an opportunity to go after the Federal Government once more, and try to change the regime in Ottawa so that we can go on with the kind of deficit financing that we saw for 16 years in the Trudeau years and the kind of deficit financing we've seen under the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology when he was Minister of Finance in this province; so we can go back to that kind of system where we just dig ourselves in deeper, and we just make that ball that's attached to the chain, just make it a little bigger and harder to carry around over the years.

I'm sorry, Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Ellice was occupied on the other side and didn't hear my reference to the ball and chain. It's one he likes to refer to quite often. But I'm just warning the Honourable Member for Ellice that, if he goes on supporting these types of resolutions, the ball will indeed get a lot bigger and harder to drag around.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan tells us in his resolution, Madam Speaker, that federal transfers will continue to decline. This motion on the basis of the first two Whereases, Madam Speaker, is doomed to failure, because it and those who support it are not speaking the truth in this respect. Between 1986 and 1987 and 1990 and 1991, federal transfers will amount to over \$90 billion to provinces under the EPF, a \$25 billion increase over the previous five-year period, and there's a guarantee that the transfers will increase no less than the rate of increase in the general price level. How that can amount to transfer payments continuing to decline, I don't understand. Honourable members opposite certainly haven't convinced me. The Minister of Education certainly hasn't convinced me, and the Minister of Education and I will have an opportunity later in this Session to talk about matters of this kind but he certainly hasn't convinced me yet.

Mr. Blenkarn and Mr. Wilson gave him a real run in Ottawa, gave him the ride that he wasn't expecting. He came back to Winnipeg a little sheepish, a little quiet for a long time after his visit to Ottawa.

Madam Speaker, I think there can be no excuse in this province not to maintain health and education facilities, and the only reason that there could possibly be would be incompetence. We certainly have seen plenty of that from honourable members opposite.

They have more of a commitment to debt in this province than they do to health and education facilities, and debt servicing charges, that ball and chain I mentioned a while ago, \$322 million this year. They are more committed to that, Madam Speaker, than they are to the preservation and enhancement of our health and medical facilities in this province. They have more commitment to the apple polishers, those 132 image builders, which this government cannot build an image for itself because it doesn't have a record from which to build an image. They have more commitment, Madam Speaker, to senior public servants and rewarding their

friends. As I said, they have more of a commitment to riverbank improvement than to health and education facilities in Manitoba. They have more commitment to MTX and discrimination against women and Jews. What does the Honourable Member for Kildonan say about that?

MR. M. DOLIN: I say it's a load of crap.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I'm almost sorry I asked the question. The Honourable Member for Kildonan tells me, we get a lot of crap. The Minister of Highways says I'm full of crap, Madam Speaker. I wonder if that could be considered unparliamentary. I'll forgive him, and take it as just a bit of - the Minister of Highways says the Member for Kildonan says that. The Minister of Highways only wishes the Member for Kildonan said that because that's what's in the Minister of Highways mind, and I wish he would remove it.

The Member for Kildonan says, Madam Speaker, that Manitoba has to raise taxes. What we have here is an excuse for the kinds of tax increases we're going to see and have seen under this government. They are paving the way for their future programs of raising taxes on Manitobans and making them pay for the incompetence of honourable members opposite.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I ask honourable members to be patient? There are only three minutes left in question period, and they'll have lots of opportunity to chatter outside after.

The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: I really am sorry, Madam Speaker, that my speech is so boring that honourable members opposite have to spend so much time chatting amongst themselves. I really wish they would be courteous enough just to listen, as I did so carefully to what they had to say.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan talks about tax reform and about how Conservatives in this country aren't committed to tax reform. Well aside from the statements we've been seeing the last few days by the Federal Minister of Finance about tax reform, let's talk about commitment and the kinds of things that honourable members opposite are committed to. They say they're committed to pay equity. I ask the question: does that pay equity principle extend to our contract work going on in Saudi Arabia? I ask, what about this government's commitment to affirmative action? Do we follow that commitment in Saudi Arabia too? What about commitments to separate school funding, Madam Speaker, commitments to allow the board of governors of Brandon University to be autonomous? That's the kind of a commitment they have. Yet we . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My comments are brief, but I just want to say, Madam Speaker, that the debate we've heard today, I think,

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indicates the basic problem that members opposite have, and that is that they don't understand the implications of Bill C-96. They don't understand the fact, Madam Speaker, that the percent share that the Federal Government is spending on health and post-secondary education is going to decline substantially over the next few years because of their friends in Ottawa. They don't understand, Madam Speaker, that formula set for guaranteeing previously that spending would increase at the same level as the GNP growth will be cut to 2 percent less than GNP. That means less money for the provinces, less money for Manitoba,

and health and post-secondary education will suffer because of their friends in Ottawa. They are saying, Madam Speaker, nothing to stop that.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 5:30 p.m., I'm interrupting proceedings. When this item is next before the House, the honourable member will have 14 minutes remaining.

I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene, orderly I presume, at 8:00 p.m. in Committee of Supply.