



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALLOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 25, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: To the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): To the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba

The petition of the undersigned, The Pas Health Complex Incorporated, humbly sheweth:

THAT your petitioner seeks to amend The Pas Health Complex Incorporation Act by striking out the word "ten" in paragraph 1, line 4 thereof and substituting therefore the word "thirteen."

WHEREFORE your petitioner humbly prays that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to pass an act for the purpose above mentioned.

And as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): The Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (1335)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister responsible for The Development Corporation Act): I have two reports I would like to table.

The first one is the Annual Report for the Manitoba Development Corporation for the year ending March 31, 1991.

The second one is the Annual Report for 1990-91 for the Manitoba Horse Racing Commission.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I have the pleasure of tabling the Annual Report of the Public Schools Finance Board; and the Annual Report for the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund Board for 1990.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this afternoon Mr. Andrzej Brzozowski, who is a Consul General of the Republic of Poland.

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

Also with us this afternoon, we have from the Poplar Point School thirty Grades 1 to 6 students. They are under the direction of Dawn Larkin.

This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns).

Also this afternoon, from the Austin Elementary School, we have thirty Grade 5 students. They are under the direction of Mrs. C. Cannon.

This school is located in the constituency of the Speaker of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly (Mr. Rocan).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Child and Family Services Restructuring

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Yesterday's announcement had a lot to do with substance and decision making, Mr. Speaker, and it had to do with the process of decision making. Yesterday's announcement was a culmination and a transformation of a government's style with the

people of Manitoba, a style that in 1988 in the Speech from the Throne said, we will be open with the public and we will be informing Manitobans of the decisions we are making prior to making them—open government.

In 1989, we heard that my government's approach to social challenges has been based on the broadest possible consultations with Manitobans. The transformation changed with the majority government, Mr. Speaker, but the Premier said in 1990: We will not have the elite backdoor accommodation decision making that we saw with Meech Lake. Canadians are tired of it.

Now we see the 1991 majority vision and majority style of the Conservative Government. Decisions made in the middle of the night without any public consultation, and people brought in to be told of the decisions without any consideration to the children and the communities, and the children that are served by those communities.

My question to the Premier is: Is this the process that he supported and agreed to, and is this the kind of decision making we can see in Manitoba in the future dealing with vital Manitoba services?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, of course, the member opposite will know that we have had plenty of discussions over the past three and a half years in government with boards of the Child and Family Services agencies.

What we are doing is attempting to improve upon a model that was badly flawed and that indeed was causing a great deal of problem with respect to the protection and services to children and families in this community. We are maintaining decentralized service delivery with a central administrative structure to try and overcome the problems that occur in the system.

I remind the member opposite, when he throws around those phrases about the kind of back-room decision making and threatening, and all those, to look at the coverage of the original decentralization as it occurred on July 14, 1983. This comes from my favourite newspaper, The Winnipeg Sun.

The headline says: Evans threatens to replace CAS boards. The province will restructure Children's Aid services, and any society board that balks may be replaced, Community Services Minister Len Evans said yesterday. Evans said: Government must have some control over the boards to have them more accountable, and given

that the province funds virtually 100 percent of Children's Aid Society operations, this is a responsible action and so he moved in.

You want to talk about threats, Mr. Speaker, here is what he said: Community Services Minister Len Evans has refused to help the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg with its financial problems unless it removes Executive Director Betty Schwartz, the agency president. That is what Evans said. That is the kind of high-handed dealing that he had. That is the kind of taking them by the throat that we saw under the NDP when they restructured Child and Family Services agencies.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Premier will note that the discussion he raised was in 1983, and the decisions to go ahead with these ideas with tremendous public consultation took place a couple of years later, not a couple of hours later like this Premier.

Child and Family Services Restructuring

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, maybe if some of the members opposite attended their community-based board meetings like I did last week, they would find out what is really going on in the communities instead of having this back-room, closed-door decision making. Members of northeast Winnipeg should have attended their meeting last week. They would have been proud of the money raised and the volunteer work in their own communities. They would have been proud of it, not putting it under as they have been with this cabinet decision.

My question to the Premier is: In light of the fact that the Reid-Sigurdson Report, which was quoted by his minister yesterday, quotes in the report, as a recommendation, that the government of Manitoba act to affirm the desirability of a community-based Child and Family Services delivery system, was the government appraised of this report? Did the Premier read this report, or did they just go on their ideology and their old-time biases about the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, and the going back to the future, as they have with the decisions they have made with the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we have no disagreement

with that. The community-based service is what worked. The community-based service is what has been left in place.

I am glad that somebody in the opposition raised the question of service because it is service that we want to improve. We needed a co-ordinated approach to service. I can tell you of reports that have been done where children who live in the core area of the city move from one agency to another, the files get lost. They travel months behind that child. By the time they arrive at the new agency, the child has moved again. There are a lot of tragedies in the system that a co-ordinated approach will solve, and improvement of service is what we are looking for.

We need a sharing of information. Under the old system, there were walls built, there was turf protection. There was no sharing of information. This new system, with one administrative structure, will go a long way to solving these problems to improve services for children and families in this province.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the community-based delivery system with volunteers, community-based people working in schools, in community centres, having ownership in their own communities, ownership of the problems between our most vulnerable children and their families, those kind of parenting programs, preventative programs, sexual abuse programs, all developed out of the six agencies in the city of Winnipeg. Were they perfect? No. Should they be improved? Yes.

Why are we going away from ownership in our own communities with volunteers raising money—I know NEW FACESS raised \$240,000 alone—ownership of the problems and the ownership of the family difficulties and getting into the families at the earliest possible point where you can stop kids from being taken into placement? How many more kids are going to be taken into placement with a super agency, with a bureaucratic structure that is not the same as a community-based structure?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The member is correct. We have a lot of children in care in this province. In fact, we have more children in care than any other province in this country per capita.

We want to be involved in the communities, and part of the new restructuring, if the member is up to speed on this, is community committees. From

those community committees, committees made up of stake holders in those communities from the Justice department, from the Health department, from schools and from community volunteers, will be part of that community committee which is there to advise the new board. They also will have the capacity to elect members to this board.

I would point out to the honourable member that the new president of the association, Mrs. Helen Hayles, is the chairperson/director of the volunteer centre. We put a strong emphasis on volunteers. We think there is a place for volunteers in this system, and we welcome the contribution of the volunteers. I know that many social workers, many foster parents have been part of the boards and part of the volunteers, and we encourage their continued input into this system.

Child and Family Services Restructuring

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, when the issue of recentralization of Child and Family Services was raised by the minister in a media comment on May 13 and then in the House on May 14, he blamed the media, as is this government's wont recently, for reporting rumours and drawing conclusions. When I asked him on May 14 about this issue he stated: "I am prepared to listen to any suggestions that are going to provide for better service for children and families in Manitoba."

My question to the minister is: Why did he and his government unilaterally, literally, over the first long weekend, the first summer weekend, make these changes and dictate, not consult, with the affected agencies, volunteers and workers?

* (1345)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, in the eight months that I have been minister of this department, I have done a tremendous amount of consultation with service providers, with clinicians, with boards, with directors and talking widely in the community with people about improving the service to children and families.

Ultimately, the minister and the government are responsible for the delivery of Child and Family Services in this province. Ultimately, the decision is the government's decision. We did this after a good

deal of thought and a good deal of consultation with the community.

I am aware that there are people involved in the system who have mixed reactions to a decision like this, but our decision was made to try and improve the delivery of Child and Family Services in this province. We want a co-ordinated approach, so the children in care and the children we serve are served in the best possible way with the resources we have available.

Ms. Barrett: Yes, the government will be held accountable for its actions in this regard.

Restructuring Costs

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I would like to ask the minister, how much, in total, including costs associated with the changeover and including costs estimated for the meetings of the new board of directors, who will now be paid rather than volunteers, will the recentralization cost? How much revenue will be lost as a result of community volunteers not performing the functions, raising money as they have with the fight back against child abuse, which raised a quarter of a million dollars in only one month?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): The budgeted amount in this department—and we will be into Estimates in the next few weeks or months, I am sure—has been transferred to the new agency. I have said just earlier that we encourage the use of volunteers by the new agency, and I expect that the agency and the chairperson will be making tremendous efforts to include volunteers. If that volunteer component is involved in fundraising, we would encourage them to continue to be so.

Regional Boundaries

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the report also states that there will be four regions that the Child and Family Services delivery will take place out of.

Could the minister table for us the boundaries of those four regions, and will he assure this House that the city core will be a unique and separate region so that the special needs of those children will be met and not subsumed under some larger grouping that has a majority of suburban cases in it?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I do not have that information with me, but I will be pleased to provide the member with the information on the boundaries, on the specific boundaries that are going to be created.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to just mention that service delivery and service standards are a very important component of this new agency. We want to be sure that every child and every family in the city should expect a consistent standard of service within this new agency, recognizing that the needs in Charleswood and the needs in central Winnipeg are different, but families should be able to expect the same consistent standards of service.

This new agency will give us the capacity. If we have staff in the Charleswood area or in River Heights who could be better used in the core area of the city, we will have the opportunity to have those workers perform their service in that area.

Child and Family Services Quality of Service

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): When we talk about Child and Family Services agencies, we talk about the first component the most, the children. These are children who are at risk, children who have been physically abused, children who have been sexually abused, children who have been deserted by their parents.

Can this First Minister tell the House if his government did a single study to prove that the children will be better cared for under this model than they were under the other, since the other was supported by the foremost experts on children's physical and sexual abuse?

* (1350)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I can assure the member, in all our deliberations and thoughts, the service to children and families has been uppermost in our minds. We want to present a co-ordinated approach to the care of children. We want a sharing of information so that agencies are not fighting over particular turf but working together.

Less than two years ago, we had a very tragic case in the city of Winnipeg, where four people lost their lives. As a result, the reports on that indicate that there were many social workers involved, 10 social workers, many of them not reporting to each

other, some reporting to different agencies, a complete lack of co-ordination. I do not blame those front-line workers. They were trying very hard to do their job. One of the problems that impedes them is the fact that there was no co-ordination, there was no sharing of information. This new agency is going to give us that capacity so children and families like that do not fall through the cracks.

We also have social workers working in the system, from the education system, from the health system, as well as the Child and Family Services agency. We see the need for an automated system. We see the need for some co-ordination, so these families can be helped before tragedies like that happen.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the Child and Family Services agencies have been the victims of their own success, because what has happened is, with the development of more agencies, more and more parents and children and other adults came forward to report children who were physically abused, who were sexually abused. That was the strength of the regionalization of these services.

Why can this government not present a single piece of evidence that children will be better served under this new program?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is having some difficulty separating service and administration. The service to children, the service delivery system remains intact. By the changes to the administration, we hope to enhance that service to protect those children and those families that we speak of.

The member and her critic are the defenders of a status quo. They want no change. They want no reform. As part of that package of reform, we mentioned a number of other things, the creation of a family fund, the creation of a child advocate, the adoption of the high-risk indicators and an automated information system. These are all part of the reform that this system needs. The member and her critic want to defend the status quo. We want to see change. We want to see reform. We want to see better service to children and families.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, as a child, I was abused. There is no way I will accept the status quo on any government that does not move to protect children. I cannot find, in this program of this government, a single example, a single study, a

single new initiative that is going to protect the children.

I want to know from the Minister of Family Services how he believes that the programs which are now being delivered in six regions will be better delivered in four, how he believes the programs that will have fewer volunteers will have more input from local people when he has dissolved those volunteer community boards?

* (1355)

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat again, for the edification of the member, some of the reforms we see that are going to help children and families in the system.

We said yesterday that we would be proceeding with a child advocate. We know from recent reports that there are children in the system who are in care of the treatment centres, who need somebody to talk to, who need an independent person to bring their concerns forward to. A child advocate is going to be created, reporting to the minister, who will be dealing with those problems within the system. We see that as a reform.

We also announced an automated system. I have told critics before, we have talked about it in the House, we have talked about it in Estimates, that there is a crying need for an automated system here. The files currently in place get lost. They travel months and months behind the child. We need an automated system. This was recommended years and years ago that, in this era of automation and computerization, an automated system will improve immeasurably the system we have in place.

Deer Lodge Hospital Bed Openings

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of rhetoric from the Minister of Health, during the Estimates debate, about supposed action in response to the Extended Treatment Bed Review. Well, this minister has not even been able to open up the new beds built under the NDP at Deer Lodge Hospital that he promised during the election, that he promised on July 26, 1990, in terms of an imminent opening that he repeated again in this House on October 17, 1990, yet most of those 90 beds remain vacant.

Could the minister tell us today, what is the status report of those 90 beds that he has announced and announced and announced? When will he open up

those beds and live up to his promise to the seniors of this province?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, lest Manitobans might believe my honourable friend where she indicated that the NDP rebuilt Deer Lodge Hospital, let us have Manitobans fully understand that it was federal government funds that rebuilt Deer Lodge Hospital under an agreement negotiated between the federal government and the Province of Manitoba in 1979. It was not NDP Manitoba money. It was federal government dollars, so let my honourable friend not try to take credit for that.

To answer her question on beds and their use at Deer Lodge Hospital, I will refresh my honourable friend's memory that, in announcing the commissioning of those beds, it was to be for four program areas, with the last program area taking the longest in terms of its implementation, because of the complexity of service anticipated to be delivered there, as an interim measure, Mr. Speaker, in moving those specialized programs for the head injured from Deer Lodge as a program to the redeveloped Municipal Hospital, which was also part of our announcement in acceptancy of the Extended Treatment Bed Review.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, it was this minister who promised on July 26 the immediate opening of 90 beds at Deer Lodge Hospital, and 66 of those 90 beds remain vacant today. All we have from this minister is empty promises, empty beds and full halls.

I want to ask the Minister of Health, why did he and this government decide to save \$1 million for this government by delaying the opening of those beds and denying service and much needed beds for the senior citizens who have built this province?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, needless to say, I am going to try to calmly reject the rhetorical flourish of my honourable friend.

I did not say that there would be an immediate opening of all beds at Deer Lodge, because there is a process of staff hiring, there is a process of bringing program in place. I just indicated to my honourable friend that the one aspect of program at Deer Lodge which will not be immediately opened is the very specialized care for those head-injured Manitobans, a demand and a need for service that has existed for a number of years, which in the announcement of acceptance of the Extended

Treatment Bed Review, we sought the concurrence of Deer Lodge Hospital to have that program commissioned and commenced at Deer Lodge as an interim measure to have that program then transferred, in whole, to the redeveloped Municipal Hospital site when construction is completed there. There was no indication and no created expectation other than the incorrect statement of my honourable friend that that program would happen immediately.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister is not being forthcoming and straightforward with this House or the senior citizens of this province. He promised the immediate opening of 90 beds for chronic and rehab purposes, including a provision for a brain-injured person care unit.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon), since this is something he promised in the election, since this is something he has talked about, will he review this situation, get a handle on the delays of this Minister of Health and make a commitment today that these long-promised beds will be opened immediately so the senior citizens of this province will have the attention and the services that they need and deserve?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1400)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that process will happen. In addition to the beds my honourable friend discussed, we have, in the period of time since the announcement of the acceptance of the Extended Treatment Bed Review, commissioned the temporary redevelopment of 60 additional beds on top of that. Those beds will be available to serve needs of personal care home placement in the community. There has been every opportunity to have that program proceed in a very meaningful and deliberate fashion.

My honourable friend cannot, as I indicated—well, no, I will not say that. I cannot indicate to my honourable friend and explain to her any more clearly than I already have, you do not—and I did not indicate that, immediately, we would have a head-injured program and unit operational at Deer Lodge. I explained very clearly to my honourable friend, at Estimates, on two successive occasions, that the commissioning of that complex care unit would take some more time. That in fact is the case.

Highway 227 Upgrading Start

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, this government has contributed significant increased dollars to highway construction in Manitoba. Many highways were left in disarray when we took office. The minister of Highways has performed admirably in repairing the roads that were left. I do have one concern over one highway. It is Highway 227, which cuts across the north end of the Portage constituency linking the north end of Winnipeg to Highway 16.

I would like to ask the minister, in the light of that he had indicated last year construction would have started last fall or this spring, when construction on Highway 227 will begin?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, because this government recognizes the importance of transportation to the economy of Manitoba, I am proud to indicate that, in our capital program this year, we have \$102.5 million for the construction of roads.

In this program, I am delighted to indicate to the member that the grade and gravel for Highway 227 in the Portage area, which is very important to him and the people in the Portage area, is included for this year's construction.

55-Plus Program Deindexing

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the honourable First Minister and Premier of the province.

This Conservative government has once more shown the human inclination to injustice by cutting off the vital support increases to the 55-Plus program for senior citizens when, at the same time, it can gleefully give a \$30,000 increase to a chief executive officer of the Manitoba Telephone System, who already makes \$130,000. This is a policy of making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the honourable First Minister: Would he make this Seniors Day a truly memorable day by revoking the cut off of the increase of the 55-Plus and restoring the increases to the 55-Plus program for senior citizens of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, of course, the Manitoba Telephone System would have had a great deal more money if the NDP government had not lost \$27 million on the sands of Saudi Arabia, just dumped that money indiscriminately in Saudi Arabia, much to the chagrin of our seniors who now pay higher telephone rates, substantially higher telephone rates. I might say the increase has been much higher than any of the figures that he is talking about as a result of the NDP's actions, irresponsible actions.

This government, of course, has increased its funding to health care by \$90 million this year, \$90 million despite the fact that our cash transfers from Ottawa for health and post-secondary education were reduced by some \$36 million. We put \$90 million more. That is for the benefit of seniors and people throughout this province, but seniors particularly, who depend upon the health care system.

We have chosen our priorities to ensure that health care is the highest priority so that our seniors can benefit from that, Mr. Speaker, and so that they can live in a province that provides high-quality health care and will continue to meet their needs on the health care side. We have had to make our various choices. We have chosen to put \$90 million more into health care instead of dumping \$27 million into the sands of Saudi Arabia like the NDP did when that member was a member of the government.

Pharmacare Card Implementation

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, if the honourable First Minister will not listen to the campaign of the Manitoba Society of Seniors to restore the 55-Plus, would he at least make the Seniors Day memorable by making a commitment to persuade his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to institute the Pharmacare card so that senior citizens who are usually short of cash can immediately acquire medication without waiting, without coming up with cash up front and thereby waiting an unreasonably long period of time before making a refund?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, again this government is putting substantial increases into Pharmacare funding for seniors this year. Indeed, I believe that the Pharmacare funding increase is something in the order of \$6 million, again, because

we recognized the needs of our seniors in our province, unlike the NDP who took that money and built a bridge to nowhere in Selkirk; \$30 million they spent on a bridge to nowhere instead of looking after the needs of our seniors with the various programs that they had.

I ask the member for Broadway, if he really wants to help the seniors, why does he not urge his caucus to bring Bill 44 to a vote? Bill 44, that bill that allows for a lock off of those who refused to pay their bills to Centra Gas, is resulting in every senior citizen—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, our rules are very clear. In fact, Beauchesne 417 states that answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has been asked about 55-Plus and Pharmacare. It is his prerogative not to answer the questions, but if he is not going to answer, he should say that and be accountable to the seniors of this province instead of engaging this irrelevant debate.

I ask you to bring the Premier to order and answer the very straightforward and honest questions asked by our Seniors critic.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, with due respect for the opposition House leader, I did in fact refer to our increase in Pharmacare funding, as I said, I believe an additional \$6 million, but I want the NDP to save \$10 a month for every senior in this building by passing Bill 44.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We were dealing with a point of order. On the point of order raised, I would like to remind all honourable ministers that answers to questions should be as brief as possible, should deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

Handi-Transit Government Commitment

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, if the honourable First Minister would not restore the 55-Plus increases and would also not instruct his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to use the Pharmacare card for the benefit of senior citizens, would he now, on the Seniors Day, show real statesmanship and courage by restoring the

privileges of senior citizens to use the Handi-Transit in the cold city of Winnipeg?

* (1410)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I might say that he is speaking to someone who, when he was on City Council, was one of the originators of the Handi-Transit System.

This administration continues to support Handi-Transit not only for the senior citizens of Winnipeg, but it continues to be expanded and enhanced throughout rural Manitoba as well, Mr. Speaker. We have a commitment to Handi-Transit that continues and will continue as long as we are in office.

Pines Project Funding Justification

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

Today is the day, of course, that we pay special tribute to the seniors of the province of Manitoba here at the Legislature, and it is therefore particularly appropriate, in my view, to ask the minister again to revisit his unequivocal and unabashed financial support for The Pines project on Portage Avenue.

Mr. Speaker, the seniors of this province, as has been pointed out earlier, are facing ever-increasing financial needs, yet at the same time, the government is pulling back regularly and consistently—a case in point, of course—the deindexing of the 55-Plus program.

Mr. Speaker, why does this minister have millions of dollars in interest-free loans and hundreds of thousands of dollars in outright grants to give to the proponents of a project that serves only those seniors who can afford a \$30,000 to \$46,000 entrance fee, as well as a \$550 to \$755 monthly rental fee, and at the same time, he does not have the funds to index the pensions of the poorest, most desperate seniors in this province?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Well, Mr. Speaker, before the member for St. James stands up and condemns a very much-needed senior citizens housing project in St. James-Assiniboia, he should get his facts straight. There is no interest rate subsidy associated with the Seniors RentalStart program and, with The Rotary Pines project, no interest rate subsidy.

There is a grant of some \$350,000 that will be earned over 35 years at 1/35 per year under the Seniors RentalStart Program for that particular project, so he needs to get his facts straight before he makes any statement with regard to that much-needed seniors project in St. James-Assiniboia.

Mr. Edwards: Surely, after all this, the minister is not saying that he is not financially supporting the project. Of course, he is financially supporting it, Mr. Speaker, to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Commercial Development

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): For the same minister, the proponents of The Pines have always cast this primarily as a residential project. The commercial aspect was clearly secondary. Proof of that is their own leaflet which says: The Pines, A Seniors Residential Development. The map attached says: Future Commercial Development. The residential aspect is the present, the future will come with the commercial aspect.

Given that yesterday the Planning Committee of the City of Winnipeg released a note from one of the proponents to Councillor O'Shaughnessy, which clearly indicated—I will ask the minister whether or not he will now reconsider his financial support for this project, given the fact that this note which went from a proponent to a councillor in 1989 and which stated that the proponents could not guarantee the residential development would proceed quickly, but that they would like to proceed with the commercial as soon as possible, will he now reconsider this, given that clearly the proponents are out for a commercial development, first and foremost, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Again the member for St. James does not have his facts straight. The fact of the matter is, the proponent of the project, the Rotary Club of St. James-Assiniboia is dealing with a senior citizens project and none other—no commercial development, senior citizens project. That is what the government is supporting, Mr. Speaker, a senior citizens housing project. We are not supporting commercial development. We have nothing to do with commercial development, and the member better get his facts straight.

Mr. Edwards: For the minister's edification, I will table the leaflet—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time is of the essence.

Mr. Edwards: —of the proponent which talks about the commercial and the residential. I will also table the note which talks about the commercial first and the residential second, simply to answer the minister's query.

Finally, for the same minister. What guarantees can this minister give that not one dollar of public money will go towards the commercial aspect of this project, in particular since the developers clearly are primarily interested in that commercial venture and not a seniors residential facility first and foremost?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, the arrangement that the Department of Housing, the government of Manitoba, has with the Rotary Club of St. James-Assiniboia is for a seniors housing project—no other project but seniors housing.

Child and Family Services Impact Aboriginal Programs

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I am directing my question to the Minister of Child and Family Services.

Given the fact that this minister surprised everyone yesterday with his announcement of his sudden change in policy regarding Child and Family Services without having consulted anyone, I want to ask the minister: Can he tell this House today what positive impact this decision will have on child welfare agencies which are currently being operated by aboriginal people?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the positive impact we see is enhanced service. Now I say that with the knowledge that there are many issues that we have to discuss with the aboriginal community. We have aboriginal service units which operate on reserve outside of the city of Winnipeg. We also fund Ma Mawi, which is a nonmandated service within the system. We anticipate to continue working with Ma Mawi and to have a good relationship develop between the new agency and that particular agency. At the same time, we have many issues that we have to resolve with Native agencies that operate outside the city of Winnipeg. We have discussed this with them a number of times, the question of jurisdiction, the question of codes and standards and other issues that are the subject of ongoing discussions with those agencies.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, we know already what this government's attitude is towards aboriginal people, those not only living in the city but living on reserves in the North as well.

What assurance can this minister give this House that he will not inflict the same misery to aboriginal child welfare agencies, or does he have a plan to do that already, because as I said before, he surprised us yesterday with this announcement?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the honourable member is taking an interest in the Child and Family Services agencies. We are aware, of course, that these agencies perform a valuable function outside the city of Winnipeg as well. We have a very complex system in this province where independent Child and Family Services agencies service the city of Winnipeg, the central region of Manitoba and the Westman region. There are areas of the province where the department provides that service, and we also have five mandated Native agencies which are funded in part by us and in part by the federal government.

I readily admit to the member, we have big issues that we have to resolve with the Native agencies over the question of jurisdiction, over the question of codes and standards. We have been meeting with a number of representatives from the Native community on Child and Family Services issues. We will continue to meet with them and attempt to resolve those issues.

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

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I would like to make committee changes, moved by the member for Point Douglas, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: The member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), for Tuesday, June 25, 1991, at 8 p.m.

The second committee change, moved by the member for Point Douglas, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) for the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli); the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) for the member

for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), to take effect Tuesday, June 25, 1991, at 8 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Nonpolitical Statements

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Could I have leave for a nonpolitical statement, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the second opposition party have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Agreed? Agreed.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, today is a special day in this Assembly because we have seniors here, but it is also a special day for one particular senior, a senior who has close links with this Legislature. Today is the 95th birthday of Tommy Hillhouse, who served for many years as the MLA for the Selkirk constituency. Unfortunately, Mr. Hillhouse is now in a personal care home and has been there now for several years. I joined with him in his celebration of his 90th birthday as did the former Premier, the Honourable Howard Pawley.

I know that everyone in this Chamber would want to wish Mr. Hillhouse well on this his 95th birthday.

* * *

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave for a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker: Leave? Agreed.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to have the opportunity today to just say a few words of congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Manitoba Farmer of the Year, Mr. and Mrs. Owen McAuley from McAuley, Manitoba, and I would like to congratulate the Red River Exhibition on the course of action in terms selecting the Mr. and Mrs. Manitoba Farmer.

It is indeed a tribute to Manitoba Farmers that we recognize our peers. Mr. and Mrs. McAuley have been farming for many years in the McAuley area on a family farm that was started back in 1894. They were selected because of their financial management capacity, their ability to technologically manage their farm, their degree of

land use and in terms of their commitment to their community.

In terms of community commitment, Mr. McAuley has been a councillor, he has been one of the chief leaders of the Keystone Agricultural Producers and he has also been on the national task force for safety nets to develop the GRIP and NISA programs. Mr. McAuley has also been on the Manitoba Farm Mediation Board and has served not only his community but all of the farmers of Manitoba very well and indeed, in his latter capacity on the safety net task force, all farmers of Canada.

It is indeed a pleasure to congratulate the Red River Ex on passing on this tradition year in and year out to recognize Manitoba farmers and help the urban-rural relationship that we need to develop in this province.

Also at this time, I would like to recognize, there is one member of this House who has been a Mr. Manitoba Farmer, the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery).

Committee Changes

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Osborne (Mr. Alcock) for Inkster.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I also have some committee changes. I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: The member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) for the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose). This is for the June 25, Tuesday, 8 p.m. sitting.

Also, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The member for Ste. Rose du Lac (Mr. Cummings) for the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns); the member for Turtle Mountain for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik); and the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) for the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer). This is for the Tuesday, June 25, 8 p.m. sitting.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before I move the motion, is there willingness to waive private members' hour?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Is there agreement? Is it agreed?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Okay, leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: I thank the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Rural Development.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—HEALTH

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Jack Reimer): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Health.

When the committee last sat, it was considering item 2. Healthy Public Policy Programs (b) Health Promotion, Protection and Disease Prevention: (1) Salaries \$1,620,100 on page 84 of the Estimates book and on page 41 of the Supplementary Information book. Shall this item pass? The honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema).

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Acting Chairman, I wonder if I might, before my honourable friend starts off, provide some information on tuberculosis that my honourable friend asked for yesterday. In 1986 a total of 136 cases in Manitoba, 96 non-Native, 40 Status Indian. 1987 a total of 125, Status Indian up to 44, non-Native down to 81. In 1988 a total for the province of 111, non-Native down slightly to 80,

Status Indian down to 31—a fairly significant decrease year over year there. In 1989, total cases 100, non-Native down fairly significantly to 71, Status Indian down to 29. Total cases in 1990 92, non-Native 67, a decrease again, and a decrease again in Status Indian down to 25.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister give us a status report on Lyme disease? There have been a few cases and some media reports and there was some report from the minister's office as well. Can he give us an indication, do we have any special programs for Lyme disease?

Mr. Orchard: Now, I am going to try to get right down to—I am trying to find the area where it indicates the status of potential cases in Manitoba. We have provisionally identified, provisionally because there is, I guess, some uncertainty around Lyme disease, but Manitoba has provisionally identified 12 cases of Lyme disease diagnosed in 1989.

There are only a very few of the ticks which carry borrelia that have been found in the province. That is the infectious agent that comes on a specific type of deer tick, *Ixodes dammini*, I think is the scientific name. Now, we have continued to emphasize general knowledge about the disease, its transmission through bites by ticks, and naturally part of our education prevention program is to emphasize avoidance of tick bites.

The workshop that was held which was sponsored by the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control, Health and Welfare Canada and the Canadian Infectious Diseases Society—their recent workshop will have the summaries distributed to all physicians to ensure that they are aware of the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease, the recommendations regarding laboratory testing and the recommended treatments. In addition, public health agencies will follow up reports of erythema migrans to determine whether a particular area of the province may have become infected with the deer tick.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister, I am sure has received a communication from one of the patients. I would not like to mention the name, but her family is suffering from a lot of problems. This individual has Lyme disease and also some other members of the family. They continue to have some difficulty in terms of establishing diagnosis

and they have expressed their concern that, as the minister has said, some of the physicians are not aware of the diagnostic tests or whether there were some diagnostic tests. They are not even sure. This particular family, and I will give the minister the name off the record to probably have some communication with this family so that they can get some information. I will provide the name and the address and telephone number off the record.

I just want the minister to be aware of the situation and even though the numbers are small, a lot of the individuals were concerned. My specific question is, what is being done in terms of making aware to the physicians and the other health care professionals to get themselves more familiar with this disease so that they can at least be able to direct the patient to the right source of information?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I guess the issue of Lyme disease is a very new one and it is multistage, multiorgan disease that can mimic many other diseases and that can make it difficult to diagnose. The only diagnostic feature is erythema migrans, a characteristic rash which develops in up to two-thirds of infected individuals within a few weeks of the infection. The late effects of Lyme disease are not specific and Lyme disease is caused by a bacterium which is carried and transmitted by the deer tick, *Ixodes dammini*, as I indicated.

Now, as I indicated to my honourable friend, a recent international workshop on Lyme disease was sponsored by the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control, Health and Welfare Canada and the Canadian Infectious Diseases Society. Now this group with representations from Manitoba looked at Lyme disease in Canada and the following conclusions were reached.

Lyme disease is transmitted only by deer tick. The wood ticks which are so common in Manitoba are not good hosts for borrelia, which is the infectious agent. Field studies have been done by Dr. Galloway and are sufficient to demonstrate that Manitoba does not, and I emphasize, not, have an established population of *Ixodes* ticks. This makes it very unlikely that someone will contract Lyme disease in Manitoba. It means that Manitoba is not an area which is endemic for Lyme disease.

When Lyme disease is as common as it is in the northwestern U.S.A., it is easy to diagnose because of the rash described above. There are no definitive

reports of the characteristic rash in Manitoba, again making it unlikely that Lyme disease is being transmitted here.

The blood tests for Lyme disease are very inaccurate when used to test persons who likely do have Lyme disease, i.e., who do not—pardon me, when used to test persons who likely do not have Lyme disease, i.e., most Manitobans. In that case, most positive tests will be positive because other bacteria share the same chemical structure as borrelia. It is recommended that testing not be carried out unless the patient has been to an area such as Connecticut where infective deer ticks are known to reside.

Now, the Manitoba Health has continued to emphasize the general wisdom of avoiding tick bites. Summaries of this workshop will be distributed to all physicians in Manitoba to ensure that they are aware of the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease, the recommendations regarding laboratory testing and recommended treatments.

In addition, public health agencies will follow up reports of erythema migrans to determine whether a particular area of the province may have become infested with the deer tick. So those are the instructions that are going, I believe, have already gone out in fact to physicians in Manitoba, or will be very shortly.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will share the information, and some of the information really has gone through the minister's office. Also one of the persons has been in touch with the minister's office. The other one, I am not sure about that, but this person was sent to Toronto to see a physician. They have gone through a lot of hassles and the patient is right in her own way. The person is not sure about the diagnosis and a lot of frustrations, but they need somebody to hear their concern and make sure that they have the right information, even though they have compiled a lot of statistics to prove their case. The general line that they have used is general ignorance of the medical community of this disease. That is what she has really put forward. She is extremely concerned that whenever she goes to a physician they are not aware of this disease.

The minister has said they are going to circulate the notes from the conference, and that will be helpful to clear some of the misconceptions. I will share the information with the minister.

Can the minister give us, on a separate issue, an update on the immunization record? As the minister has said last year and as I understand that Manitoba is probably, I think, really one of the best in this country as far as immunization records are concerned. They are updating either through the schools or through the physicians. Is there any major problem the minister is encountering, or are they moving into the right direction as they have stated the last three years?

Mr. Orchard: No, I think the system has been working exceptionally well, and giving credit where credit is due. This was introduced on a pilot basis in Westman area of the province, and in St. Boniface and St. Vital in 1980. The ensuing experience in those two regions led the government of the day, the previous government in 1985, to introduce the program province-wide.

That has been established. Implementation of MIMS is complete in all provincial Health regions, of the city of Winnipeg and federal nursing stations. Immunization records on all children born since January 1988, and for the majority of children born since January 1980, are available.

Physicians presently access the system through the public Health staff. In future, it may be possible for them to have direct access. Approximately .25 professional SY in the directorate is devoted to MIMS. It is working I think most effectively, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, have there been any major adverse reactions reported with the immunization? Are we making a record of those reactions, or are the physicians reporting those situations to the Department of Health?

* (1450)

Mr. Orchard: No, I am informed, no major areas, problematic areas. Those would naturally emerge with the system.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, as we know, there are a lot of new Canadians coming to Winnipeg. Some of the immunization records they do not have practically in their own countries, and there are some problems dealing with those situations.

Can the minister give us an update? What are they doing to trace those individuals and make sure they have the records complete?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed that federal Immigration undertakes that check through Medical Services.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am not sure about that. I do not think that is the case. I think that the individual cases when they come to this country, only if they are specified that this person will have a particular form of illness or possibility of having a problem.

For example, if somebody's X-ray had a problem in terms of possibility of tuberculosis or old T.B. those cases are being notified to the physician and through the Medical Services Branch and through the Immigration department. For immunization there is no such provision, and I think we should look at that. It is very important. We get a large number of new Canadians, so that they can be immunized as soon as they arrive and get their data updated.

Can the minister tell us, on one of the subjects where the minister made a policy announcement as to smoking prevention and that was a school project—no smoking by the year 2000—and how much money they have allocated for this special fund, is this a basic equivalent to your work or is the government having a specific person in charge of this special program?

Mr. Orchard: What was it?

Mr. Cheema: It was the anti-smoking campaign.

Mr. Orchard: The individual who was really leading the issue, Anne Skuba, retired recently. I have to say that I very much enjoyed working with Anne Skuba, obviously for her total commitment and absolute enthusiasm for the project. I never had an opportunity to ask if this was an original thought or concept that Anne herself had come up with, but I always indicated to her when the project was first suggested to me as a new initiative, that it sounded like a genuine winner.

I am and remain totally committed to that Smoke Free Grads 2000 concept. I think it is probably the absolutely best long-term prevention education program that we can bring into our school system to break the trend of starting to smoke. Smoking cessation is successful. There is no question about it. A lot of people have ceased being addicted to tobacco. Let me rephrase that, I do not think they have ceased being addicted to tobacco and nicotine. They probably remain addicted, but they have ceased the activity of tobacco consumption.

That is a very difficult—very, very difficult—and strenuous exercise. I think a number around this table might even be able to indicate just how difficult an exercise it is through personal experience. The whole concept behind the Smoke Free Grads 2000 program is absolutely excellent in that, if you never start, you never have to stop. The enthusiasm that school children approach the whole Smoke Free Grads program, the community and corporate partnership in sponsoring the program that we achieve is just absolutely heartwarming to see.

My honourable friend made reference to the school in southwest Winnipeg, because I did my Paul Bunyan routine last year, I was not around for the official kickoff of Smoke Free Grads 2000. In its second year, I wanted to be with young students, with the young Manitobans, who were going to participate in the program. Hence, we went out to the school where "Sila" the polar bear activity was filmed for the antismoking videotape. Mr. Acting Chairman, I tell you it is one of those days that you do not forget as an elected official because there are so many times when we end up agreeing to disagree and maybe in less than pleasant circumstances.

The enthusiasm of those children and their teachers and the staff and everybody there, you just know that you are going to have a group of students who, in the majority, will never start smoking. You know, for that, I have expressed my personal thanks to Anne Skuba in terms of her efforts in bringing that and other programs to smoking cessation in Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Chairman, we have continuation of the program. It will be continued each successive year as an initiative of cessation of smoking in the province.

Mr. Cheema: As far as I remember, I think it was well received by the media, as well as the public at large, and that is why I am asking the minister how much money is coming from the Department of Health for this particular project?

Mr. Orchard: We will get you an exact figure on that, but it is a very modest—I cannot give you an exact number—commitment of provincial dollars in that program for two reasons.

First of all, it is undertaken as part of the staff programming, so that those costs will be ongoing even if we do not have the program in part or in whole. Mr. Acting Chairman, the key reason why it is an economic program is that we have such

substantial private sector sponsorship. CKND television, I believe—and I am going by memory here—provided the television crews for filming the video. Great-West Life provided financial support and I am going to offend other corporate sponsors because I just do not have it in front of me as to who else participated financially.

The corporate participation in this initiative has been just absolutely remarkable and has led to a very economic prevention program being part of government. If I can be so immodest as to suggest is really where we have been heading in terms of healthy public policy and partnership in the community with support groups, with community interest groups, with the private sector through corporations. We are able to take modest resource of the taxpayers and use the good will and promotional efforts and financial resources of outside agencies and the private sector to build very strong and progressive prevention programs in the province of Manitoba.

This is really a shining example of the Smoke Free Grads 2000.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just wanted to make one suggestion. In the area of health prevention and promotion, we always, of course, have the unusual from the department and from the schools and all those corporate sponsors. I think we should, or the minister should set up a plan where the students who are going to parties within this program could be awarded in the public forum. I think that enhances their ability to even encourage other individuals, and that was very well done in some parts of this country.

If the minister had read the Second Opinion book, it is very clearly indicated it was done in Toronto by the first medical officer of Toronto. It was very well received and really got people involved at an earlier age. They get real excited about them, and they really want to participate. Also, the communities and the parents and everyone really feel that they are part of the system.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I want to tell my honourable friend that is exactly where we are coming from. Now, again, I do not want to pre-empt my honourable friend. We have not got around to doing it yet, but the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and I have discussed it because he is as enthused as I am about this program of providing a certificate of graduation at the completion of every

school year in which the students have remained smoke free. That could be carried on by successive Ministers of Education and Health in the year 2000 or 2010, when we are no longer here.

* (1500)

Mr. Cheema: Can the minister tell us, are they going to establish a community wellness resource centre either in Winnipeg or in other parts of rural Manitoba to make sure they have the diabetic education resource centre, for example, in either Dauphin or Swan River or Thompson? I think that will be a worthwhile project to make sure the community is involved, and it will really be a very inexpensive way of delivering very expensive services.

Mr. Orchard: The diabetes education program has been progressively extended to a number of areas of Manitoba. Right now the community of Swan River is in discussions, I guess, with government in terms of attempting to focus—well, in part or in whole—on diabetes education in the Swan River Valley. Currently, they receive services one day every two weeks out of the Parkland region. They have made the proposal that they would like to move in that direction to try to further—and we have entertained discussions and proposals and are in the process of entertaining proposals and having discussions around that issue.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell us how much money we are spending out of this branch for a program like this so far?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot really separate it out because it is all part of the line allocation of resource.

Mr. Cheema: Can the minister tell us on the other line here, in terms of the public and professional education on cardiovascular risk prevention—and the minister is smiling. He knows that he has done well on this issue, and I am just giving all the time to outline some of his achievements. One of the projects is at St. Boniface General Hospital, and he is going to discuss it and I am going to listen to that.

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend, you know, understands the system pretty well, because the issue of the Heart Health Project is one that I think has had some pretty substantial success. The initial survey upon completion allowed us to identify high-risk activities and areas in the province. The next step is to build some focused workplace and community projects. That was subject to question

yesterday, and I am seeking information in terms of the status of the project in the Tupperware operation in Morden, because they were one of the corporate entities outside of Winnipeg that was participating.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I guess I will put it to you this way: It costs the system possibly \$20,000 to \$25,000 to do bypass surgery. It is a very invasive procedure, one of our most complex procedures that we do in Manitoba. It is undertaken in growing numbers each year and represents a pretty substantial financial commitment in health care. I make the case, as I know my honourable friend makes the case, that if we can work with heart disease from the preventative side in terms of greater public awareness as to what high risk activities are, like smoking, like cholesterol, like stress, like lack of exercise and generally unhealthy lifestyles, that if we can achieve a gradual change in personal commitment to greater heart health, I think my honourable friend can see that even the simple delay of several years of the necessity to undertake bypass surgery will save the system considerable dollars.

If we can achieve a lowered rate of surgical intervention in terms of maintenance of heart health, everyone wins. The only ones who potentially would lose would be those practitioners who have become very skilled in bypass surgery. If there was nothing to do they would be the obvious losers, because their professional skills would not be needed. I do not think that we have a utopian opportunity to be there in the near future.

Certainly, every indication we have from across Canada indicates that provinces that have in the past undertaken successful risk identification and education in health promotion programs around the issue of heart health have shown some success. I believe that our sister province of Saskatchewan has undertaken a fair degree of heart health activity some five or seven years ago. The indications are that from a statistical comparison, they are healthier in some of the major indicators of heart health in Saskatchewan than Manitobans.

It is one of those opportunities for tangible result that is so often disadvantaging funding commitments to health promotion programs, because you do not have the instant tangible statistic to deal with. If I commit a budget of \$1 million to more open heart bypass surgery, I can say at the end of the year that we have undertaken 50 more cases. If I put \$1 million into the heart health

project I cannot point to the saving of 50 bypass surgery cases. The system tends to prejudice itself against decisions which would lead to improved health status through ownership of personal health issues and knowledge of risk activities so that one can conduct themselves in a lifestyle conducive to maintenance of good health.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairman, as we have repeatedly discussed this same issue over the last three years almost on the same lines, I do agree with the minister that it is an area where you have to spend money, and it may take five, ten years. By that time you will see the good effects. But definitely—maybe politics is not important here—I think it is important that you are saving money in the long run. That will show up, it is just a matter of time that you will save money from many areas if you are having a major impact on the health prevention and promotion.

The minister has stated very well in terms of the anti-smoking campaign, for the education for the diabetic patients and the families, as well as the prevention of other communicable diseases. There is a decline in the tuberculosis area which is very, very positive in terms of the Native community. The rate has come down substantially for the last three or four years. Some of the numbers that we are seeing, I think some of them may reflect the new Canadians. I think there is some element of people who come newly and there may be a possibility that we see the fluctuation and that may very well be the case.

We agree with the minister that the healthy promotion and the Healthy Public Policy is a must. Whether the next government, be it NDP or Tories or whosoever, will enjoy the fruits of that hard work, but people will remember who started the program.

I want to go to the next issue which did get a lot of attention in '88-89, that was the so-called "hamburger disease," infection with the E. coli, and that was because of the raw meat. Can the minister give us, because there were some patients who did suffer major complications and the public education was not there at that time, can they give me the status report on the number of cases in '88, '89 and '90?

* (1510)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think we are going to have to inquire directly of staff for that information and provide it at a later opportunity.

Mr. Cheema: Sure. Can the minister tell us what specific measures have been taken to make sure that we do not have that kind of situation, at least not in the alarming numbers we had in 1988, in terms of the public education plus how the meat inspection and all those things are being done, and how the store owners or the outlets are being notified that they have to cook the meat properly so that we do not have this problem? There were very horrible stories of a few patients who suffered major damage in terms of the kidneys and other body systems.

I think it is worthwhile to explore that and to make sure that the public is notified, provided the health care professionals are quite well aware of the situation. I just want to get some updated information. If the minister has it now, it is fine, otherwise we can wait—maybe later on.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I believe that we have partial figures for my honourable friend, so I will give them to my honourable friend. In '88 there were 59 cases of bloody diarrhea and/or hemolytic uremia syndrome due to the E. coli in hamburger. In 1989 that grew to 115 cases and in 1990 only 58 cases were reported. A similar decline in number was seen in other markets.

I think the inspection process is one side of it. I think it has been certainly reinforced throughout our food system, but the major initiative that we have undertaken is to increase public awareness and use such avenues as public service announcements, press release fact sheets, certainly media interviews, et cetera to emphasis to all, but more important to the consumers, the necessity of safe food handling, because two things can happen.

For instance, if you perchance purchase hamburger, round beef with a presence of E. coli, that can be quite safe to consume providing you store it properly after bringing it home from the retail establishment so that you have stored it in an environment where the E. coli do not multiply rather alarmingly. Secondly, that you undertake complete cooking of the hamburger. That is really where we are attempting to come around the issue in terms of a prevention standpoint in the province of Manitoba.

The issue has been, as I said, publicized quite widely through public service announcements, press releases, et cetera but also close co-operation with the City of Winnipeg Health Department to assure that areas of education and prevention under

their jurisdiction—that the message is consistent between the province and the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, one of the problems the minister has outlined is the meat inspection and then, the second, setting of the protocol for these outlets and health care facilities. The other problem, in terms of the prevention, is small children. The adults are in big parties in the parks there, and when they share the food, it could be easily spread if you are sharing the same food.

I ask the minister is there any specific protocol for schools or daycare centres or any other public places so that they are aware of the situation?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, there is a specific protocol that has been developed within the ministry to control spread amongst small children in daycare facilities, and that is one of the areas of co-operation that I mentioned earlier on between the City of Winnipeg Health Department and their provincial counterparts. That information on the protocol has been sent to all licensed daycare facilities.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, on a different issue now, can the minister give us the update on hemophilic influenza vaccine? Are we still supplying the vaccine on demand to the physicians, or is there a strict supply quota—so much supply you are going to get—also, if there is any public awareness for this particular vaccine? It could be used in many, many conditions. It really works in many situations and saves money in the long run.

I am just asking the minister if there is enough supply to supply to the physicians. I am not advocating on behalf of anyone. I am just advocating on behalf of patients that there is no shortage of this vaccine.

Mr. Orchard: We have sort of been the odd province out in terms of provision of the vaccine at 18 months of age. The reason we have not provided the funding for this program is because, in terms of the epidemiological evidence, it is still not clear how effective the vaccine is.

The difficulty that we have in coming around this issue from a professional standpoint is that most of the infections can occur prior to the 18-month age in Canada. We have remained consistent with our policy over the last number of years, and when a vaccine is available for use in infancy so that it can protect those less than 18 months old or even where

the present vaccine has demonstrated its efficacy to the system, we would be prepared to reconsider the policy instruction to allow us to come around the issue. The issue is reviewed by the Manitoba Advisory Committee on Infectious Diseases.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think we have discussed most of the questions on AIDS yesterday, but there is one issue I forgot to ask. That was the AIDS at the workplace. Is there any specific committee, or are there any specific protocols put in place to make sure that the education is done at the workplace also as far as the AIDS prevention and AIDS education is concerned?

Mr. Orchard: In the health care workplace there is quite regular in-servicing or opportunity for in-service in terms of methods of understanding the spread and protecting oneself as a care deliverer in the workplace. What we have done in conjunction with Manitoba Labour and workplace safety and health is developed information sheets and have also developed policy guidelines which we expect to distribute shortly.

Public Health Nurses and workplace safety and health officers are being asked to respond to the request for information and in-service from workplaces. An AIDS in the workplace education guide has been provided to each public health region as a resource document. Public Health Nurses are conducting assessment of workplaces in their region to identify workplaces with AIDS policies and employee education systems. An AIDS in the workplace policy for government is being drafted with my departmental staff.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Item 2.(b)(1) Salaries.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I would like to ask some questions pertaining to the issues of aboriginal health. I am pleased that the timing was such that my colleague the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) could join us at this point. I would like to ask some general questions and then pass it over to my colleague in terms of this area. I trust that I am not repeating too much of this issue area that was raised by my colleague the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) yesterday.

* (1520)

The first question I have, Mr. Acting Chairperson, relates to the request before the minister, from Pukatawagan and the Mathias Colomb Band, in

terms of follow-through with respect to their effective transfer of responsibility for health care. I am wondering if the minister has made a decision with respect to ensuring that there is a direct relationship between the minister or his department and this band in terms of the payment arrangement?

Mr. Orchard: Which? I missed it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Pukatawagan and Mathias Colomb.

Mr. Orchard: I do not think there is any formalized arrangement.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister indicate, what is the status of the request before him then?

Mr. Orchard: No, I cannot. I do not think that we have—if there is a request, it is not to this area of the ministry. Can my honourable friend indicate to whom she understands the request has been made?

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: To the Department of Health.

Mr. Orchard: Well, I am not trying to avoid the issue here. I want to get a little better handle as to what services were involved, because it is not within this ADM's responsibility that we have—and it may well have been that the information came directly to my attention, but I do not recall correspondence from Mathias Colomb. I have had communication from other organizations or other Native organizations, but I do not recall anything from Mathias Colomb, but that may well have happened.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: First of all, I am raising these issues here since the minister has indicated aboriginal health falls under Health and Public Policy Programs. He has a specific line on the chart, so there are a number of issues here that I hope we can deal with, at least in part, rather than referring them all to the Health Services Commission. However, if the minister does not have all the information, I hope that he will get it to us.

The minister might recall that the issue in terms of Pukatawagan has to do with the question of holding beds at a nursing station and the way in which payments are dealt with and the fact that this band has effected transfer of responsibility and now is looking for a change in the way payments are made. Currently, the nursing station bills the province. The province pays the federal government. The federal government then in turn, I assume, reimburses the band. Our question is,

when will the method of payment reflect the transfer in responsibility to this reserve?

Mr. Orchard: I will have to seek an answer to that question.

Ms. Wasylycla-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, while he is seeking an answer to that response, we would like to get some information from the minister in terms of this whole area of recognition of our aboriginal communities in the area of health, and the responsibility that they, in some cases, have assumed and have been authorized to assume and, in other cases, are in the process of seeking self-government arrangements around health care.

I would like to ask a second question on another particular issue and that has to do with Sandy Bay. The minister may be aware that Sandy Bay has initiated an application that is supported by, I believe, the six other municipalities in that region for approval for a salaried physician payment program. I am wondering if the minister can tell us what the status of that application is.

Mr. Orchard: If that application was being considered, it would be considered under the division of Mr. DeCock wherein medical services would be considered for salaried physicians.

Ms. Wasylycla-Lels: Perhaps then the minister could give us some general philosophical policy responses to these issues which have all to do with the question of self-government and the changing situation with respect to our aboriginal community and their request for recognition and authority to provide services directly and to deal directly with the Province of Manitoba and to have their request treated as seriously as any other before this government.

Could the minister tell us, generally, since I will be raising a number of issues in this area, what is the general policy right now of this government with respect to requests from various aboriginal communities and bands for management of their health care services?

Mr. Orchard: I know I will be corrected if my impression is wrong, but I believe that the issue of on-reserve health care services to bands is negotiated with the federal government, and the Province of Manitoba is not involved in either the construction of the nursing stations on reserve nor their staffing by either nurses or physicians. That is an issue that has long been a service delivery by,

for instance, northern medical services, with the federal government.

Ms. Wasylycla-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we are also dealing with issues that in areas where it has already been established that the medical services are insurable, payable services under the Manitoba Health Services Commission, we are also dealing with issues and requests and applications from communities that are legitimate recognized authorities under the District Health and Social Services Act.

In terms of these requests, is the minister at this time prepared to look seriously at entering into a direct funding relationship with aboriginal communities who come to this ministry with proposals, innovative and creative proposals, for serving broad communities and providing medical services in a variety of ways but, specifically—and I am thinking of the most recent request before the minister—on a non-fee-for-service basis?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend—and correct me if I am wrong—is my honourable friend saying that the province ought to now entertain requests from bands for on-reserve provision of health services, that the province ought to take over that responsibility? I want to tell my honourable friend, if that is the position she is making, I have some difficulty accepting that offload from the federal government. I do not know whether that is where the New Democrats are coming from, that we ought to pick up that responsibility for program and funding from the federal government.

If my honourable friend is saying that, that does not exactly square with my honourable friend's stated case on numerous occasions in the House of criticizing the federal government and demanding action by this provincial government to fight federal cutbacks and transfer payments which support the provision of health care services in Manitoba.

It appears as if my honourable friend wants us to fight cutbacks that she and her party indicate are potentially harming the health care system in Manitoba, to fight those cutbacks, those transfers of responsibility by the federal government; and now, my honourable friend appears to be saying that we should take over responsibility voluntarily from the federal government of a funding issue and a program responsibility issue that the federal government has traditionally had. Is that the case my honourable friend is making?

* (1530)

Ms. Wasylycla-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister likes to misinterpret and distort our questions on a regular basis. He is doing it once again. I have raised two issues where the provincial government is already involved, but is refusing to recognize the aboriginal community as a legitimate authority and establish a direct reporting relationship. In the case of Pukatawagan, we are talking about a situation where the province is picking up the claims, only doing it very indirectly and refusing to enter into a direct relationship with the Mathias Colomb Band.

In the case of Sandy Bay, we are talking about an aboriginal community that has taken the leadership in terms of a region and, working together with a number of municipalities, put forward to this minister a proposal for acceptance in terms of a non-fee-for-service or salaried physician payment program. That region is now recognized as a legitimate authority under The District Health and Social Services Act. There is an Order-in-Council, I believe, to which Sandy Bay is an official signatory. They have come forward with a very creative, innovative proposal to provide co-ordinated health care services to a region. They have yet to receive a response. They have been told that a decision is pending. I want to know why the delay in both cases. Why cannot the minister, with respect to these two requests, make a decision and respect the interests, aims and aspirations of our aboriginal community?

Mr. Orchard: Let us separate the two issues, in case my honourable friend has difficulty understanding them and understanding what she is saying. If I listen to my honourable friend, what my honourable friend is saying on behalf of the New Democratic Party is that the provincial government ought to take over responsibility for funding on reserve health care services for Status Indian population of Manitoba. That has not been our responsibility in the past; that has been the responsibility of the federal government. That should remain with the federal government in terms of the financial contribution necessary to undertake that.

Surely my honourable friend, in arguing in the House against cutbacks by the federal government to support the health care system for a million Manitobans, is now not turning around and saying, well, we are against the cutbacks by the federal

government, but we are willing, on the other hand, to take over federal responsibility for health care delivery to Status Native Manitobans on reserve.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycla-Lels: Perhaps the minister is not aware of his own arrangement in terms of paying to the federal government for claims submitted from nursing stations under a 30-year agreement. He should refer to his own Annual Report of the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): The honourable member did not have a point of order. It was a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Orchard: Let us distinguish the two processes. I want to tell my honourable friend that the provincial government does not have the financial capacity to accept continued offload of health delivery responsibility from the federal government to the Native community. -(interjection)-

Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend wants to confuse two issues. If my honourable friend wants to know how this government approaches the issue of the Native communities being in a position to manage their own service delivery, I have no philosophical and I have no policy concerns with the management of programs on reserves by Native people. I do not have a problem with that. My honourable friend from The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) knows that this government signed the first ever management-of-lotteries agreement with his band as a method of self-government, if you will. I do not like to use self-government because I do not completely understand the concept—it has not been explained to me adequately—but basically to give responsibility for service delivery, I do not have a problem with that. Where I do have a problem is in a request from IC coming from the Health critic of the New Democratic Party, a request that the provincial government take over financial responsibility for medical services, health care delivery services on reserve. I cannot accede to that because that is a responsibility the federal government has traditionally had. There is no question that in the process of unloading costs on the province, they would like to unload this one.

So let us separate the issue. Financially, the responsibility on reserve is federal government; management-wise of the issue, I do not have any

management-wise of the issue, I do not have any philosophical or program problem with the Native communities in Manitoba assuming a greater empowerment and management of health care delivery in their respective communities.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): I would like to maybe enlighten the minister just a little bit on the federal-provincial agreements that have been in place for a long time and are still in place today.

First, I want to refer to him an agreement that has been there since about 1964. He knows it, and I am glad that he knows that. The communities of Moose Lake, Chemawawin, Grand Rapids, I have been meeting with officials from the government, sometimes with the Department of Northern Affairs. I believe, the minister may have met with them at one point in time. Their main interest is, as the minister says, to eventually work toward the notion of having self-government.

I believe the minister when he says, when our band signed the gaming commission or the Lotteries Commission, that was not an attainment of true self-government as aboriginal people see it. In fact, it was just another milestone, if you will, or another evolutionary step toward the eventual true self-government that we have been after for a long time.

For the communities of Moose Lake, Chemawawin and Grand Rapids, they have been meeting and negotiating with different ministries with government and officials. So far as I am given to understand by the tribal council, there has been virtually no progress made in these meetings and negotiations. I know the federal government is party to those agreements that I refer to. Perhaps I can ask the minister to give this committee an update as to where those negotiations are and if, indeed, there has been any progress.

* (1540)

I know that I have asked him once or twice in the House a question on the same issue. Perhaps I will stop there for now and ask the minister to give us an update, or to give this committee an update, as to where we are at in terms of negotiating those health transfer agreements that my colleague had been referring to when she was talking about Mathias Colomb Indian Band.

Mr. Orchard: The federal government, I understand, is committed to the initiative to transfer responsibility for administration and delivery of

Community Health Services to Native control. As of July 27, 1990, eight projects involving 32 bands across Canada had reached completion with signed transfer agreements. Two of these signed agreements involve two bands in Manitoba, Mathias Colomb First Nation and Sandy Bay Band.

The Chemawawin Indian Band, adjacent to the Easterville community which currently receives health services from Manitoba Health, submitted a community health plan to Medical Services Branch, Health and Welfare Canada and Manitoba Health in June, 1989, indicating the community's readiness to proceed with transfer of control discussions. To date, no formal mechanism has been identified in Manitoba for negotiations of new service agreements between Indian bands and the provincial government.

Manitoba Health is not in the position to respond to the request for transfer of authority and resources for the administration of delivery of health services to Native communities without direction from cabinet. Nevertheless, the preparation of a provincial strategy is essential to prevent federal offloading of responsibility onto Manitoba for service provision to Native communities. That is the issue that has troubled not only this cabinet but previous ones, because clearly the federal government's agenda—they would welcome a transfer of responsibility and financial responsibility to the province. I think my honourable friend understands that.

The issue of transfer to Native health authorities has been a subject of discussion not only in this province but other provinces as well. I want to tell my honourable friend that in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the provincial territorial Ministers of Health met and, because this is not a narrowed provincial agenda but rather one which has impact on all provinces and territories, we undertook to hold a meeting of provincial territorial ministers with the federal Minister of Health and Native leaders in order to attempt the next steps in process.

All provincial ministers, I think it is fair to say, want the federal government at the table, because Native administrative responsibilities is the federal government's, not the provincial government's in terms of health service delivery.

They would be glad to have us there alone as provinces and picking up the program and the financial commitment. That is not where we want to

be, and I do not think the Native leadership want that to be. They believe the federal government has a financial and a program and policy obligation to the Native communities.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I know the minister was reading from a text that was given to him by his officials. The three communities that I mentioned are communities that are both Metis and Status people together. For example, in Chemawawin you have a provincial nursing station that is providing services to those people who are on the Metis side and presumably looks after people who are Status whenever the need arises, but primarily the Status Indian people go to The Pas for medical services.

I worked for the Swampy Cree Tribal Council back in 1979, and even in '79 these talks were being carried out between the tribal council and the federal government and the provincial government. Subsequently, more recently the talks have picked up again. It would seem to me, what is holding up any movement towards health transfer to the Status people is the fact that the expiry date of the federal-provincial agreement is still quite a ways off. At least that was the understanding I was given at one time when talking to provincial officials. I wonder if I can ask the minister to clarify that, whether that indeed is the roadblock, waiting for the federal-provincial agreement to expire.

Mr. Orchard: I do not believe that is the roadblock.

Mr. Lathlin: Is there indeed an expiry date on those federal-provincial agreements?

Mr. Orchard: I do not know whether there is or not, and my staff does not know whether there is or not either.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could I then ask the minister to, at some later date, perhaps give us or share that information with us, specifically referring to the federal-provincial agreement that is there, the terms and conditions and the expiry date and everything?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed that there is no expiry date. I will confirm that at next sitting of the Estimates for my honourable friend.

The reason why I did not answer in any other way but by simply saying I am not aware of that being a problem is that in all of the discussions I have to date around the issue, this is the first time I have heard of any mention of an expiry date. It has not been

part of any discussions I have had as driving the process as my honourable friend is concerned about.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the other reason that has been given by officials from the Department of Health and Northern Affairs is that the department was not willing to transfer anything over to the Indian band in terms of health programs and services, because there are still people there who have not regained their Status. Although if you look at the community of Chemawawin, for example, there is only a handful of people who are Metis, and the majority of the members of the Chemawawin First Nation are Status Indians. That is why the Chemawawin First Nation was so determined to gain control over the health services that were available in Chemawawin, whether they were federal or provincial.

Could I ask the minister if he would consider, given the small number of Metis people who are left in Chemawawin, of going ahead with the tribal council, Chemawawin First Nation, and the federal government of transferring those programs and services to the community of Chemawawin?

Mr. Orchard: I think, Mr. Acting Chairman, that is exactly part of the process that my honourable friend indicates has been discussed since 1979, because this is not a new issue. It has been unresolved even by the Pawley administration, I think it is fair to say. The reason it has been unresolved is that whatever you do in the band that my honourable friend mentioned will be the pattern that you use right across the board for all other, a transfer of responsibility. That is wherein, I think, all provincial governments, and this one not being an exception, want to clearly establish the fiscal framework with the federal government as to who has responsibility continued financial requirements are.

* (1550)

We make the case that on reserve, Native health programs are a federal government's responsibility. The federal government, as I have indicated earlier on, I think it is fair to say would like to have the province assume that responsibility. We cannot afford to be there, quite simply, because as I used an example earlier on to my honourable friend's colleague, the Health critic for the New Democratic Party, how many times in Question Period, how many times at the start of these Estimates has my honourable friend on behalf of the New Democratic

Party indicated that we should fight tooth and nail with the federal government to have them reinstate cash transfer payments to the province to support what, to support health care delivery.

That is why in any kind of agreement or a negotiated process of transfer of management responsibility and program responsibility with the Native communities in Manitoba, we want to understand fully and completely how it is the federal government is going to provide ongoing financial commitment to the provision of those services. We cannot on the one hand accept the legitimate argument of the NDP that we should be getting more money from the federal government to finance health care for Manitobans, and on the other hand simply put our hands up in the air and say we give up, we will take over yet another federal responsibility, this one being provision of health services to on-reserve Status Indian people.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do not believe the minister was listening to me when I was talking. Perhaps he was preoccupied with something else, because the answer that he gave is not really related to the question that I asked.

My question was, there is a facility out at Chemawawin, it is a provincial operation. Most of the residents in Chemawawin are treaty Indian people. There is now only a handful of Metis people there because all of them have regained their Status through Bill C-31. What would it cost the provincial government to agree to get out of the federal-provincial agreement if the federal government was willing to fund health transfer programs, which by the way, they have a policy that they do health transfer programs across the country?

Mr. Orchard: Obviously, I cannot answer that question today. Let me seek my honourable friend's clarification around the issue. The provision of service in this community stemmed from the 1964 agreement at which time, if I understand the general arrangements that were made, is that the province and the federal government jointly provided health care services. We did not make the distinction on a given program line whether the individual receiving the care—let us say for a doctor's care—was Status Indian or off reserve living in Metis community next to the reserve, neither did we ask for nursing service whether they were Status or non-Status. We had a split of costs which approximated, at that time, the

non-Status versus Status Indian population, so the costs were attempted to be split in some formula which reflected Status versus non-Status.

In that way, we did not have to go through, as I understand the agreement, the ability of billing for physician services delivered through the clinic provided to Metis community members. We did not have to have the federal government bill us and vice versa for nursing services or others that we have provided.

Now, the status of the community has changed. Recognize that. The replacement of the agreement will be one which, I think, my honourable friend will have to admit, set the precedent for other agreements in place. My honourable friend shakes his head. I will trust his wisdom in that. Where we are approaching the issue is in terms of the management of the system and the empowerment of the native community to manage their own care delivery. I do not have any philosophical disagreement, but where we want to understand, we want to go into this as not day-old kittens but hopefully full-grown cats with our eyes wide open so that we do not have the federal government yet again offloading, to province, provincial responsibility, provincial taxpayers, a financial responsibility that they have traditionally had, I guess, since this country was formed.

I believe that therein lies part of the difficulty, because this issue did not just magically appear in May of 1988. A previous administration, of the philosophical persuasion of my honourable friend, wrestled with this agreement and were unable, I believe, to resolve it, or else we would not be discussing it today. It is not as simple as my honourable friend might indicate. It is an issue which requires a great deal of consideration and forward thought before the provincial government accedes to any new arrangement, because our commitment has to be to provision of services that we are required. We want to hold the federal government to their obligations in any new agreement. Those obligations, we believe, are provision of health care services to Status Indian.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, what I cannot understand is the—I do understand the provincial government's position on aboriginal people, treaty aboriginal people. Their position is that they have absolutely no responsibility for treaty Indians, except, of course, when it comes to election time. All of a sudden, we become very, very important,

and we actually have people come to visit us on the reserves, knocking on our doors, even coming into our homes. That is the only time; we realize that. We know where we are in terms of the provincial government. The minister does not have to keep reminding the committee that you are a federal responsibility, except when it comes to election time.

The reason that I shook my head when you were saying—you know and because the minister, when he answers questions, whether it is in committee or in the House, always likes to come across as being very informative and well versed on issues that are asked of him, because he prefaces his responses by saying, let me correct my honourable friend because he or she does not know what she is talking about.

So I am glad I caught him on this one because that would not be a precedent-setting exercise if you were to do it in Chemawawin. All you have to do is go to The Pas and look at the operation there. There is a health transfer program there that has been going on ever since 1972. You have a full range of programs and services that are being fully funded by the federal government, so if you do it at Chemawawin, you are not going to be setting any precedence. It has been done in Manitoba and elsewhere in the country, and they also are doing it in Pukatawagan, the Mathias Colomb Indian Band.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer): Item 2(b)(1) Salaries—

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I paused because again the minister was not paying attention to what I was saying, he was too busy talking to his official. I would kind of think that the minister would be courteous enough to listen, or at least pay attention, or at least appear to be paying attention to members asking questions during these committee hearings.

So, for example, he mentions the Lotteries commission that we entered into. Did it cost the provincial government any money for us to enter into that kind of an agreement? Did it cost the government any money when we entered into the Moose management agreement when I was still chief of my band? No, it did not cost the government anything.

* (1600)

I am just going to leave that part for now, and I want to finish off by referring to a letter that was written to the First Minister, the Premier (Mr. Filmon),

regarding an agreement that has been in existence since 1976 between the provincial Health department on dental services with the Swampy Cree Tribal Council.

Now, the letter says here, and since 1976, the Swampy Cree Tribal Council has had an agreement with the provincial Health to provide dental services to the children on the Swampy Cree Tribal Council member reserves and adjacent Metis communities. Your government's recently announced budgetary cutback will compromise oral health for our youth.

So the program that was cut back had to do with funding that went to serving Metis children who were 13 and 14 years old.

What I would like to ask the minister is: Because he always seems to be so concerned about the health of everybody, including aboriginal people, why would he see fit to cut back what we thought was a very worthwhile program, an agreement that had been there since 1976?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I will deal with the dental health issue after I take slight umbrage. I believe I asked my honourable friend, "correct me if I am wrong," not that he was wrong. I know maybe he is a little sensitive when he does not get the answer he wants. I cannot help that.

I simply want to indicate to my honourable friend that, when he talks about the Lotteries Agreement, which was signed with himself as chief of The Pas Band, not between an NDP government that he is now part of, but between a Conservative government—

An Honourable Member: Started with the NDP government.

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend has interjected the gratuitous piece of information, started with an NDP government, but my honourable friend makes the statement that the only time politicians come to the reserves and come into their homes is during election time. I believe the agreement that was signed with him as chief was well before an election campaign, and he might reconsider some of those statements which stretch one's imagination and destroy one's credibility when they make them because they are not exactly accurate and factual.

Now, Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend indicated that The Pas had an arrangement of provision of medical services paid for by the federal

government and had existed since—what?—1972, I believe my honourable friend said.

An Honourable Member: Well, you must know. You know everything.

Mr. Orchard: Now, my honourable friend does not know what he just said five minutes ago, but I am assuming my memory is correct in what he said five minutes ago. If he might want to, we can check Hansard to see if my honourable friend did say it, if he does not now remember what he said, but my understanding is that he is asking us at Chemawawin to take over or to allow the federal government to deliver the services there and pay for them. Is that what my honourable friend is suggesting, because he used the similar analogy between The Pas after discussing an issue of transfer of responsibility to Chemawawin? Is the federal government going to pay for the services in Chemawawin? Is that what my honourable friend is proposing?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I believe the minister has advised us that there have been ongoing discussions and meetings and so forth, so I do not feel the need to really apprise him of developments that have taken place, because he is the minister. He has just finished telling us that there have been ongoing meetings. Surely he knows what is going on in his department.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I was just trying to determine what was ongoing in Estimates here, because you cannot use an example of medical services paid by the federal government at The Pas Band. Unless I misunderstood my honourable friend, I believe he wanted the provincial government to pay for the service on Chemawawin. The two are not comparable. If the federal government wants to pay for the services at Chemawawin, as they do at The Pas, that is a different issue. That is exactly the issue we discussed for about 10 or 15 minutes. The example my honourable friend used at The Pas as a comparable example may not be as comparable as one would like.

Mr. Lathlin: You see, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that is why I was saying that the minister was not listening. He was preoccupied with something, but then he very quickly told me that he is quite capable of sometimes doing two things at the same time. I believe him. What I told the minister is that The Pas Band has virtually full health transfer program.

They have nurses, they have community health workers, they have a committee and now they are going into a full-blown health transfer mode with the federal government. The federal government will be paying for all of those services, because I have gone through the federal health policy over and over again and that is what it says.

What I was trying to make the minister understand, Mr. Acting Chairperson, and that is when he was either sleeping or talking to his official or thinking about something else, was that I could not understand why he would be so hesitant to turn over the facility, the programs and services over at Chemawawin when the federal government is quite willing to do a health transfer program to Chemawawin. The stumbling block has always been, no, the expiry date has not come around. We are committed to keep providing these services to the Metis people. That is the only reason why I said I could not understand why he would refuse to agree to a health transfer program at Chemawawin when it probably would not cost the province anything.

Mr. Orchard: I thank my honourable friend for that clarification. On the issue of the children's dental health service provision a decision was made at the last budget that we would maintain the education and health promotion components of the children's dental health program, which ranges from no services in Brandon or the city of Winnipeg, up to age 14 service in some parts of the province, to age 12 in other communities, to age 10 in other communities.

What we have done is maintained all of the promotion, education, fluoride rinse programs, for ages up to 14, 12 or 10 depending on the community. In terms of restorative and reparative work and extractions, we will be removing that service to ages 13-14 where it is currently provided.

* (1610)

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, perhaps I could ask the minister—I know when I was going to school on the reserve we used to have a visit from a dentist once a year. There was no education work done. There was no awareness work done. There was no prevention. The only time we ever saw a dentist was once a year when he came around. I am telling you, even though he only came once a year to the community, after he would leave half the community would be toothless because that is how

bad our dental health was. That is the truth. I am not making it up.

What would happen, you see, when I was executive director of the tribal council, if our staff was out in Grand Rapids or Moose Lake and if somebody came to them in terrible pain needing medical, dental attention, I would say, yes, go ahead help him. I mean who the hell cares about cost. The person is in pain; help him right there; it is only going to take you half an hour anyway.

My question for the minister is: What happens now, for example, in the area of prevention, dental hygiene, education and even extractions? Does that mean that people have to go to The Pas and have to pay \$50 surcharge or do they have to come to Ashern or Winnipeg? What do those people do in terms of accessing dental services or do we send them a butcher of a dentist once a year, like what they used to do to us a long time ago?

Mr. Orchard: I think my honourable friend indicated there was no awareness work, there was no prevention. Those programs remain intact, as do the fluoride rinse, as do the hygiene education, as do the oral health promotion programs. What will not be there is the extraction at age 13 or 14. That will have to be accessed by the individuals in wherever they, the communities, can provide that service. That is what parents face in the city of Winnipeg for the entire length of a child's school years. The same thing in the city of Brandon.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The education, the health promotion, the fluoride rinse, the opportunity for practice of good oral hygiene will remain. That has always been the strength of the program, and I think my honourable friend in his earlier comments alluded to that, that all you had in his younger years was a dentist coming in once a year and leaving half of his community toothless, because there was no education, there was no oral hygiene, there was no fluoride rinse, there was no preventative measures and education programs undertaken. Those will be continued to be undertaken for the entire range of school children who are currently enrolled in the program.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am just going to ask one more and then I will be through.

So the minister is telling us that those people who are going to have to have their teeth extracted will have to travel on their own wherever they can find a

dentist. What about other preventative work, like braces and other special type of dental care like that? Would that still be available or are the people going to be left on their own to look after that as well?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, for a child of age 13 or 14 they will now do what a child of age 15 has had to do. In other words, when a child reaches 15, they no longer have the services available in the program, and should they have needed an extraction, they would have had to seek that extraction through some other provision of service. The children's dental health program covered students only to the age of 14 in most communities, outside of Brandon and Winnipeg, to age 12 in one other community, to age 10 in one other community. So they will have to seek the service as the 15-year-olds do as they come off the program whether that be in adjacent communities or Winnipeg, that is the choice of the individual.

My understanding is that braces and orthodontic services were not part of the children's dental health program unless, for instance, that happened as a result of an injury on the playground, but the program provided education, prevention, oral hygiene, fluoride rinses and, where necessary for younger children, repair of caries or possibly extraction.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairman, I just want to add a few words here. I think I just want to indicate that the issue that the minister was trying to explain and the members for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis) and The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) were asking, I think the issue is larger than that. The issue is who is ultimately responsible for the health care of Native people. I think the issue, as the minister has said, to try to outline, is a very complex and a major issue, and it is going to be a major issue of debate for the next, you know, probably a year. It is going to be a major responsibility for the new Grand Chief from Manitoba to have that kind of approach because the—as I understand the total determination of self-government and the Native health care, they are inseparable issues. They are a major component of their well-being and which is very crucial and very important.

As the minister has said and the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), who is very well-known in his community and has done a lot of work—but I think the issue goes back 100—how many?—116 years ago when the whole issue of—in 1874 when the first treaty was signed. That treaty, I guess it was No.

6—no, it was not No. 6 treaty, and during that treaty was the only, as far as I could get from the research, that treaty did specifically mention the role of the federal government to take responsibility for health care.

Later on, it was tried many times to have the other treaties to have the same kind of provisions, but it was always denied. The federal government has always maintained a line that they are providing health care as a moral obligation. They never really accepted a legal obligation, so what has happened was the health care was provided to the various Native communities under the various treaties.

The problem started, as I know in 1970, when the national health plan, medicare, came. At that time there was question about who was going to pay for deinsured services. I think that was another issue.

Now, what we have today, I do not know the specific issue the member from The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) was asking, but I think the issue is larger in terms of the provincial and federal government and who is going to be ultimately responsible. If you try to take one issue, one project here and there, I think it is easier for them to offload the responsibility. Now, finally, somebody is going to be responsible.

I think the issue is a larger issue, and it has to be dealt on a major constitutional conference here. I do not think it is going to be solved in any single province and a single band. Probably, by next year, I think we will see some response, but I just wanted to add those comments.

It is a very sad story that for 116 years the responsibility, which has been the federal government, was taken as a moral but never as a legal responsibility has been the cause of many problems. If you look at the statistics, how the ill effects of the Native community is really a tragedy, that many people are suffering from so many illnesses. Rather than me going through all the statistics, I just want to put our views on the record that I think there has to be a clear-cut distinction: who is going to be taking full responsibility, and that apparently the Native community will be deciding about the self-government, and Native health and other social work is so inseparable. I think the debate will be a very hot heated one. We will see how this proceeds.

I think that is the direction, probably, the Native community would like to take. I do not know; that is my perception. That is what I have been getting the

information through the various organizations—not various organizations, but what I have researched I have that that is the direction they want to take. I just want to register my comments.

* (1620)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would just like to carry on in this area because I think it is a very important one and we should devote considerable time to it.

The member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) makes the point that many of these issues must be dealt with in terms of the broader constitutional agenda and the resolution of jurisdictional disputes. However, we have been raising some issues today that are waiting for the province to take some leadership on that can be addressed now. They fall outside of that broad constitutional jurisdictional matter and yet the minister continues, it would appear, to be hiding behind jurisdictional issues as a way of avoiding the issues and approving some applications before him.

There are clearly some areas where he could be—he has the jurisdiction, the authority to act now, but it takes a little bit of political will and it takes some consistency on his part in terms of addressing the needs of the aboriginal community and the nonaboriginal community.

I raised the question of Pukatawagan and the Mathias Colomb Band. This is a case—and I now have in front of me the expenditures for MHSC in terms of payments to the federal government for claims submitted by—from nursing stations for their holding beds. That is an expenditure for the year 1989-90 that came to a total of \$1,583,358. So clearly we have a case where the province has accepted these claims as legitimate insurable benefits. The province is paying the federal government for those claims submitted.

So the issue at hand is, why does this minister not recognize the transfer that has been effected in the case of Pukatawagan and deal directly with Mathias Colomb Band instead of treating aboriginal communities and aboriginal people as second and third class citizens? That is the first question. I still have not heard from the minister why he is not prepared to enter into a direct relationship with this particular band.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, you know, the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) and I may have had a small disagreement wherein we would exchange direct words, but at least the

honourable member for The Pas did not stoop to the accusation that this government is treating the Native people of Manitoba as second-class citizens. Only the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) gets into that kind of silly rhetoric.

If my honourable friend for St. Johns thinks that enhances her status somewhere in the province of Manitoba. I would like her to point out where it enhances her status. I just get rather, well, sick and tired of that kind of silly rhetoric and narrowed, easy to use the words without understanding the implication that my honourable friend puts behind it. It is offensive. I simply want to tell my honourable friend, it is offensive. I know that will not change her style and her pattern. She will remain using that kind of rhetoric without any reason to, without any issues, without any examples that she can use which would reinforce that statement. I would expect that if she is serious about the issue, she would raise the level of debate just a wee tad.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I was going to start my comments by pointing out that I felt fortunate today in that my colleague the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) was being treated as rudely and as patronizingly as I have been over the last couple of weeks. I did not detect much of a difference in terms of response on the part of the minister. Perhaps there would be less emotion and concern and compassion being expressed in these Estimates if the minister would answer the question.

Once again, he has chosen to avoid answering the question which is simply, this government has recognized, met certain medical services to be payable services, why does this government not pay directly to the band providing those medical services?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, that is exactly the issue that we spent about a half an hour discussing with the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin). I know my honourable friend sat through all of those discussions. I cannot add any more light on the issue than I did in the responses I gave to the honourable member for The Pas. I would suggest to my honourable friend that maybe she might want to consider a perusal of Hansard to see what it is she has objected to in my answers.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will not need to peruse Hansard to be able to play back to the minister everything that he has said in response to our questioning. He has been quite

consistent. He has chosen to hide out and control this whole area rather than to respond to the aspirations of our aboriginal community.

Since he will not answer that question directly, since we are not talking about a jurisdictional issue here, although the minister would like always to colour the issues that way, could he tell us why he is delaying a response, on a number of fronts, for authority and funds for communities that involve reserves, where there are regions that have reserve and nonreserve populations, where we have Status and non-Status populations, where we have aboriginal and nonaboriginal people all working together trying to put in place an effective, co-ordinated health care delivery system that is, by going that route, a cost saving to this government and to all taxpayers in the province of Manitoba, why he is delaying responding to the applications before him from Sandy Bay and from the Swampy Cree Tribal Council?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I thought that the issue was becoming clearer with discussions I had with the member for The Pas, but now my honourable friend is saying, why does the province not just pay those on-reserve costs direct? That is the whole issue. Now, my honourable friend says no. I am quite sure that is what she just suggested in her last statement was that we pay those costs direct. -(interjection)- She says no. I will let my honourable friend indicate what she did say then.

* (1630)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The minister often gets proposals for him from communities, from regions, for approval of arrangements for delivery of health care services. In the case of Sandy Bay, he has a proposal before him, initiated by a reserve but supported by half a dozen municipalities, for a salaried physician payment system for a health care delivery system that meets the needs of that community. That is the most cost-effective efficient way to go from their perspective. He has chosen, in this case, to delay approval of that application. The question before the minister is: Why has he chosen to delay this application? Is it because there is a reserve involved in terms of this regional proposal, or is it because he has problems with the notion of a non-fee-for-service arrangement?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, if I understand my honourable friend correctly, she is suggesting that the provincial government provide the financial

support for a salaried physician delivering services to an on-reserve community. That is the whole issue. That is not our responsibility. Again, my honourable friend tries to be on both sides of this issue, and I do not know where the NDP are coming from. Are they saying that the provincial government should pay all of the medical costs, salaried physicians in this case, and other costs for on-reserve Native health service delivery?

If my honourable friend is saying that, then she had better check with the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) who just said that, since 1972, the federal government has paid for all of those services and community outreach, et cetera that he so eloquently put before this committee earlier on today. Now my honourable friend is saying the province should pay that. We have one New Democrat saying one thing; we have the Health critic saying another thing. What is the position my honourable friend from St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) is putting forward as the NDP Party policy on Native health issues? That the province assume responsibility and funding, is that the policy? That is what I just heard my honourable friend say.

I say to my honourable friend, that is not this government's policy, and that is why we are negotiating, discussing, attempting to get clarification and seek the commitment of the federal government to carry on that program and financial responsibility. As my honourable friend, the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) so well understands, it is a very complex issue which the federal government would love to have the province fund.

Mr. Acting Chairman, it appears as if the federal government has an ally in the NDP. Correct me if I am wrong, please—Brian Mulroney and the NDP.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The minister likes to try to play off individuals one against each other and to play games throughout these Estimates. If he listened, and I am sure he did, he knows that we are all saying the same thing, that this government has tended to hide behind jurisdictional issues to refuse as an excuse for avoiding action in areas for which it has full responsibility and authority to act but has applied a double standard in terms of the health care delivery, in terms of our aboriginal community versus nonaboriginal communities.

Let me ask the minister, since he is not prepared to address any of these issues very seriously, if he

at least is prepared to start addressing the concerns of aboriginal people living off reserve, and if he can indicate through all of these research task force study initiatives, if he has in fact made any effort to evaluate the utilization of health care services in terms of the aboriginal community versus the nonaboriginal community?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend says that—she used the term "hide out," and I avoided reacting to it. Now she has again said that I am preferring to hide behind jurisdictional issues. When my honourable friend makes those statements, my honourable friend is trying to cloud two divergent positions from the New Democrats of Manitoba in this Legislature.

The member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) clearly stated that the model that he saw as being appropriate was the one of The Pas Band where, since 1972, the federal government has paid for the provision of service. The Health critic for the New Democratic Party this afternoon has said, the provincial government should pay for a salaried physician to provide services on Sandy Bay Indian Reserve. Those are two different positions.

One I agree with, the member for The Pas, in that he is consistent that the federal government has responsibility for financial contribution toward provision of health care services on reserve. I cannot agree with my honourable friend the Health critic for the New Democratic Party when she says the province, the provincial ministry of Health, should provide the money for a salaried physician for on-reserve medical service delivery in Sandy Bay, because that is what she is saying.

Now, I do not know whether that is nouveau New Democratic Party policy, but it is inconsistent between two members sitting at the Estimates table today.

So then my honourable friend says well, you know, I am hiding behind a jurisdictional issue. I have made it very clear this afternoon that I have no problem with the empowerment of the Native community on reserve to manage more of their service delivery and program. No problem with that. That is why we signed, as I used as an earlier example, an agreement with The Pas Band in terms of management of Lotteries undertakings.

The one thing that this province wants to assure itself of is that the federal government will continue its support financially of health service delivery to

on-reserve Native communities. That is a consistent approach that we have taken including in the years when we were last government, from 1977 to 1981.

I do not detect that consistency in policy from the New Democrats. They seem to be saying that the province should take over the financial responsibility for on-reserve Native health delivery. I do not agree with that.

If that is what my honourable friend is advocating, if that is what my honourable friend wants me to sign on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba, I will have to inform my honourable friend that, with regret, I cannot do that.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is the minister saying that he is prepared to disregard, ignore, the legitimate authority as established under Order-in-Council of the Seven Regions Health Council, as established under The District Health and Social Services Act which gives that region, that health council, the authority to provide medical services? Is he saying that because one of those partners, one of the parties who happens to be a legal signatory of that regional health council, is a reserve that he is not prepared to respect his own legislation, his own Order-in-Council for the right of that regional council to provide medical services?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I did not say any such thing. What I said to my honourable friend is that the on-service provision of medical services, health services, ought to be funded by the federal government. That is consistent.

My honourable friend seems to say the province should provide those, and that is where I have the difficulty in coming to grips with what is the real New Democratic Party policy on this issue. Is my honourable friend saying that the province should pay for the salaried physician for on-service medical delivery at Sandy Bay? Is that yes or no? Is that an easy question to ask my honourable friend? Is that what she is saying we should do? I seek her advice.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is the minister saying he is not prepared to foster efforts of co-operation between reserve and off-reserve communities, and Status and non-Status communities, and aboriginal and nonaboriginal communities to work together to address the medical services of their region and their community?

Mr. Orchard: Well, I am not going to answer your question until you answer my question. Of course

not, do not be so silly—of course not. But the issue is responsibility financially for the service delivery on reserve, and I have been consistent in saying to my honourable friend that that is a federal government responsibility. My honourable friend seems to be somewhere different, yet does not really want to admit it because I suggest she has not caucused it with her Leader.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, perhaps I could ask the minister about his initiatives with respect to off-reserve aboriginal issues, since he is not prepared to address anything in terms of the reserve situation and some of the applications before him. Could he indicate what initiatives he has undertaken over the last number of years to deal with the extraordinary health problems facing our off-reserve aboriginal communities?

* (1640)

Mr. Orchard: As we discussed last evening, for instance, in the collaborative program called Street LINKS, the City of Winnipeg and the provincial-federal governments are providing services to Native youth who are "street kids," as well as others, non-Native people who are part of the street culture in downtown Winnipeg. That is the newest initiative.

I am aware that we have carried on with the service provisions that have grown over the number of years. We have not reduced any of those services that had been in place for a number of years, a number of governments, in terms of service provision for nonreserve Status Native Manitobans.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: To repeat a question I asked earlier, is there a capacity somewhere under the privity of the minister, either within his department or with the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, to track aboriginal versus nonaboriginal utilization of our health care services?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am informed by staff that we do not have the ability, through the commission which deals with numbers and names, as to attach ethnic origin to them. So we are unable to accomplish that tracking, as my honourable friend would want us to do.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Perhaps the minister could look into the initiatives presently in Ontario for implementing data collection systems that allow that kind of comparative utilization review.

I would think that the minister would be most interested in that kind of analysis, given the much more critical and serious health care issues facing our aboriginal communities, particularly the group that is most often ignored in all of these studies and research and evaluations, those people living off reserve.

I am sure the minister is aware of some of those statistics, but I would point him to a recent article in *Synergy*, which documented very clearly—a life expectancy of eight years, less than the national average; suicides in the 10 to 19 age group, seven times the national average; post-neonatal death rate at four times the national average; gastroenteritis during the first year of life, 20 times the national average; infant mortality rate, 60 percent above the national average; a study in Manitoba indicating that 60 percent of aboriginal deaths were drug related compared to 27 percent of Canadian deaths; and approximately 75 percent of all deaths involving accidents, poisoning or violence among Indians and Inuit related to alcohol abuse according to a recent survey, and the statistics go on and on.

On that basis, I think it would be useful to have as much information as possible to address the concerns of aboriginal people living off reserve.

I would like to ask specifically about an issue in this area, where I know the minister has received correspondence and presentations and submissions, and that has to do with renal failure among aboriginal Manitobans and requests before him for some specific initiatives.

I would ask him how he is responding to the following requests from a number of individuals, particularly documented by Dr. John McKenzie, head of Nephrology at Health Sciences Centre: No. 1, for preventative dietary and hygiene problems on reserves—programs and initiatives to move in that area; No. 2, support for bands to develop their own water and electricity—sewage problems; No. 3, assistance in terms of allowing Natives, aboriginal people, to be able to hemodialyze at least on some reserves, either dialyzing themselves or being dialyzed at nursing stations; finally, a Native dialysis housing project in Winnipeg to assist temporarily or permanently relocated Native families?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, a number of those initiatives, when they are on reserve, I believe, we provide as much support as possible, but I think the initiative and negotiation for that initiative, to

bring it to fruition, is an ongoing discussion between the respective bands and the federal government in terms of northern medical services.

In terms of the proposal that there should be a facility in Winnipeg to serve the needs of those, particularly northern and remote Natives, who are dialyzing in the city of Winnipeg, I just met recently with the proponent group who have made that suggestion. They themselves have recently, as I understand it, brought an individual on who is assisting them in creating a proposal around the issue, and we have not received a final proposal from them for consideration by government. So I cannot indicate direction other than to indicate the status of the issue with government.

In terms of sewer and water, provision of those services and waste disposal on reserve, again, I believe those issues are issues that the respective bands negotiate with the federal government through Indian Affairs. I believe they make reasonable suggestions because they are part of the determinants of health which underpin Healthy Public Policy, so that their initiation and funding by the federal government we support. It may well lead to an improved health status and a significant reduction in a number of the specific disease entities that my honourable friend has discussed.

Again, when those services are required on reserve, the provincial government does not assume the funding program approval policies.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Item 2.(b)(1) Salaries \$1,620,100—passed; (2) Other Expenditures \$5,325,100—passed; (3) External Agencies \$888,600—passed.

Item (c) Women's Health: (1) Salaries \$415,200.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I wonder, before we close off today's discussions I would like to respond to a couple of issues that were raised yesterday and provide information to my honourable friends.

My honourable friend the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) indicated the potential financial difficulty of Michael Lloyd and Associates and was asking whether that was of any concern.

Inquiries were made of the Corporations and Business Names of Corporate Affairs, and here is the information that I would like to provide to my honourable friend. Michael Lloyd and Associates are in default status because the company did not

submit the annual return of information for 1991 which was due by the end of February 1991. They are not in danger of being cancelled and Corporate Affairs would still issue a certificate of status for the company if a request was received.

In January 1992, if the company still has not filed the 1991 annual return, it will be asked to submit the 1991 and the 1992 returns. The company will be given 90 days to comply. If it does not submit the 1991 return within the 90-day period, the company at that time could be cancelled.

So I do not think, from the information that I have been able to gather, that the difficulty with Michael Lloyd and Associates is financial, as alleged yesterday by my honourable friend the member for St. Johns but is in terms—

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On a point of order, the minister knows that I raised a straightforward question about whether he had any concern about the fact that this corporation was listed in a default status—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, that is exactly the issue that my honourable friend raised, that the company was in default status. I pointed out that the default status does not appear to be a financial problem of the corporation, but rather a noncompliance with return of an annual return of information.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister should know that I made no reference to financial difficulties. I simply quoted from the Manitoba Corporations—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, so I hope that clears the issue up for my honourable friend. If my honourable friend is going to pose questions about

default status of companies with which the government is dealing, I want to provide her with the information that she requested, and that is what I have done.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Another point of order, Mr. Acting Chairperson. The minister can respond in the same light in which the question was raised. It was simply an objective question around if he had any concerns in terms of that word being listed in terms of this government's own records with respect to Manitoba corporations. He does not have to add his own innuendo and an interpretation. We could expect from this minister a little more respect and dignity and just general human decency.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Orchard: I am sorry my honourable friend is offended, but when my honourable friend brings an information to the committee -(interjection)-

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please.

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend came to committee yesterday, and questioned whether we were concerned about the default status of a company we were dealing with. Someone from the outside, reading my honourable friend's comment, might conclude that it was financial difficulties, and I am clearing up any potential confusion caused by my honourable friend's question that the default status is not providing information to the corporate branch. There is no indication of any financial difficulties with the corporation. I think that is quite a fair thing to do.

My honourable friend asked the question; I provided the information. If my honourable friend is embarrassed about her question from yesterday, that is my honourable friend's problem.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I have no embarrassment about raising a simple objective question. It is the imputation of motives and the interpretation and colour that he has put upon those questions. If he has some concerns about financial status of this corporation—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to also provide to my honourable friend a copy of the Health Services Development Fund. -(interjection)- Well, not unless you have.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: We are on to Women's Health. I would like to ask the minister if he could tell us how many deaths and how many diagnosed cases of breast cancer, if he could give us those statistics for whatever years he has available.

An Honourable Member: You are so good at it, Don.

Mr. Orchard: Stick around; you might learn something.

An Honourable Member: Not from you, I will not.

Mr. Orchard: Good. I would not want that either.

Manitoba in 1989, there were 157 deaths and 655 diagnosed cases of breast cancer. I do not have 1990 figures with me nor do I have 1988 or '87. We can attempt to provide those for my honourable friend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister tell us what the difference in—give us the comparative cost for diagnostic mammogram versus screening mammogram?

Mr. Orchard: Diagnostic mammogram will cost approximately \$74 and, in terms of the discussions that are ongoing with the breast cancer screening committee, I do not believe that there is a projected cost for a screening mammogram. It will be less than the \$74 of approximate cost for diagnostic.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is it not the case that diagnostic mammograms cost about double of screening mammogram?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I cannot indicate whether that is right or wrong, but it is more expensive. The factors which drive the screening program costs are the negotiated agreement that one would hope to achieve with radiologists and other professionals who are undertaking the program.

The diagnostic mammogram is under the fee-for-service schedule of the Health Services

Commission; hence has a fee schedule negotiated. The anticipation and, indeed, the experience from other jurisdictions wherein they have undertaken a breast cancer screening program is that they establish a rate which is not fee for service and it varies quite substantially.

Naturally, any negotiation or any approval of program that we would consider would have to reflect a significantly lower charge for screening because of the potential volumes of service which would be anticipated in a screening program versus from time to time a diagnostic mammography screening.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister indicate which provinces in Canada now have implemented the breast screening mammogram?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, Nova Scotia has commenced a program in June of 1991; Ontario, late 1990; Saskatchewan, April, 1990; Alberta, the fall of 1990 and British Columbia, the longest standing program, in July, 1988, and Quebec—no, Quebec are basically in the same position we are.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Has the minister received reports from all of those provinces that have had breast screening mammogram up and running for some time now?

Mr. Orchard: I believe that the committee has indeed received, particularly, the British Columbia study, and I cannot answer as to whether other provincial studies have been provided to them. I will attempt to find that out.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Although the minister may feel that this is a repeat question, I am wondering, given all of this information, if he is prepared to indicate now how soon he can move in terms of a long-stated promise to introduce breast screening mammogram procedure in Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Naturally, we are wanting to undertake an early detection program as we have indicated. I have indicated to my honourable friend that there is not unanimous—there is not consensus around the issue of how we ought to approach the program. We are prepared to act expeditiously upon advice when received and—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McAlpine): Order, please. The hour now being five o'clock, and time for private members' hour, committee please rise.

SUPPLY—RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Would the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Rural Development, page 144.

We will have the opening remarks by the Minister of Rural Development.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Chair, I was going to just table my remarks, if I had been able to get in last evening prior to ten o'clock, and would have accommodated the committee, but I will make a few comments in my opening remarks and try and keep them fairly brief so that the work of the committee can get on as it should do, and that is the questioning of the members opposite.

Let me first of all say, Madam Chairman, that I want to acknowledge the work that my colleague the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) has carried out as Minister responsible for Rural Development, a very well-received member of the Legislative Assembly working with municipal councils. I want to acknowledge the work that he has done as minister and thank him for that contribution. I am pleased to carry on the responsibilities of Rural Development.

In introducing Rural Development Estimates for '91-92, I will be highlighting significant events of the past year, confirming directions my department will be taking and linking dollar figures to program and policy initiatives.

I would like to open by saying that the budget for Rural Development is down by \$2 million from last year. In analyzing the reduction, members will have noticed that the major decrease, about \$1.5 million, comes from staff salaries. I appreciate the foresight shown by senior staff in adjusting program delivery mechanisms over the past several months and not hiring staff to fill vacant positions. This has meant that government goals have been achievable, while negative impacts on employees have been kept to a minimum.

In all, Rural Development lost 39.14 full-time and term positions. Of that, 25 positions were vacant, six employees chose reassignments offered through the department, four chose to be named to a re-employment list, three opted for retirement and one opted for the enhanced severance package. I

want to acknowledge the efforts put forward by senior staff who participated in this budget exercise. I know the decisions that had to be made did not come easy, and I appreciate the hard work and effort which supported those decisions.

It is a tradition, in remarks introducing Estimates, for the minister to acknowledge the efforts put forth by municipal officials, and I am pleased to do so—the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities and the Manitoba Municipal Administrators Association—and commend their executive and their membership for the dedication which continues to be shown to the citizens they represent.

Let me say, Madam Chairman, after having this past week and a part of having met with the municipalities during the past few days, as I have said, discussing with them some of the decisions that government has taken, the reasons why government has taken them. They may not be in agreement with those decisions, but at least they understand the reasons why decisions had to be taken. It has been an exercise which has been important to us and, I think, helpful to the municipal councillors.

* (1430)

In these difficult times, when rural Manitoba is buffeted with uncertainties from many quarters outside our sphere of control, the importance of their work certainly assumes extra dimensions. It is gratifying also to recognize the efforts of regional development agencies whose work fosters economic development thrusts at local levels, conservation districts whose work on behalf of the environment will be seen by generations to come.

The difficult choices we have had to make have meant some reductions in some areas of service to our municipal partners. It has also resulted in a rethinking of our relationship with local governments and the shift in directions in line with municipal requests, I may add, from regulatory to advisory in many instances.

The province recognizes that local governments form the backbone of rural Manitoba and that municipal corporations provide a framework within which people from all walks of community life can direct their energies and ideas. Just as the concept of sustainability, the widely held belief that a secure environmental, economic and social future will rely in large measure on actions we take today,

underlies provincial policy, sustainability is applied to our cities, towns, villages. Rural municipalities can offer local stability and progress.

Earlier this year, I introduced a Community Choices Program, a Sustainable Communities Program for Manitoba. Community Choices supports local initiatives, local control and the local development of community plans, which take into account social, economic and environmental circumstances. To date, eight communities have chosen to work proactively for their future through Community Choices, while several other communities are organizing round tables prior to applying for assistance.

I may add as well, Madam Chairman, that during these past few the days, the members are aware that I have introduced the Rural Development Bond Program as legislation for first reading. I look forward to the speedy passage of this legislation so communities can in fact develop a source of backing for their community activities in an economic sense for job creation, reestablish in the communities' local confidence so that we can see activities that will in fact enhance local economies, overall provincial and the country's economic activities.

To meet with each community's unique needs, Community Development offices' one-stop shops, which offer comprehensive and integrated land use, economic development and conservation planning, have been co-ordinated in nine rural centres. Through cross-disciplining advisory and planning services to local governments and community groups, we see our rural communities being in better position to shape their own futures and to select positive directions for themselves.

Rural Development has taken a leadership role in decentralization through offices located across Manitoba. I am pleased to note that a comprehensive Community Development Services office opened earlier this year in several communities, one of them in Deloraine, that staff assigned to The Pas and to Brandon in the past year enhance our relationship with northern and Westman local governments.

While Westman is on our minds, it is worth noting that the cabinet office in Brandon has seen an increase in inquiries about government programs and policies over this past year, particularly from rural communities.

In examining supports extended to municipalities through grants and payment programs, I can report that grants in lieu of Taxes are up. Members are aware that budgeting is a variable exercise as grants in lieu are based on municipal mill rates which vary from year to year.

A major transportation grant program for the mobility disadvantaged has been transferred from Highways and Transportation. This came about through a functional alignment in line with the Rural Development's thrust at providing comprehensive services to local governments and with government efficiency and program administration in mind. The program for the mobility disadvantaged enriches our transit assistance program and, I am happy to report, will be administered through our Brandon office.

Centennial celebrations confirm Manitoba's community heritage. I look forward to attending celebrations over the summer in rural communities and I am pleased to congratulate the rural communities that are celebrating their centennial years: Brandon municipality, East St. Paul, Ritchot, Langford and the village of Benito. I am sure the critic has an idea of where that community is and may be able to even participate in their celebrations as well.

Grants for police services have been enhanced through increased contributions by rural municipalities in recognition of the need to correct imbalances between rural and urban municipalities. Provincial support has remained at the same level. We are pleased with the Minister of Justice and the successful negotiations which resulted in a one-year extension to the federal-provincial contract. I can tell you, the review committee is being reconstituted to look at not only police funding but other issues such as how services are supplied and how costs should be shared.

I want to reiterate my desire to resolve the difficulties that have been pointed out by the municipal corporations as it relates to RCMP costs throughout rural Manitoba. There is an imbalance there, and I believe that, as long as there are debates going on between the different local governments, then we have other issues that we should be putting our energies toward and in fact have to get on with.

I want to encourage the members opposite, if they have ideas and thoughts as to how better we can

improve the imbalance and how better we can resolve the policing costs, that I would invite them to put their thoughts forward.

Funds have been allocated for downtown revitalization for our larger centres, particularly one larger centre, for this year, and proposals have been received or are in discussion with two others. Brandon is one which funds have been identified for, and discussions are currently taking place with Thompson and Selkirk.

The port of Churchill and its current tentative position is receiving support through an economic advisory committee established to examine the entire spectrum of the economic development opportunities and encourage residents to take ownership of the community's economic future. I want to compliment the current leadership of the town of Churchill and their desire to improve conditions, new ideas and concepts which are extremely important to make sure that Churchill plays a full role in the continued development of northern Manitoba. This committee was originally housed with Manitoba Highways, but to develop a sustainable comprehensive vision, responsibility has been transferred to my department.

Manitoba is water rich, but unfortunately, only about 10 percent of Manitobans live in water-rich central and northern Manitoba. The rest of us, plus most of our agricultural land, are in the relatively dry southern areas. Safe, secure supplies of quality water are crucial to the sustainable future of much of agri-Manitoba. I may say, Madam Chairman, that the water which was received in southern Manitoba was something that was timely and I say much appreciated.

I know that areas that did not receive it are still going to feel that they for some reason should have it, and they should. I would expect that, with the weather conditions that we are currently seeing, it will in fact spread to all regions of the province. If the forecasters know what they are talking about, that in fact will take place. I know that we have had substantial rainfall over the last few hours. Reports of half an inch to some areas of three to four inches, which in fact could be too much, in general will help finish out a lot of the crop throughout rural Manitoba.

A reorganized Manitoba Water Services Board will be working more closely with municipalities, rural groups and farmers to tackle water supply problems and programs. The board will be utilizing

consulting engineers from the private sector for design and construction supervision. Members can be assured, however, that the board will continue to play a primary liaison role with local governments and the citizens groups to ensure provincial and technical resources are well matched.

It is worth noting that a major tripartite funding agreement for upgrading and stabilizing water supplies in several major service centres is being supported by close to \$3-million provincial contribution through enabling vote this year. Another \$1 million has been allocated for droughtproofing, for finding solutions to water-short programs according to principles of sustainable development. These funds, which are going directly to rural Manitoba, are not allocated through my department's appropriation.

* (1440)

It would be remiss in these remarks to ignore the positive results of last year's province-wide reassessment, the first ever in Manitoba's history. I compliment my colleague for Emerson in the work which he carried out, the direction which he gave the bill and the work that was done under reassessment, a very onerous task and one which he carried out very capably.

While it is important to remember that we have really only taken a first step in improving the assessment system, I think all of us can agree we have made an ambitious start. In fact, several of the basic reform goals identified by the Weir committee have been met.

The single most important achievement has been the introduction of market-value assessments. This has given ratepayers a valuation system which is easy to understand and judge as to its accuracy. A measurable impact of this is the number of applications to local boards of revision by people questioning their property's assessment. In municipal Manitoba, applications averaged out to, at one point, 3.2 percent of the total, 375,000 provincial properties.

Another major milestone was reached when Phase 1 of the Manitoba assessment computer system became operational. Phase 2, which extends electronic evaluation of residential and farm properties plus the sales subsystem to assessors, will be operational for the next general assessment. Public access to MACS is expected for later this year, so that such external agencies as

municipalities, the Agriculture Credit Corporation, the Land Acquisition appraisers and so on can access MACS with costs recovered by the department.

Throughout Rural Development's program thrusts for this year, the concepts of sustainability and working with communities and community groups to help them meet their own goals pervades. To equalize provincial support for regional economic development and conservation programs, a new and equal funding formula has been developed. This demonstrates equal commitment to our regional development agencies and our conservation districts.

Enough has been said in the newspapers, in the streets and cafes and on the radios about the tough times we are all facing. It is time to get to work. This year's Estimates lay out a plan of action, an approach to problem solving which takes into account our shrinking resources and applies my department's considerable strengths to working directly with municipal partners toward an economic, environmental and social future which can be sustained for future generations. If I may add, Madam Chairman, I think the key to the policies which we are trying to develop are the policies which will enhance rural employment opportunities, rural investment, confidence in Manitoba, so that we can generate the kind of activities, whether it be through resource base, whether it be through service base, whether it be through technology or research and development, whether it be through food processing, working with the Departments of Agriculture and other IT and T departments, I think are crucial for the underlying policies and development of this government.

I look forward to the positive input from the members of the opposition. I know there are many positive things that have taken place, particularly the activities as they relate to Repap and the Swan River Valley. I know that there are other positive things that have taken place when it comes to potential new activities as they relate to the agricultural industry and enhanced crop production.

So with those remarks, Madam Chairman, I look forward to a productive and, hopefully, short debate on the department's Estimates. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: The critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for Swan River with her opening remarks.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to put a few comments on the record before we get into the actual Estimates and, that is, I would also like to recognize the work that the previous minister did. There have been good comments from some of the municipalities, that he was a good minister to work with. I hope that this minister will carry on with that same reputation, as listening and understanding the people in the municipal councils.

When the department got a new name, Department of Rural Development, it gives the impression that this is a department that cares about the rural community and is out working for development and to support the rural people. As I look at what has happened through this whole budget and through various departments, I feel that there has been a failure by this government, for what they have done for the rural community, and I hope that the minister is going to be able to provide us with more information as to what will happen.

What we have is a whole rural community in Canada—all of rural Canada is in a state of decline. Rural Canadians from across the country are losing their communities, their services, their livelihoods and their way of life. Communities that were built in the spirit of co-operation of people, helping people, are now feeling uncertainty about their future or very unoptimistic.

The problems facing rural Manitobans, as well as all rural Canadians, is that they are victims of ill-conceived policies, of urbanization and service cuts, and free trade and low commodity prices. Attempts to readdress these problems have failed, first by federal governments, all federal governments, and now we see the same thing happening through provincial governments. The governments are not addressing the real concerns of rural Manitobans and they have approached the situation in a reactive, fragmented fashion.

Individual programs are targeted at specific areas, but there is no overall plan to deal with the problems in the rural community. A real example of this is a federal program that has affected the rural communities, and that is the Canadian rural transition program. It is a program that is designed to move people off the land. We should not be looking at moving people off the land, we should be looking at how we can develop these communities, how we can provide resources into these communities so that the people will stay. We have

to look at a new direction, at what we want for rural Manitoba.

It is not the hinterland, it is a part of the whole province and in order for the province to be healthy, the rural community has to be healthy as well as the urban community. I feel that is where government is failing. They are not addressing the real needs or making an effort to make the rural community a viable place where people will want to stay. Rather, they are encouraging people to leave.

People in rural Manitoba have a basic right to the same level of services provided to residents in urban areas. Provision of health care, which extends beyond basic services to preventative services, support of social services, rural child care and education and cultural opportunities must also be guaranteed to rural residents. Local services must be recognized as essential services that are more important than corporate profit. Service delivery must be suited to the rural areas and be developed and controlled by local people.

This government gave the impression that they were committed to rural Manitoba when they talked about decentralization. We have seen that this commitment has not come through to the degree that they had said it would. The services are not being brought to the rural area. The jobs are not being brought to the rural area as they were promised. Now we have a concern that other services are going to be reduced as well.

What is the impact going to be on the rural and northern communities with Child and Family Services? They are talking about centralizing the service. I have a concern about what the impact of this is going to be on rural Manitoba.

* (1450)

The other area I would like to touch on as we get into the Estimates is the decrease in funding to regional development corporations. These are the people who should be helping develop and bring industry to the rural community, but with their reduction in funding, that is well a step backward. There are some concerns, as well—the minister has said, we have started the assessment process, but it is not a perfect process. There are areas that have to be addressed in it, and I will be raising a few of those.

Rather than getting into a lot of comments, I would just say that I would rather raise my comments when

we can get into the question period and get more direct answers. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: We will now hear from the critic for the second opposition party, the honourable Leader for the Liberal Party.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Chairperson, my remarks are going to be extremely brief.

I understand that the member for Swan River is not going to be present on Thursday. If it is agreeable with the minister, I am prepared to let her ask all of the questions she wants in this department, provided that I am given the same opportunity and that we will pass it all at the end rather than pass it step by step.

I just want to put on the record that I am concerned not only with this department, but with all departments that affect those people who live outside of the city of Winnipeg. We have seen the Agriculture budgets showing significant cuts in a number of programs that deeply affect those who live in rural Manitoba. We see major cuts in this budget which also affect people who live in rural Manitoba. We see 40 staffpersons, 39.62 to be absolutely specific, many of whom delivered services to individuals living in rural communities in the province of Manitoba, much of which, quite frankly, will result in one of two things, either a decrease of provincial service or an offloading to the municipalities.

We watched in the Education budget where municipalities throughout the province of Manitoba were expected to pick up more and more of the costs of education, with the province accepting less and less of its responsibility to the education of our young people.

Those are the issues that I want to dialogue with the minister about, as to what is, in his mind, the future of rural Manitoba when in this so-called premier department, the department which speaks about rural development, in fact is contributing to a decreasing amount of development in rural communities.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairman: At this point, I would invite the minister's staff to please enter the Chamber.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, just a matter of clarification, I would like to ask the minister, is he prepared to take questions from anywhere or does he want to

go—anywhere at all and just take them from there and then pass it after?

Madam Chairman: Just for clarification and so that it is on the record, is it the will of the committee not to review these Estimates in the normal procedure, line by line?

Mr. Downey: I do not want to set a precedent in doing this, but I understand that to accommodate the member who may not be able to be here another day, I would be prepared to try and field as many questions as possible. The Liberal Leader has indicated she would like the same amount of time. If it would accommodate them to try and maximize the use of the time, then I would take questions from as broad a range as possible, Madam Chair. However, if there are certain sections, as we move through, that do not pertain to interests of them or questions related to, we could maybe start and kick off on the basis of going through it in an orderly manner, and then if those questions lead to other areas, when those questions finish, we can pass that particular section.

I am not calling you to be too strict, but maybe we should start opening it up as the Estimates are listed in the book. I am getting an affirmative indication from both opposition critics.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would just like to begin—the minister gave us some information on decentralization and jobs that were moved, earlier on in his opening remarks, but I would just like to ask, how many positions were supposed to be decentralized in the original decentralization plan, and how many of them have moved?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, in the initial decentralization there were 19 positions within Rural Development of which we will get the information as to the numbers that were reduced through the budgetary exercise. What we currently have that are being decentralized, I will get that information and have it within the next few minutes.

Ms. Wowchuk: While we are waiting for that information, I am a bit confused here. Is it all right if I ask questions on the Brandon office then?

I just want to ask the minister, there have been a lot of cuts. The government has had to make cuts in many, many areas to accommodate what they

said was necessary to reduce the budget. As far as the Brandon office goes, they have chosen to keep this office at the same level.

My question is: Why would you keep an office like this at the same level, but then go into other areas where there are services that are right there for the people more in the community? Services have had to be reduced, but you have kept this office at the same level or a very slight increase.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, let me before I answer that question, introduce my Deputy Minister, Mr. Gerry Forrest. We have Marie Elliott who is the Director of Research and Systems and Anna Fuller who is the Manager of Administration Services who are the staff who are with me today. I wanted the members to know of those individuals.

Number one, the Brandon office as it relates to services to people, I believe, when it comes to providing accommodation for meetings of government activity, whether it relates to Crop Insurance board meetings, whether it relates to agriculture-related board meetings, whether it relates to activities which well can be carried out in rural or Manitoba's second largest city; there is a service there provided by the Executive Council office for the activities of government.

I am finding that it is very well received, and it was a decision made that as far as the services to people are concerned in the Westman Region, that it is important. The decision was basically taken to carry on with the services that are provided out of that office.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, if the services are so well received and the service is being used as much as the minister indicates it is, are there any plans to introduce such offices anywhere else in the province to provide other people with that kind of access to government services?

Mr. Downey: Not at this time, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: What other services have been reduced in the cuts in other parts of the province? What kinds of services have been reduced throughout the province?

Mr. Downey: Basically, Madam Chairman, there has been, I would say, a redirection, as I indicated in my opening remarks, of work activities rather than a reduction of services. For example, the Water Services Board will still be working with municipal councils, will be working with the people who are

interested in the development of water in their communities. The support services will be there as it relates to advisory activities. What will not be available are the engineering services which were a direct cost to government.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sorry. Could I ask the minister to repeat that last part? I did not hear you, on engineering.

* (1500)

Mr. Downey: It is a pretty tough question to ask me to repeat what I just said. We are on to the next issue, but I will try to come as close as possible. What I said was, the government, through the example of the Water Services Board, will still be giving advisory information, working with them for the development of their water systems and/or sewage systems. What is not being provided is the engineering service which now will have to be paid for or hired by municipalities on their own. That is one of the basic differences. As far as reduction of services, I would say that noticeably there will not be any reduction in services. It is a matter of probably who pays for those services rather than a reduction of departmental services, and there will be some reduction in what government is paying for in some of the municipal areas.

Ms. Wowchuk: Were there positions eliminated in Water Services? Were there people who were displaced?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can the minister tell us where these people were located who were let go?

Mr. Downey: Brandon, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: The person who was let go, that person was to do with Water Services, is that correct?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, the number of positions that were deleted from Water Services Board was nine. There were other positions that were deleted within the department as well, and I will get that information for the member.

Ms. Wowchuk: The position that I want to get at is—has the chemist been let go in Water Services? This is an issue that has been raised by a couple of municipalities, that the chemist who did the testing on waters has now been let go and there is going to be a reduced service to communities on that.

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, the individual whom I believe she is asking about is an individual who is a research engineer. He is currently on the re-employment list, and he is on the payroll until sometime in August.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can the minister tell us, how is the concern that the municipalities and the towns have going to be addressed as far as having their water tested and the work that this chemist was doing for communities? How will that be addressed?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, the same process for water testing still exists.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I understand from the minister that there were to have been 19 positions decentralized; we do not know how many that has been reduced by in the budgetary process. The member also asked the question, how many of the original number downsized have in fact been moved at this particular point in time. So if it has been downsized to 15, how many of the 15, whatever the downsized number is?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, all those individuals, the positions, and individuals in those positions that were scheduled to move to decentralization positions have in fact been moved. As soon as we can get the numbers put together here we will, as far as those that were cut, the positions that were cut. It is indicated to me by staff, of the 19 that were initially started minus those that were cut in the budget, they have actually taken place. The moves have taken place. The positions have moved to those locations.

Mrs. Carstairs: Of those positions that have moved, how many of them were in fact employed civil servants at the time of the decentralization initiative, and how many of them were new hirings in order to have them participate in the decentralization initiative?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I want to be correct in the information. It will take a little longer to get the information, so maybe we can proceed to some other questions while we are getting that. I know that there are at least six—I could give the number at least six—people that have moved in the decentralization program. We will update that as we get the information.

Mrs. Carstairs: There were 39.62 actual cuts in this department as a result of the April budget of this

government. Can the minister tell me how many of those 39.62 were located in rural Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: The member wants to know how many of the positions cut in the budget were in rural Manitoba versus those that were in the city. Okay, we will get that information.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, so I will move into another area. We are going to be getting this information, obviously, in dribs and drabs.

Can the minister tell me if he is dissatisfied with the functioning of the Brandon office at the present time? I ask that question because we had some discussion last year about the presence of Ron Arnst in the Brandon office and how essential that presence was. That presence has not existed there for a number of months. That presence has existed and is well functioning here in the chambers and the halls of this building, because Mr. Arnst has, in fact, replaced Barbara Biggar.

So since he has replaced her, has the minister noticed a dysfunctioning of the Brandon office, because I now understand that it is staffed by quite junior personnel to what was presently the staff complement?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I will be very brief. I know that the expertise of Mr. Ron Arnst has had to be spread to other parts of government. I know that it is still his responsibility to work, and he does spend some minimal amount of time in the Brandon office and oversees the operation of the Brandon office. I have not had any complaints about operations in the Brandon office.

I have not had any complaints about Mr. Arnst in the Winnipeg office. I think the work activities are being carried out. I know that there probably would be some greater activity that may be able to be carried on if Mr. Arnst was there full time, but given the overall decisions of government and the responsibilities that we have in different areas, that is why we are doing it.

I know that Mr. Arnst, as well, has been working actively with the Brandon committee on the work to retain the Shilo base and the full complement of activities that go on there, so he is actually carrying out a fairly major responsibility as it relates to Brandon and the direction that is going on out of that office.

* (1510)

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell the House why this individual is still being paid by the Department of Rural Development when, in fact, his principal occupation now is the staff of Executive Council?

Mr. Downey: As the member knows, Barbara Biggar is away on a maternity leave, and it is a matter of a secondment from the Department of Rural Development to fill in while she is away from that position.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, does the minister not believe that it would be more appropriate for Mr. Arnst, since his functions are primarily Executive Council functions, to be paid out of the budget of Executive Council rather than to pay him out of this budget, leading people in rural Manitoba to believe that X number of dollars are being spent on their activities, when in fact they are not being spent on their activities?

This man's activities—and I have no complaint about his activities at the present time. He is performing the function to replace Barbara Biggar, but the function that he is performing is not a function of the Department of Rural Development.

Mr. Downey: Some of the work that he is carrying out is for rural development and the Department of Rural Development.

Mrs. Carstairs: I know that the member wants to get on, so I am going to leave it at this, but would the minister like to put a percentage figure? Is it 5 percent? Is it 10 percent? I mean, what is the percentage figure that this individual is now performing a function in the Department of Rural Development as opposed to the functions that he is performing in the Department of Executive Council?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, maybe she could help me. What would she like it to be? Percentage of time—I know that he spends, I think, and I stand corrected on this, probably sometime on Friday, sometime on Monday. I do not know what he spends as it relates to the Shilo work, but I know he is very effective in that area. I could give her a percentage of time and then I suppose we could break it down and take so much out of Executive Council and so much out of Rural Development.

I think though, if I could, to try and help the member, in the time span of which we have Mr. Arnst working in the position where he is currently filling in, that it is not overly misleading to rural

Manitoba to say that his position is totally away from the Rural Development position. In fact, it is a shared responsibility and I presume when Barbara comes back to her position that he will go back full time to Rural Development work, and for the purposes of this period of time it is just as easy administratively to leave it where it is at.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just back to the Brandon office, since Mr. Arnst is working here in Winnipeg, has he been replaced? Is there additional staff at the Brandon office and if they are, where will that money be coming from? Is it in the Brandon office budget or where are these new people being paid from? Are there any new people in Brandon?

Mr. Downey: There is a new person, but there are no new positions. There has just been a change of people. The numbers of positions in the Brandon office are the same as they were when it was initially established.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just on clarification on that, is the minister saying then that when Mr. Arnst is here in Winnipeg, is there only one person in the Brandon office?

Mr. Downey: There are two people, Madam Chair, in the Brandon office.

Ms. Wowchuk: So in actual fact, is the minister saying then that if Mr. Arnst is still being paid out of the Brandon office, there will be three staff years out of that office which are not allocated in here. Can he tell us then, if there are three staff years in that office now, is that a temporary position or is that going to continue at three people in that office?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, there are three positions there. One of the positions is a secondment out of Northern Affairs office. So there are three positions: two listed here under Rural Development, one seconded out of Northern Affairs.

Ms. Wowchuk: The question was, is that on a temporary basis or are there plans to keep three people at that office?

Mr. Downey: There are no plans to change.

Mrs. Carstairs: Since we are dealing with the whole Administration and Finance services department, can the minister tell me if the two communicators who were let go in this department, due to the restructuring of the government's communications strategy, were in fact let go or were they simply moved over to Culture, Heritage and Citizenship?

Mr. Downey: One was reassigned and one took the enhancement retirement package.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just on Human Resource Management, part of the goal is placement of affirmative action candidates. Can the minister tell us how successful his department is on their Affirmative Action, whether there has been an increase in women or minority groups on his staff and what the plans are to continue this?

Mr. Downey: From last year's Estimates there has been very little turnover or change in staff within the department. I am told by staff that the overall department is within the government guidelines and within the government targets.

Madam Chairman: Item 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries \$260,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$81,900—pass.

1.(c) Brandon Office: (1) Salaries.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, before we proceed any further to pass this item—and I do not have any difficulty—can the minister give us some indication when we are going to get those figures on the whole decentralization initiative with respect to this department?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, just as soon as they are ready. Staff are working on them right at this point.

Ms. Wowchuk: I know the minister's staff is working on those figures. If he cannot produce them right away, that is fine, but if we could also have, sometime, tabled the costs of decentralizing, how much this department has spent on either letting people go, the costs that you have spent on moving people, and where that would show up as an expense in the Rural Development budget. If you could just tell us where it is—I do not want you to give the costs right now, but if you could provide us with that.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, it would fall under normal operating expenses, and we will have to sort it out so it is identified separately. It is not identified separately as it relates to the Estimates, but I will get that information.

Madam Chairman: Item 1.(c) Brandon Office: (1) Salaries \$89,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$30,000—pass.

1.(d) Human Resource Management: (1) Salaries \$149,200—pass; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$11,400—pass.

1.(e) Financial and Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$241,800—pass; 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures \$189,500—pass.

2. Municipal Board (a) Salaries \$337,400—pass; 2.(b) Other Expenditures \$65,000—pass.

Resolution 122: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$402,400 for Rural Development, Municipal Board for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

3. Municipal Advisory and Financial Services: (a) Salaries \$1,039,800.

* (1520)

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, one of the objectives that is outlined in here is the appointment of residential administrators at local government districts. I am sure the minister is aware of the problems that have arisen within the LGD of Mountain in the last little while and the resident administrator who has resigned. Can the minister tell me at what stage his department is at appointing a new administrator?

Mr. Downey: There has been an acting person put into that position, and we will be advertising for a full-time person.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sorry, in what time frame are we looking at? Are we looking at having the acting administrator in place for five or six months, or are you planning to advertise the position within the next few weeks?

Mr. Downey: I am told, Madam Chairman, that the ad is ready to go for a full-time filling of that position.

Ms. Wowchuk: The other issue that has arisen out of that council and has been brought to my attention is movement of an office. Has the minister met with that council, or has his staff made any decision on moving the LGD office?

Mr. Downey: Staff have met with the council and have recommended that they have local meetings to sort out the moving of that office.

Ms. Wowchuk: Has the staff made any recommendations as to whether the office should be moved, and has the minister taken a position on that issue?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I believe it is up to the local council, and to my knowledge staff have not taken a position on that move.

Ms. Wowchuk: If it has been agreed that we will deal with the whole No. 3, I have a couple of other questions that I would like to ask. Is that fine? Thank you.

One of them is the Municipal Support Grants. I would like to put on the record, and the minister has heard many times that I am quite disappointed that the government has taken this move to reduce support to municipalities, and particularly the timing that they chose to make this announcement. Municipalities had had their budgets set, had their year planned and then just all of a sudden we had this announcement that the support grants are going to be reduced for the municipalities.

I think when you talk out of one side of your mouth saying that you are in support of the rural community, you want to see the community grow, and then on the other hand you offload additional costs onto the municipalities, it is not sending out a very good message.

We get the impression then that this government is just doing exactly what their federal counterparts are doing and just offloading. If you want to survive out there, well then you just have to pick up those extra costs on your own.

Can the minister tell us why he, at this time, has chosen to reduce the supports to municipalities? I have copies of letters from municipalities that are concerned about this, and I know the minister has many letters as well, that they just feel that they cannot absorb this extra cost at this time and carry on with the level of service that they have had up till now. Can the minister give us some explanation?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chair. The money that she is referring to comes under revenue sharing from the federal government. The municipalities knew that during times of increased revenues they shared in them. In fact, the previous administration took the decision about 1987-88 that they would cap them at a 5 percent increase.

We, on coming into office, removed that 5 percent cap which was put in place so now when the revenues have fallen below they are sharing in the reduction of revenue as well as they shared in the increase in revenue. So it is by statute or by policy that this is being carried out, and it is not a matter of

us cutting back, it is a matter of the actual revenues not being there to transfer.

Ms. Wowchuk: In actual fact, if the minister is saying it is the revenue in the province, I guess what the province has to do is take some initiative to stimulate the economy and perhaps we will then have revenue in the province. Rather than cutback, maybe you put some effort into stimulating.

Again I say that has not been happening. The need for job creation, the need for stimulating the economy, just has not been there. If the government would take that initiative, perhaps we would have the money to then keep things going and the support for the rural community that is very much needed.

In this department also we find that the Churchill economic development committee has been transferred to the Department of Rural Development. I want to ask the minister what the rationale was? Why, if after all these years Churchill has been part of the Department of Highways and Transportation tied very close to transportation at the port, this government has chosen to put the Churchill economic development committee under this department and what the minister sees as the benefit of this, and what is happening in Churchill that will stimulate economic development?

Mr. Downey: Seeing that the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) is here now, we should maybe have him answer that question as to why—well, let me put it this way, under the Department of Highways and Transportation, the Port of Churchill Development Board was basically focused at the operations of the port.

Under Rural Development, it is seen as other opportunities for economic development not just focusing on the port, but focusing on tourism, focusing on other activities as it relates to generating economic activities in Churchill, a little more all encompassing as far as the community is concerned. Its relationship with Rural Development was seen to be more appropriate than that narrow focus of which was under the Department of Highways and Transportation.

Let me clarify that the Minister of Highways and Transportation was a very strong advocate and is a strong advocate of the use of the Port of Churchill. He has captained and steered many committees. He has met very often with the Wheat Board

representation. He has pressed very hard to make sure the Port of Churchill operates.

So we are not lessening the work in Churchill. We are trying to broaden the base by having it work through Rural Development, and that is basically the reason why it was transferred from Highways and Transportation—by no means, in anyway diminishing the hard work and effort of the Minister of Highways as it related to the port, but in addition to the fact. The Minister of Highways is still very much involved in discussions that we have on an ongoing basis as to economic activity at the Port of Churchill, but it was really to broaden the base for economic activity through the Rural Development portfolio.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am pleased to hear that the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) was a strong spokesman for the Port of Churchill. I hope this minister will continue to be as strong a spokesman for the port because he talks about economic development away from the port, but nothing that happens at Churchill can be separate. You cannot have any development at the town of Churchill which will not relate to the port.

If this government is committed to development at Churchill, can the minister tell us how many jobs were lost, decentralized, or taken out of the community of Churchill? Have there been any new jobs put in there, or has there been a cut in jobs in Churchill?

Mr. Downey: No change as it relates to Rural Development, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chairperson, are there any changes as related to the town of Churchill? Has the town of Churchill lost any jobs through the decentralization process, or cuts from this government, reduction of services?

* (1530)

Mr. Downey: Again, Madam Chairman, as it relates to Rural Development, there are no position changes in relationship to the town of Churchill.

Ms. Wowchuk: I think, Madam Chair, we will have to check that, because it is my understanding that there have been some service cuts to the town of Churchill. I will just pass this one for now.

Mrs. Carstairs: I would like to go back to a few areas. First of all, Municipal Support Grants. The minister talks about the fact that the increase in Municipal Support Grants was tied to the increase

in revenues and therefore the decrease in Support Grants should be tied to decrease in revenues. But I think the minister would be the first to admit that it was not a 39.4 percent decrease in revenue of the provincial government, and yet there was a 39.4 percent decrease in Municipal Grants. So would he like to explain why the status quo was not maintained? Even the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has indicated that he is expecting a revenue increase of zero to one-half of a percentage point, but that is certainly not what happened in terms of the municipal grant structure.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I can appreciate that the member might be somewhat confused. I did make reference to the revenue sharing program.

What she is referring to, I believe, is the monies that were made available for the phasing in of the assessment reform for municipalities that were seeing a tremendous increase in the first year and there was an allocation of funds that would cushion that blow. Municipalities were then allowed to phase in the program, and the reduction there is because we are in the second year of a phase-in program of the assessment reform as it related to some 13 communities.

That was 50 percent the first year, and 25 percent the second year, by a policy which was established at the time of the assessment reform introduction.

Mrs. Carstairs: The Activity Identification of this department says: "Grant entitlement is based on a percentage of Net Payroll Costs or total earnings before deductions in excess of the guidelines." Can the minister tell the House today if, in their view, there will be no net increase in payroll costs, there will be no net increases in any earnings for any employees in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, we are now into another area, and that is—well, same area, but a different policy area. The government is paying the municipalities a grant-in-lieu of the payroll tax. Any municipality that is now not paying the payroll tax because of the government's policy of increasing the level at which the exemption would take place—any municipality that is now not paying the payroll tax no longer receives a grant from the province. That was a policy change this year.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, I have no difficulty if they are not paying the tax and not receiving a benefit. That makes perfectly good logical sense to me, but the

reality is that there is \$1.4 million less that these municipalities are receiving.

The member says that some of that money, and I want to just be clear, is coming from those municipalities that formerly paid payroll tax and do not, and some of that money is coming from the decrease in the assessment rate which was 50 percent for last year and 25 percent for this year. That comes up with the figure of a 1.446 decline.

The minister is nodding, Madam Chair, so let Hansard say that all of the statements that I have made, the minister is in full agreement with.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, whoa, whoa, whoa. I am not going to let that stand. As it relates to the most recent question put by the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), I will say that she is close to being accurate in her assumptions on the taxation questions.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, under 3.(d), reference No. 3. Transit Grants, there was a decrease of 8 percent in the transit grants from the adjusted vote of '90-91 to the year ending budget 1992, March 31.

Can the minister give us a breakdown as to where those transit grants have gone in the past and what communities will anticipate decreases and by how much?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, there has been no reduction in the transit grants. That is basically the answer.

Mrs. Carstairs: But then there is something very wrong with my book which says that the Transit Grants Adjusted Vote for 1990-91, page 42, are \$1.348 million and for the year ending March 31, 1992, they will be \$1.241 million. That is a decrease of \$107,300. Since that is a rather substantial sum of money, I would like to know who is going to suffer those transit cuts.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, the reason for the reduction is under the Mobility Disadvantaged Grant Program. The funds do not flow and it is projected that they will not be needed in this period of time as it relates to the budget. The reduction is in relationship to the demand in operating grants from the Mobility Disadvantaged. So that is the reason for the reduction then.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is the minister saying that there is \$107,000 in a budget for mobility grants and nobody

in the province of Manitoba is taking advantage of it?

Mr. Downey: No, the member is incorrect in her assumption. There are many communities that are taking advantage of the Mobility Disadvantaged. How the program works is they get an initial operating grant from the province and as the need—the start up grant—increases, as their operating expenses increase, then they apply for funds. So it is seen in this particular budget year that the operating grants will not be at the same level they were last year, but it does not mean to say, because their operating expenses, I would assume, during that period of time are not going to be as high as they were the year before, they get an initial grant. As they increase their expenses, they call on the government for additional funds. I believe we share something like 37.5 percent of the funds.

It is not that the program will not be operated; it is that they use the initial grant for a period of time, and after that initial grant is used up, then they reapply. The program is based on a 37.5 percent provincial contribution and the balance from the municipalities.

* (1540)

Mrs. Carstairs: As I understand the program, they receive \$6,000 as maximum in their first year of operation as a start-up grant. Then they receive 37.5 percent of their operating expenditures to a maximum of \$20,000. Is there no one in the province taking the maximum \$20,000 at the present time? Let us leave it at that.

Mr. Downey: There are a few that are taking the maximum grant. I can get that number exactly. There are 12 out of 40 that are taking the maximum grant.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister indicate that the reason for the decrease then in this budget was because they had learned after the previous years' financial statements that there just simply was not the need for this program as had earlier been anticipated?

Mr. Downey: At that financial level, Madam Chairman, that was correct.

Mrs. Carstairs: Yes. I just have one question on 3.(h), Reference 7, Downtown Revitalization. The minister in his Supplementary Estimates talks about the objective is to provide large rural centres with funding for revitalization. Can he define what is a large rural centre by this definition?

Mr. Downey: Communities that have had discussions with the province are Brandon, Selkirk and Thompson.

Mrs. Carstairs: That is not quite what I asked. There obviously is a determination in the department as to what they think is a large rural centre. Is it 5,000? Is it 10,000? Is it 40,000? I mean, what is the definition of a large rural centre by the government's definition, so that the correct municipalities know whether they are eligible for this program or whether they are not eligible?

Mr. Downey: Basically, Madam Chairman, I can say this: With the limited resources we have within the province, we have had discussions with three, and that is basically how it came about. Those communities have advanced themselves as being interested in Downtown Revitalization.

I can tell you we have very limited capabilities, as she knows, as the public knows, in this area. Brandon, for example, had some \$300,000 in their budget. This year we will be matching that \$300,000.

As far as the other two communities are concerned, we do not have any funds for them, because it is not only this year. We enter into a longer term commitment. We have been in discussion with those communities. As they get their budgeting and their plans put together, then we will be in further discussion with them.

It is basically those communities that have had discussions with the department as it relates to interest in their Downtown Revitalization. That is not to say other communities may come forward, but we have not had an approach, to my knowledge, from other communities.

It is not what I would say, something we are as a program touting as the end all, the be all. We have the Southern Development Initiative which is putting a lot of infrastructure in communities. I guess if I were to be requested to say, Mr. Minister are you prepared to entertain other communities?—I would say, in a priority way, do we have our other infrastructure and things done? I would not say I would reject them, but I guess because those are three communities that have currently had discussions with the department, with my colleague who was the former minister, that is who I am discussing, but basically that is where it is at, and those are the three communities that the department have had discussions with.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, how do you even know you can have discussions if you do not know what the definition of a large rural centre is? I mean how is Flin Flon, or how is The Pas to know that perhaps they can apply for this grant if there are not some criteria for the definition of a large rural centre?

Two of the ones he has mentioned are cities. One of them is not; it is a town. You know, are you a large rural centre at 4,000? Should you approach the minister? Are you a large rural centre at 10,000 people? Should you approach the minister? I mean, surely there is something a little bit less loosey-goosey than this.

Mr. Downey: Well, Madam Chair, the member is raising an important question which I am dealing with as it relates to what is currently before us. We have just introduced—and I said in my opening remarks—a Community Choices program of which communities have an ability to access themselves. If their priorities are looking at some form of downtown or city revitalization, then I am sure that they will come forward, but I do not want to raise false expectations.

What I am saying is that we have had three communities that have been in discussions with the government that have shown interest in downtown revitalization—Brandon, which have put money in their budget and have a major program; Selkirk, which have not done a lot of the preliminary work that has been done, for example, like Brandon; Thompson have done some work. We do not have any major resources for either of those communities at this point, and when we are entering into this, it means fairly major commitments.

If other communities had a proposal to come forward, then I guess one would be entertaining it. At this point, I have not had any indication from other communities that they are in fact interested. What they are interested in, though, is more of the water services systems, the sewage systems, the infrastructure development which would encourage their communities to grow through more of an industrial basis rather than what a downtown revitalization program would do for them.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, when we introduce programs in any department, equity must be the primary incentive so that everybody is treated equally. In order to be treated equally, you have to be given factual information. It seems that the

minister has established a program here that if you find out about it, you apply and you let the minister know you are interested. If you do not know that there is such a program, well, then you are not going to let the minister know and you are not going to qualify, because goodness knows there are not any rules because he cannot even define what a large rural community is.

Mr. Downey: Well, Madam Chairman, again what I am saying to the member is, Brandon took the initiative, Selkirk has taken the initiative and Thompson has taken the initiative to approach the government.

It is a program in which we have limited capabilities because again we are dealing with limited resources. Brandon has come forward with a plan with money in their budget, of which we can entertain this year. Other communities, I leave it to those communities to identify themselves, whether they feel the need to advance to government their ideas as it relates to their downtown revitalization.

I guess what those communities are saying to me and what I am hearing is that today they have more interest in some other projects like economic development as it relates to infrastructure support, as it relates to rural development bonds, as it relates to other initiatives. So I leave it to those communities, at their initiative, to come forward and say that they are prepared to enter into discussions with the province.

They know that it is happening, Madam Chairman. I would be less than responsible if I went out touting a program, then to only say to them: I am sorry that we have this program, we have not got any money for it. So what I am saying is that we are entertaining as they come forward, as Brandon has come forward, as Selkirk has come forward and as Thompson has come forward. We are in discussions with them.

Now if she wants me to define what a large community is, well, I am from a small town called Coulter where there were about 10 people. So, Madam Chairman, the city of Winnipeg is a very large centre. The cities of Brandon, Thompson, Flin Flon—and I know what Flin Flon's main priority is. It is their need to have a smelter upgraded.

So I would suppose that what means to them most importantly is the smelter, rather than coming for funds for downtown revitalization. What would

revitalize the city of Flin Flon would be a new smelter. That is the kind of concept that I look at.

Portage la Prairie is a major large centre and has a fine MLA who continuously tells us of how big Portage la Prairie is and how much bigger he wants it to be. I say seriously, those are the kinds of approaches which we take, and any discussions that we have, Madam Chairman, are based on the needs of those communities.

* (1550)

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): The minister was making references about the Selkirk application. Could he explain the status of the Selkirk application under this program?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, I have had a meeting with the mayor of Selkirk recently. They just wanted to know whether or not we were still interested or if that program would be still available to them. I indicated not this year, maybe not next year, but in fact we are in discussions with them. They were not unhappy with the answer which they received.

Ms. Wowchuk: If we could go back to 3.(c) Grants to Municipalities in Lieu of Taxes, I would like to raise with the minister the issue that has been raised by many municipalities and that is taxation on Crown lands. Municipalities have been concerned that they do not have the ability to collect taxes on Crown lands. As a result, there are people who are living on Crown lands, getting the services, but not paying their fair share of the taxes.

I would like to ask the minister whether his department is looking at this, whether they are giving this any consideration to look at ways that municipalities will have the ability to collect taxes for buildings that are on Crown lands at the present time?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I want to be clear. Is the member for Swan River advocating that we now tax people living on Crown lands to a greater extent? Is that what she is saying?

Ms. Wowchuk: What I am advocating and what municipalities have been asking for is to have the ability to collect taxes. They cannot levy taxes on buildings that are—they can levy the taxes on the buildings that are built on Crown land right now, but they do not have the ability to collect that money.

I am asking the minister if he or his staff are looking at this, and what they are prepared to do to

help out municipalities, because they cannot collect the taxes, and they are providing the services for these people.

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, the member raises a legitimate concern, and what we have done in most cases is departmental staff sit down with the Department of Natural Resources when it comes to people who are not paying their land tax. When it comes to living on Natural Resource ground, there is usually work done on behalf of the municipality. If she is aware of a situation that is not being looked after, I would like to know about it.

It is the habit of the Department of Municipal Affairs, working with Natural Resources, to try and get the resources to pay for the taxes on that land, so the municipalities do not, in fact, go without the revenues off of that property. We do have an informal process in place which works to accommodate the payment of those taxes.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, I will bring the specific cases to the minister's attention, because I cannot just bring specific cases, it is municipalities. This is a resolution that has been passed at the convention of municipalities asking for this change because they just do not have the ability.

I would ask the minister to look at it. It is something that we as opposition cannot bring in, because it deals with money. I would ask the minister to give this serious consideration, because I think with the amount of offloading that municipalities have had to bear and the additional costs that they have to pick up, they should have the ability to collect taxes on all buildings and all people that they are providing services, because they are building the roads to these places. They are collecting the education tax, and there is an inequity at the present time in some of the rural communities.

Mr. Downey: Again, I take that as information and look forward to her providing me with the places where she has had difficulty.

Mrs. Carstairs: There was no change in 1991 with regard to portioning. I think the decision of the minister as well as the department was that they barely worked through one system—and let us everybody take a bit of a step back and maybe evaluate, but let us not rush to make changes much too quickly. I think, in balance, that was probably an appropriate reaction.

Can the minister tell me what re-evaluations are going on now that the City of Winnipeg has seen two

tax years under the portioning system? Particularly, I am concerned about the portioning system as it applies to owner-occupied condominiums which is significantly below owner-occupied residences in terms of the amount of tax they pay based on the value of their property.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, as was said by my colleague who had the responsibility for the assessment reform, that the government following the initial move on the assessment reform legislation, all related activities on portioning would be assessed after we saw the impact of the assessment reform bill.

We are currently in a process of developing a strategy as to how to deal with it. I appreciate her concerns that she has brought forward.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister tell how us how broadly based this review is because I understand that a decision will have to be made sometime in December or prior to December in order for the City of Winnipeg and other cities to know just what that portioning rate will be. Will they be reaching out to discuss this matter with the cities?

Certainly I have received a number of letters from people who do not like the fact that they pay more tax when they do not live in their condominiums. Quite frankly, if they are renting it out for income purposes, I do not have a lot of sympathy with them to be treated any differently than somebody who rents out an apartment. I personally live in a resident-occupied condominium and I know that I do not pay my fair share of taxes because of the portioning system as it is presently established.

I raised this last year. I think the minister of I, T and T almost dropped his mouth because he could not believe that anybody would actually be complaining about the amount of taxes they pay. Again, we are dealing with an equity issue. I know that the value of the condominium and the amount of taxes I pay are not appropriate.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, we are looking at what appropriate action—we are assessing what appropriate action should be taken in this whole regard.

Madam Chairman: Item 3.(a) Salaries \$1,039,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$223,600—pass; (c) Grants to Municipalities in Lieu of Taxes \$33,140,600—pass; (d) Transit Grants \$1,241,200—pass; (e) Centennial Grants \$14,800—pass; (f) Police Services Grants

\$1,400,000—pass; (g) Municipal Support Grants \$2,223,100—pass; (h) Downtown Revitalization \$400,000—pass.

Resolution 123: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$39,683,100 for Rural Development, Municipal Advisory and Financial Services for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

Item 4. Municipal Assessments (a) Salaries \$4,973,800—

Ms. Wowchuk: The government took on a big responsibility of reassessing and changing the assessment system in the province. I would like to ask the minister: Was there additional assessors brought in to do that assessing? If there were additional assessors brought in, are they all still on, or how was that handled? Was there new staff?

Mr. Downey: There were no additional assessors, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: Has the assessment staff stayed the same, or have we lost any assessors since then? What is the status of those people?

Mr. Downey: A reduction of two, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can the minister tell us where these reductions are?

Mr. Downey: One Brandon assessor position and one Winnipeg clerical.

* (1600)

Ms. Wowchuk: I am wondering, has the assessment staff—are all the assessors still in place in rural Manitoba? Have any of those been let go?

Mr. Downey: The only one was Brandon which was a vacant position, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would like to ask the minister a couple of questions on assessors and their responsibilities. Can the minister tell me when an assessor is working and his property has to be changed, can an assessor do an evaluation on his own property, or does someone have to come in from another area? Who can do the evaluation on an assessor's property?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I would not think that an assessor would do their own property, and I am sure the department would make sure that, in fact, does not take place.

Ms. Wowchuk: Are there regulations that prevent an assessor from doing an evaluation on his own property?

Mr. Downey: By policy, Madam Chair. If the member is aware of something like this taking place, I would be most interested to hear about it. To my knowledge, it is by policy and by policy that they should not do assessment of their own property. If she knows something to the contrary, I would be pleased to hear it—I would not be pleased to hear it, I would like her to inform me of it.

Ms. Wowchuk: When an incident like this is brought to the minister's attention or to the staff's attention, how is it dealt with?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I would turn it over immediately to my deputy minister.

Ms. Wowchuk: Do incidents such as this occur very often? Are such matters brought to the minister's attention very often?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I am not aware of any of those situations having been brought to the deputy's attention, and I have not had any brought to my attention.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sure the deputy minister can provide the minister with this information. I want to get back to assessing someone's property. When assessors assess someone's property, they are required to put the information on a sheet. I forget what the name of that sheet is, but what are the requirements for changing numbers on those sheets? When numbers are changed on the sheet, do they have to be initialled? Can assessors change numbers on a sheet, or is there a particular process that they have to go through?

Mr. Downey: The sheet that she refers to is a field sheet. That is entered into a computer, and is only available to the assessor who is responsible for the municipalities. Once it goes into the computer, it would not be able to be changed unless it was done by the assessor responsible for that municipal corporation.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am not familiar with computers, Madam Chairperson. I am talking about the field sheets when they were done on paper. It is my understanding that when an assessor makes an adjustment on those sheets he or she has to initial it, they are not supposed to erase numbers off the sheets, and that they have to enter a new line so there is a continuous record of what happened over

the years. If the value of a home changed or something like that, you could always go back to this field sheet and go back to the value of the property.

The minister is saying this is now on computer. Are the field sheets not available any more where you can go back and trace the value of property?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chairman, the field sheets are available. If the member has a specific concern or specific incident I would invite her to bring it forward, so I can have the specific issue reviewed. I have no problem with the questioning at all, but it would be helpful if I could follow through the specific issues so that we can get to the bottom of the concern which she is raising.

Ms. Wowchuk: There were, I think, quite strict conflict-of-interest guidelines that were brought in, that government employees were supposed to follow when they had government jobs. Does this department enforce conflict-of-interest guidelines? Again, I am getting back to assessing property of relatives, assessing your own property. Do you enforce the conflict-of-interest guidelines?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chair.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just one other question here on the privileges provided to people who work within the department. Can the minister tell me what privileges a civil servant or, in this case, an assessor would have to a government vehicle? Can he or she use the vehicle for their own time or for their own mileage and how is that covered off?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, the department's vehicles are operated on a pool basis, and they are kept at a central location when they are not out on government business.

Ms. Wowchuk: What are the regulations for—in this case I am talking about assessors. Are they allowed to do assessment of property after hours? Are there any restrictions put on them as to what they can do? Are they allowed to do assessing for real estate companies, for example, or appraisals on property value? Are they allowed to moonlight?

Mr. Downey: I do not know whether the member is suggesting that we should control people after they work for the government or whether they do not. If it had any reflection as to the work they are doing with government activity, then I would be interested to find out specifically what relationship the work they are doing after working for government is in relationship to their government work.

As far as trying to control the time of a person who works for government after their normal work activities, I would think they would be free to carry out an activity, but if it has a connection to or in some way reflects on government or government work that they normally do, then I would think it would certainly raise some questions that we would want to look into.

Ms. Wowchuk: So the minister is then saying that he would be concerned if assessors were doing appraisals on government time when they should be doing assessments.

* (1610)

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, the member is raising some questions which I want more information on. If she is making accusations that there are government employees who are hired and paid for by government, carrying out private work activity during work hours, then that is not going to be tolerated.

I am told by my deputy minister that assessors are encouraged not to do work other than their normal assessment work with government. That is an unwritten policy, but a request, although I would think one would be hard pressed to enforce it.

Again, the questions the member is raising, if she has some specific information, details of people who work for government who are doing private work on government time, then it will not be tolerated. I do want to know more of the information of which she is alluding to.

Ms. Wowchuk: From that I gather that the minister says that it would be a conflict if an individual was doing private appraisals on government time.

Getting back to the staffing, the minister said that there were only two positions that were let go. Was not one assessing officer let go in the Swan River area?

Mr. Downey: The information I am provided with from my deputy says no.

Ms. Wowchuk: What about in the previous year? Was there a position vacant in the Swan River office in the previous year?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, I am told that an individual resigned in the Swan River office probably two years ago. I would have to get that information. I would have to check on that information.

Ms. Wowchuk: I will just leave that one for a minute here. I will let the Liberal critic take it for now.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, in the Supplementary Estimates, statements made to annually report to the minister and the Public Schools Finance Board—when, by law, are the municipalities required to report to the minister as to what exactly will be the total municipal and total school assessments for each municipality, including Winnipeg?

Mr. Downey: December 31, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Carstairs: Therefore, I assume that the minister has the figure for December 31, 1990, at the present time. Can he indicate what was the percentage increase in total school assessments across the province reported—total municipal assessments as well as total school assessments?

Mr. Downey: I do not have that right at my fingertips, but I will have the department provide it for her.

Madam Chair, I can give the information. Is it the municipal assessment change which the member has asked for? Given the date 1990, it was 1.1 percent over the '89-90 figure, a 1.1 percent increase.

Mrs. Carstairs: Does the minister also know what were the percentages—he may not have this information—but what were the overall percentage increases in municipal taxes in that same period of time?

Mr. Downey: I am informed we do not keep it municipality by municipality. We can calculate it for her, if she would like, but it would take some time to do it.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just getting back to my previous questions. The minister said that if there were specific cases, he would like to know about it. Is the minister aware of the meetings that were held with the previous Minister of Rural Development and other department people about specific cases such as this involving the person from Swan River who resigned, who asked that these allegations be raised? Has the minister addressed the concerns of these individuals?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I think I am starting to get a little clearer on what the member is asking for, and there have been some concerns brought forward. The way she was asking the questions, I was not aware of the reasons why this took place.

I know of some difficulties as it related to the assessor in that community, and I was not trying to play as if I did not. The way she was coming at it, I was not understanding what she was getting at. There have been concerns raised with me.

It was the manner in which the individual—I guess the reason for the person resigning is more the reason that I had it approached to me, not specifically the activities as to how the person operated. It was more the reasons for the individual resigning his job. I have looked into it; I am looking into it, but maybe she and I should sit down—if she has additional information as to why this individual resigned, it would be helpful to me in the overall work that I would have to do.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, I know that members of the cabinet are aware that this person, Mr. Jack Wallwin, has made some very serious charges as to what has been happening, and I would hope that the minister would look into it and get some answers. I have no information other than what Mr. Wallwin has given me, and that is why I am asking the minister to get some clarification and to clear this matter up. I would be pleased to be able to discuss that.

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chair, I have been approached by the individual named by the member for Swan River, and I will be requesting more information as to the background in this whole situation.

It was not presented to me as this individual assessing his own property, doing work activity outside of his responsibilities or, in fact, doing private work on government time. None of that was presented to me, which I was not really following in her questioning, and I do not want to mislead this committee in trying to say that I had not had meetings with an individual. I have had a meeting. I have had the concerns raised with me, but it was done from a different approach.

Ms. Wowchuk: I also want to clear the record that I am not trying to put accusations on Mr. Wallwin. These are concerns that he has raised that have to be addressed.

Another question on this line, who is in charge of municipal assessment at this time? Who is the director?

Mr. Downey: Ken Graham reports to Marie Elliott, Madam Chair.

Ms. Wowchuk: The director? What is his title?

Mr. Downey: Ken Graham is an acting director.

Ms. Wowchuk: Does the minister intend that Mr. Graham stay in that position, or is it a position that is going to be filled as a director eventually? What is your intention on this position?

Mr. Downey: A decision in that regard has not been made yet, Madam Chair.

Ms. Wowchuk: On the assessment as well, I believe the other member asked this question on apportioning values. When we were going into the assessment, it was anticipated that properties would go to real value. Then it was changed over to apportioning values. When will the complete stage of that be phased in to real market value on properties?

* (1620)

Mr. Downey: Basically, Madam Chair, I responded to the same question by the Leader of the Liberal Party. The answer is the same as it was to her. She can refer to it in Hansard and save time.

Madam Chairman: Item 4.(a) Salaries \$4,973,800—pass; 4.(b) Other Expenditures \$645,800—pass.

Resolution 124: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,619,600 for Rural Development, Municipal Assessments, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

Item 5. Research and Systems Services (a) Research: (1) Salaries \$230,800—pass; 5.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$109,500—pass; 5.(b) Systems Services: (1) Salaries \$742,800—pass; 5.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$2,929,900—pass.

Resolution 125: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,013,000 for Rural Development, Research and Systems Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

Item 6. Community Development (a) Salaries \$2,769,900.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, under this area I would like to talk about the regional development corporations and how this government came about making a decision that, on one hand, they talk about supporting the rural community and attracting industry to the rural community, and then on the other hand cutting the funding to the very people

who are the ones who are helping, doing much of the leg work for the communities in the regional development corporations.

Why did the government, at this time, decide to cut that funding?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I guess it is a matter of difficult choices when you have revenue shortfalls which we have experienced in the province. I know my colleague for Emerson, my colleague for Portage la Prairie, my colleagues throughout rural Manitoba have continually pointed out the need for economic development and the support for rural development operations and RDCs. It was an extremely tough decision -(interjection)- Yes, that is correct.

What we are looking at is, of course, other activities that may well, in fact, enhance rural development, and, of course, one of those initiatives will be the rural development bond concept which probably will give some additional work activity to rural development corporations, and in combination with that program, we believe that we will be able to give some impetus to rural development.

It is a matter of municipalities having to put a value on their own budgetary priorities, and if the program and the project is worthy of support then we felt that they would come forward and pick up that additional support that is needed. Again, not a very easy decision to make, but one which, when one looks at the overall decisions of government, was part of the overall activity of decision making.

Let us look at the base industry, that being agriculture of which some \$43 million was put forward under the Gross Revenue Insurance Program plus the NISA program, which is a basic economic development support program. So one cannot just say we are reducing our support to economic activity in rural Manitoba because we are not supporting RDCs.

We are supporting the actual structure a little bit less, now going on a 70/30 formula, 70 percent provincial, 30 percent local municipality but we are, in fact, putting millions of dollars in a farm support program which is a rural economic development program.

Ms. Wowchuk: I know that several of the regional development corporations have come to meet with the minister and his staff to argue the case, so to speak, that municipalities feel their services are very important.

Is the minister giving any reconsideration to reinstating their funding, or is there a different structure of funding? What are the plans for the regional development corporations?

Ms. Downey: My deputy minister has had meetings with the regional development corporations. I have had meetings with them. There is one particular area which has been raised that is concerned, and that is the Parkland east and the Parkland west which were set up as a pilot project in their new approach. What I was encouraged—and there was quite a ready admission that the former RDC system was not working very well. They were encouraged under the current government, I believe, to restructure, to set up two separate regions, and in fact are working.

They have come forward and said they are short some \$13,000, I believe, as one of their concerns. I have not had the opportunity since I have had that meeting to discuss it in any detail with my department. I was not quite sure where the member opposite was coming from, whether or not she would be supporting them or not. I would anticipate from her questions that she would like to see them, but I do not know where I would take that money from?

Where would she like me to reduce that fund from or get that money from? If she is asking me to spend it in that area, does she have a recommendation where I should take the money from, because my overall budget is struck. I would encourage her to say that she would be prepared to give up money in another area so that we could, in fact, enhance the support for that program.

It is always helpful to say, yes, we need more money for this program—

Mr. Plohman: Cannot make decisions, eh?

Mr. Downey: Yes, there were decisions made, but she is asking me to reconsider that decision.

Mr. Plohman: No, they are.

Mr. Downey: Oh, you are not. Okay, so it does not have the support—they do not have the support. Now I have found out they do not have the support of the member for Dauphin or the member for Swan River.

Mr. Plohman: You are pretty good with your facts, are you not? Do you care about facts?

Mr. Downey: I just want to be clear on this. I want to be serious. I want the member to say that she has an option which we could consider. I have said, and I will say it again, in some of the work we are doing with the Rural Development Bond concept there may be an ability to, in some way, provide some additional support if there is work to be done on behalf of the Rural Development Bond concept.

Again, it is in discussion stages. I have not had an opportunity since our meeting—we have had municipal meetings throughout the province the last week and a half, and we have not had a real opportunity to sit down and look at any options at this point. I had the case made by my colleague in caucus of their concern for rural development corporations and the support for them. I will leave it at that.

Ms. Wowchuk: The minister does not have to doubt at all that I am in support of rural development corporations. He seems to have some indication—

Mr. Downey: I wanted to hear it perfectly clear.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, I will make it perfectly clear, I am in support of them. It is the minister's responsibility to find additional funding. If I was the Minister of Rural Development, I would deal with it, but that is his responsibility to find out how the organizations are going to survive.

An Honourable Member: Cut his salary, yes.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, cut his salary, I mean he is the minister.

With regard to Parkland east and west, yes, I am aware of their need for additional funding. There were difficulties in those areas, and it has been reorganized in such a fashion that it is working now. I think we have to look at that whole Parkland area as an example of what can be done, because the whole Parkland area is working together now. They have had funding from Community Futures, but in order for that to get off the ground they need the two regional development officers to work with them to carry through with the operations.

* (1630)

The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and myself have met with those organizations. They have indicated it is very important that the regional development officers stay in place at least until—I would like to see them stay in permanently so the other one does not fall flat on his face as well. That is why it is very important that this minister

someplace find some additional money for these organizations, if he is committed to development in the rural area, in particular, the Parkland area.

He mentioned earlier the Repap deal that was so good for the Parkland area. Well, the people in the Parkland have a much different view of that. What we need in the Parkland area is economic growth, and the regional development corporations are getting off the ground and working for that. I hope he would reconsider the funding there.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, there was a decrease in 16 employees in this particular branch, according to the figures that I was given. Can the minister tell us how many of those positions were located in Winnipeg and how many of them were located outside of Winnipeg?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chairman, there are six from Winnipeg.

Mrs. Carstairs: That means there were 10 that were outside. So far the minister seems to be batting zero as far as rural development is concerned and decentralization, because to date we know of at least 12 that he has admitted to who were cut from having previously had positions in rural Manitoba. We learned of an assessor in Brandon and I think one with the Executive Support services—no, perhaps it was the Municipal Board—that was also cut. I am still waiting for the other figures, but can the minister now tell us if, as a result of his decentralization initiative for which he is responsible and his budgetary cuts in Rural Development, there are any additional people working in rural Manitoba as a result of the actions of this minister in these two portfolio responsibilities?

Mr. Downey: I will go through the numbers that I told the member I would go through before, so we keep it in context. She has to remember that 70 percent of our staff are in rural Manitoba to start with—of Rural Development, reduction of 40 SYs, of which 24 were rural and 16 Winnipeg. In addition, there will be three redeployments from Winnipeg to rural offices. Under decentralization, there were 19 positions. The budget cuts there were 11. Six people were transferred and two were hired locally, for eight.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, if I can put all those numbers into some kind of context, we had 11 jobs that were located in Winnipeg that have now been moved to rural Manitoba but we have had 24 rural

jobs that have been cut, so we now have 13 fewer people working in rural Manitoba for the provincial government as the result of the combined responsibilities this minister has for Decentralization and Rural Development. Is that an accurate reflection of what has happened here?

Mr. Downey: No, I do not agree, Madam Chair, there is a reduction of five. It should be 19 from 24. Let us make this thing totally into perspective. We have to look at more than Rural Development as a department totally responsible for the decentralization program. For example, we have the Manitoba Agriculture Credit Corporation, we have had the rural libraries, the Land Acquisition branch, many other departments participating, and one has to not just look at Rural Development as the sole department responsible for decentralization. The numbers are what they are and the budget is something we are supporting. It had to be this way and we will continue to try and carry out our responsibilities as they are dictated through this budget.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, we heard exactly the same kind of a scenario from the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), who also indicated that there are fewer jobs in rural Manitoba as a result of budgetary cuts despite decentralization. I would like to know where the minister gets 19. He originally said that there were 19, but then he said there was a reduction because of budgetary cuts. If that reduction has now been 11 in terms of decentralization initiative and he has also cut 24 rural jobs, then the differentiation is not five. The differentiation is 13.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I indicated budget reductions of 24 for rural Manitoba and, out of that, the decentralization were 19. Nineteen from 24 make five, so we show a net reduction of five.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, but this minister earlier in this very session this afternoon said that, while there had been originally 19 positions to be decentralized; because of budgetary downsizing of decentralization, that number had been reduced. Now what has that number been reduced to? I understood from his supplementary comments that it had been reduced to 11. Now if it had not been reduced from 19 to 11, what has it been reduced from? It cannot keep 19 on both ends; it does not add up. I used to teach math.

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, I will not argue with the member. If she feels comfortable with her position, I feel comfortable with mine.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, but what I really would like to know is the correct number. What is the correct number? If 10 was downsized, what was it downsized to?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, we had decentralized 19 positions. Of those 19 positions, 11 of them were reduced through budgetary decisions, which left eight. The budgetary reductions left eight for decentralization of the initial decentralization positions. Okay? Now there are three more redeployments which take it back up to 11. -(interjection)- No, the total reductions which I referred to earlier were 40 in the budget, of which 16 were from Winnipeg and 24 from rural Manitoba. I cannot change the numbers. That is what they are.

* (1640)

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): I am pleased to be finally recognized. Madam Chairperson, I guess I made it very clear when the budget was brought down that I supported the budget in principle and, in fact, in most items; but one area that I was critical of, and I still am, is the treatment of the RDCs in rural Manitoba. In fact, I think if we do have a blemish on our record, it is the record of economic development in rural Manitoba. I think that it is an area in which we have to put a larger thrust. I support the decentralization in spite of the catcalls from the opposition. It was the right move to make, and we are making that move, but the RDCs, while maybe some say they have been ineffective in some areas, I think the comments of the member for Swan River that in that region it has improved, and I think it has—I think the one in southern Manitoba has been excellent. I know I have worked very carefully with the group in Portage la Prairie on many, many issues and it has been an excellent program. It is working with the community.

If we have to take some cuts there, what have we got to replace it with? I do not think we have had anything that I am aware of to replace the RDCs in any way. So, therefore, I am critical of the Department of Rural Development for the treatment that the RDCs have taken. I think we need to be increasing our economic thrust in rural Manitoba. If there is a better plan in place, a better plan to go forward with, then I would be quite happy to look at

that, but there is no other plan to go forward with. We do have the bond issue. Sure the bond issue will allow entrepreneurs and investors to get together, and with some security through the government—in whatever form will be securing them, or whatever, I do not know, whatever comes through when the bill is finally introduced.

We still have to have somebody to put these groups together and to put the package together. We have to have the ability for the investor and the entrepreneur to get together, and there has to be a focal point, and that, at this point, is the RDCs. Somebody says, the minister says, where would you get the money from? Well, I put forward the suggestion that we can take some money out of Community Places, which is a great rural program. It would be rural, but that is for community enhancement and I have made use of it in Portage la Prairie, or I should say the constituency has made use of it, and to good use, but we are talking about the life blood, which is jobs and the economic survival of rural Manitoba. I think we need to take a hard look at the refunding of that particular organization. I was very unhappy in the method and the way it went about and the cuts, and where the cuts were.

If we are looking for another place to cut to fund the RDCs, then I would say we could all take \$10,000 out of our constituency allowance, which is quite high. Members shudder and shake their heads. When we came into government here, there was only \$3,500 in constituency allowances. We did darn well and we had to go out and work, instead of looking at the expense accounts which will be coming out every year that shows what members spend, the printing allowance and all of that kind of stuff, the overspending on printing allowances by the NDP. Let us take some of that money and shove it into economic development in rural Manitoba, instead of some of the garbage that is put out from all parties. We could do an awful lot of cutting and trimming and put our money where it properly belongs.

So, Madam Chairperson, I would ask the minister, is there any other plans for rural economic development? We looked in our throne speech some three years ago where we talked about a business centre and doubling them and the funding, and we have seen no progress to that date. Economic development is very dear to my heart and it is one that I understand, and I would like to see

our government doing something much better. I would like to have some comment from the minister as to what thrust we can expect in the near future.

Mr. Downey: The short answer, Madam Chair, is yes, and I expect to have input from not only members on this side of the House, but all members as it relates to the economic activity. Activity in the economic sense is the motor that drives the engine of our economy, provides the funds for our social programs, our health and education programs.

So I have to say I am extremely open to ideas and comments as they relate to economic development, whether it is agriculture, food-related industries, whether it is energy-related industries. I am encouraged by recent development in the southwest area which I represent, and was sorry today that we had to—I am happy because of the rain—but sorry we had to cancel an opportunity to see the new horizontal drilling activity that is taking place in southwest Manitoba, again the private sector investing to create economic wealth.

So the answer is, yes, we have other concepts and ideas that we are working on, and I hope that the rural development corporations will play a major role in that overall economic development.

Mr. Connery: Madam Chairperson, there is one other question I pose to the minister and I think it is the lifeblood of southern Manitoba, especially southwest and south central Manitoba. That is water, and I know there have been proposals suggested. We have the south Hespeler study group that is looking at means of providing water to all of southern Manitoba. We need to very desperately and as soon as possible provide water to all of those communities that are dry.

We have potential along the Assiniboine River. We have potential of expanding off of areas along the Assiniboine River, but we also have a great potential down through the south where we could divert water out of the Assiniboine River or other structures, the Pembina, the Souris River. The key one is some sort of structure on the Assiniboine River which will impound water for the next 50 years to ensure—Winnipeg even has the ability to flush the Assiniboine River, and the Red, to make them cleaner rivers to enjoy for recreational facilities. Also, if we had a structure on the Assiniboine River, we would be able to have a sporting area similar to the Shellmouth where we could have sport fishing, where we could have recreational activities. That

would spur business, industry all along those communities, the small communities of Holland and Carberry and all through that area.

I would ask the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey) if he would support a structure on the Assiniboine River along with others that are very important, the Souris River which is important to that community, and the Pembina, to provide water for all of southern Manitoba, not just for industrial and residential but for irrigation which will allow for the secondary industries, so that we can see all of the communities in southern Manitoba flourish, because we can produce a lot of food.

We see in southern California and in some of the southern states they are running out of water, and I can see a potential for us being able to sell food to California rather than California selling that food here. I think there are tremendous opportunities, with the Minister of Rural Development's support—those very important impoundings of water. I guess I support the Assiniboine first because of the size of it, but I recognize the importance of all those other impoundings of water on other tributaries. Would he support that sort of initiative?

Mr. Downey: The concept that the member raises is one which has given lifeblood to southern Manitoba when you look at the Lake of the Prairies. The concept is something that I support and endorse. There are of course the normal necessary environmental works that have to be carried out, which I know the member supports, but I make no apologies for it, Madam Chair. I support that kind of activity as it relates to water ponding and management of water in southern Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, just back to regional development corporations. The other members have raised some points on it, but also I would just like to say that I think it is very important that we all work together on this. Now that we have community futures and federal funding, I hope that this government does not think that they can slough off on their responsibilities. Municipalities and the provincial government and the federal government all have to work together, if we are going to have any economic growth.

The minister raised the rural development bonds, and he has raised this several times and gotten a lot of mileage out of it. Can the minister tell us when can we expect to hear the real facts on the rural

development bonds other than the announcements that the bill is coming?

* (1650)

Mr. Downey: Very soon, Madam Chair. As she knows, the bill has been introduced for first reading, so as soon as the completion of the work in that relationship is done, she will see the bill.

Madam Chairman: Item 6. Community Development (a) Salaries \$2,769,900—pass.

6.(b) Other Expenditures \$452,300—pass.

6.(c) Grants \$503,200—pass.

Resolution 126: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,725,400 for Rural Development, Community Development, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1992—pass.

Item 7. Provincial Planning (a) Salaries \$345,600.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just one question. I want to ask the minister, is his government looking at changes in land use policy as far as farmland or industrial development? What are the plans of this government on land use?

Mr. Downey: Good question. I can tell the member that the land-use policies will be coming under review.

Madam Chairman: Item 7. Provincial Planning (a) Salaries \$345,600—pass.

7.(b) Other Expenditures \$32,200—pass.

Resolution 127: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$377,800 for Rural Development, Provincial Planning, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1992—pass.

Item 8. Surface Rights Board (a) Salaries \$69,000—pass.

8.(b) Other Expenditures \$29,000—pass.

Resolution 128: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$98,000 for Rural Development, Surface Rights Board, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1992—pass.

Item 9. Manitoba Water Services Board (a) Salaries \$1,201,200. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Wowchuk: Could the minister give us some explanation on why there has been such a large reduction in staff in the Water Services branch?

Mr. Downey: Currently a lot of municipalities are now purchasing their engineering services and other services not in relationship to the Water Services Board outside the Water Services Board, and we now expect other municipalities to do the same.

Ms. Wowchuk: The Southern Development Initiative, again that is another program that has been announced several times, and we have heard about it. Can the minister tell us what the status is of the program? I understand they are in process of agreements. When can we expect to see some work under this program?

Mr. Downey: This fall, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Wowchuk: How many communities are at the present time getting assistance under this program? I want to also ask the minister, what initiatives are being taken to provide water for northern communities as well?

This is a southern initiative. In particular, the community of Mafeking is looking for assistance on water. Is anything being done to provide assistance for northern communities? I know I have asked a whole bunch of questions there, but if the minister could—

Mr. Downey: There are nine communities under the SDI initiative which are currently in negotiations with the department and the federal government under PFRA.

The Northern Development department looks after the water supplies for northern communities. I believe Mafeking is currently under negotiations with either the Water Services Board or the department. I am aware of the need for work to be done there anyway.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sorry. The minister, did he say that it was under Northern Affairs?—because Mafeking is not a Northern Affairs community.

Mr. Downey: I apologize, Madam Chair, it is currently under Water Services, and is in the design stage.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can the community of Mafeking expect water by this year? Can you expect that the services will be put in place this year?

Mr. Downey: I cannot guarantee that, Madam Chair, but as soon as the design work is done, then I would expect it to proceed to the next stage.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, does that mean that funding is in place and once the design work is done, the work can proceed in Mafeking?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, once the design is done, then we go to tender to see what the cost of the project would be and then funds would have to be provided.

Ms. Wowchuk: What I am trying to get at, Madam Chair, is this has been a project that has been ongoing for a long time. I would like to ask the minister, has his government got in place funding that will cover this project once the design work and the tendering is done? Is there money available?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, until we know the cost of the project and the design work is done, we cannot give that indication, but let me put it this way, the former member for Swan River worked hard to get Mafeking a water program. What we have done is it is in the design stage. As soon as it goes through this process, I can tell her personally, any place that I can see the need, or can support in water systems, I truly want to support. Water is the lifeline to all communities and without it they cannot grow and expand or maintain their populations, and I feel very strongly about the supplying of water services.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, in this particular item we have the reduction of eight employees. Can the minister tell us where those eight employees were located?

Mr. Downey: I answered that earlier, Madam Chair. At Brandon.

Mrs. Carstairs: I am sorry, Madam Chairperson, I understood him to say one had been located at Brandon before, but all eight of these have been located in Brandon. All right.

Can the minister explain his statement of a few minutes ago in which he said that more and more municipalities were bypassing, if you will, the services provided by the Manitoba Water Services Board and going directly to engineering consultants of their own choice rather than working through the government department. Can he tell us what municipalities have done that, how large a distribution that was and, if that was the case, for how many years has it been ongoing, and why have we kept these employees in place if nobody wanted them?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, they were all vacant but two, and what I said was many municipalities are

employing the services outside of Water Services Board currently, and we expect them to do so and that to expand.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, if they were all vacant but two, for how long has this department been running a vacancy rate in this branch of—well, six out of 30 would be a substantial amount, 20 percent.

Mr. Downey: Make it about a year, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chair, then is the adjusted figure of \$1.263 million an accurate figure for the amount of expenditures in '90-91 for staff salaries for this particular service board?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Item 9, Salaries \$1,201,200—

Mr. Dewar: I believe that Selkirk is identified as qualifying for assistance under the SDI. I was wondering when Selkirk can expect assistance to develop new water sources?

Mr. Downey: Yes, they do qualify and they are in negotiations now.

Mr. Dewar: Can he explain further the status of those negotiations?

Mr. Downey: The management committee have met with them once, and the negotiating committee are meeting with them now.

Mrs. Carstairs: I do realize the minister wants to rush through this, but there are some questions that are left to be -(interjection)- she is quite prepared to allow us to continue asking questions in this particular area.

The minister indicated that there were, in fact, only 23 professional and technical people. He said there were 29 there, but six were vacant, so that leaves 23. Can he explain why, if 23 is an accurate figure, and the staff salary range is an accurate figure; why he would be paying an average of \$54,000 for a professional/technical person in that department, and now it is \$44,809?

Mr. Downey: I cannot determine where she is getting her numbers from, Madam Chair, but I can get an explanation for her as to the issue which she has raised.

Madam Chairman: Item 9.(a) Salaries \$1,201,200.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would like to ask the Chair, I realize—I would like to ask the minister if there

would be leave to, since we are just about finished this department, if we could just perhaps take a few minutes to carry on. I have not talked to the other—

* (1700)

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The procedure is such that I cannot permit it through this process. What has to happen is -(interjection)- Order, please. What has to happen is we have to go back right through the Speaker's Chair, back into the Assembly and then request leave and then move back into this process.

It is five o'clock and time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) with committee changes.

Committee Change

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would like to make a correction from yesterday that for the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources where I moved Osborne (Mr. Alcock) in place of Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) be rescinded.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed.

House Business

Hon. James Downey (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I believe it is agreed by the House, by the members here, that we would ask for leave to be able to finish the Rural Development Estimates to accommodate some of the members here, for approximately 15 minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to revert into Committee of Supply?

An Honourable Member: Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker: There will be leave for that? Is there also leave now to bring forward the motion, for the second time, for the House to resolve itself into committee? We will need leave because this is twice that we have done this in one sitting, so we need leave for that. Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: There is leave for that.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Rural Development.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Item 9.(a) Salaries \$1,201,200—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$329,900—pass.

Resolution 129: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,531,100 for Rural Development, Manitoba Water Services Board for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

Item 10. Expenditures Related to Capital (a) Capital Grants: (1) Transit Bus Purchases \$151,000—pass; (2) Water Development \$850,000.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): The minister, in response to a question from the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), indicated that he was very much in favour of a number of Water Development projects. Water Development projects require money. Would the minister like to explain how he can, a few minutes ago, be in favour of Water Development projects and then see his budget for Water Development projects cut by over 50 percent?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Chair, the member should know that to embark upon major water projects like the member has asked about, would not come to be this particular year. It would take a series of environmental impact studies, a lot of work would have to be done that would be preliminary to the actual expenditures of construction works.

However, I do want to point out to the member that we have put in place a million dollars for droughtproofing of rural communities of which would include pipe lining for some central distribution

systems and overall work as it relates to the water activities. Let me say very seriously—pardon me?

Mrs. Carstairs: Where is that in the budget?

Mr. Downey: It is on page 156 about two-thirds of the way down, item 1.(e).

All I can say to the member is that I think what we are attempting to do is to put the necessary resources, ingredients in place so that communities can develop. I make no apologies, Madam Chair. I believe it is the government's responsibility to work with municipal corporations to give them the tools to maintain lifestyles, to enhance lifestyles, to encourage investment by the private sector to come to those communities and do business. It is our responsibility to give them the natural resources to work to provide and develop the natural resources to do that.

That is my answer and I know the member may have further comments, but I would hope that she would support in this area, the whole area, of Water Development.

Mrs. Carstairs: I just have a question with regard to procedure. Why was the droughtproofing moved to the enabling vote rather than as part of this particular capital project budget?

Mr. Downey: We are entering into discussions with the federal government as it relates to cost sharing.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): In the interest of time I will not get into very much detail. I have some concerns about water development and the proposals that are being made. I want to say that I am supportive of providing water to all areas that need it, as long as it is not at the expense of another community that is going to suffer because of the change of water patterns. I hope and I am sure that the minister would take that into consideration.

*(1710)

The area that I would like to touch on before we finish this department is conservation districts. The government has talked about sustainable development, and part of sustainable development is preserving the soil and the water, and conservation districts have come a long way to conserving. I want to ask the minister, why has there been such a decrease in funding to Conservation Districts, and are they abandoning the idea or not recognizing the importance of conservation districts?

Mr. Downey: Madam Chair, there is nobody that supports conservation more than this government and this party and the rural base of which we represent. I have to say again though that when you look at the total amount of expenditures that this government is expending on conservation, when you look at the Department of Agriculture, when you look at Natural Resources, when you look at the Prairie CARE program, I think one would find the commitment to conservation still there and maybe in a greater way. There are tree planting programs, row crop planting programs, leasing of pothole type lands from farmers. I think you would find in general that there is major support.

What we have seen in conservation districts, and I say this genuinely, is some of them have seen over the past few years, they have converted from drainage districts to conservation districts. There is still a major amount of drainage taking place. What I think we are forcing to take place are municipalities taking a closer look at the whole word of conservation: Are we really accomplishing with our conservation districts what we wanted to do?

Again, it is an area which I am committed to even though you see a lesser amount of money here, but again it is a matter of prioritizing. I think if one were to assess the total activities of conservation in the government, how can we better co-ordinate and make better use of the monies that we have? That is really where we are coming at.

I do not feel good about this particular reduction, Madam Chair, but it was again a decision that had to be made to meet some targets. We are in discussions with the Conservation Districts people, and we will continue to discuss with them as we will discuss with Natural Resources and Agriculture how we can better maximize the use of the scarce resource that we have.

Ms. Wowchuk: I guess I just want to say I agree with the minister that this should not have been a cut. I am disappointed that it is a cut because for a bit of short-term gain to meet the target, as he says, we may end up paying a very high price. Communities have worked long and hard and those people who believe in conservation districts have worked long and hard to get them established and to convince people that conservation districts are the way to go.

If the funding is not going to be there and we are going to be taking a step backwards, we may pay a

high price as far as conserving our soil and water goals by reducing this funding.

Mrs. Carstairs: It is not appropriate for the minister to put on record that there is perhaps more money for conservation -(interjection)-

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: The reality is that conservation monies, which were in the Department of Natural Resources and were in the Department of Agriculture, have also both been cut in addition to the monies that have been cut at this budget. The amount of monies available for conservation are considerably less over all three departments than they were in previous years.

More importantly, as a result of the change which this government has done, they have again offloaded a responsibility onto the municipality. The decrease in the amount of money for conservation grants is a direct result of their decision that the municipalities would have to pick up 30 percent of the cost and 70 percent of the cost would be borne by the provincial government. That is a change in policy, but it is also an offloading of expenditures on to municipalities throughout this province, the way they have offloaded in water services, the way they have offloaded in terms of school taxes on to the municipalities, as well.

I simply want it to go on the record that the minister cannot look in other budgets to find the monies. It is not in other budgets, either.

Madam Chairman: 10.(2) Water Development \$850,000—pass; (3) Sewer and Water \$3,000,000—pass; (4) Conservation Districts \$1,953,100—pass.

Resolution 130: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,954,100 for Rural Development, Expenditures Related to Capital for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1992—pass.

At this time I would ask that the minister's staff please leave the Chamber and we will move to item 1.(a), page 145.

Item 1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary \$10,300.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, I guess it is a tradition that we look at what the minister should earn in his salary for what he has done for the rural community.

When I look at what he has done and the supports that have been reduced and what has happened with decentralization and how this minister has misled the rural people—you know, during the election we had great big promises about decentralization. Then we hear the real facts, that a very small number of those jobs are really out in the rural area.

When we look at the regional development corporations, the very people who should be supporting the rural communities, have their funding cut. To look at all the offloading that this government has done on to the municipal governments, I cannot quite see how the minister has earned his salary in this department.

I ask the minister, since it is his job to deal with the rural community and the department has been changed from Municipal Affairs to Rural Development, that he look very seriously at what is happening in the rural community and give a sincere commitment to the rural people that he will provide jobs, that he will have the services there so that people will be attracted to the rural community and want to live there.

The way we are going right now, when we do not have the services for people, services in mental health that have been promised for rural people, particularly in the Parkland area, that are not there, jobs that are not in the rural area, our young people having to leave this province, because there are not jobs for them in the rural area.

I ask this minister to take his job very seriously as Minister for Rural Development and look for development throughout the province. I know he is taking lots of credit right now for the development in southern Manitoba and, as I said before, I am very happy for the people in southern Manitoba; but there is a vast part of this province, in the North, in the Parklands areas, throughout the area, that needs support. I ask this minister to go out and meet with the people and hear what they really need and make a commitment to rural Manitoba.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I echo the member's comments from Swan River that there is a lot of talk about how this government is supportive of rural development, but there is not much action. No better place do we see that than what has happened in the whole decentralization initiative.

* (1720)

We went through that with this minister and he told us that 146 positions had been decentralized to date. Yet, we also know that Agriculture has lost eight; Rural Development has lost 13; Natural Resources has lost 61 and, in those three departments alone, 82 fewer jobs exist in rural Manitoba despite what this minister has said. That does not deal with the whole issue of Northern Affairs and with Native Affairs and with all the other government departments that, ostensibly, have made cuts in their budgetary numbers.

The result is that there are fewer services available to rural Manitobans. There are fewer government employees working in rural Manitoba. The mandate of this government to represent the people of rural Manitoba has been badly let down by this minister and this government.

Mr. Downey: Not to delay, Madam Chair, I just want to thank the members opposite for their moving along the Estimates as quickly as possible, and I will take another opportunity to respond to the comments that were made, but one cannot neglect or ignore the \$43,000,000 in the GRIP program going to rural Manitoba.

The other commitments that were made and are made as it relates to capital expenditures of some \$300,000,000 in this province are spread throughout the province. I do want to thank the members for the constructive criticism, and I do look forward to great things happening in rural Manitoba under rural development bonds and under the leadership of Premier Gary Filmon and this Conservative Party.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. Item 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$10,300—pass.

Resolution 121: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,063,400 for Rural Development, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1992—pass.

This concludes the Estimates for the Department of Rural Development.

As previously agreed, the hour being past 5 p.m., time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

Mr. Speaker: The hour being after 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS**Bill 32—The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Mount Carmel Clinic, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave. Agreed.

SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS**Bill 66—The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation The Winnipeg Canoe Club.

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation The Winnipeg Canoe Club, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Render: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to act as sponsor to the amendment to The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Act. This amendment will clarify the fact that the Winnipeg Canoe Club is a not-for-profit organization. Just before I go into some of the details of the reasons for the amendment, I would just like to give a little bit of a history of the Canoe Club, which happens to be in the riding of St. Vital.

The Winnipeg Canoe Club was founded in 1893, making it the second oldest active sports club in

Canada. It was incorporated by an act in this Assembly in 1914. Now, throughout the 1930s and the 1940s, the Winnipeg Canoe Club was very competitive as well as being very successful in vying for some of the top honours in all levels of paddling and canoeing. They were particularly active for the 1940 Olympics which were held in Finland.

Unfortunately in the 1950s, tragedy struck. I do not know how many of you remember the flood of 1950, but the flood of 1950 wiped out the Winnipeg Canoe Club. Four years later, the club was again destroyed, this time by fire. However, the members were very active, dedicated and enthusiastic, and within one year the present Canoe Club was reconstructed and completed.

Further additions included a pool; additional tennis courts were built in 1967 for the Pan Am Games and in 1970, badminton, squash and handball courts were added. In 1979, four international squash courts were also constructed. Now all of these new facilities have led the Canoe Club to host a wide variety of city, provincial, and national championships.

Over the years, Mr. Speaker, the Winnipeg Canoe Club has provided a valuable community resource and has served not just the surrounding area, but all Winnipeg residents as well. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) was also a member of the Canoe Club at one time. --(interjection)- Oh, yes, the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme) was also a member of the Winnipeg Canoe Club.

I would just like to tell you some of the things that the Canoe Club does. Its golf courses, aerobics program, swimming lessons and lifesaving courses and children's summer camps are all open to the public. The Winnipeg Canoe Club also makes its facilities available to a host of Winnipeg and Manitoba teams and schools at nominal or no charge. For example, the St. Vital Mustangs Football Club has used the weight room. Local schools use the squash, badminton and racketball courts. The women's provincial squash team trains at the club, as did Manitoba's Canada Games team. Junior provincial squash and badminton teams also use the club facilities to train, and the club hosts local, provincial and national tournaments. These are all open to the public at no charge.

The Winnipeg Canoe Club is now seeking an amendment which is intended to clarify and ensure

the fact that the club is a not-for-profit corporation by providing that, upon dissolution of the club and after the payment of all debts and liabilities, the remaining property of the club shall be distributed or disposed of to charitable organizations or organizations which are beneficial to the community. The act does not currently make any reference to what would happen to a surplus on dissolution, and The Corporations Act suggests that in the absence of any such provision, assets would be distributed among the shareholders which, of course, would call into question any assertion by the club that it is a not-for-profit corporation.

As many of you may know, if you have been following the newspapers these last few years, the club's finances are ailing, and the club is looking at a variety of ways to keep the club alive and financially healthy. Thus, some of the other reasons for changing the club or, as I say, ensuring the club is a not-for-profit corporation are: No. 1, it will enable the club to make application to the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation for a licence to conduct lotteries and other games of chance. This, of course, is very important to the club as a means of raising revenue. No. 2, it will enable the club to argue that it should be exempt from school taxes levied by the City of Winnipeg. No. 3, it will remove any doubt about whether the club is a not-for-profit corporation when considering its liability to pay federal and provincial income tax.

The Winnipeg Canoe Club has stood the test of flood and fire, two World Wars and the social changes which have taken place during its long history. It has continued to grow and is one of the finest clubs in Canada. This amendment will serve to assist the Winnipeg Canoe Club's growth well into the 21st Century. I would urge all honourable members to support this amendment.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I move, seconded by the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 22—The Manitoba Energy Authority Repeal Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr),

Bill 22, The Manitoba Energy Authority Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la Régie de l'énergie du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Bill 23—The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Bill 23, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Bill 24—The Business Practices Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), Bill 24, The Business Practices Amendment Act, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales, standing in the name of the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) who has seven minutes remaining.

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Bill 25—The Environment Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), Bill 25, The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no. 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

Bill 26—The Environment Amendment Act (3)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion, the honourable member for St. James, Bill 26, The Environment Amendment Act (3); Loi no. 3 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

* (1730)

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Mr. Speaker: Are we moving ahead with Bill 16 (The Motor Vehicle Lemon Law Act; Loi sur les véhicules automobiles défectueux)? No.

Bill 17 (The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur)? No.

Bill 27 (The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie). No.

Bill 31—The Ombudsman Amendment Act

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 31, The Ombudsman Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur L'Ombudsman, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely simple bill. It does what has already been provided for the city of Winnipeg which is to enable the city of Winnipeg to access the services of the provincial Ombudsman. It became increasingly clear that people at the municipal level felt that they had the same needs to access the Ombudsman for clear and thorough investigation of cases which they believed might have been decided in ways that were not in the best interests of the citizens of the province of Manitoba.

We made that amendment in this House over a year ago, and the result of that has been now the provincial Ombudsman will indeed be able to provide those services for the city of Winnipeg. However, there is also a large group of people who

cannot still access for the purposes of municipal services, the Ombudsman, because they are not part of the city of Winnipeg, that includes all of the people who live outside the city of Winnipeg.

What this simple amendment does is to make the provincial Ombudsman also accessible at the wish of the municipalities so that their citizens also can have the right to go to the Ombudsman and to plead their case if they believe that they have not received equitable treatment through municipal agencies and through the municipal governments in the province of Manitoba.

I believe that it is something which many municipalities will choose to access on behalf of their citizens. It makes the process of democracy thrive even more in our province as a whole. We have watched with interest Ombudsman's reports now coming through for a wide variety of areas, Child and Family Services complaints, complaints of hospitals, complaints of the operations of agencies within government control, such as the Manitoba Developmental Centre.

Many of the Ombudsman's recommendations have showed clear and careful examination of the fact. They have shown that sometimes governments of all political stripes make mistakes, that sometimes the individual does not receive the attention that he or she may deserve. To broaden the access of the Ombudsman to people living in municipalities is to, I think, promote the kind of democracy that each and every one of us believes in, and I recommend this bill to each and every member of this House.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 62—The University of Manitoba Amendment Act

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 62, The University of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Université du Manitoba, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my very introductory remarks when I presented this bill, I introduce this bill with some regret. I introduce it because had the government, through the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach), acted in a manner in which previous Education ministers had acted, this bill would not be necessary.

It had been the custom of the Minister of Education and Training to accept the appointments of the student council of the University of Manitoba. Those young people who are to be appointed to the Board of Governors on the recommendation of their own student body were then taken by the Minister of Education and Training and they became his or her appointees to the Board of Governors, as the present legislation permits.

What we have seen under the present Minister of Education and Training, tragically, is a willingness on his part to politicize the process of the student representation on the board of the University of Manitoba.

The Board of Governors' appointments of students came about when many of us were participating actively in student movements in the '60s. At that time we resented the fact that we had little say about the direction that our universities were taking, little say about the content of courses, little say about the programs that would be offered, little say, unfortunately, about the quality of many of the people who were teaching us.

We hoped that by having student representation on the Board of Governors of the universities throughout this land those students would be able to plead the case for the students who lived and worked at those universities. After all, it was our education that was of most importance to us at that particular point in our career, and we wanted to ensure that the quality of the education we received was of the very highest quality.

Student representation on Board of Governors has become part and parcel of every university campus throughout this nation. Representation of students presenting their concerns about increased tuition fees, presenting their concerns about the quality of their education has been a vital part of board meetings each time the board met.

It is not enough for the student representation to be there. The student representation must truly represent the student body. The only way that student representation is going to truly represent the

student body is for the students to select that individual, not the Minister of Education and Training, whoever that Minister of Education and Training may be.

The students who are now in our university education system are all, for the most part, over the age of 18. Every one of those students has the right to choose us as MLAs. Surely they should have the same right to choose their representation at the university-level board of governors, and yet we are denying them that democratic right.

We say to them, you can make suggestions to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), but if the Minister of Education does not like your suggestions, then we are going to reach in the hand—sometimes, unfortunately, the ugly hand of political patronage—and we are going to say we like those students better than the students that you have democratically selected.

* (1740)

It is not good enough, Mr. Speaker, for students to not have the opportunity to choose their own student representation. It is not good enough to say to our young people, you have a right to vote in provincial elections, in civic elections, in federal elections; but you do not have a right to select your students who are going to represent you at the board of governors of our university.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I introduce this amendment, because it is the right thing to do. It is the right thing to say, that if we believe in democracy, then we believe in affording the opportunity to democracy to university students throughout this province. That democracy has been recently denied to them, and I think it should be restored. That is the purpose of this particular piece of legislation.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): I move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 27—Manitoba Economic Decline

Mr. Speaker: Resolution of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), Resolution 27, Manitoba Economic Decline.

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: No, there is no standing of resolutions. Is the honourable member for Flin Flon to proceed? No? The resolution accordingly is dropped to the bottom.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I would ask you to petition the House to determine whether or not there is a will to call it six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock?

Some Honourable Members: Six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, before I give my

agreement to that, I think it was the will of the House to actually call it six o'clock prior to the movement of that resolution to the bottom of the Order Paper. Certainly my party would be in favour of leaving that resolution standing at the top of the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question before the House at this moment: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: That is agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 25, 1991

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