

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 13, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Glenlawn Collegiate eighty Grade 11 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Nemetchek and Mr. Kornberger. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Goods and Services Tax Finance Minister's Position

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): At the First Ministers' meeting last Thursday, the Prime Minister was adamant. The GST, as outlined by Michael Wilson, is going to take effect. So much for co-operative federalism. What disturbs Manitobans are the mixed messages we continue to receive from the provincial Government. The Premier states that he does not like the GST in its present form, but perhaps another form might make it acceptable. Meanwhile, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) states that the Manitoba economy will benefit under the proposed GST.

My question is to the Finance Minister. Why is the Finance Minister supporting a tax opposed by his Premier, particularly when the Finance Minister's own studies indicate that it will have a devastating effect on the Manitoba economy?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Leader of the Liberal Party use the word "obtuse" before in this House. I am not going to use it in reference to her question despite some urging from some colleagues, I might add. Let me say the reference to my saying there would be some benefit to a consumption tax was couched in terms of 1995. All of the studies done by everybody on all sides of the issue indicate that in due course supposedly there will be some beneficial gains specifically with respect to the goods and services taxes. However, this Government has been adamant in its opposition to it and, secondly, has not in any way had differing views as to the impact over the next two or three years on the Province of Manitoba, all of that impact being negative.

* (1335)

Mrs. Carstairs: Obviously, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) believes that this tax in the long run is good

for Canadians and Manitobans. Will he state that clearly in the House today, and indicate why he is opposing a tax that he thinks is in the best interests of Manitobans, he and he alone, I might add?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what it is that the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is really wanting in this case. This Government, indeed the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), indeed the Minister of Finance have been on record ad nauseam saying that the GST is a tax that is unacceptable to this province, that it is something that does not in any way represent an economic benefit for this province over the next two or three years. Mr. Speaker, that has been the case over and over again.

All the analyses that have been done with respect to this tax bear that out; so there is nothing new here. I cannot understand why it is that the Leader of the Liberal Party has so few issues in her bag of issues that she keeps coming back to try and receive clarity on this one—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Impact on Manitoba

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, if the Finance Minister does not believe that this is the single most important issue on the economy to Manitobans, then he is severely mistaken. What they want from this Government is a clear vision of the GST, and we continue to get mud. Will the Finance Minister outline for us today what benefits he thinks will accrue to Manitobans from this tax?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think in response to that question I should probably also respond to a question posed by the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) last Thursday when he asked the impact on the Province of Manitoba in terms of jobs over the next two or three years.

Let me say this was part of the position that Manitoba entered into the national study that was done by the Conference Board of Canada. Let me say that in 1991, job losses as a result of the GST to the Province of Manitoba are supposedly 1,200; in 1992 those job losses would rise to 4,500; and in 1993 would increase another, I believe, 1,000. Starting in 1994, by the analysis, that breaks even, and in 1995 the jobs begin to show a positive increase.

Conference Board of Canada Report

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this Minister really does talk out of both sides of his mouth. I mean he says that it is a good tax, but meanwhile we are going to lose, by his own

figures, some almost 7,000 jobs. The province has requested and received a report from the Conference Board of Canada, a report that the provinces then leaked to the media in Ottawa.

Will the Finance Minister of the Province of Manitoba today table that report so that all Manitobans can learn of the devastating effects of the GST?

* (1340)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am led to believe at this point in time that study done for the First Ministers, indeed in essence owned by the First Ministers, at this point has not been decided as to whether or not it will be released. There are some indications that it is available in the Province of Alberta, but let me say that the First Ministers, I am led to believe, have not decided on how they are going to release that report.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, what a cozy little club these men belong to, a cozy little club that leaks it to the media in Ottawa but will not provide it to the citizens of this country. When will this—

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, yes, it is a point of order. I ask that the Leader of the Liberals either describe who she means by this cozy little club, because I can indicate nobody from Manitoba, absolutely nobody from Manitoba, released any report to reporters.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts. Order.

Goods and Services Tax Conference Board of Canada Report

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this report is available to the media. The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this province knows it is available to the media in selected groups. Will he now commit to releasing that report to the citizens of this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that report was prepared on behalf of the First Ministers.—(interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) is never allowed to ask a question or to say anything in this House by his Leader, so he has to heckle all the time. Let him not show his ignorance and let him just be quiet and listen to the answer to the question that his Leader has asked. His Leader has asked a question. I would hope that he would have enough courtesy to listen to the answer.

Mr. Speaker, the First Ministers had that report prepared. Premier Bourassa, as chairman of the First Ministers, has indicated that it is his preference that

it not be released until they have an opportunity to discuss it with the Finance Minister and the provincial Finance Ministers to utilize it as the basis for discussion in hopes that the federal Government will reconsider and come back to the table.

That report was not in any way made public by this administration or anybody from this administration, and in fact to my knowledge, the entire report does not appear to have been in public. There appear to have been excerpts or references to things in that report, but I did not see the report made public.

If the First Ministers agree on it to be made public, I have absolutely no difficulty. I would be happy to make it public if there is an agreement amongst the First Ministers, but I think that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) would want to have further discussion, would want to have the prospect of Ottawa backing off on that tax. If that is one of the conditions that they feel can lead to that, then I am happy to support that in continued discussions.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, according to the Prime Minister, he already had the report because he made reference to it in his comments before the First Ministers' meeting. The Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) is referencing parts of it today in his comments to this House.

Why is this First Minister reluctant to share with the people information that is available to the media, available to the Prime Minister, available to federal Cabinet Ministers, available to provincial Cabinet Ministers, but not available to the people most affected by the GST?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, what the Finance Minister has indicated here—

An Honourable Member: It is a serious issue, is it not?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

* (1345)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, it is amazing how the backbenchers from the Opposition all treat this in such frivolity. They think this is a great joke. The problem that we have with respect to this issue is that Opposition Members just want to treat it as a political issue that they can have fun with. They do not really care about the people of Manitoba. They do not care about the negative damaging effects. They do not care about what is going to happen to the people of this province. They think that this is a humorous political issue. They are wrong, and the people will show them they are wrong.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the official Opposition.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, one of the real problems that we have in this province is we cannot get consistency of opinion between the Premier, between the Finance Minister.

There is a study and report available, commissioned, paid for by the taxpayers of this country that will apparently provide us with that information. Why is this Government stonewalling and not ensuring that the people have what they are entitled to and what they have paid for?

Mr. Filmon: Let us talk about consistency and particularly the consistency of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). She has just criticized our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for saying that he is opposed to this tax in its present form. She says that is a terrible, terrible inconsistency that he is putting forward.

I will quote from a petition that she and her Party have been putting around through seniors' groups and residences throughout this province. In fact this one reads, "Dear River Heights Residents:"—she says in her letter about the GST—"This tax must not be allowed to become law as is."

So we will wonder what that is, Mr. Speaker? Then she says, as the preamble to her petition, "Therefore be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly reject the proposed goods and services tax in its present state."

Well, Mr. Speaker, what are we talking about? What are we criticizing? She does not like the word "forum." She believes that the word "state" is better than the word "forum." That is her criticism about the GST.

This is absolute stupidity. The Leader of the Opposition is going forward trying to make a case—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable First Minister to assume his chair. Order, please. Order. I am not standing here for the good of my health. I would hope that the Honourable Members would show a little bit of respect for the Chair.

Goods and Services Tax Labour Impact

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): We have the NDP petition and we—

An Honourable Member: Did anybody sign it—

Mr. Doer: Yes, 30,000 people, about 30 times more than signed your casino fight a little while ago.

It says clearly that we want this tax totally stopped and replaced with a minimum corporate tax in this country. A clear position on this. My question is also to the (interjection)- I would be careful, most of those loopholes were created between '65 and '84. Corporations used to pay 20 percent of the tax in this country. It was down to 11, when you left office.

We cannot deal with the loophole Liberals—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: —and the timid Tories together, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: How about the incompetent NDP?

An Honourable Member: Calm down, children.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Doer: I thank you for providing order in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier, at the conclusion of the First Ministers' meeting, stated and I quote, "I think in all respects we have achieved virtually all the important things we came for."

* (1350)

Mr. Speaker, I took the liberty on reading that statement to read back his presentation to Manitobans on Tuesday, prior to the departure for the First Ministers' meeting. I particularly noted his comments on the GST tax, the 9 percent tax, and also noted in his statement where he only asked a question about an alternative for the Finance Ministers to conclude did not come down very strong in terms of providing tangible alternatives, had a question mark behind the question of interest rates.

My question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is: given the fact that the Prime Minister stated that he was going to hit back hard on this study that the Premiers have put out on the 400,000 jobs that were going to be lost in Canada, did the Prime Minister, "hit back hard on the GST in the closed meetings because he certainly did not do it in the open meetings?"

Can we confirm today that thousands of jobs will be lost in Manitoba; that it will cost each family \$629 extra per year in year One and year 10 of the GST, unlike the quotes from the Minister of Finance, and therefore should be stopped in 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995, in terms of its benefit and hit on Manitobans?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the Prime Minister provided no further information in private than he did in public, and his so-called, hitting back hard, I suppose is information that he has for another time because he certainly did not provide it to us.

I cannot confirm the figures that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) has provided in terms of the \$629 over 10 years. The Minister of Finance may be able to add to that.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me say with respect to the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Doer: I will await the answer. The Premier last week said it was in the ballpark of \$629, so I assume that is the figure. I also assume that the Premier will table

the regional breakdowns before they are leaked. I would ask him to do that on behalf of Manitobans because it is oozing out all across the country. I think we deserve an opportunity to read those figures and debate them.

CFB Portage la Prairie Closure Reversal

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My second question is to the Premier. In light of the fact that the Premier said, I think we have in all respects achieved virtually all the important things we came for, we have not got a reversal on the GST. Was the Premier able to get a reversal on the Portage base? In light of the fact that the Prime Minister said to the Premier of P.E.I. that upon his return from the Soviet Union he would treat Prince Edward Island in a "fair way," I notice he did not say that to Manitoba. Did we get a reversal on the Portage base and the other bases in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Well, you might say, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister has already said that he would treat Manitoba and the people of Portage la Prairie in a fair way. We do not think that is enough. We would like to see that base closure decision - (interjection)-

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Filmon: Well, I notice that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) abandoned that one very, very quickly after she made her political hay, Mr. Speaker. So we are carrying on the fight, unlike the Liberals who go out for votes.

Mr. Doer: I keep looking for this, achieving virtually all the important things we came for, in my question.

VIA Rail Cutbacks Reversal

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My next question to the Premier is, in light of the fact that you were not able to reverse the Prime Minister's position on the GST, you were not able to reverse the Prime Minister's position on the base closings in Manitoba, was the Premier able to get a reversal in the cavalier, in an inaccurate, decision of the Prime Minister to cut back trains in western Canada, to have cutbacks on VIA Rail? The last train leaves western Canada on the southern route to Vancouver in eight weeks. Was the Premier able to succeed in that aspect of his mission to Ottawa on behalf of Manitobans?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I guess I have to say to the Leader of the New Democratic Party that I have to wonder whether he has changed his position over the weekend, because I distinctly heard him on the news media on Friday morning saying that I had done an excellent job in presenting Manitoba's views. So I guess he had better make up his mind.

* (1355)

Mr. Doer: I think you did an excellent job on Meech Lake, and you blew it on the GST. You blew it on VIA Rail. You blew it on the Telephone takeover. You did not get anything back on the base closings.

Day Care Federal Strategy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My final question to the First Minister is, in light of the fact that we achieved virtually all the important things we came for, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is—I know he is a little sensitive; we are just looking for some bottom lines. My question to the Premier is, was he able to reverse the Prime Minister's decision on the unilateral takeover of Western Telephones in the private meetings or in the public meetings, and was he able to reverse the Prime Minister's decision to hold back the \$7 billion funding promise that he made in Winnipeg for child care as part of returning child care federal-provincial funding for the future of our programs in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): With respect to child care funding, it was the New Democrats and the Liberals in Ottawa who fought against the Bill that was to provide that funding for child care, who took every possibility to fight that in the House of Commons, who stonewalled, who dragged it out so that the matter could not be dealt with before the federal election and then their Liberal friends in the Senate, to prevent the passage of that legislation. The Liberals and the New Democrats are the people in this country who are responsible for having stopped that national child care program, Mr. Speaker.

Ryan Sais Social Assistance

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic Security. This Minister has been aware for some time of the situation of Ryan, a 12-year-old who lost the tips of several fingers when he was four years old. The court awarded him \$10,000 to be held in trust to assist him when he reached the age of majority.

Now economic security has ceased his social welfare payments because of this fund, even though he does not have any access to the money. Mr. Speaker, this clearly is a travesty of justice in this province. Will the Minister now intervene to ensure that Ryan gets the basic necessities of food, clothing and housing allowance which he is entitled to under Canadian law?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to get some more information on that case. I am not as familiar with it maybe as I should be in an up-to-date sense, but I am sure if the family is in need of social assistance they are getting the basic necessities covered. I will follow up and make sure that is happening.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, if she would inform herself, she got the full file on October

18, with no reply to this Member. I would like to know if the Minister will now make changes in that regulation so that in future the children of this province will not get caught in this type of unfortunate and callous situation on behalf of the Government?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Speaker, I said I would undertake to take another look at the case, and I will be responding to the Member as soon as possible, when the staff have done all the investigations.

Canada Assistance Plan Compliance

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the same Minister. Being that 50 percent of the sport payments are from federal funds, has this Minister received a legal opinion on these regulations as to whether or not they comply with the Canada Assistance Plan?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the department makes every attempt to comply with the Canada Assistance Plan, and the Member should also realize that before we can obtain those dollars back from the federal Government we have to spend them and have them up front in Manitoba.

McPhillips Children's Centre (Co-op) Meeting Request

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). The people of the north end of Winnipeg are facing a major crisis in ensuring proper day care centres for their children.

Mr. Speaker, the Tiny Town Day Care Centre closed last week with a loss of 35 spaces. In September the north end lost over 100 spaces with the closing of Mini-Skool. The constituents of Maples, Tyndall Park, Garden Grove and Kildonan are facing a major crisis. Can the Minister of Family Services now meet with the directors of the McPhillips Children Co-operative Centre to try and rectify this situation?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I had a letter late this morning from that particular group and I will be responding to it as soon as possible. I think for expediency I will ask the staff to meet with them today or tomorrow because my timetable is quite full. But to expedite their request, I will ask the staff to meet with them.

Funding

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, this Minister's time is full, but 150 parents are waiting for an answer from this Minister for the last six weeks. My next question is: can the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) immediately provide this centre with the funds to start up the cost for this co-operative centre?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I think, for the record, it should be pointed out that it

is not 150 people who were displaced by the closing of the Tiny Town Day Care, they number anywhere from 30 to 32. That was the number of children in that centre at that time.

With regard to the funding of that organization, my staff will be undertaking discussions with them immediately. The difficulty with that is the person who was operating that centre has the lease and owns the property. It was a private centre, and so this parent group will have to negotiate with the owner.

* (1400)

Licensing

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, it is simple mathematics, 100 plus 35, what is that? One hundred thirty six, minimum, spaces. The Minister even does not know simple mathematics. Can she assure this House that the parents of this centre will be given ample opportunity to make sure that they get the licence for the centre?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): That parents group will have to, like any other group that wants to start a day care centre, go through the regular licensing procedures.

McPhillips Children's Centre Co-op Meeting Request

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I hope that this line of questioning from the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) indicates that the Liberals are finally seeing the light of day and the down side in terms of funding of profit day care centres. My question—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis).

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: On the issue relating to the absolute emergency situation in the northwest part of this city when it comes to day care, the Minister has been very accommodating when it comes to Vicki Shane, has bent over backwards in terms of granting her provisional licences, licensing order, interim licences. We want to know, what about the parents and the children? Mr. Speaker, will the Minister recognize that this is an emergency situation? Will she re-organize her schedule for the next couple of days so that she can fit in this group of concerned parents who have a very creative, positive proposal to discuss and treat this issue with the seriousness that it deserves?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I do treat this seriously, and I have instructed the staff to meet with them as soon as they possibly can. I could meet with them at a later date if necessary, but that is not the point, of whether I meet with them or not, it is that things are being done.

Mr. Speaker, as soon as the licence in that particular centre was revoked, my staff phoned parents to offer

them whatever assistance possible to get a space for their child. The three associations were called to see if they had any knowledge of any spaces that were available. I know it is a serious issue in that part of the city because of the circumstances of two centres having closed. I recognize that, and we are doing everything we can to ameliorate the situation.

Funding

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, this Minister will not meet with this group of parents, and she now is telling them to take a number when it comes to their creative, positive proposal to meet an emergency situation.

My question to the Minister is: will she deal with the situation of two closures of private centres within three blocks of each other in the Maples, which has left parents and children scrambling for alternate care services? Will she consider very seriously their proposal and set aside some of the funding in her workplace start-up centres' fund which has \$200,000 in it, of which she has not spent a penny in the last year, and of which no proposals had been funded this year? Will she take out of that unspent \$200,000 the amount of \$25,000 to \$35,000 to make this exciting proposal, dealing with an emergency situation, a reality?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I do take this very seriously and everything we can do to help those people license a centre will be done. I pointed out to the other Member that this was operated by a private individual. They will have to negotiate with her if they are thinking of purchasing it. My staff will be meeting with them. I could meet with them. If that is the only burning issue whether I meet or not, then I could certainly meet with them. Everything will be done to be sure that they are helped, but they will have to apply for a licence and go through the regular channels, which are exactly the same as the ones in place when that particular Member was in Government.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, they have applied for the licence. The Minister should have a copy of that today. They do not want to negotiate with Vicki Shane, they want to start a parent run co-op day care in the northwest of Winnipeg.

My question to the Minister is, given that these parents affected by these closures are out of pocket, prepaid care that they have not received, given that the staff are out of money because of bounced cheques, will the Minister abandon her ideological love affair with profit private day care with high turnover centres? Will she provide support to a caring and committed co-op that will meet the needs of a community that has lost, and I refresh the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) mind, over 150 spaces in the last two months?

Mrs. Oleson: I do not know how many times I have to indicate to the Members of the House that I certainly am concerned and are working with these people to get a centre. We cannot do a centre overnight. There are steps that have to be taken and instant money seems to be the prerogative of this Member now, not when she was in Government.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please.

Repap Manitoba Inc. Environmental Hearings

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): The question is for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and concerns the Repap deal. Mr. Speaker, I understand the Minister arranged a meeting with the Repap executives after Repap announced 10 days ago that it would not go ahead with any portion of the development plans for The Pas and Swan River until it had obtained approval for all stages of the agreement. Let me make myself clear. We want to see this project succeed, but we will not put the corporate bottom line ahead of the environment. Will the Minister advise the House of the results of the meeting and the impact on the regions in question?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the question is fair although I at times question really where the Liberals stand on Repap coming into Manitoba.

Let me say that I met with senior officials of Repap Enterprises in Montreal on Wednesday last and came away from that meeting with the assurance, and indeed a feeling of greater comfort, that the company has fully committed to the development of The Pas and Swan River districts with respect to their phased-in projects today as I did when they entered into agreement with the province last March.

Construction Schedule

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Given that the sales agreement, Section 901(b), suggests that the company will commence construction by December 31, 1989 at the chipping facility and equipment maintenance plant at Swan River, is this still going to proceed on schedule?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that particular clause was discussed. I can indicate at this point that Repap will be coming back to myself within the next two weeks and giving to us greater clarity with respect to that particular clause.

Cutting Areas

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, as a final supplementary, will the requirement for all approvals to be obtained apply to the forest cutting rights, and will these applications be subject to public hearings before anything starts?

* (1410)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as indicated by Repap's own corporate decision, they will not be proceeding with any major expansion at The Pas, particularly until all environmental processes have been conducted including those dealing with the forest management agreement.

Minister of Energy and Mines Resignation Request

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. In view of the fact that the people of Lynn Lake have now had their lives put on hold by the announcement that negotiations between the province and LynnGold have broken down in light of the fact that the president of DCC and the president of LynnGold have indicated that the failure rests on the shoulders of the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), the letter indicates that the Minister and the Deputy Minister's dogged determination to see this deal die have ended up in the ending of the livelihood of many people in the community of Lynn Lake.

Will this Minister remove the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) from his responsibilities and will this First Minister further take on the responsibility of attempting to get these negotiations back on track? Will he call Mr. Buchan, the President of DCC Equities? Will he use his office to see whether we can - (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The fact of the matter is that this Government has consistently worked towards trying to find a way in which we could keep the town of Lynn Lake going, in which we could keep the mining operations going there.

Over the weekend my Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) and his senior staff continued to be here in the Legislature, in their offices, working to try and ensure that we had a proper response, that we had the information we needed to keep dealing on the LynnGold situation.

We have been doing this for months. We have put on the table a bigger offer than would have been put forth by any Government in this country, and we have consistently said that we will do whatever is reasonable to try and keep that operation alive.

In contrast, Mr. Speaker, the owners of the company have not offered to put one new nickel of risk capital of their own on the table. All they say that they put on the table is what they have already sunk and what is already lost. They want all of the money to keep that operation going to come from the taxpayers of Manitoba.

So here we have the New Democrats supporting a multinational corporation that has \$450 million to put into a mine in the U.S. that is worth over a billion dollars in assets but will not put a nickel into Manitoba. They are out there advocating for them, grovelling on the floor suggesting that they ought to make a deal for that kind of company. That is how low the New Democrats -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Storie: That may have been a rousing speech for someone, but it is no comfort to the 240 people who are losing their jobs or people who invested a lifetime in the community.

LynnGold Resources Inc. Negotiations

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, in a letter to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), the president says, "Every time we get close, a further stumbling block is put in our way," and he follows it up with a letter which it is another stumbling block.

My question to the First Minister is, will he live up to his commitment to the mayor of Lynn Lake to initiate a meeting to establish contact again with the company, so that we can salvage these negotiations that have been bungled by this Government for the people of Lynn Lake and northwestern Manitoba? Will he do that?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I have always indicated to the mayor of Lynn Lake, as I have to the people of Lynn Lake and to this Legislature, that if the company comes forward with a proposal that meets our minimum tests of requirement, for them sharing in the risk of the continuing venture and meeting all of the continuing tests, which include a long-term outlook for the town, so that we are not just bailing them out with taxpayers' money for a short-term situation so that they can line their pockets and leave, as long as it meets our minimum test, I am there to meet with them.

But when they put forward their so-called new proposal which had some elements of merit to it, it was all based on "if" they could do certain things conditional upon the agreement of creditors, they would try to do these things. At no time would they do what they asked us to do, and that is to make sure that regardless of the circumstances they would stand behind their end of the deal. It was all conditional on their getting creditors to forego some things, on their getting new investment from other people, not a nickel of their money. Until they put that money forward, I cannot risk further the taxpayers' money.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Yes, Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Kildonan have leave to make a non-political statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Cheema: Today is a very special day for 15 million Sikhs all over the world. It is the day when the founder of the sacred Guru Nanak was born in Punjab which is now in Pakistan.

Guru Nanak was a prophet of peace and friendship. He preached God as one and equality for all. He preached for the dignity of labour and the sharing of the fruits of labour with all human beings. He preached peaceful resistance against hypocrisy and injustice. He travelled to most part of the world to carry out his message.

Guru Nanak was succeeded by nine gurus who carried his message and today the Sikh religion is spread all over the world. Sikhism was founded at a time when the Indian subcontinent was experiencing deep social, economic and political turmoil. Thousands of Sikhs have made Canada their home, and are enjoying the fruits of freedom and are contributing to build this nation.

Guru Nanak's message was significant and is playing a major role in the world. His prayer was "Let there be peace for everyone. Let there be progress and prosperity for everyone."

Mr. Speaker, I am personally proud to be part of the Sikh faith. Thank you.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Selkirk have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed) The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my congratulations to Ms. Cindy Lange, who received a prize of \$300 in the competition put forward by the Department of Co-operative and Consumer Affairs. The Minister was very pleased, I am sure, to choose her as the winner of this wonderful award, the fact being that she will be the person in all of Manitoba to put forward a teen consumer-based program on MTN TV, and I congratulate her for that.

Further, Mr. Speaker, to further congratulate my teenagers in Selkirk, I wish to announce that today in Selkirk we are beginning our Drug Awareness Week that will be announced at our high school this evening. Pride, as it is called in our community, has brought forward all residents in order to put behind the idea that we can say no to drugs, and that the answer will depend upon society and will not come from above but will be the people.

Today in Selkirk, Mr. Speaker, you will see every telephone post and storefront along Main Street carrying the banner, and I believe it is this type of program that we should all support and that the people of the province will be the answer to the future of our youth.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Gilleshammer for Enns.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), that the composition of the Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) for the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake). Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY ORDER FOR RETURN NO. 11

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call the Order for Return in the name of the Honourable Member for Radisson?

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): I move, seconded by the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray),

THAT an Order of the House do issue for the return of the following information:

- (a) the number of hearings and reviews heard by the Workers Compensation Board of Commissioners between August 17, 1988, and August 31, 1988, and monthly thereafter to September 30, 1989; and
- (b) the number of cases at the Board of Commissioner's level of the Workers Compensation Board that are being held for final decision; and
- (c) the monthly statistics for the delay time between the hearing or review of a claim and the time at which a decision is made at the Board of Commissioner's level of the Workers Compensation Board for all decisions made or in progress after August 17, 1988; and
- (d) the monthly statistics for the period between August 17, 1988, and September 30, 1989, for the total number of Workers Compensation Board hearings and Board reviews with an indication as to whether they have been accepted, partially accepted or rejected.

I also move, again seconded by the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), that this be in both official languages. Can I get you to sign that?

MOTION presented.

* (1420)

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, the Order for Return, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson), is acceptable to the Government.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION 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 Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) in the Chair for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY
SUPPLY—HEALTH

Mr. Chairman (Harold Gilieshammer): Order, please. I would like to call this section of the Committee of Supply to order to consider the Estimates of the Department of Health.

When we last met the committee had been considering item 2.(f) Gerontology: (1) Salaries, \$171,800—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Chairperson, in my absence the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) has raised several issues, but I just want to have a couple of issues brought to your attention and to the Minister.

In terms of the total services for the seniors, and we have consistently raised a number of issues, can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us again, update the information he promised me, that he will tell us what recommendations they have implemented on the service delivery for the mentally disabled persons who are in the senior age group? It is part of the psychogeriatric.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Psychogeriatric?

Mr. Cheema: Yes, there are just a couple of things here.

Mr. Orchard: Okay. Last fall we established, I think it was September or maybe it was October, I am not sure of the month, but we established the \$300,000 funding for the establishment of three psychogeriatric teams. One operating out of I believe Bethania Nursing Home, Tache and Deer Lodge. Their purpose is to provide services within those respective institutions, as well as provide assistance to other institutions, their management and staff, in terms of how they approach the growing issue of residents of personal care homes that have psychogeriatric problems, be it Alzheimer's, be it dementia, et cetera.

Those programs now are staffed up and are operating to my knowledge, and I can give my honourable friend this indication that we have not had any negative feedback on the operation. We have had a number of positive comments back to the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the Continuing Care division, and the Personal Care Home division, as to the value of having those three teams available as resource individuals.

In addition to that, as part of the reform of the mental health system in the central region, we picked the central region to undertake a psychogeriatric project in terms of providing timely care for distressed seniors. This is a pilot project emanating from the almost million dollars of funds we have reallocated with the reorganization, reform of the mental health system. The psychogeriatric demonstration project in the central region focuses on early identification of and response to older individuals whose independence is threatened by mental illness. This is something slightly different

than the team approach, which serves patients who are already within the personal care home system. This is a community-based program to intervene earlier to provide hopefully care and assistance in the home environment.

Mr. Cheema: I think during the past week there were, during the Estimates discussion of Seniors Directorate, a number of questions were asked to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) and he said that most of the answers will be given by the Minister of Health.

Can he tell us what is the role of the Minister of Seniors for the delivery of health care? Is he responsible for a specific program delivery or is it still the responsibility of the Minister of Health?

Mr. Orchard: Program delivery is the responsibility of this ministry.

Mr. Cheema: Then in the Minister's view, what is the role of the Minister of Seniors?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to my honourable friend, we thrashed this for about two hours on Thursday of last week, and we can go into it again. I am quite willing to go into it again.

The delivery of program is the responsibility of this ministry. The Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) is in a co-ordinating position, in terms of policy development and specific issues. As I indicated last Thursday, the specific issue under discussion right now is elder abuse, wherein we have a recently tabled paper being the subject of public meetings and discussions throughout the province.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: I am sorry I missed that, but I will look into the Hansard and thank the Minister for that answer.

The other question, probably there were some of them more appropriate under the heading of Manitoba Health Services Commission because it deals with the service delivery in terms of the hospital and personal care homes, and I think we will wait for that. Other than that, I do not have any questions.

Mr. Chairman: Item 2.(f) Gerontology: (1)—pass; (f)(2) Other Expenditures \$113,900—pass.

(f)(3) External Agencies \$1,567,800—the Member for Kildonan.

* (1430)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, if the Minister has already provided the information on the external agencies who are providing the delivery for the seniors, that is fine. If he has not provided them, I would request him that if we could have the information on those agencies?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I have just given my honourable friend a list of all the external agencies by

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appropriation. The first page we have already dealt with, in terms of Communicable Disease, Maternal and Child Health, Health Promotion and Hearing Conservation.

The second page are the services, which are being funded under the appropriation Gerontology that we are now currently discussing, and my honourable friend can see that there is a substantive list for the Gerontology. It is the largest single organization as reflected by the fact that External Agencies represent 80 percent of the budget and of course that is the listing of these grants.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that the figures are the '88-89 actual, the '89-90 request is funding, which will be made available to the individual external agencies up to the figure mentioned, but they must go through the usual accounting procedure to demonstrate that they have expended the commitment of financial resource to meet the goals that were stated when the funding was approved.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I am sure the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) also has received a letter from the Gwen Sectar Creative Living Centre, and I think most of the Members of the Legislature have a similar letter. Can the Minister of Health update the response given to that particular centre?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, there is Gwen Sectar and there is the Winkler Senior Centre, both of whom are in a similar position with an understanding that their level of grant, hence their ability to deliver services, would be substantially increased, significantly increased.

Both of those, for whatever reason and no malice involved, just got lost or their request did not materialize. We are dealing with both of those organizations right now. We have had meetings with them over the last six to eight weeks and it is our intention to resolve the issue for both of them. My understanding of it, for my honourable friend's information, is that it clearly was a misunderstanding between Gwen Sectar, Winkler Seniors and staff as to what ought to be achievable. We are working with them right now, both of them right now, to find an equitable solution and I am confident we will.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I would appreciate if the Minister could also send us a copy of the response that he has or he will send to the Gwen Sectar Creative Living Centre. In the letter dated October 31, which has been sent to many Members, it is written clearly that without the funding increase in base line funding, the centre's future is uncertain at best. I have gone through some of the statistics. Right now I do not have the other information with me. It is in my office, I failed to bring it here, but I have taken the Minister's words for granted that their issue will be addressed so that they can continue to provide the essential services in that area.

Mr. Orchard: As I said to my honourable friend, there was clearly a misunderstanding as to what was delivered versus what was expected. As soon as I found out that,

and I found out that prior to any formal communication by letter, and we have been working with both organizations, Gwen Sectar and Winkler. I believe the communication my honourable friend has in front of me is copied to himself and he will be provided with a copy of any correspondence that we send to the Gwen Sectar resource.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairman, just for clarification, I would certainly have to respond to the Gwen Sectar Creative Living Centre. I would indicate that we have discussed the situation, and it will be addressed in the best possible way so that we do not have any communication problem as far as we and the Minister of Health are concerned.

Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us that the Jewish community centre in Winnipeg has, the request this year was \$16.7, is that \$16,700.00? Is that the correct assumption?

Mr. Orchard: I am not, you know I do not have—

Mr. Cheema: Page 1, if we go just below the Winkler and District Multi-purpose Senior Centre. Are these numbers in thousands of dollars or—

Mr. Orchard: Yes, that is an approval of up to \$16,700.00.

Mr. Cheema: We have to assume that most of the requests made by the agencies have been met, as far as this paper is concerned. It seems quite logical that they have received all the funds to provide the services to all the seniors, and we certainly appreciate the Minister for doing that.

Mr. Chairman: Item 2.(f) Gerontology: (3) External Agencies—pass.

(g) Continuing Care: Provides program direction and support to the development and maintenance of services for persons requiring home care assistance as an alternative to institutional care and provides assessment for personal care home placement. (1) Salaries \$425,000—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairman, can I take the liberty here to request the Minister that there was a couple of questions I wanted to ask on the Hearing Conservation Program, if it is possible, even though the staff is not here? It is on the basic principles of delivery and Hearing Conservation in Manitoba.

Can the Minister of Health tell us now in view of the report from Dr. McDermott regarding the total rehabilitation services—and hearing conservation is definitely one of the aspects, as I was going through the Manitoba Health Services Commission and Manitoba Health Report, it is clearly indicative that the number of services has increased and the services delivery has improved to some extent.

* (1440)

Can the Minister of Health tell us what is the specific initiative they have taken to meet the demands for the

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seniors, who are unfortunately either the victims of stroke or other illnesses and also the hearing impairment, which is not uncommon in that age group? Have they developed a special policy for that age group or not?

Mr. Orchard: No, there is no special policy. Obviously, through gerontology the seniors have been a significant target group of Manitobans who have received substantial assistance to the program. Just from memory, if I can just find—Hearing Conservation is before Gerontology.

In terms of referrals on adults—that has been a steadily increasing target group, if you will, for services under Hearing Conservation.

I just want to give my honourable friend some numbers indicating the referrals for assessment, and these are well-elderly, as well as, stroke victims. In 1986-87 the actual number referred for assessment were 2,523, of those 2,315 had a confirmed hearing loss; '87-88 there were 2,532, of which 2,345 had a confirmed hearing loss. Then there was a significant increase in '88-89 of services provided for assessment of 3,115, of which 2,900 in '77 did have a confirmed hearing loss.

We are projecting, for next year, that we will have as many as 3,250 referrals for assessments and of those, given past experience, approximately 3,000 will have confirmed hearing loss.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister of Health tell us if there are any vacancies, at present, at the major centres like Seven Oaks, Deer Lodge, Victoria who are providing the Hearing Conservation Program?

Mr. Orchard: No, Mr. Chairman, all our funded positions are filled throughout the province and in the regions.

Mr. Cheema: What is the waiting period for assessment in the Winnipeg region?

Mr. Orchard: That was answered last Thursday, and I cannot recall what the number was.

Mr. Cheema: I will check Thursday's Hansard. There is one more question in regard to gerontology. As I understand there is one position on the Health Advisory Network, Margaret Chown, who has been part of the Health Advisory Network. Under the Extended Care Review Program, is there any member from the seniors group?

Mr. Orchard: Under the Extended Treatment Bed Review?

Mr. Cheema: Yes.

Mr. Orchard: I would have to get the figures. What we have are resource people, or some of our staff people from the commission in the long-term care division who are providing information to the task force. I would have to check that.

Mr. Chairman: Item 2.(g)(2) Other Expenditures \$129,700—pass.

2.(g)(3) Home Care Assistance \$47,782,300—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, are we under 2.(g)?

Mr. Chairman: Item 2.(g)(3) Home Care Assistance.

Mr. Orchard: If my honourable friend has questions under anything of Continuing Care, let us deal with them all at once.

Mr. Cheema: I think this is the one area where public perception is different. We have a different perception, and the Minister has a different perception of what the whole delivery of the Continuing Care Program is in the community.

As during last year's Question Period, and otherwise, we have conveyed to the Minister, either directly or indirectly, several issues where the seniors were concerned that their home care services were either cut directly or for some other reasons.

Consistently, the Minister has denied that there has been any change in the policy, that in fact last year even I, after viewing certain cases, was also of the same opinion. My opinion changed later on, because when we received a number of calls and the concern was raised that you have to wait for a longer time, and some of the seniors were told, no you do not qualify for this service and you have to go to the non-profit services available in your area.

Can the Minister, if it is possible, clarify the policy in terms of continuing and home care services in Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to my honourable friend there has been no change in policy and in guidelines on the Continuing Care Program. I do not know what has brought my friend around to his conclusion that there has been, because the program's access has been consistent for the last several years and certainly consistent since the 9th of May when the change in administration took place.

The criteria for access is the same as it was then. My honourable friend, I know, has received a copy of the discussion paper on how to use the Continuing Care Program. Because of the confusion around accessibility to the Continuing Care Program we put this discussion paper out amongst interested groups to obtain feedback from them on the Continuing Care Program. To date, we have had probably a dozen responses back or so.

The number is not the relevant matter. The purpose here is to develop a brochure or a similar discussion paper, which will then become part of a package left with those individuals who are accepted into the Home Care Program so they understand the services that are to be available, the review process, and that continuing care is there to support them in independence in their home environment or in, certainly, their apartment environment if that is the case.

Should their circumstances change, either in terms of increasing health status or decreasing health status,

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there is always a mechanism of review outside of the automatic reviews, which are happening approximately on a six-month interval.

My honourable friend might have noticed my comment that the Continuing Care Program is there to support independence not to create dependence on Government for independent living. That is anachronism, reverse philosophy.

During the review processes there are instances and circumstances where the health status of individuals have improved and circumstances have changed so the service by Government is no longer assessed to be necessary using—I am not changing criterion as has been alleged—even criterion that have been applied for the last number of years.

What you have—and I used to get them as I was an Opposition Critic—what you have is people who have become accustomed to having some home care services. When their health status improves so they no longer need them, and those services are either reduced or withdrawn, the individual, from time to time, not understanding the process, will complain.

I have to tell you that in any instance where such a complaint was brought to my attention, and it was an improper assessment, service was reviewed. That was from my Opposition days and the same circumstance exists today.

* (1450)

The issue becomes the expectations from the program. It was never anticipated from inception in 1975 or '76 that once a person received home care support it would become a permanent service offering to the individual.

There were always people who went on the program and came off the program as needs required. That is what stimulated us to undertake the creation of a discussion paper; so we could have a very understandable, easily read, easily comprehended document for those going on the home care program; so there will not be the potential confusion if better health status is achieved through the assistance of the program, and the individuals no longer qualify for the system, because the system, by and large, is designed to create independence, as I said, and not dependence on another level of Government funding.

Mr. Cheema: There was a study conducted by the previous administration. That was in '85, and one of the things that came out of that was to have the independent supported and living at home. This was one of the facts that they wanted to enhance to provide the continued care along with the Home Care Assistance Program at home.

Certainly in recent times, a number of articles have come through. According to those articles, continued care and home care in Manitoba is not perfect, but it is one of the best in North America.

Certainly, after I have gone through and read more about the Continuing Care Program I think we are moving in the right direction. At the same time we

pointed it out to the Minister in Question Period, but later on I decided I would raise the issues with him by letter or by other ways of communication so we do not have to bring each and every issue on the floor for personal information, which at times is not very healthy for the individuals. People do not want to give their name. They do not want to come forward and tell they are suffering from this kind of illness for privacy sake.

I still think the perception there is there has been a change in the home care, and certainly if this brochure could be helpful and given to the individuals who are utilizing these services, and to the professionals who are providing the services, it would be a very effective way of telling them there has not been a major change in the policy.

Can the the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us how much money they underspent last year in this particular area?

Mr. Orchard: The answer is \$4.6 million, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister of Health tell us now, what were the number of total services requested last year as compared to a year before that, and in what regions of Manitoba the money was saved?

Mr. Orchard: I think in terms of what regions it was pretty well right across all regions in Manitoba. I believe all were under their home care budgets throughout the whole province. It was not narrowed to a given region.

Let me share with my honourable friend—and I will leave him a copy of this after I give him the information.

In 1986-87 the—this is for the fiscal year so this is till March 31, 1987. The total number who were assessed for admission to the home care program during that entire year were 14,242, and the assessments—those are individuals who asked and inquired as to whether they could go on home care. Of the 14,242 in '86-87, 11,827 were admitted to the home care program. There were 1,435 ineligible for the program, and there were a group of "other reasons," totalling 980, which were not admitted to the program.

Those reasons for non-admission range from the person of the family refusing the service to the person being deceased, or the person admitted to a care facility such as a hospital or a personal care home. So of the 980, some received service, some refused service, et cetera. There is quite a range of personal circumstances there.

In 1987-88, again until March 31, 1988, the number assessed for admission to the Home Care Program dropped from 14,242 the previous year to 13,223; of those, 11,011 were admitted to the home care; 1,400 were found ineligible; and the other categories ranged to 812. That left a ratio of persons who were not admitted to the program, for whatever number of reasons, of 10.6 percent of the numbers assessed for admission.

In '88-89 there was a continuation of the trend to decline in numbers asking for admission to the home care program. In '88-89 those figures were 12,540; of

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those 12,540, which was down from 13,223 the year before, 10,320 were admitted to home care; 1,332 were ineligible; and 868 were in the other category. Again, the ratio of persons ineligible of the numbers applied was 10.6 percent.

What I am trying to indicate to my honourable friend is we have been experiencing over a three-year period of time a declining request for admission to the Home Care Program which commenced with a significant drop in the fiscal year, '87-88, ending March 31, 1988.

That trend continued for the next fiscal year and appears to be, I guess it is fair to say, levelling off this year, maybe picking up slightly. It was the decrease in requests for assessment that led to the lapse in funding. It was not a change in policy. It was not, as alleged by some, a different attitude, et cetera. It was simply that the numbers requesting home care in those years were down compared to previous years. The acceptance to the program was the same. There was no change in the acceptance to the program. I will leave this with my honourable friend.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, on the Annual Report of 1987-88 we have the only bad report so far. If we go to page 36 on the same report it confirms what the Minister has said, there is a steady decline from the month of April of 1987 to March of 1988. The persons receiving co-ordinated home care services by region has declined.

Can the Minister of Health tell us if the total number of applicants have changed or if these are the individuals who are receiving the services?

Mr. Orchard: I am not sure I understand my honourable friend's question. Is it Table 3 that he is referring to?

Mr. Cheema: No, it is Table 1. Table 1 indicates monthly maximum number of persons receiving co-ordinated home care services by region.

If you follow from April of 1987 to March of 1988 there is definitely a decline with a fluctuation in the months of July and August. In the month of March 1988 there is a further decline in the total number of services, 14,192. Can the Minister of Health tell us, these are the individuals who have received the service, but how many people actually applied for the services?

* (1500)

Mr. Orchard: These are the people receiving services, but the number of people applying for service are the figures that I gave my honourable friend, wherein we are dealing with '87-88, a total of 13,223 asked for service and of those, 11,011 were admitted to home care. Now that is spread out over the months April to March, relatively. I do not know what the distribution would be.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, there were 11,011 people who were admitted under this Home Care Program. Can the Minister tell us now, region by region, as we have heard many complaints from the north end, and I am interested to know why there were more

complaints from the Winnipeg north end as compared to any other centre in Winnipeg?

Mr. Orchard: I am going to try to provide as much information as I can to my honourable friend.

Mr. Chairman, there is no particular area of the city where there is a greater decline in the numbers of people, the 11,011. There are variations but this is not like dealing with widgets, if you will. There are variations but all regions have experienced a decrease in the numbers actively on home care as well as being accepted to home care.

In terms of the question, the specific question about why did the Winnipeg North region appear to have more complaints, I cannot really answer that except I do know that the Winnipeg North region was subject to a mailer by one of the Opposition Parties. Now whether that raised the issue, and it was not the Opposition Party that is now questioning, so my honourable friend can rest at ease. From that there was a flurry of complaints that came in. I guess the return was a check-off, if you have problems you check-off. That became a complaint that was raised from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, the issue that we are trying to address is one of, is there—let me tell you right off the top, it would be very nice of Government, independent of whether or not it is me, the Minister or my honourable friend from Kildonan as the Minister or honourable friend from Thompson as the Minister, it would be very rewarding if the reason for the numbers of people, fewer and fewer numbers requesting home care, was as a result that there is a greater status of health in the community, that some of our health promotion programs are in fact working and some of our other support programs are indeed working to provide better meals, better access to social events, and visiting and friendly telephone calling, et cetera, et cetera, all of the programs that from time to time are brought in by support services for seniors and community resource groups.

There certainly appears to be a trend declining on requests for service and home care. That is matched, as my honourable friend can see, with a decline in the number of people on the waiting list. There is a little exemption to that in that 1989 there appears to be an increase again, so it is back up a little bit, but the trend line in Table 4 that my honourable friend has before him is that of declining numbers panelled for personal care home placement.

Again one would very much appreciate being able to say that our support programs and our initiatives in terms of wellness are working. That may be one of the reasons, and I certainly hope it is the major reason, but what we are doing with the continuing care consultation paper is raising the level of awareness of the program because obviously projections of demand—like, bear in mind we set these budgets, now almost 12 months ago, as to what we projected in demand, and when you get into the fiscal year, at the end of the fiscal year you are 15 to 18 months behind from when you made your original projections.

It would be delightful if increased health status was the reason for the decline in demand. However, if it is

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lack of awareness of the program we intend to, we hope, resolve that through the consultation paper, its wide distribution, the discussion that has taken place, the feedback we get and the information packages that we intend to use it as part of, in its final produced form.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, this issue is extremely important to us because when we receive the phone calls or letters and for us, I think, in our Party we are very realistic when we deal with specific complaints. We want to tell them exactly what it is in black and white and I want to, and all of us want to go from here to be very clear of that and make sure that there is no change in the policy rather than—we do not mean to defend the Minister's policy but it is their Government's policy and if there is no change and people are happy, then why do there have to be complaints?

So that is why I think that if this pamphlet is going out and explains to the individuals and all the organizations and I think that may be helpful, but I think we should send this brochure to all the organizations, all the external agencies, all the hospitals, including all the physicians, all the clinics must receive that information so that all the seniors can get hold of that information, especially the families, because I do not think this information is available in the hospital system. I do not think so personally. I have not seen it at Seven Oaks Hospital and I do not know about other hospitals.

Can the Minister indicate to me whether this information is available to the clients, to the families, to the hospitals, to all the health care providers so that all the people who provide the health services are clear about the policy direction?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, we narrowed the distribution of the continuing care consultation paper to the consumers, consumer groups and seniors' groups throughout the province to get their feedback, seniors and disabled groups because both are the higher consumers of the continuing care program. We have received, as I say, some feedback already and we had a deadline set and that deadline was passed. We have extended it essentially to assure complete feedback.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that there were a total of complaints in the neighbourhood of—is that the right number? Over the past year 55 complaints on home care came in, formal complaints. Now that is out of a caseload of 23,000 people who are on the continuing care program and that works out to one-third of 1 percent in terms of complaints.

As I indicated to my honourable friend, some of those complaints were as a result of checking off a brochure that emanated from the Legislature and some of those complaints—one in particular, when we followed up on it the individual was quite dismayed that continuing care people were contacting that individual because the individual was not aware of ever making any complaint in to the program. So that all of those included, we have some 55 complaints.

I am not down playing the substantive nature of any of those complaints because I think in the past, had

we kept a tabulation of how many formal complaints by writing or investigations, we would find maybe similar numbers, maybe a little increase now, I am not sure. Everyone of those complaints is investigated and if there is an improper assessment or any difficulties that were not uncovered, service is reinstated.

* (1510)

I have to indicate that in a lot of cases the assessment has been an appropriate one and the decision of reducing the service was maintained in most of the complaints. Again I hearken back to my honourable friend that the program was designed not to create a dependence, but to create a vehicle of independent living in time of temporary need, hopefully, and in some cases of continuous need in the home.

Certainly where health status improves so that the individual no longer needs the service, it always has been and always will continue to be the policy of the program that those individuals who no longer need the service will have the service either reduced or discontinued. That has caused some complaints. There is no question about it.

The consultation paper, hopefully, when people come on to the Continuing Care Program, they will understand the nature of it and not have an enhanced expectation from the program.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I think still it is very essential that this information is available to the health providers because that is where the first complaint starts. The patients and the family have to wait for either the primary care physician or the nurse or somebody on the unit and if they are not clear about what kind of program we have, I think then we have to deal with the problem there. I think it will be worthwhile to make those brochures available to those individuals.

My next question is: has there been any change in the forms of the evaluation process in terms of having the initial assessment done?

Mr. Orchard: There has been no change in terms of the assessment vehicle, the guidelines that are followed in terms of assessment. That has not changed.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, has there been any guidelines or any letters of communication sent to the various regional directors that they have to be more careful how they deliver the Home Care Program?

Mr. Orchard: There has not been any direct communication from myself and I do not believe there has been any direct communication. Bear in mind that every time a complaint comes in, often the regional director or the continuing care supervisor becomes involved. They become involved because a complaint registered with the Minister's office hits the higher ranks of the regional services bureaucracy.

Our urging that we have consistently made with every complaint is to assure us and assure me, that an even-handed assessment was made and that the decision-

making was even-handed. There has not been any written directive to that effect, but all we are asking is that there be an understandable and uniform application of the guidelines so that there is not the confusion.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, the intent of my asking the question is very clear, whether that kind of communication is solely for the basis of financial reasons or to improve the quality of care and deliver the best possible care because there have been numerous complaints. We do not have the proof and these are so-called allegations and sometimes it is the wrong perception. I just want it to be clear that there has not been any direction from the Ministry of Health to the various regions that they have to be more financially responsible. I mean anyone has to be more financially responsible but in terms of the delivery of the home care services.

Mr. Orchard: Since entering office on May 9, Mr. Chairman, I can give my honourable friend that assurance.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that answer because most of the complaints which come to us, that is the first thing. People complain that there has been a policy change and there have been some directions given to the staff either in written form or in other forms, and if the Minister says there has been no such letters of communication, we certainly believe him.

An area of major concern, I think to the public and to the professionals who provide the care, is what kind of policy do we have for the home care attendants who go out there and provide their services. Sometimes some of the attendants do not have training to deal with some of the life threatening situations, some of them do not even have a primary screening for the immunization. I do not think we have in the policy to make sure that these individuals are screened for any communicable diseases. Can the Minister clarify that?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, my honourable friend is striking upon an issue that we are currently reviewing because my honourable friend is right that up until now there has not been a necessity to have your immunizations, et cetera, proof of same. That is under review right now with Dr. Margaret Fast to see whether that is an appropriate and easily workable requirement for home care attendants. There is training of those who are hired and I guess one can argue around the issue, if the training is adequate. I know we have a high degree of turnover in terms of our home orderly service. There is really a 10-year history of difficulties in the home orderly service area. The specific issue of the communicable disease area is currently under review and conclusions—I cannot speculate on what they will be but—they will centre upon whether part of the hiring criterion is an assurance that immunization has been achieved.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairman, I think it is extremely essential because we are providing—according to the information, 11,000 persons are getting the services

and these are the individuals in most situations who are compromised in one or the other way. They do not have one disease, they may have some others, and any person who is already in that situation is more vulnerable to any communicable disease, No. 1. Number two, even the simple handling procedure for a person who is disabled, No. 3, it is extremely important that somebody who is on a ventilator or in a home oxygen program, the person who is going to go and deliver the service must be trained.

I think right now they get about 16 hours of training and sometimes the family is responsible to give that training. I think that is not sufficient because if the same patient comes to hospital they get a trained nurse, they get a trained doctor, they get a trained orderly, they get everybody who is well-trained. You are sending the same individual into the community, but they do not have the same quality of program.

* (1520)

I am not blaming this administration. I think that has been ignored in the past and certainly they are moving in the right direction. It should be looked at. I think the other thing should be for any person who simply even works in a food store or in a meat packing plant, they are even supposed to get a complete physical and also X-rays to make sure they do not have any communicable diseases. I think this probably is not less but equally important and should be looked at. How soon can we expect an announcement on the policy?

Mr. Orchard: I accept my honourable friend's observations. I think they are valid ones and obviously an area of concern and one that we are currently trying to come to grips with. I will try to get an answer for my honourable friend when the discussions are finished because we just do not have an idea here, with staff I have here today, but I will find that out for my honourable friend.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I do not want to put a couple of names on the record because of privacy reasons of this individual, but these are the two individuals who suffer from a very debilitating disease and these two boys have done extremely well. Their parents are trying to make a living and both are working very hard.

At times they have people who are ill-trained. I will not say this is a fault of their own, but you are putting somebody in charge in the home when the family is not there, and they do not have the basic training even for school teachers and other places. They are asking them to know the basic skills of resuscitation or even CPR in doing some of the things.

I think it will be extremely important although my example of teachers may not be the right one, but I think it is extremely crucial that we should have a very strict policy of who we hire and what their level of training, is, what is their education, what is their level of communication, and also, how do they handle the simple counselling procedures, which are extremely important in the home care situation when you are

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leaving a person who is sort of dependent upon the whole activity and people feel helpless. That is the part of the training many professionals have. These individuals come to the hospital and that is what they need most of the time, just compassionate care.

At times there are people who provide services; they are inappropriate for the job; they are rude at times and simply by coming to home care and just sitting on a chair and watching the person, if he is breathing or not, is not adequate. I think some procedure has to be put in place and make sure that somebody is checking them to make sure that these services are adequately provided, because we are going to have more of these home care services in the future as our population is growing and people are more aware of these home care services.

Most people would like to have home care provided rather than stay in the hospital. Also the families would love it if somebody—but they do not feel happy when you are giving them somebody in charge of their house affairs, somebody coming into the house and in a few days time there is a different person. It takes times to develop a relationship with the one individual. I think we should try to keep the same people providing these services and having a minimal amount of training. We should set up a policy of having a special program. I am not aware if there is a special program being provided either at Red River or any other community college.- (interjection)-

I am sorry, I am told by the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), who is quite aware of the home care situation, that there is a program available, but I think it should be upgraded to make sure that the people meet the changing needs of the society, especially in health care, which almost every one of us has to learn on a daily basis. I think that would put a lot of people at ease, especially the families who even do not live in Winnipeg. If you do a random survey, there are a lot of people who have moved. Their families may be in Vancouver, Toronto or someplace else and they are leaving their families whole affairs in the home care situation. I think that would be helpful.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for Ellice.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Just a couple of questions on the home care attendants. I understand that the contract with the home care attendants, when there is a need to be filled, as far as a client needing home care attendant services, that the idea is where possible that the next person on the list, who is a trained home care attendant, providing their schedule meets, is then asked to assume those duties.

Mr. Orchard: That is the general rule of thumb, giving compatibility with the case.

Ms. Gray: Are there any situations where we would put, where it is deemed that you need, a home care attendant who is trained to go into a situation where we would send in people who do not necessarily have that home care attendant training?

Mr. Orchard: I do not understand the question.

Ms. Gray: My concern is with the particular famous case in Transcona, and since Theresa Ducharme has no problem at all with people using her case as an example, because of her many conversations to many MLAs. I wonder if we follow through on that policy, in regard to when an employee leaves her employ, do we in fact take the next person on the list or whoever is appropriate, or do we sometimes find ourselves in the situation where we are putting in people who are not trained?

Mr. Orchard: I am going to answer this as delicately as I can that we have some difficulties in terms of maintaining staff servicing for the individual, and one cannot be prejudging why or anything. Within the Home Care Program individuals, the service providers, do have the option of refusing to take on a given client. I think that is in part what has caused some recent difficulties there in that the next most trained individual is not necessarily anxious to undertake the provision of service. That puts the scheduling staff in something of a delicate position, in that you have to provide service, or we believe we want to provide service, and that may lead to an accusation that a less than fully trained individual is being put into that particular client's home. I think that has caused maybe some additional concerns to be expressed .

* (1530)

Ms. Gray: My reason for the question was more from, there are a number of angles you could look at this issue, a point of view I was concerned that in fact if we were actually complying with the contract, in regard to home care attendants—because we oftentimes get phone calls from home care attendants or home support workers who say to us that they are not getting enough hours of work, and that is something we would like to follow up on. My concern was, were we actually complying or could we be accused of actually not following through on the contract, and could we be open to Government? Could they be open to grievances, in regard to existing home care attendants who are employed by the Government?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, we attempt to—I suppose it is one of those issues where a contract could be followed to the letter of the law, but would that necessarily resolve the problem? We have taken I think a reasoned approach, in terms of providing service and asking individuals to provide service as allowed in the contract, but we accept that there are extenuating circumstances on both sides that from time to time are considered.

Ms. Gray: Is this individual that we are speaking of, and any other clients, are they allowed at all to do any preliminary screening of potential home care attendants?

Mr. Orchard: General rule of thumb is no, but in this circumstance there has been some exceptions made.

Ms. Gray: Is this something, again because we received phone calls from other clients who would probably wish

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to do the same thing, if it is done in a couple of situations that the Government is willing to look at extending that practice to other individuals as well?

Mr. Orchard: The system that has been in place has worked, I think my honourable friend would have to say, quite reasonably well. Where the circumstances have—my honourable friend is shaking her head, maybe she might want to elaborate.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, well, I would say in fact probably it has not worked very well when you take—

Mr. Orchard: For one individual?

Ms. Gray: For one individual.

Mr. Orchard: Yes, I said in general the system has worked very well and you shook your head. Have you got other examples?

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I shook my head in reference to the fact you are saying in general it works very well. My point is that in fact when you utilize the amount of staff time and employee time on one or two cases, my question is: is there a better way to provide service provision? I ask as an example how many employees over a fiscal year might we have trained and sent into one client's situation?

Mr. Orchard: Is my honourable friend asking for the specific details on the client whose name she mentioned earlier on this afternoon? I would prefer not to discuss the individual circumstances of a client on the public record. I do not have any reason to do that.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, because this particular individual does phone the Opposition on a regular basis and ask that in fact we do raise these issues and she herself has no difficulty with the issues being raised, I think—that is my question. Her concern is that in fact the home care attendants are not well trained. She keeps losing them and we hear this complaint over and over again.

I am wondering if there has been any ability of the department to deal with that particular issue or are we hearing one side of the story and in fact what is the reasonable amount of employees that one client can go through.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, the individual that my honourable friend refers to has been given service by a number of individuals, over the past number of months and years. There are circumstances in which there is a higher rate of turnover, I believe it is fair to say, with that individual than with probably most others, 99.99 percent of clients.

That is why I indicated to my honourable friend, because her question was very deliberate and very specific. She wanted to know if Government was considering an exception to the rule applied across the board for circumstances where there is some discretion in terms of who may provide service. I started to indicate to my honourable friend that on balance the majority

of the 25,000 individuals served by the Home Care Program have good working relationships, satisfactory working relationships, with the individuals providing services in their homes.

Where there are some narrowed exceptions, we attempt to do whatever is possible to maintain the level of service in the home. There are circumstances where it does not seem to matter what efforts are taken by staff, by the service providers, by Government, and I say this apolitically because I can think of a couple of people whose circumstances have been brought up in the Legislature for over a decade.

Governments of two political stripes have attempted, in as reasonable a way as possible, to provide services to those individuals. The services provided are not always deemed, by the individual receiving the service, to be adequate. I can simply say that the level of service provision is as good as we can make it under the Home Care Program and the criterion for use of employees and provision of service.

There is an answer that from time to time we use for extenuating circumstances, and that of course is a contractual arrangement for the individual to undertake their own care. We have a half dozen or so of those scattered throughout the province. That may be an avenue of investigation.

Ms. Gray: I thank the Minister for that answer.

With just a final question, could the Minister tell us, in regard to the Home Care Program, where you have individuals who are first of all eligible for the program, is there ever a point reached or are there ever situations where in fact the department determines or feels that in consultation with clients and in fact the services that home care are able to provide are not meeting the needs of the client. So therefore a decision is made that in fact there will be a discontinuation of services, because it is determined the department, for whatever reasons, a variety of reasons, is unable within their resources to obviously meet the needs of a particular client. Does that ever happen?

Mr. Orchard: Is my honourable friend referring to a circumstance requiring a high degree of complex care?

Ms. Gray: Yes.

* (1540)

Mr. Orchard: Yes. Okay, there are circumstances, I am informed, in the Home Care Program where staff do not feel confident they can provide an adequate level of safety in the home through the Continuing Care Program and it is at that stage of the game that alternate arrangements are sought with the individual and their families, inclusive of extended treatment placement or personal care home placement.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us what the policy is in regard to provision of service where there are clients, and hopefully we all wish that in fact there would not be situations where this does happen, but we know that being realistic in a world we have clients out there

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who for a variety of reasons will not accept service from home support workers or home care attendants who may be of a different ethnic group, colour, race, et cetera, than they are? They refuse the service and/or go a step a further and throw racial slurs at the staff. What is the Government policy in regard to dealing with those issues?

Mr. Orchard: Again it is with flexibility where we can provide appropriate care we attempt to do. However, we have a contract governing placement of staff. We have criterion that we have to attempt, from the larger picture, to accede to. I mean the Continuing Care Program cannot tailor make services for every single circumstance that may crop up in a potential client population of over 1,000,000, but I think that my honourable friend has to conclude that on balance with a third of 1 percent of complaints from 24,000 clients on the program, that by and large the administrators attempt to provide the appropriate level of service, and the staff deliver it with a minimum of difficulty.

There are always going to be circumstances where there is incompatibility. We just discussed one. In terms of the specific issue of potential clients being abusive to individuals, I believe the service provider can ask not to go back to that environment. We are just simply not, as I say, going to be able to provide a perfect program to everybody who wishes continuing care. In circumstances like that we cannot accede to, and we will not tolerate, or have not been tolerating, racial slurs as my honourable friend indicates to staff that has come in.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): When in Opposition, the Minister of Health spent a great deal of time in Health Estimates, in this particular Estimates category, talking about what he called a lack of fiscal control in this particular area. I just want to remind the Minister of some of his statements just in case he suggests that I am not providing accurate information to the committee, because when I come to this committee I make sure that I do research the situation correctly.

I note that in 1987 for example he talked at length about his feelings that there were management problems in this particular area. I have some quotes here from the Minister, when he was Opposition Critic, when he expressed: a lot of alarms, a direct quote, over the \$8 million overexpenditure in home care. That in fact did take place, there were Supplementary Estimates. The Member was quite correct, but it is interesting to note the alarm, those are his words, a lot of alarm about the overexpenditure in the home care system.

There are a number of other similar references where the Minister expressed concern in a particular year actually where spending increased by 40 percent in terms of home care. Much of the same concerns were expressed about alarm. He asked a specific question, to the then Minister of Health, whether the home care assistance was targeted in meeting the needs of the people, were the expenditures properly undertaken, and was the system of control with management in place to handle the system?

Various other references—he asked in fact April 17, 1987, whether this program is under control and asked

the Minister whether the monies have been spent properly. I think the most blunt statement from the Member, when he was Health Critic, was when he in the Legislature asked why, and this is a direct quote, why the accountability, and this is in the Continuing Care Section, was in shambles in home care.

The Minister went on record I think quite clearly as a critic for the Department of Health indicating he felt a great deal of concern about what he classified as overexpenditure, what he classified as lack of fiscal control. In fact he went so far as to say this was a program that was out of control. Those are direct quotes. I am sure the Minister will be able to recall those, when he made them, from Hansard.

What I would like to ask the Minister is: what his current agenda is for the Continuing Care Department? When he was a critic, he went at great length to say he wanted to see greater fiscal controls. Does he now still believe that, as Minister, or does he feel that such controls are not necessary?

Mr. Orchard: I appreciate my honourable friend's question. Not that I want to take credit for anything my honourable friends did when they were in Government, but as a result of my questioning on the Continuing Care Program one thing ensued, and that was the retention of Price Waterhouse as a consulting firm to undertake a complete review of the home care, the Continuing Care Program, at substantial cost to the system.

That Home Care Report Program analyzed the Continuing Care Program, under my honourable friend's administration, and made a number of observations. If my honourable friend has not read the copy of the Price Waterhouse Report, I have brought one for him this afternoon. If he needs it, I will be fully pleased to give it to him so he can read through the Price Waterhouse Report.

Mr. Chairman, as a result of the audit that my honourable friend refers to, and let us just go back and make sure that we know what we are talking about, in terms of the program. The program was voted in 1986-87 in the print Estimates at \$24.6 million approximately. My honourable friends in Government were talking the next year, '87-88, of this massive increase to the home care budget. They were talking about a \$10 million increase roughly, well, \$9 million increase to the home care budget and how massive an increase and commitment to seniors this was.

* (1550)

Mr. Chairman, it was false advertising of the worst kind, because when my honourable friends were standing up in the House as Government saying there was a massive increase in commitment to the Continuing Care Program of \$33.5 million as was printed in the Estimates for '87-88, it appeared as if there would be a \$9 million increase. In fact my honourable friends, when they were making that statement as Government, knew that they were overexpended on the previous year by over \$8 million and that in fact the budget reflected a \$1 million increase roughly. Hardly an honest

statement for Government to make to the people of Manitoba.

Two things emerged. The information did come out, as information does come out, about overexpenditures. My honourable friends had to answer, not only to Manitobans, but indeed to the auditors, Provincial Auditors, as to what happened in terms of how did they get into this circumstance of budgeting \$24 million, and in fact spending \$32 million. There were a number of criticisms that were levelled at the program and the appropriation when my honourable friend was Government, not since, but when my honourable friend was Government.

As a result there were management systems put in place by the previous administration, which envisioned the establishment of a position of home care finance officer to try and get some of those financial issues in order, and that individual was finally hired in the fall of '89. They, to achieve greater financial control, implemented an automated commitment accounting system and that was in place in the spring of '88, developed all during the term of the previous administration.

There were moves put in place to improve and automate the budget process, which were formalized by September of 1988. I indicate to my honourable friend that they also contracted with Price Waterhouse to undertake a complete review of the Continuing Care Program, not because they wanted to spend the money on Price Waterhouse as a consulting firm, but I think the previous administration wanted to find out indeed whether they had some difficulties they had to come to grips with in the program. They found that they did. They implemented some financial control mechanisms as Government, the previous administration did, so let not my honourable friend attempt to indicate that all these changes have occurred since May 9. They were in place as a result of reviews and overexpenditures experienced by my previous administration.

Mr. Chairman, there comes a time too in terms of integrity and budgeting and my honourable friends might recall that my honourable friend, particularly being something of an economist, might recall that the previous administration during those glorious years of the latter term of the Pawley administration were running \$500 plus-million deficits. The financial rating agencies across North America were dropping the financial ratings of the Province of Manitoba like a stone.

Every time during budget time there was an incredible amount of scrutiny, not by Manitobans on the budget of the NDP, but on the financial houses to where they made regular trips to borrow money. I suspected my honourable friends deliberately understated their requests for funds so that the printed deficit would appear to be coming down because what other reason could you give for the \$33 million and \$8 million increase year over year in the printed Estimates when you knew you had spent within a million of that the previous year?

Furthermore, for that fiscal year '86-87, how could you budget a figure of 24.6 million when the expenditures, the actual expenditure was 25 and then stand up in the House and say how wonderful you are

increasing the budget? I suspect there was some pressure on various ministries to understate their financial requirements and to achieve those additional dollars by Special Warrant at a later date, but the first message that went out at budget time was that the deficit was coming down so that the credit rating agencies would not drop us that next step which would have had very difficult circumstances on the Province of Manitoba.

My honourable friend is right. There needed to be some financial controls put in place. I was right when I said that as Opposition Critic and indeed the previous administration, in its wisdom, put them in place as an example of the need to assure financial integrity of the system so that you could assure yourself that individuals in need were receiving the service. That is a goal that I think all of us ought to share in this House, not to waste the money but to spend it providing service.

Mr. Ashton: It is interesting the length to which the Minister can go not to answer a very direct question. I quoted the Minister from his statements in 1987, and I asked him whether he still subscribed to those statements. To the extent he answered the question, I think it is clear he does. I was asking what his position as Minister was. The reason I raise this is because the Minister said the program was out of control. He said the accountability in the program was in a shambles. He did not say that there needs to be an improved accounting system. I can tell you, if anybody was reading this I think they would have assumed that there was a major problem with the home care program, not the side issue the Member got into in terms of the budgeting process. I have the figures here and I am quite aware of the figures.

Quite frankly, I would say in terms of providing the supplementary funding, I would like to know what the Minister would have done when clearly the demand in that year was such that the funding needed to be increased. I would like to know what the Minister would have done in those circumstances as Minister? I would have hoped that he would have gone to Treasury Board, as did the then Minister of Health, and seek the supplementary funding in order to provide those services.

* (1600)

Let us not forget who are the recipients of this program. This money did not go into a black hole, it went into providing service, providing service to our seniors and other Manitobans who receive the home care service. The Minister knows, in terms of the history program, that service has increased dramatically since it was established in 1974, I believe, the Schreyer years. I believe at that time there were something in the range of 12,500 recipients. Nowadays the client load is double.

I know the original Estimates figure for home care was \$4.7 million. It has gone to well over 40, and so it should. It is a very significant program, it has been described as the best in North America. It has also paid dividends, not just in terms of service to people, but also in terms of reducing the loan, therefore, the expenditures in other parts of the health care system.

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But it was the Minister who suggested that, it is quite clearly on the record.

These are direct statements of the Minister. If the Minister has some difficulties with statements he made to the press, I know he did at the time, I will certainly be glad to hear his clarification because when the Price Waterhouse report was released, the Minister was quoted in the Free Press announcing the release of the report saying that, "The program was not mandated forever to provide house cleaning services." The report then went on to say that poor management had turned the program into a money-eating monster. I know the Minister had problems with that statement so if he wishes to clarify exactly what he said or meant, I would certainly give him the opportunity, and went on to suggest that the program had forgotten to encourage seniors to become independent again.

There were references to the annual deficits having ranged to \$9 million in the past few years, with expenditures increasing an average 20 percent annually. I would like to hear the Minister's statement on the record whether he feels that the previous Government should not have provided the funding to provide the service to the people who required it. There were suggestions that the recommendations, this is from the Minister again, for tighter management including the appointment of financial controls officers, fiscal management training, more cost controls will allow the program to live within its year's budget and yes, accounting procedures have been put in place. But I find it interesting that there was a statement at the time made about living within this year's budget because in the end—and the Minister can correct me if I am wrong—there was more than \$4.5 million underspent in this particular budget.

So I do not know if this was a self-fulfilling prophecy at the time but indeed the budget was underspent. It did come under the budgeted amount. There was a great deal of concern at the time and the Minister then, after having the statements on record as an Opposition Critic and having these statements on the record when the Price Waterhouse report was released, I think was surprised at the uproar and it was not just from Opposition Members, it was from people who are in the field. I know there was a letter sent to the Department of Health from McBeth House in the north end of Winnipeg. Concerns were expressed by the Society of Manitobans with Disabilities, the Society of Seniors expressed concern at the time and yet the Minister seems surprised at the reaction to what happened.

Now, if the Minister feels that the Price Waterhouse report, or felt that the time was not appropriate, the recommendations, I do not know why the Minister did not disown the report. According to the reports I have received when it was released, the Minister did quite the opposite. In fact, if anything, it seemed that the Price Waterhouse report was in kindred spirit with the statements of the Minister when he was in Opposition which leads me once again to ask the question based on what the Minister said when he was in Opposition, and based on what he was reported to have said. I would appreciate his corrections if there are any

corrections to the statements that were received in the Free Press.

I would like to ask the Minister whether he stills feels that the program is "out of control." I am not talking about the budgetary process or the Supplementary Estimates process. He said, and this is a direct quote, why accountability was in a shambles in the home care. I think anyone, any member of the public reading that would assume that there were all sorts of people out there receiving the service who should not have been receiving the service. Before the Minister tries to, as he did in his last response, suggest that I am suggesting that, I am not. Quite the opposite, I would suggest quite the opposite to the Minister.

In the same sense in terms of the fiscal controls, I believe it is fine to put in improved accounting systems, but essentially the home care system was a sound program, was providing a needed service, and the increases in funding that was given to that program were legitimate increases that reflected the increase in not only the numbers of clients serviced, but the level of service.

I would like to ask the Minister again, can he clarify exactly whether he now still believes that home care is in a shambles and can he, in specific, indicate what he said when he released the Price Waterhouse report, whether he supports the recommendations of that report or not, and what other initiatives based on the Minister's own statements he plans to implement or has implemented in regard to this—and I use the Minister's words here—bringing fiscal control, that is his words, not mine, bringing fiscal control to what he called a system where accountability was in a shambles. Those are his words again, not mine.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, let us deal with several of the issues. My honourable friend is quoting from a Free Press article which was written the day after I tabled the Price Waterhouse report. My honourable friend ought to as well read the letter to the editor which pointed out the inaccuracies in that report in the Free Press.

There was the statement that I called the Continuing Care Program a money-eating monster. We reviewed the tape, we transcribed the tape. Those words were not used anywhere during the press conference and since that was the only contact I had with that particular reporter on the Price Waterhouse report, per se, and the Continuing Care Program in general, I had to conclude, as I did in my letter to the editor, that it was a figment of the writer's imagination, so therefore, highly inaccurate, as were a number of other inferences drawn by the writer of that report.

Mr. Chairman, my honourable friend criticizes me for using the words that I did when the audit report showed the Continuing Care Program to be financially out of control. My honourable friend might know that was the language used by the auditors who investigated the report, not myself. I simply quoted the language that was in the audit report, an audit report done when he was sitting in Government. I realize my honourable friend did not have anything to do with it because of

his position but those were not my words, those were words given to his then Minister of Health regarding the continuing care report. That review was a financial audit, not a program audit or management review. The Price Waterhouse report tended to be much wider in its scope and indeed did not deal with the specifics of the internal auditing.

My honourable friend, as I have indicated to him earlier in an answer, should know that as a result of the internal audits, those three steps that I pointed out to my honourable friend were commenced by the previous administration in order to bring a semblance of reasoned financial control to the Continuing Care Program, not me implementing them as the Opposition Health Critic, but the then Government implementing them because of observations made in the audit report. Let not my honourable friend try to confuse the two.

* (1610)

My honourable friend asked me what would I have recommended to Government to do. To my honourable friend, I will simply recall my advice to him that I presented about 20 minutes ago.

There would have been a reasoned case for some honesty in the way the Estimates were presented, because how can one conclude honesty from Estimates presentation when in fact your actual expenditures are 21.2 million at the end of a given year, and you budget 21.7 and tell people that you are increasing it by 2 million print over print.

What kind of honesty is there where the expenditures have actually gone up to \$25 million and you have budgeted in the print 24.67 million, less than what was actually expended the previous year, and then tell Manitobans you are increasing the budget by 3 million?

Again let us deal with the next year. The actual expenditures were 32.2 million and there was a budget of 33.4, and that was the year we were told that there was \$8 million more coming into continuing care. In fact, there was \$1.2 million more coming in on the print vote, and subsequently that year the Government of the Day had to bring in supplementary funding of over 5 million of which they lapsed 3 million of it, so that actual expenditures did not go up as anticipated.

All I am saying to my honourable friend is that what needed to be done was what we attempted to do on our first full budget, and that is to present the Estimates honestly, to give the honest estimate of what you think you can spend, not to knowingly budget something just slightly over what your actuals were and then tell Manitobans how great we are by increasing the budget, when you know full well that it is an inadequate printed vote budget.

In the position that my honourable friends found themselves in Government, they had to do that, because they had to present a budget in which the deficit was levelling off or appearing to be going down. Otherwise the financial credit-rating agencies to which the NDP had become extremely beholden would have downgraded further the credit rating of the Province of Manitoba with a resulting increase in interest rate

and resulting increase in interest expenditures, all of which do not provide one hour of care in the Continuing Care Program.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

So my honourable friends were riding a very wild bronco. They were delicately trying to not get bucked off but yet appear to be skillful riders. It worked until 1988 when finally everything came crashing down and their financial record was evident to everybody, not only in Government, indeed in the Crown corporations. What I would have done, Mr. Acting Chairman, was budget it honestly as we did this year.

Mr. Ashton: I find it interesting, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that the Minister keeps returning to this whole question of the deficit. We can get into the way the fiscal books were left. I am glad to debate the Minister anywhere anytime in terms of the situation -(inaudible)- and the way we left the home care system.

It is incorrect for the Minister to suggest that he questioned only the presentation of the Estimates and the budget. The Minister, and I have the quotes here, he described the Supplementary Estimates, the increase, as a gross overexpenditure in 1987, a gross overexpenditure. He criticized directly the expenditure. How else can you take a statement that it was a gross overexpenditure?

The Member also asked direct program questions. He asked whether the Minister at the time thought that the program was targeted in meeting the needs of the people, and were the expenditures properly undertaken, and was the system of control with management in place to handle the system? He asked three specific points. At least two of those are clearly program-oriented questions.

I am still surprised that the Minister is surprised as to why people have taken from his comments when he was in Opposition, the comments—and he has clarified that some of the reporting was not accurate in terms of the statements he made in terms of the Free Press article. He is surprised, after having made statements like that, why people are suspicious of what is going to happen in terms of home care? He is surprised when—even today I have asked him specifically in terms of the Price Waterhouse reports whether he supports those recommendations or whether in fact he will reject some of them as was done out of hand by our Health Critic at the time, the Member for Churchill.

The Minister tries to wriggle off the fact, but in fact, he raised specific questions about the program itself, gross overexpenditure, talking about the targeting and meeting the needs of people, talking about whether expenditures were properly overtaken. He raised the spectre of expenditures not being undertaken properly, and now he is the Minister.

People have been asking, I think quite legitimately, many seniors have phoned our caucus and phoned the Liberal Caucus, whether in fact the Minister's agenda is being put in place. I asked him earlier whether he still stands by those comments, his program criticisms, or whether he does not, because it is interesting to

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note that in 1987 he made these program criticisms, and then as Minister now he says, well, there have been no program changes.

Well, either he has renounced his words from 1987 criticizing the program itself, significant program elements itself, or else the Minister is not correct in saying that he has not changed his policy outlook to date. I am trying to give the Minister a chance to untangle the web that he has woven for himself through his own words. I know perhaps he is a bit embarrassed to have his words read back to him just a minute ago to say that he did not criticize the program, when in fact these are direct questions on the program itself.

I want to ask once again, I will give the Minister another chance to perhaps indicate whether he stands by those program criticisms, what the policy is in regard to the Price Waterhouse report and what other policies does this Minister have in terms of continuing care?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, we can deal with this as long as my honourable friend wants. I have indicated to my honourable friend not once but twice now that the words "financially out of control" were words in an internal audit report crafted by the department when he was Government. It was an audit report dealing with the financial accountability of the continuing care program. It did not deal with program, it did not deal with management, it dealt with the accounting of the program.

That is where the "financially out of control" comment was made and reiterated by myself, because it was a legitimate criticism, so legitimate that subsequently my honourable friend's Government took steps to bring in management systems, not because they were presumably hard-hearted individuals. It is because they had to do it, because if you do not know how your money is being spent, how can you tell people that they are receiving services? How do you know the monies are reaching the client population? That is what management systems are all about. If my honourable friend says Government can operate without management systems then my honourable friend is naive, because it simply cannot do that.

My honourable friend wants to know what is happening with the Price Waterhouse report. Well, first of all, let me tell my honourable friend we rejected a recommendation that was made by Price Waterhouse of user fees in the Continuing Care Program. I believe that was rejected with good cause by Government because the continuing care program did not grow up around a user fee for services provided in the program. That was a relatively straightforward recommendation to reject.

* (1620)

However, there were a number of others that we have either implemented or are in various processes of implementing within the Continuing Care Program to attempt to come to grips with some of the obvious areas where improvement was needed as was identified by Price Waterhouse. That process is a departmental process chaired by my Deputy Minister. I believe there

are two people outside of Government on that committee. As well as my Deputy Minister there is Sharon Macdonald, ADM; Mr. John Gow; Dr. Jack Litvack at St. Boniface; Dr. Elizabeth Shapiro, University of Manitoba; Miss Betty Havens, Gerontologist; Miss Gail Roth, a member of the Manitoba Health Services Commission Board; Mr. Frank Cook, executive director of Manitoba Health Services Commission; Ora Zobloski, Mr. Paul Hart and Mr. Bob Lane.

Mr. Ashton: I noticed the Minister is consistent in his answers to questions. If he has three statements on the record, he will repeatedly in answers to question after question try and clarify one statement leaving the two others unclarified.

It was like the Minister in the House the other day talking about the environment and the previous Government's record on the environment and never once mentioning The Environment Act. The Minister believes in repetition, not repetition for education as he suggested, but I think repetition because after awhile he feels that people will give up that line of questioning, and perhaps I should. I realize we are short of time in the Health Estimates, we have many other issues to deal with.

I would like to be able to pursue these questions in more detail and continue to ask the Minister about his statements on the record. I even said, when I read the Free Press article, I am not trying to make him accountable for statements that were made by somebody else that were interpretations of his statements. I think that is legitimate. We all I am sure have seen that happen where somebody's statements are misinterpreted but what I quoted, and I would just like to make sure that was clear for the record, earlier, was not just from this article, but was also from Hansard from 1987, when the Member as Health Critic for the Conservative Party laid out his particular concerns about the program. As I said, he described the overexpenditure as a gross overexpenditure. I suppose some of us would have, given the situation at home care, described the underexpenditure this past year as being gross, particularly in light of some of the concerns that were identified and brought forward to various caucuses.

I realize that some of those concerns perhaps have been recurring ones. In some cases I feel there were some very legitimate points raised by people in terms of the geographic distribution of services. In fact it is on that line I would like to ask the Minister if he can indicate the current geographic distribution of not-for-profit home care service as opposed to the service offered by the department. I know one concern that has been raised is just about the inequitable situation that exists. It is not a constant situation across the province and some of the problems we are dealing with may be a direct consequence of that. I would like to ask the Minister if he could perhaps clarify that because I know that was once again an issue came up during the whole debate over the Minister's comments, or what the Minister may or may not have said surrounding the announcement of the Price Waterhouse program.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, again I realize my honourable friend criticizes me for repeating an answer,

but I have to repeat the answer from time to time so that my honourable friend understands that what he is asking cannot be answered in the manner that he would wish so he can crank out his literature to the north end of Winnipeg or to northern Manitoba or wherever.

Simply pointing out to my honourable friend again when he holds up Hansard and the quotations from Hansard made in 1987, those were comments addressed to a financial audit by the Department of Health of the Continuing Care Program. When my honourable friend holds up some press coverage or whatever from 1988, that is addressing the Price Waterhouse report and its recommendations. The two issues, I will explain again to my honourable friend, are separate, apart and different. The reaction by Government, his to the financial audit from 1987, and ours to the Price Waterhouse report in 1988, have been different because issues addressed were different.

The issues in 1987 were financial issues as uncovered in an audit. An audit tells you how you are spending money and whether you have appropriate financial management systems in place. Clearly, there was not. The previous Government, after receiving the financial audit, put same in place or commenced to put same in place. The Price Waterhouse report dealt with the management program in the whole home care system, not exclusively the auditing function or the numbers function as the internal audit did.

Now, let me indicate to my honourable friend that the sheet he has received this afternoon—I will refer him to page 2, Gerontology Grants listing. We have resource councils, and I cannot tell my honourable friend whether any not-for-profit services are being offered from these individual funded organizations. I cannot tell you whether Ashdale Holdings Inc. in Ashern offers not-for-profit home cleaning. I would suspect they offer, for certain, meals on wheels at a cost to the client. Gimli—I similarly cannot answer that about Gimli. I cannot answer whether Bethel Mennonite care services in Winnipeg offers not-for-profit services; the Brandon Housing Authority, I cannot answer.

My honourable friend, I could take the rest of the afternoon and go through the list, but that list is designed to show to him the distribution of the services throughout Manitoba. I believe we are up to 117 of a potential of 180 or 210, so we are roughly halfway there in terms of the support services for the seniors' program in the Province of Manitoba.

A component of some of them being not-for-profit meals provided to individuals, not-for-profit yard cleaning services, not-for-profit home repair services, and not-for-profit home cleaning services. All of those range of services are available, but I cannot tell my honourable friend what each particular service offers in the range of not-for-profit services, but I will indicate that the majority of services do provide not-for-profit meal services.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I know the Liberal Member has a number of other questions, but I did want to, on that point, point to the concern that has

been directed to the Minister by McBeth House, for example, and by others in service organizations about the direction in terms of continuing care. I know that it was expressed quite directly by McBeth House, in terms of their concern, that programs not become a substitute for programs. Many seniors cannot even afford the not-for-profit services that do exist. I realize that those services are sporadic depending on the area that one lives in and cannot afford the \$5 and \$7.00.

* (1630)

I do appreciate the statements by the Minister on rejecting a means test. I know this is an area that we in the Opposition have a debate over. I know that unless the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) changed his view on that, or the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), or the Liberal Members, they did make statements suggesting that there should be in essence a means test. There is no means test currently. There is no means test in terms of the Home Care Program. The only test really that should be in there is in terms of the need for the program. So as I said, we do have a difference on that particular question in terms of the view of the various Opposition Parties.

I do note once again, and I have a copy of the letter which was sent to both the Liberal Critic and the New Democratic Party and to the Minister expressing their concerns about not becoming a substitute for the Continuing Care Program, that was not their basic intent as a service.

I would once again raise that matter and, as I said I am quite willing to debate with the Minister at length in terms of what has been happening in the continuing care service, certainly as the newly appointed Health Critic for the New Democratic Party, we are continuing to receive concerns and we will be raising them.

I think it will be up to the Minister to prove by his actions that he basically has changed his position. I do not have to do anything for leaflets or letters or any communication from this Legislature other than quote the Minister from 1987 and ask people to come to their own conclusions, to quote the Minister subsequently in terms of that. I hope the Minister will take charge of the situation and ensure that there are not cutbacks in terms of services.

I can really sympathize with the situation facing people last year; for all the Minister can talk about in terms of program review and various things, there was an underexpenditure in the department of over \$4.5 million. I realize there are various factors behind that, various factors as to why it was underspent. I am not sure that will happen this year. I hope it does not.

I hope the Minister will take a renewed effort in terms of communicating to people the availability of the service because I think that may have been part of the problem. Is it people after a while felt that there was, implicitly from the Minister's statements even going back to 1987, a cutback in terms of the service? The Minister says there is not. As I said, it is up to the Minister to prove by perhaps disowning his previous statements, or by making sure in the upcoming year that we do not run into the same problems by dealing with the cases that

are raised, that is not the case. I hope he can prove that.

I really feel in the current minority Government situation, regardless of what perhaps the Minister might have done under other circumstances, that this is one program that can be run without cutbacks. It is one program where I think we are going to need additional expenditure in the years to come.

Notwithstanding the figures the Minister has given us today, my research into this particular matter has indicated that there has been an increase in terms of the level of care demanded by individuals. This has been noted in previous reports on continuing care. In fact, I would like to ask the Minister one final question before turning back over to the Liberal Health Critic. What assessment has there been about the growing level of care and the pressure in terms of that, because we do have an aging society?

My understanding is that the level of care provided has been increasing. One of the reasons for those—the Minister can call them gross overexpenditures, I would call them legitimate supplementary expenditures of previous years—was because it was not just a simple question of demographics. It was the type of service that was required by the individual clients. That is one of the main reasons why there were those significant overexpenditures.

Now, the Minister has come up with a number of suggestions why there was an underexpenditure this year. What I am suggesting to the Minister is that this program is going to continue in terms of demand and in terms of the public resources. I am not suggesting anything other than the fact that we should be providing the budgetary resources to deal with that.

As a social service, I think it is important. As of itself, it is also important for the Health Care System. I would like to ask the Minister if there is any indication as to what we are going to be faced with in the current year in terms of not just the figures that the Minister has given us, but the level of service in comparison to the previous years?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I appreciate my honourable friend's comments. It took him a long while this afternoon to work in the word "cutback," which is what he wanted to work in from square one. I am very pleased that my honourable friend attempted that because it allows clearly to indicate to my honourable friend and through him to anybody he wishes to communicate with that there are indeed no cutbacks in the Continuing Care Program. There is an increase in spending from '87-88, the last year my honourable friends were in Government to the first full year we have been in Government, an increase in spending of approximately \$3.4 million in the Continuing Care Program. That is hardly a cutback. Maybe in the NDP rhetorical approach spending \$3.4 million more is a cutback. I do not think many Manitobans would agree.

Now my honourable friend says there has been declining levels of entry to the program. That is correct. Mr. Acting Chairman, I want to point out to my honourable friend the New Democratic Party Health

Critic that those declining admissions to the Home Care Program did not start on May 9, 1988, as my honourable friend would like to be able to say in all of his literature in terms of some of his communication with the north end of Winnipeg regarding the official Opposition's position in certain aspects of the Continuing Care Program. There has to be a level of integrity that my honourable friend uses in communicating with Manitobans. I do not always think that that has necessarily been the case with my honourable friends in the New Democratic Party.

I want my honourable friend to realize what the numbers are in the Continuing Care Program. 1986-87, that is the year ending March 31, 1987, that was not Premier Gary Filmon's Government, that was Premier Howard Pawley's Government. That year there were 14,242 individuals assessed for admission to the Home Care Program. In the next year, which ended March 31, 1988, and again that is not Premier Filmon and his Government, that was Premier Pawley and his Government, those admissions to the Home Care Program or the assessments for admission had declined to 13,223.

Now my honourable friend wantonly uses the terminology "cutback." Does one assume that Howard Pawley and the NDP cut back the Home Care Program from March 31, 1987, to March 31, 1988? Well, I mean if my honourable friend's logic follows through, one would have to say, yes, they cut back the Home Care Program. Mr. Acting Chairman, that is not the case. The NDP did not cut back the Home Care Program because they refused admission to approximately 10 percent of Manitobans asking for home care services. That number has been relatively consistent throughout the last number of years in the Home Care Program. It is not a proposition of changing the guidelines, of changing the policy, of more rigid enforcement of the policy as has been accused by the NDP of this Government, because the percentage of refusals has remained relatively constant. Now if the NDP had changed the policy and the guidelines from March 31, '87, to March 31, '88, their last full year in Government, well then there would be a different percentage of refusals, a higher percentage of refusals on the Home Care Program, but that was not the case.

So what we have seen is a decline in the number of individuals who have asked for assessment for entry to the Home Care Program.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the admission rate is the same. That is why this Government in July of 1989 put out how to use Manitoban's Continuing Care Program Services for Help and Independence, exactly to address the issue my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), indicates the decline in admissions to the program may be because of lack of knowledge. This is hopefully what will determine that as fact or fiction. I will give both my honourable friends a copy of it because the intention is to find out whether lack of information has caused that three-year decline commencing when my honourable friends were last Government.

* (1640)

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The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Member for Thompson, you have one more question?

Mr. Ashton: I think from now on I will not signal when I am passing the floor over because the Minister usually waits for that time to get into his rhetorical comments without answering my questions. He came nowhere close to answering my question about the degree of care. That was a very specific question.

In terms of the cutbacks, I pointed out quite clearly there has been a perception of cutbacks in terms of people out there. Individuals feel they have been cut back, not just in terms of the complete service, but cut back on the level of service. That is where I use that word and I think the Minister has to deal with those. He is not dealing with myself. I can point to individual after individual after individual who has raised this with us and we have raised it.

In some cases people have been afraid to let their names go public, but in many other cases there have been some pretty courageous people, whether it be from the north end of Winnipeg or various other areas. I think exactly what we were asking the Minister to deal with is those concerns that were being raised by service agencies and by individuals, particularly in the north end of Winnipeg.

I think it is incumbent on the Minister to deal with those questions. I think he has himself to blame to a large extent if people have a perception of cutbacks out there because his statements certainly have leaned towards that direction. If he wants to talk about the trends in terms of home care he will see.

Once again I am puzzled. This is the same Minister who was talking about gross overexpenditure in 1987. Well, that gross overexpenditure was nothing more than a recognition of the growing demand. That is not just in terms of the numbers, strict numbers of people receiving it, but the level of care as well. That is one of the most significant differences in the program between 1974 and 1989, and that is in terms of not just the number of participants in the program but also the degree of care. That is why I very specifically asked the last question. As I said, we can debate this if the Minister wants.

I did, however, want to ask a very specific question. That is in terms of whether the current budget and future budgets are going to be sufficient to deal with the increased level of care that has taken place, or at least certainly did prior to this past year. If there has been a change in the trend I think the Minister could advise the committee of that. I know there has been a situation develop where there has been an increased demand on that, and I want to ensure that there are resources there to make sure people receive the level of care they received and also they—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): I wonder if I could interrupt you for a minute. The Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) has a question and he has to leave shortly. The Member for Thompson go ahead.

Mr. Ashton: I perhaps would not have been raising this if the Minister—I think it will be the last time I will

signal whether it is my last question because the Minister seems to like to get the last word. Fine, if that is what he wants to do, but I think it does not serve the committee that well. I think we have had some very general debate. I am asking some very specific questions now. That is in terms of the level of continuing care with a trend in the level the last number of years and also what the department anticipates in the upcoming year.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, there are slightly—well the number of clients has essentially levelled off but the cost per person served, for instance, increased from an average cost in '86-87 of \$1287.37 per client to an average cost in the fiscal year '87-88 of \$1437.48 to an increase for fiscal year '88-89 of \$1666.98. Two things are at play. There are increasing salaries, naturally, but there is also increased intensity of level of service which is putting the cost per client up.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, for the last few days we have been trying to be very reasonable and not going back to what happened five or 10 years ago, but I am disappointed with the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that he had just put on the record a few things which were incorrect.

I think it is absolutely wrong in terms of going back to the same issue of home care services of last year. We were all new, there were certain statements, we admitted that it was sometimes a particular immaturity. Things can happen and we said that we were now going to ask for any means test for home care. They keep on repeating the same thing and I think it is becoming complete nonsense. It is not personally for the Member for Thompson, but they should realize that they lost four ridings in Winnipeg North. They are not going to get even a fifth one back.

This kind of propaganda is useless. They are wasting taxpayers' dollars and they have tried that and it is unfortunate they did that. If they go back there and ask people they will believe us rather than them. Absolutely it is wrong and let me just correct a few things there.

It was your administration, the NDP administration, unfortunately who has done more damage in the north end than anyone else because you took it for granted that this seat belongs to you, the whole north end belongs to you. That is absolutely wrong. You discontinued obstetrical services and you paid the price and you are going to pay more of a price in the north end because you did not even do an evaluation study after two years of simple studying obstetrical unit waste, putting hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money, you just dropped the bombshell, that is it, you are not going to get any obstetrical services. Our Member, the local Member, did not raise the issue even once in this House. That was a shame, absolutely wrong.

For the first time, the north end has acted more in this House than any time for the last 20 years. I do not have to learn any lesson from the Member for Thompson or his Party on health issues. I think we are very consistent. We have brought a number of issues in this House.

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If we are going to do this particular thing, going back and forth and taking half an hour for every issue and just trying to gain some political point, I think this is absolute nonsense. I think he should have brought this straight to the Minister of Health. If he is going to argue with me, I can bring a number of issues back to him. Our purpose has been very clear, to ask the Minister of Health and make some positive suggestions. We are doing it on each and every section of the Health Estimates. We have tried to accommodate him. We have given him as much time as he wanted, but if he is going to waste time and just embarrass us for something which we never did, I think it is absolutely wrong and I think he owes an apology to us.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

Mr. Chairman: On a point of order, the Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: I take some offence to the Member's suggestion that we are wasting time. I just indicated five minutes ago that I was deferring to the Member since he has an obligation tonight. I have tried to be co-operative. In fact today, in terms of the time spent, I believe the Liberals have had ample opportunity to raise issues.

I even let the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) raise an issue following the Member for Kildonan, but I would hope -(interjection)- I will complete my point of order and if the Member wishes to speak on it, I am sure he will be able to. I just wanted to indicate some offence at the suggestion of wasting time or not allowing the Liberals the opportunity to ask questions in committee because that is not appropriate. The Member is questioning, I think, the motives of—

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Honourable Member. He does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order. The Member for Kildonan.

* (1650)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, I was talking about the waste of time when he is just going about the same issue. They have talked about this so-called home care services and our statement at least 10 times. They have sent information to the public on public expense, taxpayers' dollars, they have sent information to all of north Winnipeg and it did not do a damn thing. I think they should learn their lesson from that very simple lesson and if any one of them wants to argue over the same issue during the election campaign they can come to Winnipeg North at any time and argue about any health care issues, but they should not put wrong information on the record.

Mr. Chairman: If I would caution -(interjection)- Order, please. I would caution Members to use appropriate language. Shall the item pass—pass.

Item 2.(g)(4) External Agencies, \$519,900—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Health tell us what the present list for the—personal care home placement is a lot less than last year and what are the reasons for this placement list and—

An Honourable Member: The panelled list.

Mr. Cheema: Yes, panelled list, and can he update what has been happening and what mechanisms are put in place to make sure that people do not have to wait for a number of years in the hospital system?

Mr. Orchard: I will get that information for my honourable friend. The panelled lists as I indicated to my honourable friend earlier on this afternoon have been going down for approximately four years. There was a slight increase last year and we will give you current numbers if we can give those.

Mr. Chairman, maybe if I can provide this information to my honourable friend tomorrow, because Continuing Care does not keep the panelled lists throughout the regions. That is the long-term care division, the personal care home division. I can give you updates, I have it. We will jump to Community Health.

Actual as of March, 1988, panelled patients, Winnipeg was—I will give you the total and then I will split it up Winnipeg and rural if you wish. The actual total is 1,234 for 1988-89. Of those the year was 594 rural, 640 Winnipeg. Comparable figures, actual figures for the year before was a total of 1,185. So there was a slight increase last year. The breakdown was 526 versus 659 in Winnipeg, rural versus Winnipeg. The previous year's actuals of '86-87 were 1,336 and that continued a down line trend that went back to, I believe, '84-85, but there were 1,336 in total, rural 572, Winnipeg 576. We are projecting for this year, '89-90, to have a total of 1,250 panelled individuals for personal care home placement and we are breaking that down in our estimates as 610 rural, 640 Winnipeg.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister give us a breakdown in each and every hospital, how many patients are waiting?

Mr. Orchard: As of September 25, which is about a month and a half old, the actual number at Concordia was 25; Health Sciences Centre 43; Grace 20; Misericordia 35; St. Boniface 18; Victoria 22; and Seven Oaks 20. Every hospital has a maximum number and Concordia is over theirs by five as of September 28; Health Sciences under by 20; Grace under by 15; Misericordia under by 15; St. Boniface under by seven; Victoria over by two; and Seven Oaks' upper limit is 20 and they have 20.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, what is the cost per person to keep these individuals in the hospital?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, could I defer to get the best guesstimate of that when we reach the hospital line? I know where my honourable friend is going to

make the case, that by having these individuals in hospital it is more expensive than in the personal care homes. That may be the case to a certain degree in dollars. I think more important the reason for moving to the personal care home is in terms of the programming made available, because in the hospital setting, regardless of best efforts of staff and management, there is not the program and the availability to delivery program. There is probably a slightly higher cost in the hospital setting than in the personal care home setting. I would have to give you a best guesstimate of that when we get to the hospital line, but it is not in the magnitude of double or triple the cost. I think my honourable friend can appreciate the longer-term care individuals are not high demand patients in the hospital system.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister also provide us the information that how much money was actually spent last year in the budget of 1987 and '88 to keep these individuals in the hospital and also this year so that we can compare that?

Mr. Orchard: I will try to have that for when we get into the personal care home, hospital section under the Commission.

I do not know how, it will not be down to the last dollar because they simply do not have the accounting sophistication to give us that cost to the last dollar if you will, but I will get staff to prepare the best estimates.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, a policy question as regards that. The non-profit organization that they will establish in the Winnipeg North, was that a policy of the previous administration or this administration to provide the home care services?

Mr. Orchard: Well, the non-profit enhancement of services under support services for seniors was an original concept of the program going back to 1985 that where, for instance, meals programs or other service programs in the community would be made available by community service councils and support services for seniors groups that those services would not be provided under the Continuing Care Program, that they would be referred to the non-profit services such as the light housecleaning, meals, visiting and other things that are not undertaken under the Home Care Program.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, why then is the NDP Member complaining that this policy was established by this administration when it was under their administration and they repeatedly brought that question in the House?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that of course is the whole nub of the issue and that is where it is incumbent upon all of us to understand the criticisms we are levelling and understand the programs that were initiated and put in place. There -(interjection)-

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Orchard: —and I have said this consistently and I can say it constantly, that the premise of the Home

Care Program in terms of policy, procedures, guidelines, has not changed. The policy for funding and implementation of support services for seniors programs has not changed with the change in Government. The criteria that were in place were good criterion. They were workable criterion and they have remained consistent. That is a referral to not-for-profit services where they become available in the community. That has been going on since 1986.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, so is that correct to assume that it does not matter whether this administration was in place or not, the policy could be carried the same way and these individuals will be still paying for these full home care services out of this non-profit organizations. Is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot answer for how the previous administration administered referral to not-for-profit services throughout the community, but we have a policy of referral where appropriate, and quite often that in fact is accomplished. If it is going to cause a hardship in the estimation of the care provider, there is no referral and Government continues to provide the service.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, then it is equally the responsibility of the previous administration's policy and the present administration's policy that when a person is referred to a non-profit organization they are supposed to pay a certain amount of money? That is in place right now?

Mr. Orchard: Well, I guess I will just argue with my honourable friend's choice of words "in terms of responsibility," I think is what he indicated. That was the intention of the policy when developed back in '85.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, I think this is very important and I want to make sure that I am crystal clear on this. I have had literature pumped out, and I have known that it has gone to all areas of the north end of the city, at the very least, that says there have been cutbacks to this service. In a yes- and no-type answer, can the Minister of Health say that there have been cutbacks, or there have not been cutbacks to the Home Care Services from this administration? -(interjection)-

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, we have gone through this thing many, many ways and I can unequivocally say there have been no cutbacks in the Home Care Program. There in fact has been an increased level of expenditure each and every year. We anticipate again this year that we are going to spend more money servicing clients in the Home Care Program. In two budgets the numbers of support services for seniors programs that have been funded has been increasing as new programs are approved for funding, and previously approved programs reach their allotted funding as they grow into the program. So there has

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clearly been a fairly significant increase in the support services for seniors program, and certainly an increase in the spending in home care. That has been consistent over last year's budget period. We expect in-home care to expend more dollars again this year.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the Minister supply me with a copy of the criteria that the previous administration had drawn up and this administration has followed up on? Would he be able to circulate that to myself and also the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema)?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I have only got the one copy here, but we will make the copy available because the criterion and the policy guidelines of the Continuing Care Program have remained consistent.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? No?

The hour is now 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. The committee will return at 8 p.m. this evening.

SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND RECREATION

Mr. Chairman (William Chornopyski): I call this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in the Chamber to order to consider Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation. When this committee last met we were considering item 2.(g)(1) Regional Services. Shall the item pass? The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I notice in the description of this area that it calls for a more decentralized model of services and speaks of 22 subregional satellite offices. Could the Minister outline what those satellite offices would be, which sections of the departments they would be, in general, and perhaps if appropriate she could provide me with the list at whatever time that is available, who is in those offices and what offices they are?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Chairperson, I understand that these subregional satellite offices may be, in some instances, Government offices. They may be municipal offices and our department advertises that our regional staff will be in these offices throughout the province, possibly a day or month or whatever, so there is advance advertising so that if people want to avail themselves of any of the programs or the personnel in our department, they are available on those days that are pre-advertised. I can get a list, I do not have a list right here with me, but I can get a list of what and where these office are.

* (1430)

Mrs. Charles: In that you divide the province up into seven regional offices, and the grants are listed in a functioning unit, that is, the Interlake is receiving so many grants and so forth and so on under Community

Places, are these areas considered as a whole entity or are they considered as individual communities in the regions? What I am meaning is, do you fund the region or do you fund organization or events in the region, in that are you trying to get some equity between regional support, or is it solely on a basis where they are judged on individual communities and the programs or ideas they put forward?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, the programs are provided on a merit basis throughout the Province of Manitoba and those organizations that apply and fit within the criteria and deserve consideration are given consideration. But we do try to look region by region and see that there is some balance and some equity, but it is not based strictly on region by region and equality per region. It is based on merit of the application that comes forward. I suppose if there was a region of the province that was not applying for programming we would have to take a look at what is happening in that region and look at programs that might suit the needs of the people in that area, but we have to base our assessment and our allocation of money on applications that come forward.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Chairman, I came in just after we had started and I was told we were on Community Places. This is the Community Places Program you are talking about now? No, I am fine, then I will wait.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, Community Places comes right near the end.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass; 2.(g)(2) pass—pass.

Shall item 2.(h) pass—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Certainly, we in this House are well aware of the problems of stripping the granting mechanism away from the Manitoba Intercultural Council and they now have the major proposal in front of them that will be developing the Multicultural Act. I believe I read in their press release of September 5 that a draft multicultural policy would be available by the end of the month, that being September 1989. Has that date been met, and at what stage now is the policy development?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We did ask MIC to forward to us recommendations on what the community had indicated to them should be in a multicultural policy. They have submitted that to us, and we are now working on putting into place a multicultural policy using the information that MIC has provided to Government. We are in the process of making that happen now.

Mrs. Charles: There is no doubt that definitely at the beginning of their term the present board of the MIC was not happy with the attitude the Government had taken towards taking away its granting mechanism. Could the Minister give an overview of how she believes the morale of the board is and, perhaps, report on how she feels the future of the board will unfold?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Chairperson, I have to say that I believe there is a much more co-operative working relationship with the MIC now. We did as a Cabinet committee meet with the board, and the executive of MIC, and had a very open and frank discussion. They indicated, of course, they were not happy with the funding being taken away, but they have been very co-operative in the transition period to get the grants moved over to the Multicultural Grants Council and get the process in place. So I have to say that there has been a good working and co-operative relationship in that respect.

The one major initiative, as the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) expressed just a moment ago, is that they have come forward and worked very hard over the summer months and into September to bring together all of the research that had been done previously by MIC. They have worked with the community to put forward proposals on what the community feels should be included in a multicultural policy. I believe with their energies channelled in that direction that they have done some very good work. I have commended and congratulated them on the work that they have done to date.

We have asked MIC to come forward—and the department is working, and I am meeting with MIC on a regular basis—to see what their role will be in the future. We have asked them to come forward with a proposal on where they see themselves to be going. We will be working very closely with them to determine what the future direction will be.

Mrs. Charles: Is the request by the members of the MIC to maintain its granting function mechanism still on the board, or have they withdrawn their objections to the Government's decision to strip them of that function?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, my feeling, Mr. Chairperson, is that they have accepted the decision that Government has made to move the funding over to the Multicultural Grants Council, and they have worked with us through the transition to make that happen. I do not know really what to say more than that. I have not said to them specifically, are you happy with the decision? Obviously they were not happy. They expressed their concerns over the decision that was made, but I believe they have accepted that decision and are working co-operatively with Government.

Mrs. Charles: I take it, then, that the MIC has not—and I suppose there has not been an annual meeting, it has not withdrawn its objection to having the granting mechanism taken from them. Can the Minister tell me what direction she sees the new granting of board go to, in that as I understand presently they have kept the same criteria, the same advertising, and in essence the same body that was in place before the improved mechanism that the MIC had put in place? Are there plans to have what MIC had in place changed in the new year, or are the same regulations and policy framework going to be—actually the identical framework, is that going to continue in place?

* (1440)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, for the time being and until the next fiscal year, we have indicated that the same application forms would be used and the same criteria would be in place, but there will be an ongoing evaluation of that. If there is the sense, and if the community expresses a desire to have that changed in some way, we may have to look at that, but at this point in time there is no plan to change the criteria. The grants that were approved by the Multicultural Grants Council just in the very first round that they did were done very expeditiously. I have received written responses from the community that it was done in a very fair way and they were pleased with the results.

Mrs. Charles: If the Minister is indicating that the grants were allocated in a very fair way, then would you please tell me one more time, because I still do not understand why her people are more appropriate to give out the funds than people nominated and elected through the process of an annual meeting by the peers of the association, knowing that they are easily approached by newcomers to Canada and to Manitoba? Why will political appointees be more easy to approach than peers of the multicultural association itself?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I think I have expressed and indicated the reasoning and the rationale why the funding was removed from MIC in the first place. First of all, it was the only umbrella group that had both an advisory, an advocacy and a funding role. There was not any other umbrella group that did perform in that specific manner. I did not indicate that there was complete approval by the community in the way MIC was handling the grants. Obviously, back at the time we did the audit, there were complaints from the community that organizations were not being treated fairly.

The Task Force on Multiculturalism indicated that there should be a separation of the funding versus the advisory role that one organization was providing, so it was not something that Government did, or the decision was not made in isolation. There were concerns from the community. The Task Force on Multiculturalism was commissioned by the former administration. The report came to me as a new Minister, and there obviously were concerns in the hearings they held throughout the province that there were some problems with MIC performing both roles. When I said I had received indication that very efficient service was provided, that letter came to me as a result of the Multicultural Grants Council assessing and providing the first round of allocations under their new mandate. The feedback I have received from that first round of approvals indicates that our community organizations are happy with the manner in which the money is being distributed.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister indicate whether she has or has not put into force all the recommendations of the task force?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They have not all been put into place, but our multicultural policy will reflect the combination of the department's responses to the Task Force on

Multiculturalism and the community's responses to the task force as well as MIC's responses.

Mrs. Charles: So then the Minister has chosen which of the recommendations she will follow, and I think in talking to the MIC people themselves they admit that when the audit was originally done there were some faults in the handing out of the grants through their MIC Council. However, they had, since that time, improved the mechanism and I believe you as Government have adopted the improved application form and the method of applying those applications.

So why was the Minister so hasty to pick on the Multicultural Council in choosing one of those recommendations from the task force? Why were the other recommendations not given as a high a priority as this recommendation of the task force?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As a result of the needs assessment, and the announcements that were being made, based on—and I guess I neglected to indicate when I was first talking about the rationale or the reasoning—it was the needs assessment also that did indicate that the advisory role and the funding role should be separated in the multicultural area. As a result of the needs assessment and the changing and trying to get new agreements in place, with all of the umbrella groups, that decision was made and we made a conscious decision that when the needs assessment was going to be announced that the changes would take place, and that is exactly what happened.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister, along the same vein, tell me by which criteria she chose those who are appointed to the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council? Was their Party background any consideration?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, we looked at urban and rural and of course men and women and those people that were competent, qualified and had respect within the multicultural community.

As I have indicated before, these people are people that have committed through volunteer time and have made a major commitment to the multicultural community by sitting on this grants council. I do not know if the Member opposite wants me to go through the names and their abilities or their qualifications, but I have received letters from community organizations commending Government on their choice of members on the Multicultural Grants Council. There has been a positive response.

David Langtry, as chair, is putting a lot of time and effort into making things work well, and I am assured we have a group that works well together. They have had some board development and some training, so they understand what their roles and responsibilities are. I believe that the community has responded positively to the appointments.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister indicate the criteria set forward in her appointments to the MIC, which were made earlier on this year, but were not unanimously received by other members of the Multicultural Council and multicultural members?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, we looked at people that had indicated an interest in serving the multicultural community through an appointment to MIC by Government. They have the best interests of the community at heart and they wanted to work towards developing and working with other members of the multicultural community towards that goal.

Mrs. Charles: I think it is appropriate, under this heading, to talk about what this Government has done to ease the growing antagonism that we have to certain racial groups within our province, and it certainly is not unique to our province. I think—and especially in this change period as Canada is bringing in more non-European immigrants and refugees—that we will be reaching a crisis stage soon, and certainly we are with our aboriginal people. Can the Minister tell me under this heading what projects that she has undertaken to deal with racism in Manitoba?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We are looking at this time of developing an agreement with the Manitoba Federation of Labour to do some cross-cultural awareness work. I tend to like to put the positive side of intercultural understanding, as opposed to racism, in the forefront because racism tends to have a negative connotation to it, and I believe that intercultural understanding and cross-cultural awareness are terms that should be used when we are talking about trying to educate and help one community or one group understand another group and work together more closely with them.

I think that you will hear very shortly of some positive steps that are being taken to improve intercultural understanding. I think that we have some things in the works and, as we can announce them, we will.

Mrs. Charles: I believe racism and bigotry are probably the meanest words and emotions that we have in all of the world and that they create wars and problems outside of wars that none of us as human beings should accept, nor do most of us accept, and I believe we have to face up to the fact that there is racism in Manitoba and we cannot gloss over it. It does happen. We are seeing through the unfortunate need for a Justice Inquiry, and two unfortunate deaths, and information that has come out through it that it does exist and it is not just something that appears in one social class, that it is throughout the fibre of our province.

I do support you in saying that we do need cross-cultural education and support, but I would like to know that this is a high priority of this Government and that no longer can we go on saying that, yes, there is racism, but if we just ignore it, it will go away. It will not go away. It will grow and, as it grows, it grows in an upside-down pyramid style, it will grow at a faster rate than we can put it down. It will take education and understanding, and I do not believe it is something that we can gloss over in any way or shape, that we have to deal with it. Manitoba, in some ways unfortunately, and in many ways fortunately, has been in the limelight of dealing with racism in Manitoba.

* (1450)

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I want to know from this Government the exact plans it has for the future in dealing with racism, and that it cannot be anything tomorrow, it must start immediately.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, unfortunately, we all know there is racism and there is bigotry, but Governments cannot legislate people to love one another and to care for one another and to understand one another. It is a process of education and I believe that as new generations come on the scene and as new immigrants come to Canada and as we have young children going to school together, playing together, being involved in community activities together, and competing on the same level together, we will come to a place where children will understand and accept each other.

There is a bit more of a problem with the older generation who have preconceived ideas and feelings towards other people, and I think we have to try through the education system, but unfortunately we cannot legislate people to accept each other. We have to provide the educational tools and we have to provide programs that will help us to understand and learn each other's cultures and traditions and, in some way, provide a better understanding of each other, but we cannot make it happen. We are working towards and, as we have programs put into place that are going to address these issues and concerns, they will be announced, and they will not be in the too distant future.

Mrs. Charles: It certainly is true that we cannot legislate people to love each other or to understand each other, but we can put in place structures that will allow that to occur. I believe this Government has been slow in dealing with some of that and would like to see a more active participation.

I suggested last year that grants could be made available so this intercultural understanding could be given as information, at least, to our service centres, to our police, to our social service agencies and so forth, that is available. It can be done in a very reasonable term, and I do not understand why the hesitation by this Government has taken place.

I would ask the Minister, in lieu of several comments that have been made in this House from her Government, what undertaking she has made to inform her fellow Members of correct statements and statements that, although they have been acceptable in the past to society, should not be put forward by Members here, especially in this House, as we are representing, as soon as we enter this Chamber, the people of Manitoba? Has she spoken to her caucus and let them know what is suitable and what is not so they may be aware of their conduct and the influence it has on representing Manitobans?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I believe it is incumbent upon all of us as individuals to think very carefully about what we say and how we handle ourselves. I believe that sometimes things get said in the heat of a moment that are not meant to portray any negative or nasty feelings, and not any one of us feels very good about that kind of thing happening.

I think the Member opposite can understand and appreciate that many times we laugh at a joke or we

say things that sometimes should be thought about a little more carefully before we do it. The barbs that go across the House very often, whether they be sexist, racist or whatever, should not happen and ought not to happen. I think we all have to be a little more careful, and I think as time goes by and as we understand each other more those kinds of things, hopefully, will not happen.

We are not going to cure and fix things up completely, but we all have to make a more conscious and concentrated effort to consider other peoples' feelings before we speak. I think that is something that goes along with understanding and knowing what to say and conditioning ourselves to say the right things at the right time.

Mrs. Charles: On a new topic, Mr. Chairman, I just have two brief ones before yielding the floor to my fellow Opposition Critic.

In June of 1985 what has become known as the Air India Disaster shocked us all. There have been questions, since the time of that disaster, of how Canada has dealt with the issue and the fact that many were Canadians. The majority were Canadians, but the majority were not white-raced Canadians. There have been questions raised, whether appropriately or inappropriately, whether this has reflected upon the follow-up investigation to that tragedy.

Can the Minister tell me, in lieu of the fact that we have such a large number and a valuable community of Sikh and Indian Canadians, what correspondence has taken place between her and the Prime Minister in asking that a full inquiry be done into the Air-India Disaster, and what was the response?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I have had no communication with the Prime Minister over this issue at all.

Mrs. Charles: Has the Minister been lobbied by any association in order to make that appeal to the Prime Minister?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, no.

Mrs. Charles: I ask the Minister then if I would be able to provide her with the background information of that, and if she could lobby on behalf of the association of Sikhs and Indians in our province, and certainly for Canadians as well, to ask for a full inquiry into the Air-India crash, if she would be able to do that type of correspondence, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I hope that the Member opposite would share whatever she has with me, and we will assess that and see what can be done.

Mrs. Charles: I will be very pleased to do that, because of course when one segment of our Canadian fibre is broken the rest of us are lesser for it.

Along the same lines, I have had, and I believe it has come to her attention, requests that we lobby the new Committee for Human Rights that was set up by Flora MacDonald as Chair, whether they would lobby the

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Indian Government in order to give full rights to the Sikhs in the Punjab, in and elsewhere in India.

As well, has she written the Prime Minister and Miss MacDonald on that situation? If not I too would be willing to provide her with information in order that she would make a fair and reasonable request to the federal Government that the rights of relatives of our new Canadians and our other Canadians can be supported throughout the world.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I was just consulting with my staff, and they have not seen that request, and I have not seen that request as yet, but before I could give an answer. I believe that is one of the things I would be seeking the advice of MIC on before any action was taken. So if the Member opposite has some information on that also maybe she could provide that to us.

Ms. Hemphill: Just to follow up on the point made by the former critic, I would also encourage the Minister to be prepared to take that role on when she gets the information that can be provided by both of us, or anyone of us.

When a community feels as strongly as they do, that there is a lot of uncertainty about the handling of such a tragedy, and in their minds they are not sure that the importance given to it and the quality of the inquiry was adequate, and that it may in fact have been related to the representation, the kinds of representatives that were there, then I think it is incumbent upon us, in this province, to represent those concerns and to put forward the question of the quality of the inquiry, and to encourage them to, indeed, do a full public inquiry so there is no further uncertainty and question about that.

So there is no question there, just I agree that it would be a very appropriate role, I think, for this Government and this Minister to take.

Mr. Chairperson, I am wondering if the Minister can tell us when she is looking at the multicultural policy, and when she is looking at the role of her Cabinet committee, is it her intention that multiculturalism will be more than just grants to multicultural agencies and the programs that are in her department. Does she see a much broader base, a much broader policy, that affects the whole Government?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, very definitely. I believe that multiculturalism is just not for the Culture, Heritage and Recreation component of Government, but it has impact on many different departments. Many of the services that are provided for Government pertain to the multicultural community, as any other community. I believe that multiculturalism is a cross-governmental initiative, and that will be reflected in the policy.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, I am pleased to hear that. I am wondering if perhaps the Minister is waiting for the multicultural policy to be completed, or it is taking a while for the Multicultural Committee of Cabinet to get going. I do not know if it is or not. I know sometimes it does.

* (1500)

I think there is a bit of disappointment, and I wonder if the Minister could comment on the fact that the Government, as a whole, does not seem to be consulting with the Manitoba Intercultural Council on multicultural policy. Now, I know that her department is.

I guess I am raising the point that almost any program brought out by any department can have an effect, or many of them do have an effect, on the multicultural community. For instance, giving them copies of new programs and saying, how does this affect your community, or how do we get the information out to them, how do we deliver the information? It just does not seem to be happening. The understanding I have is none of the other departments are turning to MIC for advice on policy, program, education, information distribution.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I believe MIC is aware of the initiatives that Government is undertaking, the ones certainly that we announced in the throne speech. They are aware that we are moving on accreditation and credentials. They know it is very definitely a Government concern that those who come to this country with specific credentials are not able to gain employment in the areas they are educated in. We are moving on that, and MIC is aware that we are moving in a positive direction.

I do know that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has met with members of the multicultural community as a whole, but also with a representative from MIC to discuss multicultural health issues, what the barriers are and ways of attempting to deal with those issues.

So those are two very major, very positive initiatives. We are working and moving, and MIC is aware that those things are happening.

We also have just recently indicated that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) is going to be sitting on the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet. I believe housing is a major issue with a lot of multicultural communities.

We want a representative from his department to be on the intergovernmental committee, as well as, the Minister sitting at the Cabinet committee meetings so he can input and provide information and his department can share with the rest of the Government departments what is happening in Housing. There are some major good things happening, and I believe MIC does know too that the Minister of Housing is going to be included.

So those are positive steps, and we are working with MIC. I guess most of their time was expended, over the last few months, working towards recommendations on the multicultural policy, which I know they have put a lot of time and effort into, and I know they have provided us with good information and good background information for us to work from.

The policy will be forthcoming in the near future as a result of the work that has been done intergovernmentally plus the information that has been provided from MIC.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairman, it gives me an opportunity to give recognition to taking on the very difficult issue of accreditation and certification, which we had begun to look at. I give credit to them for being willing to tackle it and will be very interested to see what you come out with.

I think those still—though, when you look at accreditation you are still looking at an issue that deals directly with the ethnocultural community, although it is being dealt with in another department. I am really thinking of general programs, whether it is rent controls or whether it is something that is coming under economic development, or other things like that, is having in mind that these affect, and sometimes have more effect. For instance, rent controls we know are not working in the inner city, and a large number of people in the inner city are immigrants.

The questions are, why are they not working, and do they know their rights? I think just our little ads—and I can say this because that is what we did—are not enough. Saying 3 percent rent controls, they do not know what their rights are. A lot of them are not under rent controls.

So I am just making the point that I think if you really want this to work across the Government they have to look at things they are doing that are not necessarily related to the ethnocultural community, but are programs and policies that affect everybody. Then the question is, what effect will this have in the multicultural community, and how do we get the information out to them?

It is hard to keep that in mind. You almost have to sensitize other Government Ministers to take a look when they are bring in new policies about what if any effect they will have and how they are going to communicate and deal with this group of people who tend to be left out of knowledge, information, access and understanding.

I was just making an appeal for going beyond the norm, in terms of looking at the effect on the immigrant population. So I do not know if the Minister wants to make any point to that.

I see she has been handed a little slip, and she might have something to add.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Then some very good points are raised and some issues that sometimes we tend to forget. The interdepartmental committee—I would hope that its meeting is sort of a hands-on committee that deals—it is not the Deputy Ministers of these departments that have formed the intergovernmental committee, but it is more at the working level, so that hopefully there will be sharing of information between departments on what initiatives are going to take place. We will have to put in place a strategy for communicating those initiatives to the multicultural community, and that will be part of the overall plan.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, I also want to spend a few minutes talking about the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I am not going to spend too much time talking about the change in role, although I was disappointed

in it. I think MIC was, and I think a lot of people in the multicultural community were.

I think it is a fact. I think there were very good points made by the other critic in raising the questions, but I think the reality is that the funding role is gone. I think you have made the decision to give it to somebody else, and since that is a fact I think the main concern now facing the organizations and the community is what you are going to do with what is left, what the role is going to be and most particularly what the funding and the support is going to be to do the job.

* (1510)

I guess, to ask specifically, I think there are about five staff people, and I know they have been able to maintain this year. The big question is: is there anything in the Government's mind that suggests, because the funding responsibility has been taken away, that they can now do the job with less resources? Is there any intention to move in that direction, less resources, either financial or personnel in the next budget year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, MIC has just submitted their budget to the department for next year. I have not had the opportunity to see that, as yet, but the department will do an analysis of the budget, and then I will be taking a look at it.

We will be meeting with MIC. We have asked them to come forward with some suggestions on how they see themselves evolving and what direction they feel they should, or would want to take. They have talked about community development. We have asked for a proposal on what they think community development is, and how they would like to outreach to the community.

So we are in the process of negotiation and working with them to see what their future role will be, and we will work from there. We will take a look at their budget in the near future and sit down and talk with them as we do with all of the agencies that we fund on a regular basis and see what the future holds.

Ms. Hemphill: Yes, I recognize the budget has just been handed in, and you are going to have to have a look at it. I guess I am looking for an attitude of the Government not the analysis by the staff, which I know they have to do.

I also feel it is probable that the Minister, herself, has some idea of whether or not she thinks that the figuring out what funds were going to what groups took a lot of time and energy, and with the absence of that activity being gone they can do the job with less resources.

One of the points I wanted to make is that when it was originally set up I think there were about 200 organizations they were dealing with. Now there are over 420 organizations, and I do not think we can really compare the job when it was in its very early developmental stage, with that level of activity, with the job that is being required now with 400 organizations that they need to keep in touch with and keep track of. Could the Minister comment on that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I can comment by saying yes, their role will very definitely have to change, because I guess much of their resource and manpower was going into the grant allocation process. There are some very definite needs for the multicultural community with the policy coming up with a piece of legislation, and MIC will play an important role as far as advising Government, as far as working with the communities trying to, I suppose, assess what the needs are out in the community in bringing those issues forward to Government.

We will be developing. We have discussed briefly what will happen, and I think there needs to be some more discussion between MIC and Government, myself as Minister, to determine exactly what their role will be. That has not been determined. Once it is, that will be public information, but as of this point we are asking them what they see their role to be. We will be assessing it and determining what their input will be and how they can outreach to the community in the future.

They do now have just the advisory advocacy role rather than the funding role, so they can concentrate their efforts on bringing to Government those concerns that the multicultural community has, work together with Government to resolve the issues that are out there, and hopefully in that way benefit the whole multicultural community.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, I am going to suggest to the Minister that I think the funding should be maintained. One of the reasons is that I believe they should be carrying out an advocacy role. I want to ask the Minister what her feelings are on that. Also, when they were doing the granting, the funding, they had an automatic tool to be in touch with all of the organizations. In doing that job they knew who was there, they knew what work they were doing, what the issues were and what the problems were.

With that tool taken away from them it leaves them literally nothing that gives them that quality of access, knowledge, information and relationship, and they have to find some other way of doing it. They literally have to go out on their own and find a way to get in touch, to keep the relationship going, to get information without having the automatic funnel of the funding capacity, responsibility to do that for them.

I see a tremendous requirement, increased requirement for them in terms of resources that I think would make up the difference for the time they spent on determining the allocation of the funding needed just to do the communication, the information and the knowing who the groups are. How can they do an adequate job of advising you if they do not know the groups, if they are out of touch with the groups, if they are not getting up-to-date information from them all the time?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Chairperson, I suppose there are other ways and means, besides just handing out money, that members of the community can be in touch with their community. After all, they are elected by communities to sit as an advisory body to Government, so if they have the respect and the support

of several different communities to elect them as their representative, I would believe that it would be their responsibility to go back out into that community and share the information that they receive at council meetings back out with the community.

They should be in constant consultation through community meetings with the respective communities that have advised them, and I do not believe that they need a granting function to be able to meet with their communities who have put their faith and their trust in them to represent them at the council level. I think that there is major work that can be done. They can call together meetings, communicate over the phone, send newsletters out and all of those things that are going to keep the communities in touch and aware with what Government is doing, you know, questionnaires out to the community on what the concerns might be. Having the feedback brought back to MIC and then back to Government would be very positive. It would be a great co-operative way to work together to address some of the issues.

Ms. Hemphill: I certainly was not suggesting that the only way they can do their representative job is if they are giving funding. I was making the point that in the process of determining funding they had a lot of contact, and when that process is eliminated they have to come up with other ways of keeping up that contact, and it takes time. It is going to take a lot of the time that they were spending doing the other job. I think that is the only point. Could the Minister respond?

They were talking about having three functions previously, the advisory function, an advocacy function and the funding function. The Minister indicated previously that her Government, I think, had reservations—I do not want to put words in your mouth so tell me if I am wrong—of having both advocacy and funding roles in the same body, and that was one of the reasons why they took away the funding responsibility. Now that the funding responsibility is gone, is this Government comfortable with both advisory and advocacy role for the Manitoba Intercultural Council?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I guess what I did say was it was the three functions, the advisory, the advocacy and the funding that were not done by any other umbrella group. I believe advisory and advocacy go together because advocacy is being an advocate on behalf of communities to Government, so they should be bringing forward the issues and concerns that are affecting each and every community, or different communities, to Government in a positive way because there can be a negative advocacy role and a positive sort. I believe that if the community genuinely wants Government to do something positive that information has to be brought forward in a manner that Government can deal with. You know, it is sort of the role, when the taxpayers and Government is paying an organization to advise and to advocate, I believe they should bring that information forward to the Government of the Day, whichever Government it might be, give Government an opportunity to respond to the issues and concerns that are out there and if Government does not do it

in a positive way then the whole world should know. But I think that the role and the responsibility of an organization is to bring that information forward and give Government the opportunity to know what the problem is, to attempt to resolve that problem and do it in a way and a manner that is going to benefit the whole community.

* (1520)

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, I am glad to hear the Minister's answer on that. It is my understanding that the Minister is saying that she does not just see the role of the Manitoba Intercultural Council to respond to questions that the Government asks. We would like to know what you think about this, or we would like you to respond to us on how this will work, but you are prepared to have the MIC, through its representatives and its knowledge of the communities, identify issues and problems and initiate them and bring them forward to you for examination and discussion. Get that one on the record if that is what . . .

Mr. Chairman, the previous critic spent quite a bit of time talking about the issue of racism which I think is a very important issue. I was interested in the answers that the Minister gave about what kind of a role she sees her department playing in dealing with racism, whether it is in the education system, whether it is in the schools. There is another important issue that is along the same lines and it is the issue of the decline of the inner city and the people in it. While I know she probably does not see this as directly related to her responsibility, the information that we have now suggests to us that the inner city is on a downward trend in all of the important sectors, whether it is unemployment, single parent, Native, numbers of immigrants.

One of the most alarming things is that the groups that are in the greatest need, which is Native single-parent women, visible minorities, are the groups that are increasing in numbers, are the groups that have the highest unemployment, the lowest income, the largest number living below the poverty line, living in the most rotten houses, paying the most for those houses, a higher percentage of their income, having more trouble getting food on the table, shelter over the heads for their families.

A lot of those people are immigrants, and I think that her Government, it did not start 18 months ago, it started a decade ago or more and we have been trying to reverse the trends in the inner city but they are not reversing. In fact, if they continue the way they are, I think we have the trends now that the U.S. slums had when they did not do anything about them, they have become slum cities and I think we are moving in that direction.

Does the Minister see her Government having an awareness of the problems facing these target groups—I mean the inner city, in general, as a problem—but the target groups in the inner city that need really a special priority and special attention, money and supports to go into both the groups and the issues to deal with the decline of the inner city?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I think the issue that the Member for Logan has brought forward is a real issue and it is an issue that crosses many different Government departments because there are programs available in different departments—Housing for one. We are talking immigration, we are talking employment services and economic security, we are talking day care.

There are all kinds of issues and there are several different Government departments that must be involved in co-ordinating and working towards a solution to some of these problems. I think that the intergovernmental committee that has been formed under the multicultural co-ordinator would be a perfect forum for these issues to be discussed interdepartmentally, to take a look at the issues and to look at ways and means of creating some solutions to some of the problems that are presently existing, and I am sure are going to continue and are on the incline.

Ms. Hemphill: The Minister mentioned, I think, that they have put out their first set of grants and that she was quite pleased, and she thought the groups were quite pleased with the distribution. I wonder if she could, if not at this moment, provide us with a copy of the grants that were allocated from the first set?

I think this is going to take—while this one may well have worked out well, I think we are going to have to see two or three of them before we see the trends and see what it is that the Government really intended to do.

What has the Minister put in place to make sure that the smallest groups with the least resources and the least ability to stand up and ask for support or speak out for themselves are protected in this new funding distribution?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I believe that the Grants Council is completely responsible and accountable to the Minister and to this Legislature. If there is any group that does come forward with a concern about the way the grant has been allocated, certainly they will have recourse and ability to be able to appeal. I want to say that I know that the applications are being reviewed by the Grants Council in a very thorough and responsible way. There is no distinction or differentiation given to those groups that are big or small or whatever. Each one is looked at in respect to the application that has come forward. Staff will be working with organizations to ensure that all of the information is put forward and gathered so that each one can be looked at in a thorough way, and the recommendations can be made based on the evaluation.

I know the members of the Grants Council are taking their job very seriously and are trying to, in a very fair and equitable way, distribute those grants. I know it is only the first round but the commitment is there. As I said, the grants will be responsible and accountable through the Legislature too, so all of the questions can be asked, and we as a Government can be held completely accountable for the grants that are allocated.

Ms. Hemphill: Just to end on this subject, if I were to try to summarize the two main fears that I think the

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MIC and its representative organizations have, as a result of the change right now, never mind what their concerns were in the past, what their main concerns are right now is that there will be a cut in the resources and the funding based on the pulling away of the granting activity, and using that as an excuse to reduce staff and budget and the irrelevant factor, which you might call the irrelevant factor.

What are we going to be left to do that is really relevant so our communities will see the job we are doing is relevant? So I would just make a final appeal and ask the Minister for a response in those two areas. I think that if there was a willingness by this Government to continue funding and giving them the resources at the same level and to give them a very substantive role and certainly support the advocacy role so that they do not feel and the people they represent do not feel that they are irrelevant and sitting there for really no useful purpose, then I think they will have gone a long way towards doing what they say they want to do in terms of promotion and support for the multicultural community. Could she respond to those two fears, which are very fairly widespread and very real?

* (1530)

Mrs. Mitchelson: All I can do today is commit to the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) that we are actively working with MIC. The working relationship has much improved from what it was initially. There was a conflict in confrontation. I think we all recognize that, but there seems to be a sense for MIC to want to work with Government and there certainly is a sense that Government wants to work with MIC.

What the best possible method will be in the future cannot be determined or I cannot say today, but over the next short period of time we are going to be working closely with MIC to develop and determine what their role will be. They have, over the last short while, proved to be a valuable source of information and research, and have worked co-operatively.

We have a Multiculturalism Act, a piece of Legislation that we have committed to introduce in the next Legislative Session, and we will certainly be consulting and working with MIC through that process, too, as well as with the broader community, the general multicultural community, so there is a co-operative working relationship. I expect that to continue and we are going to sit down with MIC and work out what their role will be in the future.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I just had a couple of very quick, brief questions to the Minister and that is, regarding immigration and, in particular, how many people come and enter into Canada and Manitoba for work purposes and many other things. In some cases, Mr. Chairperson, some of these individuals feel that they were somewhat discriminated against in their selection process when they came down to Canada. Unfortunately, because of something that they might have said previously in coming to Canada, they were not allowed to remain in Canada even though they have been in here, in Manitoba in particular, for several years.

My question to the Minister is: is she aware of this particular problem? The case that I am really trying to refer to is the one of Sally Espineli. I am going to ask her to comment on it.

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is Canada Employment and Immigration that has that responsibility and there is a branch of Immigration and Settlement under the Department of Family Services that would normally deal with that specific issue.

Mr. Lamoureux: Last year I had asked the First Minister a question during Question Period regarding, and I will get right to the point, Sally Espineli's particular case. What had happened to this particular individual is that she came to Canada and moved to Manitoba to work in our garment industry. After eight years of living in the province because she, upon entry to Canada, said she was not married and in fact at the time she was married, but she was concerned that in putting forward the application if she had said that she was married that she would not have been able to come to Canada. So she did state that she was not married therefore, came down to Canada. After living in Manitoba, she has made very valuable contributions to Manitoban society and unfortunately it was not seen fit to give her a permit to remain in Canada.

I guess really what I am trying to do is just to find out the rationale or get someone, whether it is the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or whether it is the Minister of Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson), to explain to me why someone of this nature would not have been given a permit when we look at the reasons that we have permits. I find it somewhat hard to believe that someone who has contributed to our society for the past eight years in such a positive fashion can be deported from our country, and I think it is really a sad state when things of this nature happen, and I understand that there are regulations and so forth to be followed and, yes, she did not tell the full truth in filling in the application but I think we have to take it into proper context.

Under what circumstances did she say this? I am of the opinion, after talking to many people that know Sally, that maybe there might have been some discrimination, at least on the surface in terms of married couples and a new immigrant wanting or a worker wanting to come to Canada saying that they were married, they felt, and that is the most important thing, they felt that they would not be able to come to Canada.

For someone that wants to come to Canada to make it their home through their own choice, I can understand that fear and can understand why they would say that they are single. By the way, now when she was deported and since she has been back in the Philippines I can say that she is not married. The person that she was married to back 10 years ago no longer sees her. I ask the Minister maybe to give me some type of an answer as to why someone of this nature would not have been given a permit.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Chairperson, it certainly sounds like a very unfortunate situation but I certainly

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cannot explain on behalf of someone else why a decision was made. It was not my decision and so I am not going to speak on behalf—I am not a lawyer, I am not a judge, I am the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation that can understand and sympathize certainly with the problems that have been expressed by the Member opposite, but I certainly cannot speak on behalf of the system and why the federal system decided or chose to make that decision. I can understand and I can sympathize and empathize but I cannot answer the question for the Member.

Mr. Lamoureux: This individual, and there are many others, and no one really knows the number, I have been trying to find out in terms of some type of concrete or even some type of an idea in terms of how many numbers or the actual number of people that might be affected in the same manner in which Sally was.

I guess what I am trying to say here is that Sally Espineli was a Manitoban. Now, I had asked the Premier, and I have asked him actually a couple of times and both times he had taken the question as notice, I had asked him to write to the Minister, or maybe I should ask the Minister of Culture and Heritage, has she written? After all, there are in provincial politics only the two people, or the two people that come to my mind in terms that should be soliciting the assistance from the Minister of Immigration, is the First Minister or the Minister representing Culture and Heritage. I would be interested in knowing if either of the two of you had written the Minister of Immigration to put your views or to express your opinions on this particular case.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I did not write myself, no, but I remember that was several months ago. Was it—I do not remember if it was in this Session or last Session that the questions were asked of the First Minister and perhaps I could follow-up and get for the Member any information that I could gather from the Premier's Office on what course was taken in regard to this specific case.

Mr. Lamoureux: I appreciate that answer and would also, maybe encourage her, as the Minister, if she would today—and if she cannot do it today sometime in the very near future—draft a letter to the Minister of Immigration requesting that Sally Espineli be granted a permit. After all, she has only now been out of Canada for over a year, I believe it was September, '88, when she was actually deported, I believe that Sally should never have been deported, I believe that she should have been given a permit. I believe, I would like to believe that if the Minister had known the circumstances surrounding this particular deportation that in fact she would have been asking or requesting the Minister of Immigration to grant this permit because I do believe it is a tragedy that she was not given a permit. I would ask the Minister today, if at all possible, and if not today, sometime in the immediate future to get a letter off and possibly even give her a phone call and discuss this particular case.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I have indicated just in my last answer that I will first follow up with the

Premier's (Mr. Filmon) Office, and that will be the course of action that I will take initially to see what course of action he took and whether he received any response or not. I will follow up after that, but I believe it is incumbent upon me first of all to check with the Premier's Office to see what has happened in that respect.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure about the area, but I think it is probably the only appropriate place to raise the question. Does this Government have a policy on the number of immigrants coming into Manitoba?

* (1540)

Our immigration numbers are actually declining and this has an effect really on the development of our province, on the labour force, and many other things. I am wondering if the Government has had discussions about the fact that immigration is actually down, and whether they want it to be down, whether they want it to be maintained the same or whether, out of the increase in immigration that is coming into the country, they want Manitoba to begin to receive and be prepared to receive more immigrants from other countries. Have they discussed this and is this an issue for this Government?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, immigration settlement falls under the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). That is part of a branch of her department, but I will check with her to see whether in fact the numbers are decreasing. I do not have those statistics and that information. I will attempt to obtain it, get an analysis of what is happening in Manitoba and go from there.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass.

Resolution No. 25: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$12,570,200 for Cultural, Heritage and Recreation for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990.

Shall the item pass—the Honourable Minister.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, just one minute on a matter of expediency. Normally before we pass this section we would take questions on Community Places, so this might be the appropriate time to do that before the whole appropriation is passed.

While I am on my feet, maybe I could pass to the critics the list of the satellite offices that are serviced from our base operations. We have received that from staff.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the committee to discuss the Community Places Program?

Mrs. Charles: One question I have in the area of Community Places, and that it seemed outstanding to me that counselling services would appear to have been funded. Was \$40,000 being given to the Raja Yoga Centre? I would like the Minister to explain why free yoga classes and counselling services were given \$40,000.00.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, this question I believe was asked the other day and I did seek some clarification on it. That grant was allocated in the first year of the Community Places Program under the NDP administration, and the money is just flowing through now as the result of the commitment that was made. That money does not always get paid out in the same year that the grant is given.

So maybe the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) would like to speak to someone from the NDP side and get some background information on what the process was in place to provide that grant.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister then elaborate that under her Government that counselling services would not be funded? That is indeed sort of capital projects and community projects that are in place but not necessarily a counselling service that would seem more appropriate to be done under other facilities, other Government facilities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, there are a lot of grants that are given to organizations, non-profit organizations, that do counselling like workshops and that kind of thing under Community Places.

(Mr. Gilles Roch, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Acting Chairperson, one of the concerns that we had was a policy change by this Government to pull out of the northern—I am not quite sure what to call it—but the option that precluded the northern communities from the requirement of putting up 50 percent. At the time I guess our concern was that since most of the northern communities, many of which were reserves and Native communities which had exceptionally high unemployment, had no facilities and no resources, we did not know where they were going to get their 50 percent. We thought that the program should be distributed fairly between urban, rural and northern, and we did make an attempt. We used to keep a running tally so that we could tell that no region was sort of getting more than their fair share.

Could the Minister tell us what her experience has been since this policy has been changed? Are there applications coming in? Is the North getting a fair share of the program money, and do they keep a distribution between rural, northern and urban, and can she tell us what the percentage is?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, when the program was first started under the former administration there was some inequity because 100 percent of the money was coming from the Community Places Program to go into some rural and remote communities, I believe, above the 53rd. When we took a look at the program we felt that there was some discrimination there. There were many communities below the 53rd Parallel that had some of the same problems that some of the northern communities had in being able to access Community Places grants on the basis of a 50-50 matching grant.

What has happened since our administration has taken over is the Department of Northern and Native

Affairs has recognized their need and their responsibility to provide assistance through the local Government for 50 percent of the share of the Community Places projects. So therefore there is money being provided through the Department of Northern Affairs for matching share, so they can deal with all of the remote northern Native communities that might be anywhere in the province that do have problems accessing because they do not have money of their own, so there is money available. Also what we are doing is encouraging, of course, the volunteer component, the labour component, and encouraging those communities that do want a facility of some sort and cannot provide financial money putting labour time into it. I believe and I believe our Government believes that that is a very major important contribution to any project. If you have got the community that is willing to put the time in, that makes it even more worthwhile, so we are encouraging that.

I just got some figures, so if you will bear with me for a minute. From the figures that I have here, for the remote North, as far as applications received, there were 40 applications and 28 applications were approved out of those 40. They applied for just over 9 percent of the money from Community Places and they were granted just over 9 percent, so what they applied for in relationship.

That is the remote North. Now do you want the urban north, or are you more concerned with the remote communities?

Ms. Hemphill: I guess you would have to put the urban North and the remote North together to get a sense of what percentage, but if the remote North is only getting nine, then I do not know what the urban North would be getting, but it looks to me like urban and rural are getting an overproportion of their share of the money, unless the urban North are getting—you said did I want you to put the two together. You gave me the 9 percent figure; that was just for remote northern communities. Then you said, do you want the urban northern communities to see what the North adds up to.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we do not have that together, but we can try to compile it if there are any other questions.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Acting Chairman, I am sure that the Minister and her staff are familiar with the Block Parent Program which has operated with real distinction in this city for the last number of years. In fact, I note with some pleasure that one of the Members of this Assembly, the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) is among the founders of the Block Parent Program which provides children in distress, seniors in distress and others a place to run in the event of a personal emergency.

* (1550)

With regret I inform the House today and the Minister that the Block Parent Program is in serious financial difficulty. Although 16,000 volunteers are presently

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involved in this program and are operating it with distinction, the program is finding it difficult to find the funding required for their office rental, for one staff person and for telephones and office supplies.

Now, many of the grants and other forms of assistance extended by the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation seem to be of benefit to organizations that are not unlike Block Parents. I think no Member of this Assembly would challenge the value of the service provided by the Block Parents Program. I wonder if the Minister could advise the House, and through us the Block Parents Program, whether there might be a category of application which the Block Parents Program which we would all like to preserve, could apply under.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, certainly not through the Community Places Program because that is capital grants. It sounds like what you are asking for is some sort of an operating or ongoing operating grant for Block Parents, and we have not been asked as a department. I do not know whether that would fall within our department or whether there might be something within Government. I do not know what department it would be, whether it would be Family Services perhaps, or something like that. I think what, first of all, the Block Parents would have to do would be to ask, bring forward some type of a written proposal to Government. I am sure it could come to my department. If there is nothing within my department I would certainly pass it on to the appropriate department that might be able to assist.

Mr. Kozak: Mr. Acting Chairman, I would of course like to make it clear that I am not asking the Minister to commit to a specific allocation of funds. The information that was brought to my attention very recently, in fact today as I was sitting in this House, does put me under an obligation to see if I can offer some advice to the Block Parents Program as to whom in Government they might approach so that proper evaluation of their request could be made. I believe the Minister—and perhaps she will correct me if I am wrong on this—is suggesting that in fact her department would be prepared to extend advice to the Block Parents Program as to whom they may contact.

Mrs. Mitchelson: By all means, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Pass. We will move on to No. 3—I am sorry, the Honourable Minister.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Could we have a three-minute break, Mr. Acting Chairperson?

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Is it the will of the committee that we recess until 3:55 p.m.?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

* (1600)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): Agreed.

RECESS

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

Mr. Chairman: Number 3, Communication and Information Resources—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister provide us with the numbers of requests for freedom of information and the reasons that the requests were denied? I am sorry, the number of requests that were denied and the reasons for the denial of the requests?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, could I ask for clarification on whether it is the whole Government or just our department?

Mrs. Charles: For the whole Government if possible, please?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, I can give you the to-date, I guess, the annual report would vary a little different from the to-date applications. There were 360 applications received to date—142 granted, 106 partially granted and 71 denied. I cannot give the specific reasons why each department would have denied. That would be on an individual departmental basis. I could tell you in our department, but I cannot give you overall Government's responses. Each department would have to provide that information.

Mrs. Charles: Are you then saying that there is no one department that overall looks at The Freedom of Information Act, that each department is responsible to the ultimate degree of The Freedom of Information Act in its own department, there is no one control over the process?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The responsibility within each department for granting of access or not is with the access officer in each department. Our department is responsible for compiling the information, but each department and each access officer is responsible for that in their respective departments.

Mrs. Charles: Is there no concern, in that it is a new Act, that there should be any undertaking to establish whether the denials were fair and honest denials, and that information would be gathered together under your department, and research gone into why requests were granted or denied, having tested out the Act now over a year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There is a process, Mr. Chairperson, that is in place for those who feel that access has been denied unfairly. That is through an appeal to the Ombudsman, and the Ombudsman has the final say. It is not anyone within Government, it is the Ombudsman that makes that determination and that decision. There is a process in place to appeal any decision that any department makes.

Mrs. Charles: The Minister's department, therefore, is doing no review of the success or lack of success of The Freedom of Information Act in its initial year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, the understanding is that less than a year's experience with the Act is not a fair amount of time to be able to access the Act's strength and its weaknesses, but there is a Legislative review process that will be put in place before any amendments are made. We have indicated that review will take place within three years of the Act being proclaimed. Open discussion and public hearings will be a part of that process to evaluate whether it is serving the intent and purpose of what it was set up to do, and if in fact there are changes that need to be made, those changes will be made with amendments at the end of that period of time.

Mr. Chairman: Shall item 32 pass—pass.

Shall item (b)1 pass—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Yes, one question here: does the Government comply to contract compliance when purchasing from agencies, in that will they give first preference to companies that employ affirmative action as an ongoing process of their company?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is not a criterion of purchasing advertising.

Ms. Hemphill: Just a question to the Minister: I have a colleague who would like to ask a question. We passed the line. It is on museums and we were wondering if we can get it in while some staff is still here, perhaps the Deputy Minister. It does not fit any line but he just has two questions that he missed.

An Honourable Member: I can always do it when the—

Mrs. Mitchelson: If she will just bear with us for a few moments we will go back to that part. Perhaps we could—if we are finished with questions on freedom of information—have we passed that? That is all passed and we are ready to go on with the next. Okay, I will just be a minute.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I appreciate the opportunity to raise this issue at this time involving the regional museums pilot project. I wanted to ask the Minister some questions about that project and also some questions about the criteria that were used in selecting the museums that were to participate. I assure the Minister that I will not be here all night on these questions, but it just depends what the answers are.

My colleague advised me that there was some trepidation about allowing me to raise the questions right now, unless it was over here, but I—some trepidation, considerable trepidation from the Liberals not so much from the Conservatives. I do not know what message that gives us.

Well, my question is this. There has apparently been a selection made into the regional museums pilot project, by way of a letter of August 31, 1989. I have information from the Fort Dauphin Museum indicating that the Dugald Costume Museum in Dugald and the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach were selected.

The Fort Dauphin Museum has put forward a concern, a complaint, to the Minister because they feel that these do not represent regional diversity that should have been represented in a project of this nature, and that these, located quite close together in one area of the province, do not appropriately represent the kinds of criteria that could have been used to have these designated. I believe that is to be true.

* (1610)

Westman, Interlake or Parkland regions have not been included at all, and I do not know what the purpose of this pilot project is. I understand it involves some funding, and I would like to know from the Minister how much, and what the objectives are? Why the selections were made in the way they were, two regional museums so close to Winnipeg as opposed to regional museums that could have represented other areas of the province? I will start with that, on this issue.

Mrs. Mitchelson: This is a three-year experimental project and it is intended to further develop existing centres of excellence, which can provide improved services to schools and to other community museums. So there is going to be a responsibility, by those that have received the funding, to share, through the education of other museums, and specifically offer workshops in specific different areas.

There were a dozen applications that were received from the province. Winnipeg museums were excluded from this process because we wanted to look at those outside of the Perimeter Highway that had something to contribute and something to offer.

There is an advisory committee set up representing community museum and education interests, and they did the evaluation of the applications and came up with the three that were recommended to me and I accepted those recommendations.

The Sam Waller Museum in The Pas, Dugald and Steinbach, of course, were the three that were chosen, and it is \$72,000 over three years, \$24,000 per year per museum.

They were chosen for specific reasons, because Steinbach is doing a fairly major capital project right now they are going to be providing workshops to other museums on raising capital and funding for capital projects, for expansion of museums, and they are going to share that with other museums. Of course the Dugald Costume Museum has a very special and specific interest in preserving clothing collections, and that kind of information will be shared throughout the province with other museums. The Sam Waller Museum in The Pas will work very closely with other museums as to preserving of collections.

There were obviously some museums with the dozen that were not able to be chosen. We are not saying that this is the end of the program or project. There may be opportunity as we evaluate, year by year, this pilot project to look at further funding for more museums in rural Manitoba. Other museums also within the province are still able to access project grants.

So these were the top three museums that were recommended to me, and I accepted those

recommendations. I believe they will all offer and contribute to education and to workshops that will provide some support and some guidance to the museum community throughout Manitoba.

Mr. Plohan: First of all in asking these questions I in no way wish to undermine the quality of the museums that we are dealing with here in Steinbach and Dugald, in terms of their impact and the service that they have provided over the years. I am not even insinuating, with these questions, that the fine hand of the Member for Steinbach was involved in any way, shape, or form, in the selection of these museums over the Fort Dauphin Museum. I certainly am not suggesting that, at this particular time.

I want the Minister to just reference the letter that was received from the Fort Dauphin Museum dated August 31, 1989 in which they outline the major growth in the Fort Dauphin Museum and the complex five main buildings depicting the fur trade and pioneer era, two permanent part-time staff and ongoing conservation and preservation programs. They mention, in particular, the Dauphin Chapter of the Archaeological Society. It has, in the Parkland and Reston regions and to a lesser extent the Interlake Region, catalogued over 80,000 artifacts and recorded over 1,000 sites.

This outreach program has operated out of the Fort Dauphin Museum for the past nine years on a volunteer basis and—I was copied on that letter—they asked the Minister to please advise how the museums in the Parkland region will benefit from the programs at Dugald and Steinbach, which are more than 200 miles away, and also to advise where the Fort Dauphin Museum's application was deficient, and what areas they should be addressing in order to be in a more favourable position for future programs? I think those are all valid questions. Has the Minister answered that letter, and if she has would she provide a copy and also a summary of that letter here at this time?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Chairperson, I think that the committee that was looking at the applications was well aware and understood that all regions could not directly benefit, because there were only three pilot projects, and there are more than three regions in the province. I do know that although two in the same region were approved that the critical factors in the proposals were to serve the school system and to serve other community museums. So those were the critical factors, and as far as where Dauphin was deficient, I do not have that information here with me, but I do know that the department has indicated that staff will sit down and work with the Dauphin Museum to see what ideas they might have for the future.

I have also asked the department, because museums are of concern—I have visited museums throughout the province in the summer and I do realize and recognize that there are museums that do very much with very little Government funding throughout the province.

I have asked the department to look at and to study the issue of levels of operating support to some of the more excellent museums, throughout the province and

in different regions of the province, so that is something that we are actively looking at and pursuing and maybe there will be some changes in the way we fund our rural museums, as a result of the issues that I have brought up.

So it is a concern, and I do know that Dauphin—I have been up and visited the museum in Dauphin, I think it is a good one. There were only three museums that could be granted this pilot project at this time. If it evaluates and works out well that this is a positive program, and should be expanded, that is something we are going to have to look at as we evaluate the program over the next couple of years.

Mr. Plohan: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether she has supplied an answer in writing to the Fort Dauphin Museum in response to their August 31, letter and if she has, whether she could provide me with a copy of that letter.

I just want to ask the Minister one other question on this matter and just raise before her the concerns that I have on this issue. Once again the Fort Dauphin Museum has been expanding. They do have school involvement. They certainly have made a major impact in the community and the region. They have received funding through the Manitoba Community Places Program in the past to expand their facilities so, from that point of view, there has been other opportunities for them. However, this would be on programming, I would think, this \$24,000 per year, as opposed to capital outlay and therefore it is quite a different nature. Therefore, with a system in their outreach, I ask the Minister, is she saying to this House today that the staff recommended two museums in one region for approval, that these were the top choices and that they recommended two from one region? I find that rather difficult to believe, when we are talking about a program of this nature.

I would just like the Minister to clarify whether in fact staff was recommending, is it two top choices, two museums from one region, and then I will close with that in the interest of time. I indicate that I very much would like the Minister to review and work with me, as she has indicated she is willing to do with the Fort Dauphin Museum, because they are a very progressive and aggressive group who are very much intent on preserving our culture through their museum work and have had a major impact in the community over the years. They really would like to have a partner in the provincial Government to a greater extent as we have done in the past.

* (1620)

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was not staff that made the recommendation. It was an independent committee that made the recommendations. If the Member would like, I would provide information on who was on that committee, and a brief synopsis of the evaluations that they did. I could share that on a one-to-one basis, but those were the recommendations that were made, and I did not interfere at all in the process. The top three recommendations were made and I accepted those.

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I do have a copy of the letter. I will get a clean copy for the Member of the letter that I sent back to the Fort Dauphin Museum.

Mr. Chairman: Item 3.(b)(1) Salaries—pass; 3.(b)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 3.(b)(3) Public Sector Advertising—pass; 3.(b)(4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations—pass.

Item 3.(c) Queen's Printer: (c)(1) Salaries—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Yes, one question here. The mandate of all of us to work into recycling, has this Government considered the costs for recycling, using recycling paper and for encouraging recycling within the Government?

That perhaps is with another department, but certainly within the Queen's Printer. Has it been considered, and at what stage is that consideration at?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We are part of an intergovernmental committee that is taking a look at that issue right now and are expecting that proposals will be coming forward to Government for their consideration very shortly.

Mr. Chairman: Item (c)(1) Salaries—pass; (c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; (c)(3) Less Recoverable from Other Appropriations—pass; and (d) Public Information Services: (1) Salaries—pass; (d)(2) Other Expenditures—pass.

Item (e) Translation Services: (e)(1)—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister supply me with information as to the levels of TR-1s, TR-2s and TR-3s and number of staff employed at each of those levels?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, we could compile that information while maybe the Member for Selkirk is asking another question or two. We will take a minute.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister outline how contracts, and or postings for staffing, are advertised? Is this done on a standard basis, or is this done as the need arises and variable because of that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay, there are two different processes in place. One is for staffing, and they always go through the Civil Service competition process. There is an examination written. People are evaluated on that examination and that is taken into consideration on employment. Contract work is allocated on the basis of an evaluation of offers of services, results achieved at written examination and translations done on a trial basis.

An ad for contract translators was placed in the French weekly, *La Liberte*, on September 29, in the Winnipeg Free Press on September 20, and the Winnipeg Sun on October 1. To this date 59 applications have been received and more are coming in, and they will all be evaluated through the process of a written examination to determine what level they are at.

I guess if you want me to give some information on what has happened over the last five years, I can tell the Member that contract translation work has been allocated to 131 different individuals and firms.

Mrs. Charles: When staff is hired and tests are written, are those receiving the highest marks in the tests or exams always the staff which is hired by Government Services?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I am informed that the highest ranking candidate of all of those who applied, provided they passed the minimum standard requirement.

Mrs. Charles: The highest ranking then has nothing to do with the level of competence in the written oral examination?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, it is a written examination that determines whether you qualify or pass to be able to translate, and that is the basis on which the candidates are tested and judged.

Mrs. Charles: I am sorry if I misunderstood the Minister. I was asking—the Minister used the term “the highest ranking.” Does “highest ranking” mean the highest placement in the written test?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister tell me which person is in charge of the Translation Services, and what background that person could have that makes him available for the job?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes. Mr. Chairperson, the director is Anthony Martin, and he has been a civil servant I believe since back in the early 1970s.

Mr. Chairperson, I have an answer to the first question, and that was: we have 8 TS-3s and 5 TS-2s.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister tell me what pay levels the TS-3s and the TS-2s are at?

Mrs. Mitchelson: For a TS-3, Mr. Chairperson, the average salary is \$45,000 to \$50,000, and for a TS-2, \$40,000 to \$45,000.00.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister provide me with the level of competence of translation abilities that those levels are expected to have? How many words per minute or lines per minute they are expected to have at those levels?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, that national standard is 900 pages per year, but I am informed that our staff translate somewhere of 15 percent to 20 percent more than that per year, but I am informed that our staff translates somewhere of 15 to 20 percent more than that per year.

* (1630)

Mr. Chairman: Item 3.(e)(1)—pass; 3.(e)(2)—pass.

(f) Provincial Archives: item (f)(1) pass—the Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Charles: Yes, I note, Mr. Chairperson, that the amount of expenditures has not kept up with the rate of inflation and the appropriation is less than last year.

Given the added needs of the facility and the recognition of the importance of archival material, can the Minister explain why the amount has been reduced? Is this indicating a lack of support for the Provincial Archives?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, the reason for the decrease is that 85 percent of the micrographics work that is done is contracted out now.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Chairperson, a number of years ago there was a great deal of controversy about the conditions under which certain records of the province were kept. Flooding and general disrepair, not enough resources were being used to ensure that the archives of the province were well cared for. Can the Minister assure us that those nightmarish stories of bygone years have been put to rest through a commitment of this Government to ensure that our very valuable Provincial Archives are being well-kept and well-treated?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, during the time that the Member opposite is referring to, there was no Government records centre. Since then we have come a long way and we are a leader in the national archival plan across the country, so obviously we are out first and foremost in that respect.

Mrs. Charles: Has the Minister given any consideration to initiating or at least supporting the concept of a multicultural archival centre in that throughout our province, history, as we know, passes daily. Certainly the new immigrants are coming at perhaps a faster pace in numbers than ever before, and their information and history that they bring with them will be lost quickly if we do not work on it immediately.

Further to that, has the Minister been in discussion with the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) to encourage, or in some way have municipal Governments ascribe to bringing their material into the Provincial Archives, so that we do not just collect the centre of Manitoba, being the City of Winnipeg, and leave off important other communities throughout Manitoba?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I understand that the Manitoba Archivist Association is trying to develop some initiative for rural Manitoba. As far as the multicultural records, our records centre is well aware that we are lacking in multicultural material, and so they are a targeted area where we want to attempt to collect more records from the multicultural community for our central record base.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Chairperson, as the Minister knows, in the 19th Century and then into this current century

many thousands came to Manitoba from all over the world, in my own case from central and eastern Europe. I have just been recently rereading the memoirs of my grandmother who came to Manitoba in 1905 from a little village I think called Pokrovsk near the town of Mogilev in the Ukraine.

The reason I bring this up is I wonder how many other wonderful family histories are sitting in basements or in drawers that could be of great value to the collective memory and records of Manitoba. Can the Minister tell us of any programs that her department has initiated or wishes to encourage, both through the compilation of written histories that are passed down from pioneer days through families, or oral histories? It would be a wonderful thing if we had a library of tapes that would record the history of families from the early days in Manitoba so that we could use the technologies that we have. Now we have video recorders, and pioneers of the province could be taped in their own homes to tell stories of pioneer days in rural Manitoba and in the City of Winnipeg, which would be a very rich resource for my children and my grandchildren to be able to access. Can the Minister tell us if such programs exist and, if not, if she is prepared to encourage their creation?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I am pleased to indicate that we do have an Oral Histories Program, a grants program. Maybe I could just give the amount of that, it is \$50,000 to date that does target I guess more the Native communities and the ethnic communities, so that we do have in areas where there is not a written history, we are attempting to get an oral history on record as a permanent part of the archives.

We, at the Ministers' conference, just a month or so ago, supported very strongly a national archival plan which will deal with some of the issues that the Member has brought up. I believe it is really important to try to gain, orally if we do not have written information, on what has happened in our past in the history of our province.

I do want to say, just on a side note, that when I was first appointed to this portfolio and I went over to visit and to tour the Archives I was very much impressed with the type of information that is collected. It would be sad to see some of the information, like the Member opposite has indicated, sitting in basements and not become a permanent part of our history in the Province of Manitoba. But I do know that when I went in, staff at the Archives had done a little bit of research and homework and they were able to provide for me information on my grandfather's homestead in Chater, Manitoba. I was very much impressed and they researched and found out that I graduated from the Winnipeg General Hospital School of Nursing in 1968, so they had brought forward pictures of graduate nurses and information on my graduating class. It made it very personal and very exciting for me to be a part of touring the building and realizing and recognizing what they had. Another thing they had pulled out was an old picture of North Kildonan when it was still market gardens—the area that I represent now—which is a suburban constituency. So there is some very valuable

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information that did make me realize the importance of maintaining the history of our province.

* (1640)

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): 3.(f)(1)—pass; 3.(f)(2)—pass; 3.(f)(3)—pass; 3.(g)(1)—pass; 3.(g)(2)—pass.

Resolution 26: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,658,800 for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Communication and Information Resources, for the fiscal year ending the 31 day of March, 1990—pass.

Item 4. Expenditures Related to Capital. Shall the item pass?

Resolution No. 27: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$200,000 for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Expenditures Related to Capital, \$200,000 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1990—pass.

That concludes all items and the committee will now revert back to Administration and Finance.

Item 1.(a), Minister's Salary.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I believe we could bring the Lotteries staff in now before we go on to my salary.

Mrs. Charles: I understand we will be going into Lotteries, but this evening the Drug Awareness Week in Selkirk opens and I will be there this evening with my youth and with the residents of Selkirk, who are working so hard to promote drug awareness in Selkirk. I would like to extend to the Minister's staff, and I hope she will pass it on, my congratulations on a dedicated job and a job I am sure they put their whole heart into.

There have been some policy changes that I support, some I do not, but I know that overall good intentions were put into them. I think we can continue working together to make the department better functioning because everything can always be better. I wish to say to the Minister again that I feel we have to deal with some unpleasant realities in Manitoba as far as racism is, and I think that is one of the major issues that we have to be looking at over this next year, as well as availability of arts and culture to all Manitobans and not to keep everything within the boundary of the City of Winnipeg. Students in Churchill have as much right to have the arts and culture available to them as students in Winnipeg.

In those remarks, I wish the Minister well and hope that she will take all the consideration she can give to each segment of her department and always consider that we outside the Perimeter Highway fight to have our equality and that she will never forget that Manitobans exist in all parts of the province, in all four corners, and that we are all colours, all religions, all races, and with all abilities. That is her mandate and it is indeed a tough task, and with that I wish her well in the continuing debate and hope to work with her throughout the year.

(Mr. Chairman, in the Chair.)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I do not know if the Member wants me to respond to the comments. I want to thank both critics, if we are closing off at this point in time on Culture, Heritage and Recreation, for their co-operation through the process. I think we have had a good exchange of information. Some ideas have come forward that I think when we look back at Hansard and read again what has been said that there are some positive recommendations. After all, we are all here as legislators, whether on the Opposition or the Government side, to make things work well and work better, and there always are ways and means to improve.

I do want to indicate that the Arts Policy Review that is going on right now is going to take into consideration rural Manitoba and some of the concerns. My roots are in rural Manitoba, so to speak, and I do understand that there should be opportunities available to those outside of the Perimeter Highway to be able to participate in the things that we enjoy here within the city limits. I am well aware of that, and my department does deal a lot with rural Manitoba. As I travel through the province, I come to realize and understand that there is a life outside. So hopefully if there are any recommendations that come forward from either Opposition at any time, I would be quite willing to listen, to talk, discuss, and hopefully solve some of the problems.

I do want to, at this point in time, indicate a sincere thank you to the staff of my department. I believe that they have put their whole heart and soul into preparing me for the Estimates process and working very well on behalf of myself and Government and also providing me with some good background and information on which to make some very positive decisions and change some of the directions. I want to thank them and indicate my appreciation for their hard work, many long hours and long days at times. They have been there, and I really appreciate it.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairman, there was one area—I realize the staff is not here, but I know the Minister will take it back to them. There are a number of areas that we all have concerns in, but there was one that I was quite concerned about and I know the Minister understood the points I was trying to make. It was the question of whether or not there could or would be some funding for the West End Cultural Centre. In raising it, I did mean to ask another question to see if the Minister could provide information. I will do it now and she can get it when it is convenient for her.

I am assuming that when the West End Cultural Centre says it has been acting as a facility, I came out with a list of 40 groups that is only a partial list of groups that are either producing or co-producing with the West End Cultural Centre artistic and cultural activities. When they put in their request to be funded as a facility to the department and to the Arts Council as a production company, I think they qualify on both those grounds and that they have done very innovative, very creative and very good work in this area. I am prepared to have that demonstrated and I am wondering—I had asked

for a list of other facilities that were being funded as a facility, and the one I recall was the Gas Station Theatre, that was getting \$56,000, and somebody else was getting a \$1.2 million. I imagine there is very heavy use of the facility. Could the Minister let us find out from those facilities what use is being made of their facilities by other groups? That is, sort of justify the support for operating as a facility like that which would then allow us to compare fairly, I think, the West End Cultural Centre, the degree to which it is making itself available as a facility and how it compares to those other centres. I am assuming it compares well and that would be a good argument for funding. I would be quite happy to have that demonstrated, to see what the figures are, if the Minister can get them.

* (1650)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairperson, I will try to gather as much information together as possible and discuss that with the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) on an individual basis to see what the comparisons are.

Mr. Chairman: Does the Honourable Minister have an opening statement on the Lotteries?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I do, and I have copies for the critics.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to at this time present a brief statement on Lotteries in the Province of Manitoba, and I have already given copies out for distribution.

The fiscal year 1988-89 saw gaming activities enter a new, more mature phase of growth. As has been seen in other Lottery jurisdictions, a levelling off in participation in gaming activities resulted in a lower increase in revenue. This trend is expected to continue, with the gaming industry in Manitoba reflecting steady but modest growth.

The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation is responding to this new trend by evaluating all gaming activities and creating new ways of promoting them successfully.

The Western Canada Lottery Corporation introduced new games including The Plus, Special '88, and Celebration '89. Sales from these and other games offered throughout Manitoba resulted in an increase of 7 percent in revenue. Other Lottery ticket games are being tested and will be introduced to the Manitoba market in the next year.

Other gaming activities managed and operated by the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation include bingo halls and casino operations. A new style of casino is being introduced to Manitobans which will offer casino gaming in a sophisticated venue reflective of the elegant, low-key casino operations in Europe.

Unique in North America, Manitoba's casino will attract people who view casino gaming as an entertainment and are able to afford to gamble, with a special emphasis on the tourist market. Annual revenue from the casino, expected to be approximately \$10 million, will go to the Health Services Development Fund, a new grant program designed to encourage the

development of innovative and cost-saving health care projects and equipment.

This new fund represents one of a number of new priorities identified by the people of Manitoba. Conservation and recreation projects are also receiving a new influx of revenue from gaming activities.

The revisions to the Lottery funding system announced last May will ensure that gaming revenue is more accountable, more efficient, more accessible and more flexible. Although the system has been revised, the basic philosophy of community-based funding will continue.

Only non-profit, charitable and/or religious organizations receive Lottery revenue. Although the new system is still in progress, we are putting the necessary agreements in place to ensure that Lottery revenue is used to improve the quality of life of all Manitobans.

In fiscal 1988-89, more than \$28 million was allocated to community-based organizations to support a wide range of programs in health, sports, community services, the arts, and heritage. An allocation of more than \$24.9 million was made through the provincial Government to support departmental programs in culture, heritage and recreation, community services, health, as well as sports programs.

As I said, the gaming industry is no longer in its infancy. As such, it is the responsibility of this Government to ensure that we keep the industry on track and in line with the needs of the Manitoba public. We will be innovative but thoughtful as we enter the next decade of Lotteries in Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): I am very mindful that we are approaching five o'clock and Private Members' Hour. I will not repeat the rather extensive statement that I made on the operations of our Lotteries function, the statement that I made in this committee on Tuesday, November 7. I will save detailed discussion of the concerns I raised at that time to our eight o'clock sitting.

I am thankful to the Minister for having made opening remarks specifically related to Lotteries this afternoon. I would, however, like to note one point, Mr. Chairman, and I would like the record to show one point. The Minister refers to a more mature phase of growth. The Minister does acknowledge that this growth will be modest growth. However, with some real concern for the future of our Lotteries system and its ability to finance projects found worthy for the people of Manitoba by the Government of Manitoba, I would note that the growth the Minister refers to is growth below the rate of inflation. What we see, Mr. Chairman, is growth that is not keeping pace with the growth of the economy, and indeed is not keeping pace with the growth of costs in our economy.

In short, Mr. Chairman, we are not looking at growth. We are looking at stabilization at the very best, and indeed erosion from the point of view of anyone who understands the concept of inflation and the damage it wreaks to the financial position of any organization, including Government organizations such as the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

I note that the revenue growth for all aspects of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation operation was in the range of perhaps 2 percent, Mr. Chairman, 3 depending on how charitably one calculates the ratios. I note that inflation in Manitoba is presently running at the rate of 5.2 percent. The Minister can in strict dollar terms use the word "growth." I do not dispute her right to use the word "growth." However, I believe that she and I and all Members of this assembly would acknowledge that what we are really facing when we consider the financial statements of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation is shrinkage.

* (1700)

Stabilization, Mr. Chairman, of Lotteries revenues is too charitable a word to use. We are looking at shrinkage after taking into account the fact of inflation. Our deliberations when we meet again this evening will be in part related to the obvious topping off of Lotteries revenue, and in fact the downturn in Lotteries revenue. I would hope in addition that as we meet again later this evening the Minister would respond to the serious concerns that I have placed on the record of this committee on Tuesday, December 7, 1989, which get to the heart of some of the matters that I have raised briefly this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 18—REFUSE SNOW DUMPING HAZARD

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), Resolution No. 18, Refuse Snow Dumping Hazard. (Stand)

RES. NO. 19—SCHOOL DIVISION BOUNDARY REVIEW

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), Resolution No. 19, School Division Boundary Review, the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), that

WHEREAS patterns of population distribution have compelled some Manitoba school divisions to close schools, while other divisions have embarked on new school construction, resulting in anomalies respecting facility utilization; and

WHEREAS there exist a number of inequities for ratepayers between school divisions, particularly with

respect to the scope of education services offered by school divisions compared to special levies paid by division residents; and

WHEREAS there are benefits to be gained in the development of amalgamated and shared services among school divisions; and

WHEREAS until reciprocity arrangements between school divisions meet with greater success than has hereto been experienced, especially with respect to student out-of-division registrations, it would be desirable to determine if present school division boundaries are optimally located; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and the Manitoba Teachers' Society have discussed the issue of school boundaries and have determined that a review of existing boundaries would be advantageous.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Minister of Education and Training to exercise his authority under Section 5(2) of the Public Schools Act and direct the Board of Reference to undertake a review of school boundaries in Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly requests the Ministers to instruct the Board of Reference to specifically review:

- (a) the continuing work of maintaining small school divisions;
- (b) the number of Manitoba Trustees consistent with good elector representation, economy and, if recommended, boundary adjustments;
- (c) special levy and service equity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly also request the Minister to instruct the Board of Reference to actively solicit public comment, as part of its required hearings, from interested citizens, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Business Officials, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, and individual school divisions.

MOTION presented.

Mrs. Yeo: Mr. Speaker, I am again pleased to speak to this resolution although it is a new Session. The identical resolution was on the plate awhile ago and I felt at the time that there was an all Party agreement that this in fact was a good proposal, was a good resolution.

Since our first debate here in the House I, and I know several others, have received phone calls and letters and in private correspondence or private conversation have had people come to them and say—you know it is about time that school division boundaries were evaluated.

More recently during the Municipal Elections of last month many people talked to me about being upset with the numbers of trustees that had to be elected, 79 in urban Manitoba to represent the same population

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as 29 city councillors and it seems only common sense that for the same surface area, the same population, that this is a far greater number than might be necessary to carry on the responsibilities of the individual urban school divisions.

As a matter of fact, many councillors ran stating that they would reduce the number of the council from 29 down to such arbitrary figures as 18, or 15, or 12, that 29 councillors were far too many. If 29 councillors are too many, what then is the number of 79 school trustees for the same area, the same body?

Since this was last raised in the House I have had the privilege of visiting many school divisions in the province, not just the urban areas, but throughout the province and I have a whole list of individuals and people representing some of the rural divisions who have said, ours is far greater in the way of difficulty. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you yourself reside in an area where one of the greatest problems occurs, and where people are saying, our child has to be bussed to school A, school B is in another school division and yet it is closer to our home, closer to our farm than is school A in a school division in which we live.

* (1710)

So it is not merely a matter of sitting down with a map and redrawing boundaries. I am certainly not so naive to think that it would be that simple. There are a great number of problems in the school divisions in Manitoba and I think that if we were to activate the Board of Reference, or as Verne Kulyk, the outgoing President of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees said in his sort of farewell to his colleagues on the school divisions throughout Manitoba, he wanted to have a royal commission which is a far greater exercise, and yet perhaps one that is long overdue, one that should be done and incorporate within it the review of school division boundaries.

When one is to look at the actual numbers, and you start playing the statistics game, which I know can be toyed with and manipulated if you so choose, but when you look at the actual numbers of students in the various school divisions, and of students from three, four years ago, one can very easily see that the majority of school divisions in the province are suffering from a decline, some of them to a much greater degree than others. The one in which I am most closely related has dropped some 10,000 students since 1972. That is a lot of bodies, Mr. Speaker, an awful lot of bodies.

I alluded the last time I was on my feet to speak to this resolution about having been the chairperson of the Ward Boundaries Committee when I was a trustee in St. James-Assiniboia, and that was a really fascinating exercise. We held many public meetings, we invited public participation, all kinds of suggestions and they were all over the map, there were all kinds of recommendations that were made to adjust the drawing of the three boundaries within that one particular school division, and the numbers of trustees that should represent the people that lived in that particular school division, or in those particular wards within that school division.

It was interesting to see that everybody thought, of course, that their idea was the best, was the one that had the greatest merit, and there was a hands-off sort of approach on the part of almost everybody else for great change. I think we live in a country, probably, where change is not something that we look upon terribly favourably, certainly not dramatic change. When it comes down to dotting the i's and crossing the t's a lot of people said, well, you can change the boundaries over there, but leave mine alone, and I think that is in fact what we might find, that they will say, you know, yours certainly needs to be changed, but our boundaries are just fine.

It was my understanding that the former Minister of Education in a Government long past and long gone, stated that he did not want to be remembered as the Minister that precipitated the review of boundaries and in fact that might lead to the change of boundaries because it is a rather controversial proposal.

It is a little gutsy I might add because it does stir up the pot a bit, and yet we can have automatic reviews of the federal ridings, we can have automatic reviews of the municipal boundaries and certainly that can be very controversial as we have seen from the last change in the provincial ridings. The review there has left some people on the other side of the House who may have to challenge each other in order to get back into the House, and certainly there is only one seat per constituency so there will be some difficulties there.

I also realize that when you change school division boundaries, when you propose changes or propose review and really that is what we are doing, is proposing a review of school division boundaries with the possibility of change, and if there is change in school division boundaries, you are also looking at changes in what happens to the lives of children in our province. What happens to the education of children in our province? That is a very—to my way of thinking and I am sure to everybody else in the House—important issue, that we cannot start ruffling feathers and making changes to the children in our division, our province, in a namby-pamby way. It has to be something that is taken very seriously and with great concern.

Probably the majority of concerns that have been brought to my attention, as far as school division boundaries are concerned, relates to busing. Busing in Manitoba is something that used to be predominantly rural. I suppose it still could be said it was predominantly rural, but in the urban centres busing is becoming more and more common as well, so both urban and rural centres are having some difficulty with the current boundaries as they stand because of busing issues.

The Western School Division received some concerns from some people there with problems with Morden Elementary School. They wanted their children to go to another elementary school that was closer to them, but they could not do that because it was in fact in another rural school division. That is so ridiculous when you have a school three blocks away and one 10 blocks away, but the one 10 blocks away happens to be within your particular school division so that is where your child has to go or you, as a parent, have to pay extra monies to have your child go, unless you can negotiate with the school board and that does not always happen.

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The other issue that was brought to my attention, and I am sure that the Speaker is very aware of the boundary, the Beautiful Plains issue, with the Turtle River School Division and the problems there for the same sorts of things, where people actually went to court and wanted to have their children taken out of one school division and placed in another because of association with children, and the children wanted to be with their chums whom they played with on Saturdays and Sundays and after 4 p.m., but because they happened to live across a mystical boundary, they were jeopardized and had to go to another school.

I was even surprised to talk to some people from the Norwood, St. Boniface, St. Vital School Divisions. I thought, in speaking with one individual from the Norwood School Division, that they were very protective because I had worked not too long ago with one of the trustees in the Norwood School Division and she seemed to me to be quite protective of their little school division, and yet, when I spoke to another individual, she said to me, no, we must look at what is the best thing for the children within our division and the best provision of educational services to the children within our division, and we would welcome some sort of a review. We would welcome some body or groups of bodies, more specifically, to evaluate the current status with the idea of maintaining the status quo or with the idea of change, whichever the body would feel was a better idea.

I have also had concerns raised from the Carman area where the Midland School Division had some restructuring, and there was quite a hue and cry out there. So it is not just an isolated incident.

When I visited Dauphin I learned that 19 out of 30 Grade 9 students from the Gilbert Plains High School decided that they would attend the Dauphin Collegiate instead of going to the Gilbert Plains High School. Now if 19 out of 30 are going to go to one school, that does not leave very many to remain in a small high school setting in Gilbert Plains.

How viable is that instruction going to be, and how good are they going to be able to, with the current dollar situation, maintain a high level or a high quality of education, whatever quality education is.

While I was there I spoke with the chairperson of the school board who told me that she was very much in favour, and that her board was very in favour of a revue because of things that were happening out in the Dauphin-Ochre River area, and that they were having to look at the closure of schools or a tremendous combination of classes where you have perhaps three or four grades in one classroom.

* (1720)

She said that as far as she was concerned for a small rural area, she would like to see maintained the individual elementary schools within the small area, but perhaps more amalgamation with the Junior High and Senior High Schools, and certainly that has merit.

There is a lot of thought there, but there would have to be some sort of a revue before this could occur.

There is no point in having piecemeal recommendations made. There is absolutely no point in having a solution for Turtle River that could also fit the Carman area or could perhaps fit that same sort of idea, fit the Dauphin area.

Why not have some leadership taken on the part of this provincial Government, the part of this Department of Education to say, yes, the time is long overdue, long overdue for a revue of school division boundaries, of some of the programs that are offered so that we can have students from one area move more easily into another area to allow for greater equity of educational services to our children in Manitoba?

I would hope that the House would look upon this resolution favourably, and I would certainly hope that it could be passed fairly speedily. Thank you.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have somewhat of a voice difficulty today, but I am going to attempt to speak to this important resolution. I have certainly felt that this is an issue that should be dealt with by Government.

An Honourable Member: Speak up, John.

Mr. Plohman: I will if you keep heckling. I will try my best to yell as I usually do, but the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) will find that it will probably lead to more problems rather than solving any, so I am going to try to speak with reasoned arguments instead of yelling.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Plohman: Why is my light flashing, Mr. Speaker? Is it time to sit down already? I am also going to attempt not to yodel today because my voice is very close—but I want to indicate first of all that I feel this is a very important issue.

It is one that I have raised with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) on a private basis in discussion. I think it is something that is long overdue. As the mover of this resolution has indicated, there is a statutory provision for revue of a number of different boundaries, for example, our electoral boundaries provincially and federally.

Divisions have not been reviewed now for some 20 or 30 years and during that time a lot of things have changed, in our rural areas in particular. I guess this applies as much to urban areas as rural because of the population build up in some areas of the city, the number of residences levelling off in other areas and the number of students declining substantially. So it certainly is an urban consideration, but it is a rural consideration as well, an issue that I think many areas of this province would support in terms of review. I have had the opportunity to discuss this topic with school divisions in my constituency. The Duck Mountain School Division, in particular, has asked for a review. They certainly do not want any solutions imposed on them. They do not want to see recommendations automatically implemented without their having a lot of say in it, and I think that maybe is one of the problems

with the resolution in terms of the action that would flow from it. It is lacking in terms of that kind of statement, but they do want to see a review, because they want to explore the possibility of some options.

The Duck Mountain School Division, for example, is one of the poorest divisions in terms of the value of property, and therefore has one of the highest mill rates in the province. It makes it very difficult for them to offer the kind of quality education that has come to be expected as routine in many other school divisions that are much better off financially because of the greater property values they have within their boundaries. Duck Mountain School Division, therefore, is constantly struggling to maintain a level of what we might call essentials in education basics. They are having to make decisions on what would normally not be frills in education—quite basic courses such as industrial arts, home economics, second languages and French. They just do not have the financial wherewithal to continue to offer those courses. It means that there is very often a declining quality of education, despite the best efforts of the teachers, the trustees and the people of those communities through volunteers and so on to continue to offer the highest quality of education possible. They just are not able to muster the resources to provide the same kinds of options and alternatives and variety in the education experience for those children as is able to be provided in comparatively wealthy school divisions within the province.

We have not been able, through equalization funding, to address that adequately. I think there is the function of equalization funding that can offset the higher assessed areas with the lower property values to offset the quality of education that can be offered with just local levy. There is a way to raise higher taxes, as the Minister of Finance has mentioned, the higher taxation that is required. The higher mill rates are what I was really referencing. There is a way to offset that through general revenue—and the Minister of Finance would be well advised to address that question from general revenue to ensure there are greater monies made available at a time when he has a fund which he is asking his Legislature to pass—of \$200 million that could be made available for those poorer school divisions. In the absence of that happening and with a system that is satisfactory to everyone, obviously there are other ways to create greater efficiencies in the school system by having some consideration of amalgamation of portions of school divisions.

It is difficult to discuss this issue without getting into the arguments why some divisions should be changed, and that is prejudging the review. What I want to do is discuss the need for the review by referencing certain problems that I have become aware of in my particular area of the province, and those exist in the Duck Mountain School Division where the busing, that the Member from Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) mentioned. There are some areas where it has become very inefficient. I think it has something to do with the funding formulas as well because it is done on a per-capita basis. What happens many times is that, on a per-capita basis, even with declining enrollments, the bus still has to go over the same routes. Therefore, it is

much more inefficient to operate that bus with fewer students, and yet the funding from the province is not maintained at an actual cost of operating that service. As a matter of fact, it drops with the declining enrollment. Therefore, they have to ply greater amounts from local levies for the transportation costs. So there may be ways to get around that through review to see whether there are more efficient ways of operating the bus system.

There is closing of schools taking place, for example, in the Duck Mountain School Division. Pine River is one school that they are looking at closing within a couple of years. There is another one in Rorketon, and those schools—particularly in Rorketon—there is no way that school should be closed. It is a relatively new facility in a relatively significant community in the area, and yet they are having to look at that kind of a distasteful decision, one that they do not want to face, do not want to undertake, and yet they have to do it because of the financial situation, because of the low amount of money that can be raised in the property in that school division. So it has put them in a bind—a financial straitjacket—they have to consider these alternatives that they would normally not want to consider, and that really should not have to be considered if there is any equality in this province in education. They should not have to undertake those kinds of decisions in those communities.

* (1730)

It is not because they are not operating efficiently, it is because of the funding formulas that we have. When I consider the fact that there may be a change in the boundaries that would allow greater efficiencies, and would make some of the wealth in neighbouring school divisions available to them so that they could continue to offer the service, I think that should be considered. However, I would not want to prejudge this review, because I realize that local input—local authorities want to have input and it is absolutely essential before decisions are made—and I think the mover of the resolution could well have added a further RESOLVED that, action on the recommendations be taken only after extensive input from local authorities. That would be following the review. She may also have considered in the second, be it RESOLVED, or be of the second RESOLVED—the mover talks about the number of Manitoba trustees—and I think the issue is the configuration of each school division as opposed to the number of school trustees. It might have been better wording, and my colleagues may at some point in the future move those amendments. I am certainly not going to. I cannot after I have spoken to this resolution.

I think those are some areas that could be addressed in this resolution to make it a better resolution, certainly one that we support, and as I have indicated earlier, have discussed with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). I do not know why he has not moved on this in the last while. Certainly it could be argued I guess that the previous Government should have moved on this. But with each passing year this issue becomes more critical and it is one that is now coming to the forefront I think amongst school trustees, and perhaps

in some areas certainly amongst teachers and superintendents. Therefore, it is very timely that we address it now, and that the Government seek to address it.

I do not think that they could do any harm by having the Board of Reference convene to have a major review. There should be really no downside to it. It would promote a lot of discussion, a lot of debate, and as long as no one involved felt threatened that whatever happened out of this review was automatically going to be implemented and forced on them, and they felt comfortable with the process that consultation would be the order of the day even following the recommendations being made to the Minister, then I think that they would welcome this kind of a review and look forward to it. So I would also support this resolution. It may be that we want to touch it up a bit in terms of some wording, and my colleagues may do that at a future time, so it may not be feasible to pass it today. However, in its present form it certainly gets the message across and it is not critical that there be the changes, but I did reference them because I thought there were some areas that were unclear. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying this is, in many respects, a powerful resolution. It has some merit to it, particularly in its RESOLVED clauses. Let me also begin by paying tribute to the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) who has managed to keep rhetoric out of his presentation this time, and therefore reduced the amount of heckling in the House considerably. So, Mr. Speaker, I guess we all learn a little bit from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, just to sum up the presentation of the Member for Dauphin, he seems to dwell an awful lot on educational finance and it is obvious to me why the NDP, when they were in Government, were not particularly anxious to proceed quickly with assessment reform—the very basis for a better education finance system, because indeed education finance, as we understand it, and some of the real problems that exist, and everybody speaks about the Duck Mountain School Division situation. Indeed, when I was the Education Critic for our Party that became the first example of the problem that we have under the existing formula.

Mr. Speaker, that type of problem cannot be handled until we have basic assessment reform finally brought forward to this House by a new administration, by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner). Hopefully it will receive the necessary and quick and expeditious attention by Members opposite because it then becomes the basis of necessary education finance reform.

Nevertheless, moving back to the resolution as presented. The RESOLVED clause, the thrust of it I suppose is supportable and I will give greater clarity to that comment in a moment. However, there are some weaknesses in the preamble and I would only spend a moment or two on them. The second WHEREAS suggests “there exists a number of inequities for ratepayers between school divisions,” and I am quoting, “particularly with respect to the scope of education

services offered by school divisions compared to special levies paid by division residents.” That is an obvious, that is a given, and I do not think that those inequities will ever totally be removed unless of course we removed autonomy locally, completely at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot have autonomy meaning something and yet say from on high like we would at the provincial Government level that there should be similarities, that there should be almost total inequities, because inequity in many respects, or equity, is in the eye of the beholder. If we are going to sit in here and judge as to what one school division should have relative to another school division, then we are making a subjective decision and we are in effect reducing autonomy.

I think I understand what it is the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) is trying to say, but let us not be so naive as to believe that there can be a complete equity as between school divisions, as we sit in judgment here and look out as to what is happening in the real world.

Let me also say that if I had an opportunity I would ask many questions of the presenter of the resolution, the Member for Sturgeon Creek, as to how it is that we allow greater flexibility with respect to busing, yet in the same breath make a commitment to autonomy, in the same breath indicate to those trustees of school divisions that they have to work within a fixed budget, finite, because we can never forget the number of scarce resources that we have and that we provide through the Public Schools Finance Board, to school divisions. They are real. There are reasons why school administrators and school trustees, from time to time, put into place hard borders, not that they want to be hard-hearted, not that they want to be heavy-handed, but because if you break rules in what appears to be a narrow perspective, the breaking of those rules in let us say a rural context could end up costing millions of dollars. One has to be very careful as to how much flexibility one asks for.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this resolution I believe that the Government would like to preface our statements by the following remarks.

The present school division boundaries were established in 1959 by the School Division Boundaries Commission. A number of important things have happened in rural Manitoba since 1959. In 1959, when those boundaries were put into place, who could foresee at that particular time a declining population of the magnitude that has occurred in rural Manitoba over the last 30 years. Who could predict at that time a declining family size in the North American and within the Canadian context? More particularly, who could at that time predict a major decline in the rural agricultural economy of Manitoba, and indeed of western Canada? Well, nobody could—nothing to the magnitude that has occurred obviously over the last 30 years. There have been a number of important changes since that time—not only a changing economy, a decline in the rural population, and of course, a vastly improved transportation system, which has allowed all of us to live in rural Manitoba, but the belief that we can go beyond the next town, we can go beyond the next

larger town in many cases, because today we have the equipment and we have the road system, particularly over the last two years, in place to accommodate the easier transportation and the easier travel.

Throughout the last 30 years the student population base for rural school divisions has declined from a high of 2,000 to 4,000 students to a point where now 50 percent of rural school divisions have enrollments of fewer than 1,500 students.

Since 1959 other boundaries have been altered significantly. The province has developed regional service delivery systems and social services in health fields. The City of Winnipeg was formed in 1971 from ten adjoining municipalities. Provincial electoral boundaries are also reviewed every ten years.

* (1740)

Mr. Speaker, also during the last several years the board of reference has suggested that a general boundaries review would be timely, both because of passage of time and because the board has had numerous requests which indicate general problems in certain areas of the province.

I would like to make clear to the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) that this Government is not only sensitive to the issues raised by her resolution and wherever vastly changed context for education, but that we are in the process of examining the possibility of reviewing school division boundaries. I can indicate to the Member, she is not breaking new ground in calling for this resolution, other interested participants within the area of education have also.

Let me indicate that in the 1986 provincial election, our Party when we were in Opposition and when we were developing our educational policies for that election also addressed this point to some degree. It was an emerging issue at that point in time. Nevertheless, I would also like to indicate that a boundaries review will not in itself resolve all the problems raised by the Member's resolution. Indeed, as Members of this House know, we have undertaken major reviews such as the Education Finance Review, and the Public Schools Act Review, both of which address some of the problems identified. These, it seems to me, will provide important insights and information as to how best we should structure our system to maximize the principles of equity, quality, accessibility, relevance and flexibility.

Mr. Speaker, furthermore, because of the nature of a School Boundaries Review, it would seem more appropriate, indeed it is the Government's conviction, that an independent commission should be created to review the existing system. Study arrangements in other jurisdictions, hold public hearings, and develop a set of recommendations which build up the 30 years of experience we have had with the present system, but which must also reflect the changed environment.

The present boundaries are not sacred. There is good reason why they should be examined. Nothing that has been devised by mortals, as representatives of the peoples coming to this Legislature, and setting into law

certain qualifications, certain decisions, based on the total, those laws are not sacred for all time. I would say the boundaries of the school divisions of Manitoba fit into that particular classification.

Therefore, at this time the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) asked me to suggest that we would not want to anticipate what might be the appropriate structure as the resolution seems to imply when it refers to, and I quote, amalgamated and shared services among school divisions. Indeed, there are a great number of elements in addition to the ones mentioned above which would need to be given very serious considerations. I refer to such things as educational infrastructure, demographics, population growth or decline, patterns of transportation, economic activities, assessment, governance, the growing role of technology in educational delivery systems, and very importantly, those principles associated with language, culture, religion and the social character of our regions.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, while the Government supports the general thrust of the resolution, I do think that it might be and it would be premature and inappropriate at this time to ask the Board of Reference to undertake a review of this magnitude.

The issue of school boundaries should be addressed by a boundaries commission with as wide-ranging a mandate as possible.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): It gives me indeed great pleasure to talk on the Member for Sturgeon Creek's resolution, what I believe is a very sincere attempt at trying to accomplish something as a private Member.

The Minister of Finance's remarks somewhat have amused me, I must admit. He has referred to one of the resolutions in particular, I should not say resolutions, one of the WHEREASes. He comments that really it is unacceptable or unbelievable that we can ensure that there would be equity or equal services and so forth throughout the province in our school divisions.

I guess what really surprises me most about this is that in fact he is the Minister of Finance, and as the Minister of Finance it is his responsibility to look over the Estimates process, the supplementary information that goes across his office desk and so forth. What surprised me, going through one of those Estimates books, of course is the Department of Education. You will find on page 7, and I will quote it, Mr. Speaker, it reads: "the primary role of Manitoba Education and Training is to ensure that Manitobans have equitable access to a full range of high quality education in training programs.

From what the Minister of Finance has stated in his speech, I would say it is in complete contradiction of what it says in the Supplementary Information. That is indeed a part of the budget. I am very surprised to hear that type of a remark from the Minister of Finance.

If we take a look he also says that this is a powerful resolution. Well, it was intended to be a powerful resolution, because I think it is time that the Government

do recognize the need for the change of the school divisions and the need to see the boundaries—and also the number of school trustees do need to be looked at.

The resolution itself calls for a review committee. I think a very noble thing to do is to get some type of committee going so that they can look at the possibilities and hear from as many people as possible, which the resolution suggests as part of the required hearings, from interested citizens, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, Manitoba Teachers Society, and it goes on. I think that this is something that does need to be acted upon, something that this Government should be acting upon in a much more serious fashion, because to sit and wait and indefinitely put it off to a back burner is not going to do a just service to the citizens of our province.

During the last provincial election, Mr. Speaker, the number of school trustees and the size of our school boundaries and our wards was an issue that did come up during the provincial election. I believe that my constituents, and I would argue that all Manitobans, are very concerned in terms of the sizes and the need for change. The Government—and I give it credit—has taken action regarding the City of Winnipeg. It has brought forward some good positive changes. I would like to think as a positive Opposition we have offered positive amendments to that particular Bill.

It is easy for us to talk about the need or to talk publicly about the idea of reducing the size of City Council, that we do not need to have 29 city councillors, that 22, and I have heard it all the way down to 12. But I think if you were to go out and sit and discuss it with the public, you will find that there is actually more of a need to put more effort in the school system to review what the actual numbers of our school trustees is. I would argue that is just as popular to talk about reducing the number of school trustees as it is to reduce the City Council.

The Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) has addressed it to a certain degree, but I fail to understand why the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has not done what his colleague has done, at least attempt to address the issue, because I believe that this issue deserves much, much more attention than this particular Government is giving it.

Mr. Speaker, I had a constituent during the provincial election who had the opportunity to move out of Brooklands, which is in the south part of my riding. He was going to be moving, or he had the opportunity to move into Tyndall Park. The deciding factor on his deciding not to move into the Tyndall Park area was the fact that he was very satisfied with the school, that being Brookland School, and the teachers and the staff over at the school, that he did not want to change schools. In fact he would have been willing to drive his son to the school. He was not looking for additional assistance if he were to move, but the biggest roadblock that was in his way is that boundary.

* (1750)

We have a boundary that is fixed and if you live on one side of the boundary, no matter how close you

might be to that school, you are out of luck. You are looking at additional expenses. I think that is somewhat unfortunate because it does put a lot of hardships on many parents in the City of Winnipeg. I would also argue the same thing can be said about the rural area.

The need for change I believe, Mr. Speaker, is now. I believe that it should have actually been initiated previously under the NDP administration. We had in the last 15 of the 20 years an opportunity in which the NDP had to revise and to get the committees. I was pleased to see the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) say that he supports the general thrust of this resolution, that in fact if it came to a vote today, that his Party would support the passage of this resolution. I think that is positive and I commend them. I commend them on that.

It is unfortunate that that particular Member did not put up a strong argument while he had an opportunity in Government to see some real change and so forth, and I find that somewhat hard to believe that in one year attitudes can change so quickly.

The Member for Dauphin says, he cannot do everything. Well, I have heard time after time, oh, we had that in the making, we had that in the making. They had everything in the making, everything that comes out of this Legislature is something that the NDP had and they would have introduced. We hear that time after time after time. I can say one thing, I sure have heard about the legislation that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) had brought in. The comment was, well, this is actually NDP legislation that he just regurgitated and changed a few things, Mr. Speaker.

I do not believe that the third Party in this Chamber had as much legislation as they say they had ready and primed and ready to introduce to this Chamber. I have yet to have seen this so-called legislation.

Mr. Speaker, getting back directly to the resolution itself, I thought it might be somewhat interesting if we go over the actual school divisions. If we go over the actual school divisions, you will see that there is quite a discrepancy in sizes in terms of student population in different areas of the city.

If you look at Winnipeg No. 1, where we have approximately—and all of the numbers that I am giving are approximate, I do not have the actual numbers, but they are not too far off. If we look at Winnipeg No. 1, you are looking at 32,000 students attending. That is in fact our largest school division in the province. That is the school division in which I live.

If you compare that to St. James-Assiniboia No. 2 has 11,800; Assiniboia South has 6,500; St. Boniface has 6,200; Fort Garry has 6,600; St. Vital, 8,300; Norwood Flats at 1,500. Imagine that, 1,500 students in that particular school division, and you take it - (interjection)- No, to Norwood.

An Honourable Member: You know why? Because the Gang of 19 developed the Liberal sprawl in south St. Vital, that is why.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Third Party (Mr. Doer) keeps on bringing up the Gang of 19.

I think we are going to have to start commenting on the deadly gang of six, the dirty half-dozen that is inside the City Hall now. If we look at the actions that they are doing, I would argue well, maybe indeed the Leader of the Third Party (Mr. Doer) should not be saying the things that he has been saying. All he needs to do is look at one of the councillors, and I know Mr. Wade - (interjection)- Yes, he is a fine man, but one of the things that I disagree with is his position on the yards relocation. He voted against the lab going downtown and in the Legislature the NDP believes that, or at least in the past thought, it should be going downtown. - (interjection)- Well, not for \$30 million he says, but that group of six or the half-dozen can do a lot of damage, and, trust me, I think in time we will see some of the damage they can do.

I do want to get back onto the resolution itself. If you again look at the number of students that attend Norwood, as I say, it is approximately 1,400 give or take 50 students, and you compare it to Winnipeg No. 1 where you have 33,000 students. I think, Mr. Speaker, if you take a stroll in a park or go knock on a few doors and you cite the extreme differences, you are going to find a lot of people are just not going to believe that we would have such differences in our school divisions. That is why I believe it is crucial that something has to be done. We have been waiting far too long for something to take place.

I should continue. We have in River East a student population of approximately 13,400. I should also include some of our rural school boards where we have Lord Selkirk, approximate population of 4,800; Seine River at 4,200; Morris-MacDonald 1,300; Interlake 3,300; and Rolling River 2,200. I have read off, I think, a dozen school divisions and you can see the discrepancy. That is why I believe that this a very positive resolution, a resolution that I believe should be voted on this evening. If the Government does not support this resolution even though the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says that he supports the thrust of it, well then let us get it on the record that the Government opposes this resolution, that the Government opposes school division realignment and so forth.

Before I conclude, I did want to comment very briefly on the actual number of school trustees. We have 79 school trustees in the City of Winnipeg and the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) is quite correct, they are all fine people. I like to think that all people that seek to represent the people are fine people, that all of them enter into politics with the idea of serving their community and implementing some of what they believe are good, positive ideas and suggestions, much like the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) has brought forward, a resolution which she feels is very sincere, which is addressing a problem that needs to be addressed. I think she should be commended on the resolution, and the Government and the third Party should at least allow it to come to some type of a vote.

We have another four minutes in which all three Parties in this Chamber can be given the opportunity to say where they stand. The Liberal Party has been very clear on where we stand on this issue and it has been enunciated in the resolution which the Member

for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) has brought forward. I did want, as I say, commenting on the actual numbers, if you take a look at the number of trustees, we have 79 school trustees in the City of Winnipeg.

Under boundary redistribution, I believe it is 30 MLAs, and I do not see anyone nodding their head, but I believe under re-distribution, it is 30 MLAs - (interjection)- The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) says, yes, - (interjection)- and he says, no. Well, he does not know what it is either, Mr. Speaker. We have 30 MLAs currently inside the Chamber. Then we have 29 councillors. I think that the 79 school trustees, well, maybe we should have been looking at that possibly before we even thought of reducing the number of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not spoken that long, my light is blinking. - (interjection)- It may just seem that long.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate on this resolution. I join with my colleague from Inkster in commending the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) for bringing forward this resolution. I think the resolution and its debate is timely as we approach the time of year when the Government of Manitoba is determining the level of support that school divisions should be receiving from the Province of Manitoba. This is one of the issues that has been raised particularly by the Manitoba Teacher's Society with respect to controlling the costs, or reviewing the costs of delivering education in the Province of Manitoba. There is no doubt that there are great inequalities—inequities—between divisions when it comes to the area that they serve, when it comes to the communities that they serve, and when it comes to the number of students that they serve. The Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) referenced to the fact that Norwood School Division has slightly more than 1,000 students and the Winnipeg School Division has more than 33,000 students.

I want to come at this whole resolution from a slightly different perspective. While review is certainly required and necessary and not to be belittled in anyway, that review has to set out certain parameters before it commences. Amongst those has to be the principle fundamental ground rule that when this review, when all is said and done, that we are reviewing the circumstances not only in terms of the financial costs, but the question of accountability and representativeness because while we are concerned about the cost—and some may view the cost of having 259 trustees in the province or 250—some trustees in the province as being an exceptional cost. We also have to remember that their job is to represent the interests of literally thousands of people in a given school division. While we are reviewing the question of cost of so many superintendents and so many administrative personnel as well as the ongoing costs of the boards themselves, the question of representativeness and accountability—

* (1800)

Monday, November 13, 1989

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 6 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings according to the rules. When this motion is again before the House, the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) will have 13 minutes remaining. I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.