



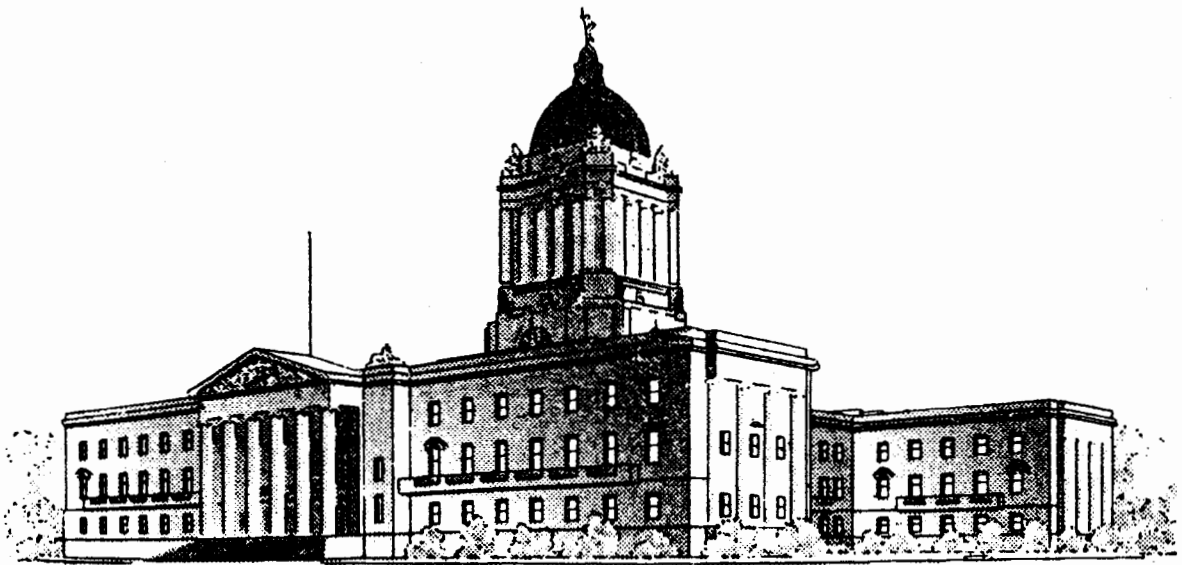
Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay  
Speaker*



Vol. XLVI No. 27 - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 1, 1996

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

---

<b>Name</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Party</b>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 1, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

*PRAYERS*

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

## Home Care Services

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Debra McNicholl, Diane Rodrigue, Diane Waterchuk and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of E.N.D. Smalling, C. Panergo, J. Lillies and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of J. Nicolson, W. Teichroeb, Helen Sawatsky and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Elizabeth Smedts, Ian B. Fraser, Jason Paas and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Patricia Cameron, A.J. Murphy, K. Alix and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Angel Busch, Bernice Ezirim, B. McGregor and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

## READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

## Seasonal Camping Fees

**Madam Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*WHEREAS seasonal camping has provided an affordable form of recreation for many Manitobans; and*

*WHEREAS the provincial government has announced increases in seasonal camping fees of up to 100 percent; and*

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

*WHEREAS this huge increase is far more than any cost-of-living increase; and*

*WHEREAS this increase will lead to many people being unable to afford seasonal camping.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the provincial government not to increase seasonal camping fees by such a large amount.*

## Home Care Services

**Madam Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and*

*THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and*

*THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and*

*THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and*

*THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.*

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

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes. The Clerk will read.

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

**Madam Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and*

*THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and*

*THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and*

*THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and*

*THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and*

*THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services*

\* (1335)

**Madam Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes? The Clerk will read.

**Mr. Clerk:** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

## PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

### Committee of Supply

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees):** Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Provincial Flooding Update

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Minister of Government Services):** Madam Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

I rise in the House today to update all members on the serious flooding situation in our province. The Red River began to crest Monday night in Emerson and Letellier areas. It appears the heaviest flooding along the river will continue through today and tomorrow.

Yesterday morning, accompanied by the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) and the Minister of Highways (Mr. Findlay), we conducted a land tour of some of the most affected areas including the communities of Emerson, St. Jean, Morris, Ste. Agathe, Ste. Adolphe and the Red River Floodway inlet.

Although I have spoken before about the awesome power of nature, yesterday I was more impressed by the awesome power of community spirit. Throughout our tour we heard about and witnessed the contribution of literally hundreds of volunteers who have taken time away from their work, their schools and families to assist in flood preparations.

Madam Speaker, while it is sometimes easy to help out a relative or friend, many of the volunteers are helping out Manitobans whom they have never met. That demonstrates the true definition of volunteerism. I personally want to thank the schools, churches, community groups, small businesses and individuals who have donated their time and strength to this effort. While much of the flood operation has been centred around building sandbag dikes to protect communities and private property, many Manitobans have found other ways to assist the victims, and potential victims as well, of this disaster.

We have all heard about willing people that donated their boats, trucks, farm equipment to aid the operation. We have seen people like RCMP Sergeant John Fleming risk his own life by rescuing an Emerson woman who was almost swept away by the Red River. We have witnessed many others who have helped rescue people, livestock and personal possessions. These are actions we might refer to as above the call of duty but to those willing to accept that call, we thank you.

\* (1340)

I would also like to mention the crew of about 70 army reservists from Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie and Brandon who have helped in sandbagging and other flood fighting activities. This is a force that we rely on through virtually every major natural disaster in the province, and I thank them for their professionalism and dedicated support.

There are others, who by virtue of their jobs or positions, are placed in a position of responsibility during these times. I refer to the mayors, reeves, municipal councils and their staff, as well as federal and provincial officials and their staff.

Madam Speaker, time after time in visiting these communities we hear about how much more prepared and co-ordinated this flood operation is in comparison with the flood of 1979. The credit must go to local authorities who with the assistance of the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization, Natural Resources, Highways, Agriculture and other departments, have well-engineered emergency plans and a capable group of people to see those plans carried out.

I might add that earlier today I, along with representatives of Scouts Canada, signed a proclamation declaring May 5 to 11 Emergency Preparedness Week. The theme for this year is: plan for emergencies today, and I can truly say the value of preparedness has been demonstrated over the past few weeks.

But the task at hand is not over. As I mentioned, flood waters have begun cresting and will remain at their highest levels over the next few days. I encourage all Manitobans to offer their assistance to the local communities affected by flooding. Municipal officials co-ordinating the local flood effort and potential

volunteers should contact those offices to find out ways in which they can help.

I want to remind all Manitobans to exercise extreme caution in the flood-affected areas. We have had several reports of sightseers interfering with emergency operations at hand and potentially endangering their lives or the lives of the workers onsite. I ask all Manitobans to use their good judgment and common sense during this period. We have thus far managed to escape loss of life. That is how I wish this operation and all of us wish this operation to end.

Madam Speaker, I continue to be impressed by the massive volunteer effort in fighting the 1996 flood. I want to assure those who have contributed to this point that their initiative has given us all a greater sense of confidence that our efforts will succeed in saving the lives, homes and personal property of Manitobans. Thank you.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** I appreciate the updates that we have been getting from the Minister of Government Services having to do with the great flood of Manitoba in 1996. I want to thank him again today for bringing this information to us.

I also want to agree with many of the things that the minister has said. I want to join, on behalf of us on this side of the House, in recognizing the tremendous contribution of volunteers who have played so active a role in defending Manitobans, their lives and their possessions against the ravages of Mother Nature.

I want to join with the minister in particularly mentioning Sergeant John Fleming. It is sort of the Manitoba spirit. I think, that gets people motivated to put their own life and limb in danger in helping out fellow Manitobans in their time of need. I think Sergeant Fleming is a great personification of the spirit that Manitobans have when it comes to co-operating together in facing the disasters that we do from time to time come across.

I also want to pay attention to the army reservists who have joined in the battle. Their co-operation and their work in this is very much appreciated, I am sure, by those directly affected. It is good to know that Manitobans can

come together in a time of need and work together to battle the problems that we face every now and then.

That leads me, however, to some more of the challenges that are coming up into the future. I would encourage the minister to include the Lake Manitoba, Portage diversion, Interlake area in the updates that we get from his department. We would be very interested to know the situation in that part of the province.

I would also like to point out that the next challenge that faces the people in these areas is going to be getting the crop in at a decent time. The seeding in these areas will in all likelihood be backed up to a point where we will be at a disaster area level there as well. So I am just pointing that out, that is going to be the next challenge we face.

I want to, again, make sure we recognize the volunteers, not only for the sandbagging and the work they are doing right now, but the planning that is going to take place, has taken place, and will take place in case we go through this again at some point in the future.

I do want to remind the minister, though, that he needs to sit with the federal people and end the squabble that has played a part in slowing down the reaction to this year's flood. It is not good enough to simply point the finger in the direction of the federal government in terms of compensation to R.M.s from last year. The R.M.s that have complained to us that they have not been compensated for last year, have not been able to move forward as quickly as they would like in fighting the flood of this year.

Having said all that, I would like to thank the minister again for presenting this information to the House.

\* (1345)

### **Manitoba HydroBonds**

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, I have a brief ministerial statement for the House.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that once again Manitobans will have the opportunity to invest in their province when HydroBonds Series V go on sale on May 21. HydroBonds are being reintroduced to

replace Series III, which will mature in June. Manitobans have long prided themselves on being self-sustaining by investing in the future of their own province. They understand that by funding the generation and supply of Manitoba's hydroelectric power they provide themselves with financial benefits and ensure a successful economic future for Manitoba's most important natural resource.

Series V of Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds will be available for a five-year term and will be a solid addition to any investment portfolio. HydroBonds, together with the Builder Bonds, have a proven track record, raising more than \$2.2 billion for the province, and have generated \$350 million in interest payments exclusively to Manitobans.

Today, they continue to benefit the province by allowing us to meet more of our borrowing needs right here in Manitoba. The terms and conditions will be the same as for last year's Builder Bonds. To ensure that all Manitobans have a chance to take advantage of this investment opportunity, the bonds will be issued in denominations as low as \$100.

Madam Speaker, I would like also to take this opportunity to thank Manitobans for the support they have shown through past contributions and to encourage continued investment in the future of our province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I thank the honourable minister for the statement and, of course, welcome the fact that Manitobans will have an opportunity to invest in this great asset, Manitoba Hydro, a publicly operated, publicly owned utility. Manitobans know a good investment when they see one.

I cannot help but think, Madam Speaker, that one of the reasons the Manitoba Hydro utility is in such good shape today is the fact that it does obtain considerable revenues, which goes back, in large measure, to the important investment made in Limestone under the previous government. Manitobans today are benefiting from the foresight and the courage of those who were in government some years ago, in the previous administration, who went ahead with the Limestone project.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I also am very pleased to note that we have among the lowest utility rates in the country, and I say that is because of the historical development, and let us hope that, all together in this House, we will ensure that the publicly owned and publicly operated utility, Manitoba Hydro, will remain that way for many years to come.

\* (1350)

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I am pleased to table the report and the recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 13—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), that leave be given to introduce Bill 13, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la route) (éclairage de l'équipement agricole), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

#### Bill 14—The Manitoba Trading Corporation Amendment Act

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 14, The Manitoba Trading Corporation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société commerciale du Manitoba), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

#### Bill 15—The Tourism and Recreation Amendment Act

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by

the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), that leave be given to introduce Bill 15, The Tourism and Recreation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le tourisme et les loisirs), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

#### Bill 16—The Charleswood Bridge Facilitation Act

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that leave be given to introduce Bill 16, The Charleswood Bridge Facilitation Act (Loi facilitant l'application de l'entente sur le pont Charleswood), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw all honourable members' attention, firstly, to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today the Honourable Ralph Klein, Premier of the Province of Alberta.

Also, seated in the loge to my left, we have David Orlikow, the former MLA for St. Johns.

Seated in the public gallery we have 20 seniors from Kimberley Grace Seniors under the direction of Lloyd Lovell. This seniors' residence is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

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

\* (1355)

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### BFI Landfill Site Environmental Licensing

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, last evening I attended a parents advisory



committee meeting and a number of members of the public were there with myself and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) talking about the massive cutbacks in public education and the impact it had on taxpayers in the community.

Madam Speaker, we have today learned that the government has approved a licence for BFI which the City of Winnipeg argues will cost the taxpayers of the city of Winnipeg up to \$7 million in lost tipping fees.

I would like to ask the Premier today, did the government consider this potential loss of up to \$7 million and its impact on the taxpayers and the services of the city of Winnipeg when it made its decision to issue the licence to the BFI proposal?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Madam Speaker, this is an issue that has been ongoing for a number of years. In fact, through the Capital Region Committee, we have been trying to assemble the information and make sure that all the parties brought to bear their best planning on this issue. Unfortunately, the city and the surrounding municipalities did not come to an understanding on regional planning for waste disposal, and this was the result of communities surrounding the city of Winnipeg looking for an opportunity for a waste disposal site which was formerly unavailable to them.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, again, my supplementary question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon): The City of Winnipeg has identified a loss of up to \$7 million to build a second landfill site. In light of the fact that the Environment Commission report does not deal with this loss of income, will the Premier be considering the \$7-million loss in income and not accept this BFI site and make a decision on behalf of the taxpayers of the city of Winnipeg so that we will not have this increased taxation of \$7 million for a second landfill site that many members of the community believe, inside and outside of the capital region, that we do not require?

**Mr. Cummings:** Almost two decades ago, the City of Winnipeg walked away from picking up commercial waste. They indicated to the producers of commercial waste that they would only be picking up once a week, and if that was insufficient, they could hire somebody to haul away their waste. There were only a limited number of places that they could take it. They then began to haul,

through private haulers, to a landfill owned by the City of Winnipeg. At the same time, the surrounding areas were looking for landfill opportunities and they were denied by the City of Winnipeg the opportunity to hire space, to rent space, to buy space in the existing landfill.

Therefore, we are now sitting with a situation where there is a need and a desire on the part of many of the industrial producers looking for an opportunity to site their waste. At the same time, there are a number of communities in the surrounding region that were denied the opportunity to use Brady landfill.

\* (1400)

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, it may not be surprising to the members of this side of the House that 20 years ago the City of Winnipeg may have made a mistake considering that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and many of his colleagues were controlling the City of Winnipeg in those days.

What we desire for the future is not to make the same mistakes as the Premier made in the past, so I will address this question to the Premier. Will he not repeat the mistakes of the past that he made when he was at City Council and many of his other colleagues made when they were in control of City Council, will he not repeat the mistakes of the past and will he listen to the citizens of the city of Winnipeg and a number of other members of the recycling community who say that we do not need two waste sites, and, furthermore, it will cost the city of Winnipeg taxpayers up to \$7 million? Let us make a good decision in the future rather than repeating the bad decisions of the Premier in the past.

**Mr. Cummings:** Madam Speaker, considering that the comment just came from a former Minister of Urban Affairs who had the opportunity to deal with the issue, what did he do when he was in office? He did nothing. In fact, he perpetuated a situation where the city of Winnipeg—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cummings:** Madam Speaker, there is considerable disagreement over the concerns that the city has raised.

They have stated their issues surrounding the environmental concerns. They have stated their issues surrounding financial concerns. There is no agreement on the issue that they have raised around financial concerns. There have been numerous proposals put forward for the city to sit down and discuss the opportunity for co-operation in the handling of waste in the capital region. That has not occurred. I offered my office, any opportunity at all to bring both sides to the table, to sit down and discuss the future of management of waste in this area. The City of Winnipeg, unfortunately, and I would wish that it was otherwise, has not agreed to come to the table to discuss these issues. Their position consistently has been no.

### **Home Care Program Privatization—Moratorium**

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

There are no studies, no reports, no experts justifying the government's ridiculous scheme of privatization of home care. Visitors yesterday summed it up best, I think, when they said, and I quote: I get the feeling people who want to make money out of a private system are pushing for it.

Madam Speaker, when will the Premier stop playing with the lives of thousands of Manitobans, stop spending up to half a million dollars a day on a contingency plan that is not working and do the right thing, put a halt to privatization for a year, allow for public input, and allow the people of Manitoba to have a say in this crazy scheme of privatization?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, after all of the things that have been said and done by New Democrats about their view of our neighbours to the south, it is rather strange that they should invite them here and recruit them to fight their battles on the political front. It was interesting yesterday to have visitors from the United States whom the honourable member and I were pleased to welcome to Manitoba and to be reminded about why they were really here. They were here because they wanted to access a part of our health system, that is, prescription drugs at much reduced cost to what our American friends to the south can access them.

But it is passing strange to me that New Democrats should call on the Americans to help them make their case.

**Mr. Chomiak:** My supplementary to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the Minister of Health: How does the Premier or the minister justify sending in high-priced health officials, officials from the ministry's department at senior levels, earning \$50,000 and \$60,000 a year, into people's homes to do laundry and bathing when you have thousands of workers who are prepared to go and do the job, a job they love and a job they care for, if you would only put your privatization scheme on hold for a year?

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member might well put that question to his friend Peter Olfert who denies the clients of our home care system the essential services that they require so much. Why does the honourable member not put the question to where it belongs?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, how does the Premier tolerate the attitude of this minister? Even in Alberta, when the public said enough privatization the government backed down and said no more privatization. Will the Premier stand up for the people of Manitoba?

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the hypocrisy of the member for Kildonan never ceases to amaze me. I noted that when the Premier of Alberta was introduced, he declined to applaud for him. I heard him—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

### **Point of Order**

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I am used to the Premier's insults but I would ask the Premier to withdraw that statement insofar as that is factually inaccurate.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I will withdraw the comment.

**Madam Speaker:** I thank the honourable First Minister.

\* \* \*

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, to reply to the question.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I did not actually see the member opposite because I was watching his Leader and deputy leader, neither of whom applauded.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I would ask the Premier to withdraw that. He is factually incorrect. As a courtesy, we always applaud visitors to this Chamber. The Premier has as many factual points today before this Chamber on who is applauding and who is not as he has on home care, where he has no facts, no figures and no studies to justify his decision.

I would ask the Premier to withdraw that statement and withdraw the privatization plans. Let us get on with this province.

**Mr. Filmon:** In response to the question of the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), I will repeat for him, as I have every day in this House, that the issue of introducing matters of competition and alternatives within the delivery of the home care system in this province is one of ensuring that we do not place in jeopardy the people who depend upon the services of home care—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I did not address the point of order. I initially thought perhaps the Premier was going to speak to the point of order raised by the Leader of the official opposition.

The honourable Leader of the official opposition did not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, to complete his response.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I interrupted the honourable First Minister prior to the completion of his answer to address the point of order.

The honourable First Minister, to quickly complete his response.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, as I have said on numerous occasions, the home care system of this province exists to serve the needs of those who depend upon it for care, not the needs of those who work in the system.

We are introducing an element of competition within the system and alternatives and flexibility in the system so that those people cannot be held at ransom by people who wish to withdraw their services from them.

### Social Assistance Rate Reduction

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, seniors in Manitoba have said that this government is mean-spirited and further proof of that comes today, a sad day for thousands of Manitobans whose budgets are being cut by at least 21 percent for food, clothing and household needs, and they are left with \$46.80 for single employables and \$81.50 for couples without children. People are phoning me and asking how can they possibly live on \$411 a month, including rent.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services the same question. How does she expect these people to live on \$411 a month?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, again, I thank my honourable friend for that question because it does allow me again to tell Manitobans that the people whom we have preserved on welfare are the seniors, are those with disabilities, are women and children who are in abuse shelters and those with children under the age of six. There were no changes to those rates.

We have said many times as a government that the best form of social security is a job, and the welfare reforms that we have announced will indeed take a very proactive approach to trying to help people get off of welfare and out of the cycle of poverty and into meaningful jobs.

\* (1410)

### Employment Creation Program

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, I would like to table copies of a document titled

Employment Growth in Manitoba, prepared by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), which show that this government has a pathetic record in terms of job creation compared to its predecessors.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services, can the minister tell the 84,000 recipients of social assistance, the vast majority of whom are deemed employable, where are the jobs that she expects them to get, especially since her own job creation goal is for only 700 positions? Where are the tens of thousands of jobs that she thinks are there?

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The question has been put.

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for that question because, again, it allows me the opportunity to tell Manitobans that government is not going to be the vehicle for job creation: it will be the private sector.

The initiatives that my colleague in Industry, Trade and Tourism is undertaking and the balanced budget legislation that our government has brought in where we have committed to no major increases in taxes—and that includes business tax—has put Manitoba in a good position to have the private sector come to Manitoba and create the jobs that will be needed in the future. We have a track record which Manitobans can be very proud of.

### Domestic Violence Counselling

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Can the Minister of Family Services tell one of my constituents and many other abused women in the same situation who can no longer afford bus tickets to go for abuse counselling, whether this minister wants them to forgo the help that they need and instead force them—because of this punitive policy of welfare cuts—to relive their abuse and to get no assistance so they can get on with their lives? Is this the intention of this minister, to penalize these individuals?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, again, I repeat for my honourable friend because he does not seem to have understood the reforms that we announced just a few months ago, that in fact those with young children, those

women and children that are in abuse shelters, the disabled and seniors have not had any changes to their rates. So I am convinced—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Family Services, to complete her response.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know that the programs that we have put in place like Taking Charge!, like our partnerships with the private sector that are looking at where the job opportunities are, the individual personal job plans that we are developing with people in Manitoba will help women break the cycle of poverty on welfare and find meaningful jobs.

### Headingley Correctional Institution Independent Review

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The Headingley riot is again exposing what is beneath the minister's press releases and tough talk in law and order when she is even turning a blind eye to justice and safety right under her nose, and now public confidence must be restored, beginning with a full public inquiry.

My question is, would the minister tell Manitobans that her so-called independent review means evidence cannot be compelled, information is not under oath, informers are not protected, no questioning in full public view, no requirement for public release of findings and recommendations? What is the minister afraid of?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, let me just correct the member in some areas. First of all, we intend our independent review to be a review which is very comprehensive in which individuals who have a story to tell will certainly be able to tell it. We understand as well there are a number of individuals who are seeking to have a confidential opportunity to express their concerns, and so we could, as the member said, wait forever, wait until we have had criminal charges disposed of.

Members across the way seem to be taking advice from I do not know whom. We have taken our advice from a justice of the Supreme Court who has suggested and has

said that it is very difficult to hold a public inquiry at the same time that you would hold a criminal trial. That is just very difficult, so what we are doing is in a very open way committing to the independent review, and I have said from the very beginning that the results of that most certainly will be public.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Would the minister who says that criminal charges and an inquiry cannot run at the same time—absurd in light of the Westray inquiry decision of the Supreme Court which said, the public inquiry, it does proceed—would she table the legal opinion that she says that she is relying on?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, I am relying on remarks by a justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Sopinka. I am relying also on the view that this is very difficult for the courts and that in this case we want to do the very best job that we can. That is why we are proceeding in the way we are now. We are proceeding with the independent review. There is nothing to hide. There will be nothing hidden. Within this process we expect to look fully at all of the issues, some of which have been raised over the past few days and others which correctional officers may wish to raise during the process. It will be a very full and complete opportunity and the results will most certainly be made public.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Absent tabling a legal opinion, would the minister admit, at least admit, that the gist of the Westray decision is that any decision necessary to protect the rights of the accused can safely be left with the commissioner of the inquiry? Will she just get out of the way of an inquiry and the truth?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, I resent very strongly the comments of the member. Let me tell you that this government will not stand in the way of the truth. This government—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Justice, to complete her response.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, one of the important points is, according to Justice Sopinka, that public inquiries must not be covert criminal investigations. That is the issue. Therefore, this government will be

operating according to the plan we have set out. There will be an independent review which will examine the circumstances. There will be an internal review. There will be a criminal investigation with possible charges.

I am also pleased to say that our Justice people have met with the MGEU, and in developing with the MGEU they will be also having what they have called at the moment the Rebuilding Headingley Committee that will be an opportunity for individuals who work within the system to come forward, to speak very frankly about the issues of their concern. We want to get on with it.

\* (1420)

### Landfill Sites—Winnipeg Requirements

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and I think it is about time that the Premier starts getting involved in demonstrating some leadership.

I want to cite a couple of examples. Today we have the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) approving the licence for BFI to have a dump. Last week we brought up this question in the Chamber. The city of Winnipeg does not need to have another landfill site or garbage dump or whatever it is that this government wants to call it.

The question to the Premier is, is the Premier prepared to stand up and make a commitment to Winnipeggers and Manitobans as a whole that there will be no additional garbage dump located in the capital region just north of the Perimeter? Winnipeg does not need another dump yard.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Madam Speaker, I think the member is well aware of it, but let me remind him that there were two processes in front of the Clean Environment Commission.

The first process was to review the concept of waste management in the area of the capital city. They recommended that the decision be made on environmental grounds, and it was.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, to cite another specific example—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster was recognized for a supplementary question. Would you please pose your question.

### Home Care Program Premier's Involvement

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Yes, Madam Speaker, let me again ask the Premier, is the Premier prepared to get involved in what appears to be another minister's inability to resolve an issue, that being the stalemate with reference to the home care workers and the clients and get this particular issue resolved? Again, will the Premier show some leadership?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I will repeat for the member for Inkster, this government is determined to ensure that the clients of home care get the services they require when they require them, as they require them and on a guaranteed basis. We have demonstrated to us right at this present time that by giving a monopoly bureaucratic solution to the problem, we cannot guarantee that all of those who depend upon home care will get their home care, because decisions can be made to withdraw those services. We are going to ensure that there will be competition and alternatives and flexibility in the system so those clients of home care cannot be held at risk, cannot be held at ransom because of the irresponsible decisions of others.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Will the Premier show leadership and say no to a dump yard in the city of Winnipeg and say that there will be a one-year moratorium put on home care services in areas in which this government has demonstrated incompetency?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, speaking of incompetency, he should be aware that the dump yard is not in the city of Winnipeg; it is in the Rural Municipality of Rosser. He should be aware of the fact that this has been the subject of Clean Environment Commission hearings, and he wants us to throw aside a credible third-party process that has recommended a licence be issued—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Lamoureux:** On a point of order, the Premier is imputing motives. He is suggesting that we want him to

throw aside CEC recommendations. I request the Premier to read what CEC said. It said, show some leadership.

In fact, I will table the recommendation for the Premier. Read and adhere to it.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Inkster does not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, to quickly complete his response.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, the CEC, a credible third-party objective review, has recommended that the licence be issued. Under those circumstances, the member opposite is suggesting that that process be thrown aside. That is nonsense. That is irresponsible and that is not the situation we are going to impose ourselves in. We will abide by the recommendations of the CEC.

### Headingley Correctional Institution Riot Cleanup

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Yesterday, when asked to respond and deal with the causes of the Headingley riot, the Minister of Justice in her in-your-face policy responded by saying it was more important to put tools into the hands of the inmate population.

I want to ask the Minister of Justice, who cannot even run a prison, who said just last year that anything can be used as a weapon, can she explain to Manitobans and to corrections officers how putting hammers, saws and other tools into the hands of Headingley inmates will make corrections staff who were just attacked feel safer?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I do not believe—and I would have to check Hansard—I would be very surprised if those were my comments yesterday.

However, let me address the issue of the rebuilding. First of all, to our knowledge, there has never been a requirement for inmates to take part in a cleanup and a rebuilding where there has been a disturbance across this

country. This is the first time. This government is saying that, separate and apart from the criminal procedures which may take place, there must be an accountability to the taxpayers, that these people clean up the place in which they live.

However, as the member knows, we have had in already, and the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister) has arranged to have in already, cleaning which will deal with those materials which may in fact be hazardous or be used as weapons, things such as the shards of glass and some of the needles which are there.

What we are looking at is setting up a process whereby inmates—the member does not want to hear—whereby inmates will begin the cleaning process and the rebuilding process; however, all of that will be done—he has been talking the whole time I have been talking, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), this is not a time for debate. The honourable member requested a response from the honourable Minister of Justice.

The honourable Minister of Justice, to quickly complete her response.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

With the Rebuilding Headingly Committee, which is a co-operative effort between the MGEU, the union, our correctional officers and our government, we will be looking at the best and the safest way in which inmates can participate in the rebuilding of the institution.

### Public Inquiry

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Madam Speaker, just do not give them ashtrays, that is all we ask.

My supplementary question is for the same minister. Can the Minister of Justice explain to Manitobans how, without an open public inquiry process, she intends to obtain all the facts about the riot when employees have been recently fired for speaking up about Headingly conditions? How does she expect all the truth and facts to come out about this case without a public inquiry?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, there are a number of issues which I hope you will give me the opportunity to speak about. First of all, members across the way are speaking about ashtrays. That is a very serious matter in the matter of domestic violence.

It was our government's position when changes were being made to the Criminal Code that significant and additional sentencing should not be limited to only the use of firearms but should also include other materials which are used as weapons. Those are regular household items available and used in matters of domestic violence. Members across the way have always chosen to consider that to be something very funny, but it has never been funny to the woman on the other side.

The member also raises issues relating to personnel issues. If he has any facts at all in which he can suggest there was any dismissal relating to the issues that he has brought forward, such as speaking out, I think he should lay it on the table, because those are personnel matters and to my knowledge absolutely have never occurred.

\* (1430)

### Guards—Employment Standards

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Madam Speaker, my final supplementary question is to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews).

Will the Minister of Labour explain to the Minister of Justice that her in-your-face, warm, fuzzy, feel-good reform policy forcing corrections officers to do lunch with inmates only added to the prison tension and is a violation of The Employment Standards Act of this province? Will the Minister of Labour explain that to the Minister of Justice, please?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, the members across the way totally trivialize the work of our correctional institutional employees. So let me just take this opportunity to say very clearly from this side of the House—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, let me just say very clearly on behalf of our government and people on this side of the House that we are extremely grateful to the work of the correctional officers, and that their work has been in fact something which we are making every effort to make sure that we have expressed to them our consideration and actually our thanks for all of the work that they have done.

Now, when the member speaks about policies, he seems to be confusing two possibilities. The time in which correctional officers spend time actually, not having lunch, not doing lunch as the member says, they are at that time being paid, Madam Speaker. They are paid employees to do their work as correctional officers.

However, I said earlier today, there is this opportunity through the Rebuilding Headingley Committee for all of these issues to be examined by the people who know them the best, by the people who have the greatest interest in them. We will be looking at all of the results.

#### **St. Boniface College Funding Reduction**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, the College Universitaire de Saint Boniface lies at the heart of the Franco-Manitobaine community and I know that all members of this House are concerned for its survival. Recent cuts from the federal government, and what are believed to be additional cuts from the province, have put the future of the École technique, the community college section, in jeopardy.

Could the Minister of Education explain to the House why the 50 percent cut to the École technique is so much greater than the reduction the province experienced from the federal Official Languages Program?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question because it gives me a very timely opportunity to indicate to the House that the federal government, after much effort on the part of this provincial government, has agreed finally to assist us with the funding that they had withdrawn.

If I may, Madam Speaker, in addition to thanking the many members of my staff who worked very hard with the federal officials, I also would like to extend thanks to

the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), who set aside his partisan opportunities to work with the minister and the department to be part of the solution rather thanacerbate the problem. So I thank him, and I am pleased about the outcome.

**Ms. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for that and I want to ask the minister to make a commitment to the House today and to the Franco-Manitobaine community that there will be a short-term solution in place over the next week—and this is the crucial time for enrollments and for program announcements—so that those academic programs and student enrollments can continue in a stable manner?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Madam Speaker, as I indicated, we now have confirmation that the federal government has changed its mind, seen the error of its ways, decided that perhaps it was most unwise to not show commitment to French language education in Manitoba and, again, my thanks to the member for St. Boniface.

My thanks, as well, to the people at the St. Boniface College for their patience, assistance and understanding through this difficult time

I indicate to the member that the plans that she is talking about are already underway. Although she has not asked a question recently on this topic, we have continued daily working on this issue to resolve those matters, and I am very pleased to say that we now have a solution that will enable St. Boniface College to no longer be in the very precarious position in which it existed over the last few weeks.

#### **Hugh Goldie Untendered Contracts**

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** Madam Speaker, yesterday I drew to the House's attention the giving of an \$18,000 untendered contract to the Premier's campaign manager, Mr. Goldie.

I wonder if the Premier could tell the House if Mr. Goldie is doing any other untendered work for his government or any other departments.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, as was fully explained yesterday by the Deputy Premier (Mr.



Downey), the fact of the matter is that that contract was awarded by the Civil Service Commission, a body that has been set up under The Civil Service Act to be independent of government, so the allegation is one of the typical smutty ones that is brought out by the member for Crescentwood.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the statement made by the Premier is clearly unparliamentary. I would have thought that when we have the Premier of Alberta here, the Premier might have put on his best behaviour and perhaps he might wish to consider—instead of taking this matter under advisement, would you perhaps ask the Premier to withdraw those comments. They are very unparliamentary and I think very unfair.

**Madam Speaker:** I will take the matter under advisement to review the exact context in which the words were stated and I will report back to the House with a ruling.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, of course my concern is when the member is faced with the facts and knows that his allegation is untrue that he repeats it. That of course is also contravening our rules here in this House.

The fact of the matter is, as I understand it, that Mr. Goldie over the past year has had two other contracts, both of which he received as a result of tenders for which he was the best bidder and was selected as such.

**Mr. Sale:** Madam Speaker, would the Premier confirm then that Mr. Goldie is doing work for the regionalization in the Health department? Will he give us the amount and the date of that contract, that he has also recently submitted a study on the organization of the Department of Health on March 15? Will he give us the amount and the date of that contract?

**Mr. Filmon:** Yes, Madam Speaker, and as I said, both of those contracts were received as a result of a bid process for which he was selected as the best proposer and the best bid. Under that selection process, one was—

**An Honourable Member:** This person had inside knowledge.

**An Honourable Member:** That is scummy.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I distinctly heard the member for Thompson from his seat say that Mr. Goldie would have had inside knowledge. That is a totally inappropriate comment, particularly because Mr. Goldie is not here to defend himself, but apart from that the fact that he can make allegations like that is totally inappropriate, and he ought to withdraw that and apologize.

**Mr. Ashton:** Madam Speaker, I suggested that someone who was the campaign manager for the Premier might have some inside knowledge about what is going on in that government. That is not only not unparliamentary; it is obvious to anyone who looks at the facts. If that individual is campaign manager to the Premier, does not know what is going on in government and does not have inside knowledge, I would be very surprised. I will not withdraw those comments. In fact, they are not only not unparliamentary, they are what anyone looking objectively at the situation will come to the same conclusion.

**Madam Speaker:** On the point of order by the honourable government House leader, I will take the point of order under advisement, and I will peruse Hansard and report back to the House with a ruling.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I just want to say for the record that Mr. Goldie has absolutely no inside information. When a request for a proposal is put out, it is the same information that is given to everyone who proposes. The members opposite may want to carry on their campaign of smear and innuendo, but it places them right in the gutter where they belong when they make these—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Deputy Prime Minister—Resignation

**Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain):** Eight days ago, I rose in this House and asked for the resignation of the Deputy Prime Minister of Canada, Sheila Copps. Eight days ago, Madam Speaker, the federal Liberals harmonized the GST—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I am sure that all honourable members would like to hear the comments of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain.

**Mr. Tweed:** Eight days ago, Madam Speaker, the federal Liberals harmonized the GST with the PST in three Atlantic provinces, and it was reminded to Ms. Copps that she had used the word “abolish” with regard to the GST, as opposed to harmonize. I was forced to refer to the dictionary for definition to make my point, and there is nothing of abolish in the word “harmonize.”

Today, Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Ms. Copps for doing the right thing. I understand it is her intention to run again in the new election, in the by-election, and I suggest that is a good thing for all Canadians, because then she will not be able to sit in the appointed Senate, in which she will draw a wage for the rest of her life.

It also brings to my attention that I would like to question where the Manitoba federal MPs stood on this issue, as I perused all forms of media to find out if they had or were willing to voice an opinion, and I found that they were not. Again, I would like to suggest that I congratulate her for doing the right thing.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### May Day

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Madam Speaker, May Day has a long and glorious history. Originally May 1 was a day of people's festivals celebrating the arrival of spring. At the turn of this century, after several workers were killed by government tactics used while breaking up a strike, workers selected May 1 as a day to honour workers and their cause.

Today, workers across the world are marching in solidarity. Here in Manitoba we are faced with a shameful spectacle of an arrogant government whose callous, unforgivable actions have as their only goal the breaking of home care workers' spirits while giving aid and succour to their close personal friends in We Care and their corporate allies in Great-West Life. Even Alberta, whose Premier was with us today, listened to the people and dealt with the laundry workers in a fair and humane manner. This government should listen to the Premier of Alberta

We in the New Democratic Party are proud to recommit our principled support for the home care workers here in Manitoba and stand in solidarity with workers around the world

Thank you.

\* (1440)

### RCMP Rescue—Emerson Area

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** I want to rise today and congratulate the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and thank the Premier and the ministers of our government for taking the time to come out and witness the devastation that has taken place in many of the communities in the R.M. of Montcalm, the R.M. of Franklin and, indeed, all the communities in the Red River Valley and the devastation that the flood waters have caused there, and also to take time by our government to ensure the recognition of the volunteer work that has been done.

Primarily, I want to rise today and recognize the bravery and the quick thinking of two people in the case of where Mrs. Charlie Sawatsky, Margaret Sawatsky, walked along a railway bridge and fell into the Red River. It was the quick thinking of the wife of the mayor of the town of Emerson, Daphne Arseny, who heard the screams, ran to the hospital and phoned the ambulance and the fire department and the RCMP, and that quick thought brought the RCMP to the river fast enough that the sergeant, John Fleming, could rescue, dive into the water, and while he was swimming to Mrs. Sawatsky's aid, Mrs. Sawatsky slipped under the water. He dove beneath the water, beneath the logs and retrieved Mrs. Sawatsky and brought her back to safety.

It is this kind of action, this kind of volunteerism and this kind of involvement that is typical of the people in the Red River Valley in its current state of emergency. Therefore, the constituents of Emerson thank the government for recognizing the dilemma that we are in, and we thank the RCMP and the wife of the mayor of Emerson for the quickness of thought and putting his own life in danger, Sergeant John Fleming, for his actions.

### Lyme Disease

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** I would like to thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing distribution of this sheet on Lyme disease in the House to all members.

Lyme disease, as many members know, is a pernicious disease caused by a bacterium that is carried by a tick that has made its way into Canada. For many years the government was reluctant to recognize that this was a very real disease and is very, very debilitating and neurologically damaging to the people who contract it and do not have it caught in the early stages.

This is the season of the year that we have to begin to be concerned about this particular disease, and I want to commend the Lyme Borreliosis group for its work in public education and its attempts to get the government to be more proactive in warning Manitobans about this disease. For every life that is ruined by chronic Lyme Borreliosis, we can talk about hundreds of thousands of dollars lost to our economy and an equally large sum in medical treatment being spent unnecessarily because the disease was not caught at an early stage.

Members of this group were told, unfortunately, just this week that nothing could be done by the government to bring this issue to the attention of the public this year because of the home care strike. We do not accept that everything that is important in Manitoba has to go on hold because the government is inept at handling a forced privatization of their own choosing.

I commend the work of this group to all members of the House. I hope all members will put this pamphlet in their constituency offices. I hope the government will see the error of their ways and immediately produce an attractive and a very readable pamphlet following the good work of this committee which, by the way, has been

in concert with Dr. John Guilfoyle and his office. All this information has been approved by Dr. Guilfoyle. The thing that is missing is the government will not put a very few hundred dollars together to print a brochure making this widely available. Thank you.

### Home Care Services

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** Madam Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) just stated that privatizing home care is intended to introduce an alternative system of economic competition; yet the fact that there is only one or few private entrepreneurs means that there in fact will be no competition. There will be economic oligopoly and, at most, private monopoly replacing public monopoly.

When the seniors from Minnesota came here to buy at half the cost price some medical prescription drugs, they said that they spend an average of \$500 for prescription drugs and only 12 percent, or about \$60, is covered by their insurance companies. Then they said: I get the feeling that people who want to make money out of the private system are pushing for it.

When anyone places monetary private interest above public interest in preserving the health of its citizens, the government loses its legitimate right to rule. When publicly elected people allow themselves to be used by profit-seeking supporters to advance their private interests above the welfare of the people, particularly the welfare of the sick and the elderly, such acts become detestable and morally reprehensible.

Placing love of money above concern for people is morally wrong, for the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil from which some have strayed from the faith for their greediness and pierced themselves through with many sorrows, for those who decide to be rich fall into the temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and in perdition.

We in the official opposition, in solidarity with the home care workers, in deep concern with the elderly and the sick, are trying to keep home care a public enterprise because the health of the people, next to life, is an utmost matter of public interest.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### House Business

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I have two announcements with respect to House business. Firstly, Tuesday, May 14, will be Opposition Day. Under our new rules, there will be three Opposition Days during any given session, and notice has been given of the motion by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). It is contained in the Order Paper, and that will be the motion that is debated during Opposition Day on Tuesday, May 14.

On Friday, May 10, between 9:30 a.m. and 12 noon, the Committee on Public Accounts will meet in Room 254 in order to give continuing consideration to the matters before it.

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

**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 La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

\* (1450)

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** Order, please. 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 Education and Training. When the committee last sat it had been considering item 2.(a)(1) on page 35. Shall the item pass?

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Chair, I think we are using this line to ask a number of questions about New

Directions, so there are things in here that maybe could be asked in other areas, but I just want to give the minister some notice of what we are intending.

I wanted to ask the minister about the exams of Grade 12 that took place during the winter. I wondered what documents the minister had prepared that evaluated those exams. It was, as the minister is aware, a process which did not go smoothly in many areas. There was a winter snowstorm, there was difficulty, which meant that a number of school divisions, I think it was about 13 school divisions, did not have the opportunity to write the test on the days that everyone else had written the test, and there were concerns from those school divisions about how their exams would be marked. I think at one point they were told that they would be marked at the end of the line, and I think they would like to know whether in fact that happened. They were also concerned about whether their marks would count in the sense of the overall assessment of provincial results. So perhaps we could start with that.

The other areas. I think that the minister is aware that things did not go smoothly are, of course, the distribution of mark booklets or writing booklets which did not necessarily have all the pages, perhaps, that they should have had and which led to some last minute problems for some school divisions. I think there were also some difficulties that the minister encountered in the early months in preparation for that exam with the reluctance of some school divisions to allow their teachers to become part of the marking system. This was particularly true, I believe, for schools which had relatively small departments of English and where the removal of one or more English teachers meant that there were difficulties for other parts of the high school, or even if it was a K to 12 school, for other parts of the school. I am wondering if, as a result of those matters of process, the administration of the exam, the minister had prepared a report that would be of some comfort to people who are facing the exam in the next few weeks that these difficulties had been overcome. Was there an evaluation done?

\* (1500)

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Chairman, these are very detailed questions, and I would be most pleased to answer them.

I think, however, we are in a different section. It should be under Assessment and Evaluation, which is 16.2(c). As I say, I am happy to go through the detail, but we are in School Programs right now. So if you want to move to that section, we can, but right now the staff we have here are for the programs. Did you wish to proceed on this one now?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, since maybe I put that question now, if the minister wanted to answer that one now, and we will save the rest of the assessment ones for 16.2(c).

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Okay. Mr. Chairman, the exam development process involves the use of classroom teachers, a significant pilot process. The ELA S4 exam was piloted in seven or eight schools, urban, rural, independent, and it was marked using the same process, and based upon this piloting, improvements were made both to the test instrument and to the marking process. The weather was indeed a problem. However, divisions are informed about a process to be followed, and we think, as we went through the experience, that the benefits that were accrued far outweighed any start-up problems that might have occurred.

As the member knows, we have had exams for many years in the province, not language arts, but annually we have been having exams, and this is the first that we have encountered the unusually severe circumstances of weather that occurred. So we have developed a protocol. There was a protocol in place but not as efficient as the protocol that has been developed since we experienced that freak weather conditioning that came about with this year's winter conditions. We are absolutely delighted and most grateful, delighted with and grateful to the teachers who did the marking for the English language arts exams, and we have received rave reviews from them indicating almost unanimously, with the exception of perhaps one teacher who felt the exams were not difficult enough, but rave reviews from the rest saying it was without a doubt the single most significant professional development experience they have ever been through.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

We were bowled over by their enthusiasm at the end of the marking process because we had, as the member correctly pointed out, in the beginning some difficulty attracting people to mark. There were several reasons for

it. One was the reason the member mentioned, that some divisions were concerned about having substitutes in for the marking period. The other reason was a resistance on the part of some divisions and some staff members to the concept of assessment and evaluation where people on principle say we do not believe in testing children, and, therefore, we do not wish to be part of the marking process. When the marking process began and the teachers started working together on the evaluation and the assessment, they indicated they had never had a PD experience like it. As I say, that was far ranging. It was not an isolated reaction. It was the dominating reaction, and it was spelled out to us in great detail. So that is a pleasing experience. I think because of that you will see those same teachers wanting to come back and probably others inspired to want to participate as well.

There were about 16 school divisions in the southern part of the province in January that either had to close or cancel school buses because of the extremely unusual weather conditions, and so we found that about 15 percent of the students were not able to complete their examination on that scheduled date of January 19. Divisions where students were unable to write due to weather conditions were asked to have students write during the week of January 22 and send their papers in for central marking. These papers were clearly identified as having been administered late, and marks on these papers were not included as part of the provincial statistics since there was no way of knowing whether results were affected by the delay in writing. The local policy then applied in determining how those marks were to be used and reported. It was important that the marking be done and the papers be returned, but the local policy then kicked in and determined how they were to be used. Affected schools were given the option of determining whether and how to count these marks since the affected schools are in the best position to judge whether or not confidentiality of the exam had been maintained. No student was likely to be adversely affected if the school decided not to count the results of the provincial exam since scores in provincially administered exams tend to be slightly lower than school awarded marks.

Other provinces have policies that if the weather affects the writing of an exam, then the school mark will apply 100 percent for those students affected. In Alberta they use that method. In one case only did they use a backup

exam, and that was done here when a blizzard shut down most of the province. But the time required to print and distribute a backup exam in that instance resulted in a delay of almost two weeks in the writing of the exam.

The current department policy is that students who are unable to write a provincial exam due to inclement weather are to have their marks awarded by the school according to local policy. Although the provincial English language arts exam was marked centrally, this principle was maintained for the January 19, 1996, English language arts exam. The standard procedures for communicating this policy have been to inform schools or divisions when they have made enquiries. All schools that were affected by the inclement weather on January 19 were notified no later than January 18 of departmental policy regarding school closures during the administration of the exam because at that date it became clear that the weather was behaving in an extraordinarily unusual way. A departure was made from the departmental policy in that the exams written late were marked by the department, and so we are currently preparing a policy and procedures manual on this issue for the benefit of school divisions.

Regarding the booklets, a hundred booklets out of 7,500 had some printing difficulty. This was a printer error that occurred under conditions that closely monitor for accuracy. Those hundred booklets were pulled out of the 7,500, and divisions were informed the day before the exam to check the documents to minimize disruption during the testing situation. Divisions were extremely co-operative during this period, and they did have additional copies at their schools so they were able to carry on. But we do appreciate the assistance that they provided in that particular instance.

\* (1510)

The member also raised the issue of markers' availability. Initially there were difficulties identifying markers; I think I indicated that. In anticipation of having too few, we made a statement that if there were too few, on a priority choice basis we would mark the divisions' papers first who had provided markers, since those divisions felt if they provided markers it would be unfair for them to be the last ones marked, especially in small schools.

As it turned out, of course, we did have sufficient markers, and we were extremely pleased with their work with the marking of the exams. We were not in any instance indicating that we would be saying that schools would not be marked. All schools would be marked, but thrown into the bin of first marked would have been those whose teachers were there. As it turned out, as I say, of course, that was not necessary. Some boards actually exceeded their target and provided more numbers than we had asked them for, and we appreciated that as well. The target number of markers from each division was only a guideline, like, we were not saying you must send six. We would say, could you send five or six markers from your division? I must indicate that the quality of people who did the marking was most impressive indeed.

The member asked if we did an evaluation of the whole process, and indeed we did. That is part of our belief in assessing and testing and examining is to believe in testing and examining our own procedures. As well, a survey form has been sent out to all divisions for teachers and administrators to give us feedback and suggestions on the process so that we can spot diagnostically any areas that we could improve for the next go round, our goal being to continue moving toward excellence in all that we do.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, I wanted to ask some questions about overall policies in New Directions, some of the concerns that have been brought to me. So these are not on the specific curriculum, but they are on the overall directions of New Directions.

One of the concerns that has been expressed to me is the role to be played by the Grade 9, and some people will suggest it is also Grade 10 as well, but the Grade 9, Grade 10 mathematics, that this in a sense will become the great sorter, that this is the one where many students will have difficulties, and that the flexibility that had been there in the old curriculum for different varieties of mathematics, consumer mathematics, business mathematics, basic accounting, those kinds of things, is not available until students have passed I think it is the Grade 10 math exam. People are bringing this to my attention as becoming the major sorter, not an English exam, not a communications exam but one particular mathematics exam, and I am interested if these concerns have been brought to the minister, where the minister believes this Grade 9 and Grade 10 mathematics fits in

the overall context of New Directions and of the overall goals and skills that the minister has written about, has laid out as her goals for Manitoba students. Is this, in fact, going to be the big sorter and the big streamer, in a sense, and a stumbling block for many, many children?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I am not quite certain what the member is referring to. We do not have a sorting process. I know there has been a sorting process in the system to date where students have been pigeonholed and slotted into different categories, but our goal is not to perpetuate that.

At the Grade 9 level, students will ultimately be writing mathematics, language arts, science and social studies, and they will be continuing in Grade 10 or the next year. In Grades 11 and 12, they have a choice of continuing or to start to specialize in various areas, but coming out of Grade 9 they still have choices that they can make, just as they do coming out of Grade 9 now in terms of the subjects they would like to take. So I am not quite sure what she means by the sorting process, and I am just having a little difficulty with where she is leading.

The exams that are taken will count for 35 percent, at Grade 9, of their final mark, which should indicate that the bulk of their mark will still be at the school level. Senior 2 is the year when specific courses for particular purposes in math, science, social studies and LA will be available. This is, in fact, what schools and parents have asked for, so students can begin to proceed incrementally towards areas of speciality.

\* (1520)

Math 20-S, which focuses on the theoretical mathematics complements Applied Math 20-S, which is also being piloted during the '95-96 school year. Both courses are based on the western framework for 10 to 12 mathematics. Math 20-S has an increased emphasis on problem solving which is, as of yesterday, something that people know that we need to do some more work on, and I am pleased that we had already started to work in that direction to make problem solving an integral part of education. But that particular course had an increased emphasis on problem solving, and a corresponding decrease in the more traditional, rote, repetitive exercises that characterize its predecessor, which was Math 20-G.

This move marks a big change in the mathematics curriculum. The mathematics K to 12 steering committee at its December 11, '95, meeting discussed the issue of Senior 2 math courses. They affirmed the department's approach to senior year courses. The revised Senior 1 mathematics emphasizes the cumulative nature of mathematics and assumes that students will continue to apply the mathematics from unit to unit and year to year.

These changed emphases appear to be worldwide phenomena brought on by the use of technology in all facets of society. It seems to be pointless to emphasize repetitive techniques in school mathematics under those circumstances. We need a better new curricula with a changed focus with outcomes for students, rather than objectives for teachers, and increased expectations for all students with a major emphasis on problem solving, as I said earlier, involving the application of mathematical knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Increased emphasis on the cumulative use and retention of mathematical skills and concepts will provide students with increased mathematical flexibility in their lives. The coordination with western partners will allow for enhancements from other jurisdictions, and you will see that mirrored in resources which correlate with the western framework.

So we need curricula that is planned to include future co-ordination with teaching strategies and assessment strategies. It is not a sorting process. It is attempting to provide students with the most relevant, up-to-date curricula properly assessed, so that we will know and they will know whether or not they have been able to acquire the prerequisite skills and knowledge to move on to the next level of learning, that next level to be determined by them.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I think the concern that I have been hearing is that the variety of mathematics that has been previously available, accounting math, consumer math, those kinds of things, are no longer available at the Grades 9 and 10 level. They are available at the Grades 11 and 12 level. That flexibility is there for students who by then are opting for different kinds of programs.

The concerns that I have heard from teachers are that the barrier, the sorting mechanism, that is what I mean by

the sorting mechanism, is going to be the Grade 9 and perhaps the Grade 10 mathematics exam, that this is a relatively difficult level, one that they are not convinced that students can achieve in the numbers, the 100 percent that we would want students to achieve, that is all students able to pass this exam, because in the past they have been able to have alternatives in mathematics. Now, at that level, they do not. So I think that is what teachers are concerned about, that this will become a means of sorting out children who are able to go on to Grades 11 and 12, and those who will find that as a great block.

So I am looking for some reflections from the minister on what is intended by that change, of putting the variety of mathematics programs at the 11 and 12, and what implications this has for the whole system. So it is the whole system of New Directions that I am looking at. Is the Grade 9, Grade 10 mathematics unintentionally, and I think it would be unintentional, is it in danger of becoming a barrier for many students and keeping them away from the more practical mathematics which they would benefit from and have benefited from in the past?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to just clarify a statement the member, the teacher, made several times in her comments just so that people do not get the wrong impression when they read Hansard.

The member said, teachers are worried about this, teachers are upset about this, teachers are concerned and teachers are not happy, and she has omitted very important words which are "some" teachers or a "few" teachers. I think those words are very important to note as omissions because, for starters, all of these things that she is talking about—teachers being concerned—were written and developed by teachers. Obviously, if the implication that she inadvertently left on the record was by saying teachers are concerned that she meant all teachers, then that flies in the face of the fact that the teachers themselves developed, wrote and prepared all of this material that the member says some, few, teachers are concerned about.

I say some, few, because I have talked to many, many teachers and there are some, few, who are concerned. They are basically people who do not want any changes in the system, want the system to stay as it is, but more often than not, the teachers I talk to like this direction.

Any criticisms that I have heard about moving in this direction have more to do with time lines, have more to do with ensuring that adequate professional development, things like that, are in place. The thrust itself has only been criticized, from people that I have talked to, by a few.

I would like to ask as well, because I am not quite sure why the member feels this is a barrier—she made reference to a barrier several times—I am not clear, nor are my staff members here, as to why having this Grade 9 mathematics with a new, improved, more relevant curricula would be a barrier to something. The results are used to provide information to parents on progress according to a provincial standard as indicated by the majority of parents as something they desire.

The member needs to know at Grade 9, which is Senior 1, now there is one math and there will be one math in the future. There will be three choices in math at Senior 2 and four choices of math in each at Senior 3 and Senior 4. That is, tomorrow, in math, in terms of the number of courses, the same number of courses tomorrow as there is today and was yesterday. I am not quite sure why she feels there is a barrier particularly when, in terms of the number of math courses available, there is no change in the number.

For 1996-97, which is this year, I will indicate to the member the options, and they will continue into the future and will be expanded. For example, consumer math at Senior 4, plus complementary and/or supplementary courses in computer applications and technology, computer science, software applications, seminars on business, mathematics, calculus and so on. That is at Senior 4, but at Senior 1, which is Grade 9, you will have the one mathematics course in the future as we did in the past. Senior 2, which is Grade 10, you will be able to choose from Mathematics 20, General Mathematics 20-S, Applied Mathematics 20-S and Consumer Mathematics 20-S. So you can choose one of those in Grade 10 or Senior 2.

In Grade 11 or Senior 3, they can choose one of Mathematics 30-G, Mathematics 30-S, Applied Mathematics 30-S and Accounting Principles 30-S. In Senior 4, as I indicated before, some of the options, but also compulsory, one of Mathematics 40-G, Mathematics 40-S or Accounting Systems 40-S.



So there is a wide variety of courses, and the member indicated, or I think she indicated earlier, that they would not have any ability to choose options until Grade 11 and 12 or Senior 3 and Senior 4. But when I look at Senior 2 and see all of the options available in mathematics, I think maybe she must have misspoke herself and meant to say that there are—you will see a wide variety of options occurring until Grade 10 and that Grade 9 will not see any difference in the number of options in the future than they currently do or that they did in the past.

So I think she maybe meant to say Grade 10 instead of Grade 11, because that is where the options begin and the variety of courses begin.

\* (1530)

**Ms. Friesen:** The minister says there is one course now at Grade 9, and there was always only one course available at Grade 9. That is what I understand her to say. Has that Grade 9 course changed? How has it changed? Just in general ways, because what I am trying to do is to understand the concerns that have been brought to me.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The mathematics course that is being taught this year has been taught for the last three years in Manitoba. This year it was fully implemented, having been piloted for the previous two years. So it has been three years of a full year of teaching to check for any indications of concerns.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I am not sure where the member is getting her information because the general consensus is that we piloted it for one year; we piloted it for a second year; we were given the blessing and the go ahead from all of those piloting, with perhaps one or two exceptions of people who were resistant to the whole concept of moving to more relevant curricula. But the go-ahead was given from the field after two years of piloting and now one year of experience, and the general feedback we get from the majority of divisions—and there will always be one or two exceptions floating around from people who do not like the new blueprint, who prefer the status quo but by and large the vast majority opinion is, we have approved the pilot after two years because we do think that it is better for our students than the old way.

The changes from the previous Manitoba curriculum of 1979, which is what was in place until three years ago, would be considered major, primarily because the department has not modified its mathematics curriculum for over 15 years and changes are in the philosophy content and the expectation of students. We are beginning to work now, as of this year, with a greatly increased emphasis on problem solving which implies a decrease in rote, repetitive, memorized exercises which dominated the earlier curricula and all indicators are that rote, repetitive exercises are not relevant for today's world. As I indicated earlier, the revised Senior 1 mathematics emphasizes the cumulative nature of mathematics and assumes that students will continue to apply the mathematics from unit to unit and year to year.

I would be very interested in knowing from the member what her source was to indicate that this mathematics was not working, because it is contrary to what we are hearing. If she has a source that she could identify, that would be appreciated. As I say, our indicators are that this was a successful pilot, and somewhere she must have received information contrary to that. It would help us if we knew the source, because then we could go to that source and assist those one or two people, whoever they might be, with the provision of information and philosophy that might help them better understand what is happening and why. It concerns me if those people are in the system and have not been given any opportunity to be provided with information as to why we are doing this. As I say, aside from one or two places where they are resistant to the whole philosophy of change, the majority of people have felt this was not only necessary but very long overdue.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, the concerns that were brought to me dealt with the place of mathematics in the whole curriculum and not dealing specifically with the content or the transition in content. I think in the broader context that the options that the minister says are there in Grade 10 are not necessarily there in all schools. So I wondered if the minister had a sense of how large a school usually is before those kinds of options will be commonly available. I think some of the discussion I heard might in fact be related to that, to the size of school and the provision of options.

Secondly, I think it also comes in the context of those people who are dealing with many students with special

needs and that concern that I raised earlier with the minister of significantly cognitively disabled which the minister anticipates will be a very small proportion overall in the province so, obviously, more in some areas than in others and people's concern that the single Grade 9 examination, which must now be passed by the vast majority of students with very detailed criteria for significantly cognitive disabled, that this may become a barrier that the government may not have intended.

So that is the context of it, the role and place of this particular subject.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I think the member is describing a situation that is eternal in education, at least it has been since education began trying to offer a wide variety of opportunities for people. The question of options that are available, and options that are available at any particular school, is a question that has been around for many, many years, because, as the member knows, during the term that her government was in office, there were many more options available than many schools could take advantage of. That situation continues right across the world. There are options available provincially that are not available in every school because of the size of the school or the makeup of the students.

This government has put a lot of effort into the development of technologies and the establishment of MERLIN to try to assist small schools with distance education, with mediated teaching, with a variety of things that will help small schools. We have small schools grants that we provide, and that is, as I indicated, why we are examining distance and delivery capabilities. Having said that, it would be our desire, if we could, that every school could offer every subject to every student, and we also would like to see students have courses that are most applicable to their own needs. Students enrolled in the M, I and E designated courses would have highly individualized programs and would not be participating in provincial standards tests. So, you know, we do have one group of students that—whether the member feels that exams are a barrier or a hindrance or whatever else that the opposition may feel about exams, there are some students who would not have either the barrier, as the member calls it, or the opportunity, as we would call it. Although they certainly can write the exams if they wish, students in those categories are not obliged to write them.

We know that we cannot always in schools of certain sizes provide the full and total range of options, but we do know, for example, that we have one student in a high school in Miami, Manitoba, which is a very small town, that is taking calculus. The only student in the school to take calculus from very good instruction, and so on, because it is being taken through Distance Education, something that we implemented for students and which has great potential for the future. As I say, that is in its infancy, so it will take time to build and is not available universally at this time.

\* (1540)

When we came into office we began the changes in the math curriculum that the member is concerned about. We began those changes starting with kindergarten to Grade 4, then Grades 5 to 8, and now Senior 1, Senior 2 and Senior 3 and Senior 4. So we have been working on them for many years. They did not just sort of pop into existence overnight. I do not know if that provides some of the detail the member was looking for, but, if it does not, I will wait for additional questioning.

**Ms. Friesen:** My question dealt with the number of schools which were able to offer more than one mathematics course in Grade 10. I wondered what the level of numbers in a school generally would be before that variety of options that the minister talked about would be available.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Our procedures on this have not changed very much from the days when the member's party governed this province. That information is not kept on file, but, as I said, we do assist small schools with our funding formula, and there are correspondence courses available. That information historically has not been kept on file and is not at this time either.

**Ms. Friesen:** I wanted to ask about some general issues with New Directions, and one of the ones that concerns me is the overall direction of policy. The Roblin commission, for example, talked about cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, encouraged universities to move beyond the disciplines. New Directions, it seems to me, takes a very strong subject orientation. I wondered if the minister would like to comment on how she would like to see those linking. What are the areas of New Directions

where cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary programs will become part of students' learning?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I am confused a bit by the apparent contradiction in terms of policy desires between the member for Wolseley and the member for Radisson. Maybe I am misinterpreting. It seems to me that yesterday the member from Radisson was extremely irate and upset that we were doing an interdisciplinary linkage with health and physical education. That is an example of this interdisciplinary thrust, but I am hearing in the member's question, here, phrased as if it is something that is to be desired, but in yesterday's I was very definitely given the message that this is a big no-no, so I do not know, she may wish to clarify where she is coming from on it, but the member is overlooking the essence of New Directions which we have discussed publicly enormously, foundation skills in a holistic sense.

We have talked about problem solving being something that needs to permeate all elements of education, and the Foundation for Excellence, for example, indicates that foundation skills and other elements will be integrated in curriculum frameworks documents to ensure rigorous and inclusive curriculum for all students, and we have listed them, literacy and communication, human relations, resource-based learning, and so on, problem solving. Manitoba is breaking new ground in preparing inclusive curriculum frameworks, and I just want to pause and give a little example here because I think it is very telling.

I was out visiting a school on one of my regular school visits and was reading to a class of children. I was reading a story called *The Fourth Little Pig*. These were Grade 3 students, and the story of the fourth little pig was about the three little pigs that had been chased by the wolf, in a brick house, hiding in the house afraid to come out because the wolf was going to get them if they went out. The fourth little pig appeared at the door, and she was their big sister, and the little pigs opened the door and pulled her into the house, and she said, why are you hiding in the house? And they said, we are afraid to go out because the big, bad wolf will get us, and the fourth little pig said, do not be silly, you cannot hide in a brick house all your life. Come out and face the world. There is no big, bad wolf out there.

The little pigs then began to argue with her, and as I was reading the story, the reaction of the children was very, very interesting. I said to the children, what do you think is going to happen next, and one to the students said, I do not think that is a fourth little pig. I think that is the big, bad wolf in disguise coming to try and trick the pigs because he could not get them when he tried to blow the house down. Anyhow, we turned the page. The fourth little pig indicated that the three little pigs should come outside, and, if they did not come outside, she would huff and puff and blow their house down. The students then said, I think that is the big, bad wolf in disguise because that individual is using the same language the big, bad wolf used to use. That individual is saying huff and puff and blow your house down. That is what the big, bad wolf said, so it must be the big bad wolf in disguise.

Another child said, but the big, bag wolf was not able to huff and puff and blow the house down before, so why would he be saying he would try it again now because he already tried and it did not work. Another student said, well, maybe it is easier to blow the house down from inside rather than outside. Maybe the way air moves around inside a house makes it easier to blow down from the inside out than from the outside in. Another student then said, well, maybe it is the wolf in disguise, and under the dress he has got one of those things that you use for fireplaces, those bellows things that will give extra air and help add to blow the walls down.

They went on in this vein, and I was absolutely fascinated as they proposed theory after theory after theory as to what they thought would happen next based upon information they had been given prior to their dialogue. They then criticized each other's theories, shot them down with no concern or care about hurt egos or feelings. They were analyzing a problem, looking for errors in suppositions, adding and building on each other's theories and essentially doing an analysis of the story and projected outcomes.

It turned out in the end that it was the fourth little pig, and it was their sister, and she was there to get them out into the world. The final comment made by one of the girl students in the class was—one of the students in the class said I believe that this is the big sister, and I believe that she will be able to blow the house down, because she is a girl pig and girls are bigger and smarter. So I

thought that was kind of an—but I said to the teacher afterwards, you know, I am really impressed with your students. They have obviously been taught how to think. They have obviously been taught how to explore ideas and concepts. They are so self-confident in their exploration of ideas.

The teacher said to me, well, that is your emphasis on problem solving. We have been working on problem solving in every subject area, like you have told us to do. In the beginning it was a lot of work, and we wondered if it would be successful but, Madam Minister, you see the results before your very eyes, problem solving integrated into literacy and literature.

That is what we are talking about when we say things have to permeate. That is a real live example that I participated in myself. I could give you more details on that, because it was interesting then to go through and see how problem solving had enriched the children's academic achievement in all areas.

Also we have developed an effective instructional model that is interdisciplinary in nature, supports the integration of multimedia technology throughout provincial curricula and facilitates systemic self-sustaining implementation. We can see in our results of having technology permeate, of having technology permeate every area. The thematic multimedia-based teaching units are being developed and are developed in each of the four phases of the project. We see these units, they are interdisciplinary in nature, and they focus on curriculum outcomes at particular middle years grade levels. The phases of the project are aligned with the '95-96, '96-97, '97-98, '98-99 fiscal years.

Multimedia computer hardware, software seed is provided in representative middle years pilot schools throughout the province through distribution of grants, 70 percent government funded. Grants have a cap; they will not exceed more than \$14,000 per school, and 20 schools have been selected in each of the four fiscal years. These I do believe will do our purpose, which is to develop an effective instructional model that is interdisciplinary in nature as far as multimedia technology is concerned. That is just one area. I have talked about so many others.

Through the department we support subject area integration at the classroom level. Currently such

support is evidenced via our work with schools on projects such as interdisciplinary multiyears multimedia project and curricular connections and the thinking framework. Time allotments are guidelines here, and that permits subject integration if that is the desire of a school. We want to help schools and teachers be clear about the subject options. I am being indicated that my time is up, so I will stop there.

**Ms. Friesen:** What I was asking about, and what I was looking for was some connection between New Directions and the subject emphasis that is there in the examinations and the kinds of goals that I think Roblin was moving towards for universities and colleges and, that is, trying to break down some of the old disciplines, trying to integrate a cross curriculum. Yet, it seems to me that as we look at the high school curriculum under New Directions that there is still a great emphasis—and in this case the emphasis coming through the government waiting of examination results, an emphasis that schools will reflect upon—that the emphasis is upon subjects and individual disciplines.

Now the minister in her response talked about subject area integration and gave, I believe as an example of that, the interdisciplinary multimedia curriculum project. My understanding is that is primarily in the middle years. What I am trying to get at is what balance there is or what new directions is the government looking at in interdisciplinary kinds of education, the kind of thing that Roblin—and I understand that he takes it from Ernest Boyer—the kind of education that he is looking at in the future. I am wondering if there is a contradiction here and what the government is doing in its overall K to graduation. Are there parallels that we should be looking at? I am looking for some evidence of the department's overall thinking on this.

\* (1600)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I am thinking the member and I are maybe reading Roblin differently in that I did not see Roblin saying you should not teach subject content. You have to have subject content. I also did not see Roblin advocating blending of disciplines. What I interpreted Roblin as doing was advocating the blending and sharing of administration, breaking down barriers to mobility, transferability. I do not think he was saying, for example, that the content of the math course

should not be the content of the math course. In math, you are teaching subject area content that is mathematical in nature. What we are talking about when we say foundation skills will be integrated into all curricula and that these will be reflected in standard tests might be best described this way. The math subject has a content. It is mathematics that is the content. I do not think Roblin disagrees with that. I do not think anybody disagrees with that. But when the students in their math do a problem that requires a written answer, the foundation skills of good communication will be expected to apply.

Curricular integration is an instructional approach—and I underscore the words “instructional approach”—that this government supports. At the end of the day, however, we have got to ensure that the students achieve the subject area outcomes. They have to know computation; they have to know problem solving, and they have to know when they are writing a history essay or a science essay that they need to be able to communicate.

They not only need to be able to communicate, but they need to be able to communicate in a wide variety of areas: technology, verbal communications, written communications, all aspects of communications, human relations, technology and problem solving must permeate the curricula in all subject areas, our move to a curriculum with an applied focus. Students will have the opportunity to apply learning in a multidisciplinary way.

It used to be that in some schools, and it still is in some schools, that people did not worry about whether skills were emphasized in each area. It did not matter if a child, in delivering an answer verbally, did not deliver that answer verbally well except in language arts class. We are now saying it matters that that child delivers that answer verbally well in all his or her classes. That is an interdisciplinary approach, and I do not think that Roblin had any difficulty with that type of approach, and I do not think he was meaning what I hear the member indicating she interprets him as meaning.

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** First of all, I think I am on the right line, Special Education Review. I have had letters about the Special Education Review. When will it happen? Can we expect it before September? Will it be during the summer months? Will it be in the fall? When are we looking at the Special Education Review?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The answer is soon. I say that with all the desire that I have to indicate I wish I could give him a specific date. We have been talking and working towards a special needs review for about 18 months now. I think we probably would even have maybe started it a bit sooner except that we had the field indicating to us that they were working on the changes we have got going now, and there are a lot of them that want to participate in this review.

While we have been preparing for it, we have been sort of identifying issues and concerns and trends so that when we do begin the review, which I hope we will be announcing soon, like maybe even before this session is over, we will have some well-thought-out terms of reference as to what needs to be examined. We started seriously looking at an implementation date in January of this year, January of '96, which was when we started talking about, we must do this as quickly as we can because we have seen the system growing in its acceptance of students in the schools who in the past were not normally there. At the same time, we have seen the system indicating that as they accept these students, they have concerns and needs that have to be addressed for them to properly fulfill their tasks.

I think actually the schools and school boards have done an amazingly good job as society has moved away from institutional lifestyles to community integration, but I think we do need to have some terms of reference, some parameters, some goals, some guidelines, some direction that can be provided to schools and school divisions as they adjust to having a student population that includes a handicapped child, a gifted child, a child with unique learning problems, behavioural disorders, a wide variety of students who in the past were not always there or, if they were there, were not there in the numbers that they are today.

**Mr. Kowalski:** I am wondering if the minister could help me find some information I am looking for in regard to special needs students. Places like St. Amant and similar institutions, when integration of special needs students in the public school system, I believe they saw a drop in the need for their facilities and saw a drop in population.

I have heard comments that as of late they are seeing increases in their residents. Although I do not have any

statistics, only just personal accounts, people indicate that possibly one of the reasons is that because either the resources were not in their particular division or overall in the system that what we are going to is going backwards from integration and students with special needs are going back into those institutional care situations.

Has the department looked at this? Has it looked at the population at places like St. Amant and similar institutions about students that have integrated and then because their needs were not being met have left the public school system to go back into institutional care? The cost, if you look overall, it is not just the Education department, but the overall government costs, whether it is from Health or whatever, sometimes it is more expensive for those students to be in those institutions. Do you have any information about those situations?

\* (1610)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, St. Amant is actually decreasing in the enrollment of school-age children. but it does have people there who came in as children who are now in their early 20s. They are into adulthood now. That number is larger.

What you are seeing is a shift in the age make-up at St. Amant. Where you would have, in the past, a larger number of younger children than older, that has now flipped. There are people who prefer the St. Amant-type setting to a community school-type setting, and I think that will always be the case. There are some children whose needs are such that their families feel they are safer and happier and better cared for at St. Amant, rather than put them through the struggle of trying to integrate them into a setting where their usual multihandicaps really prevent them from being able to participate, so we have that demographic makeup. Also, at Marymount School, which the member may be familiar with, the enrollment there has decreased somewhat as well, and those students have a lot of behavioural problems there. They have a smaller number of students there than they used to have.

The Special Education Review, when we do strike it, we hope, will, in terms of parameters of that review, take a systematic examination of many of the factors that impact on the quality of school-based special education

programs and services. It will not give priority to any one category of student. Attention needs to be given to the impact of special education policies, programs and services on all the students, because we are concerned with them all and they will be there together if they are in an integrated setting.

The review will operate in a context that acknowledges the roles and responsibilities of schools, divisions and districts, the department, other government departments, other agencies, in the integration of special needs policies, programs and services in the province, and it will have to address current needs, potentially long-term needs, major issues and recommend specific strategies to strengthen the student learning opportunities and outcomes. So we will have goals attached to the review, and they will fit. I think, with some of the questions that are coming forward.

I do not know if you were in the other Estimates yesterday when I talked about the dollars that are being transferred from Health to Education and Health to Family Services. Were you in the other room at that point or were you here?

**Mr. Kowalski:** I was in the other room.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Okay. It will be in Hansard. I just draw your attention to it.

**Mr. Kowalski:** In planning for this educational review, are you at the point where you have decided the membership of that review committee? I am talking about maybe not the persons but sectorally. Will it be from Manitoba association of students with disabilities? Will you have representatives? From what sectors will it be, and the number you are looking at, who will be on that review committee?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Obviously, we do not have the individual names. The number of groups that could be involved if it were to be strictly and absolutely representative would be extremely numerous, because there are just tons of advocacy groups around that could be called upon and probably will be called upon in some way during the review. Now, as to which ones will actually be on the review, I am not able to say, but I can indicate we are planning to see this review committee composed of three major components, a steering

committee, the project researchers, and a technical support committee.

So we see that the steering committee would probably be senior officials from the department, not just the Department of Education but also the Department of Health, with senior government officials, deputy minister level, assistant deputy minister level, probably in all likelihood the director from the Children and Youth Secretariat and three additional members from outside the department would also likely sit on the committee. That will give proposals for planning, reporting on the review, establishing, allocating funding for the study and resolving any issues that could arise during the course of the review and make sure that the recommendations of the study are brought to the attention of the minister for appropriate training.

Project researchers, I think that is pretty obvious and self-descriptive and the technical support committee again is probably fairly clear.

The consultative process will be broad. All advocacy groups, educational organizations and educational institutions will be given an opportunity to provide data that will be used, that will work with them because they are, in many cases, either the deliverers or the guardians or family members or caregivers of special needs students. We also want to hear from those people who may not work directly with special needs students but who may be in school settings with them, either as classmates or school volunteers or teachers. Particularly we will need the input of those educators who currently work with special needs students. Where we have nurses in place, or paraprofessionals in place to deal with medically fragile children in the schools, we need to hear from them, we want to hear from them because they have information about how things are working or not working that we need to access.

We obviously cannot have all of them on the committee, but when I say we expect this to take about 18 months to complete, that is why. That is because there is such wide-ranging coverage that needs to be done to make sure that we do not miss input from any of these particular people with knowledge.

**Mr. Kowalski:** If I missed this in the minister's answer, please correct me. What I am interested in is the process.

Will there be first the release of a document for people who are interested in presenting to the committee to react to, or will there first be some kind of hearings, committee hearings, public hearings and a document that will come out of that, and then another opportunity to—what will be the process?

\* (1620)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** We do not see ourselves putting out a paper. We hope to end up at the end with a paper. We will be sending out, just so that people are not operating in the dark, we will be setting out purpose and goals, we will be setting out parameters of the review. Then we will be not holding public hearings but, rather, having conversations and dialogues and working with groups in a consultative way as opposed to a formal hearing way. Any document that is concerned or associated with the review is something that we expect to see evolve at the end of the review, that we will have a paper because of the work that has been done, giving us guidance and direction and recommendations.

So we will say, here is what we are looking to achieve. Here is the situation, folks, and then working with them over that 18 months to 2 years hope to have evolved at the end of that direction for government to follow.

**Mr. Kowalski:** I could imagine some of the reasons for and against having public input, public hearings and that, but what I am concerned about is not so much from the advocate groups. In the public at large, there are certain perceptions out there about the effect of special needs students in the classroom on their child. I think there is also academic research that blows away some of those perceptions.

The way I could see it happening is first a release of some information that blows away some of the perceptions about special needs students lowering standards in the class or taking time away from teachers. There have been studies I know of that have shown that students in a classroom with special needs students sometimes have become more open to people with differences, and I think that that information, that academic information, that research information has to be put out in the public view so we are not getting presentations from the public that are just reactions to perceptions that are not true, that there is research out there.

Also, by not giving an opportunity for those who are not in those special advocate groups to present and bring that view forward that it is maybe holding their child back or taking resources away from their child, I think we are missing an opportunity to inform them and debunk some of those thoughts out there. I am wondering if there is even an opportunity for a limited input or limited hearings from the public who maybe are not parents of special needs students but that have some perceptions out there that should be heard by this review committee.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The member raises a point that I think I referred to earlier, but I draw his attention back to it. When I indicated that attention needs to be given to the impact of special education policies, programs and services on all students, all means those students who are included in the system with, quote, mainstreamed or integrated students. We will be asking questions such as: What factors must be present for the existence of a supportive learning environment that accommodates the needs of all, and I underline all, students and leads to successful student outcomes?

I think I indicated, although maybe I did not, when I indicated the types of people we needed to talk to that I included in that list of groupings—people who are in the company of the special needs students, whether they be classmates or volunteers in the school, people who are not a family member or a caregiver or guardian of some sort of the child, but people who are in that child's company—the classmates in particular would be the ones that as Minister of Education I would be most concerned about. I want to make sure that some of the things the member referred to that are commonly perceived notions are not in fact causing detrimental effects on any student. My basic philosophy of learning is I say, first of all, schools are for students. Everyday I come in I say schools are for students. Just remember that schools are for students. I sort of talk to myself, and I think as long as I do not answer myself I am still relatively sane.[interjection] I missed that and it is probably just as well.

The second thing that needs to be a focus in the department in all that we do is that all students have the right to learn in a positive atmosphere free from distraction. The other side of that is that all teachers have the right to teach in a positive atmosphere free from distraction. Unfortunately, in the real world those two

things do not always occur, but I think it always should be a goal. The handicapped child should have that opportunity, and the children who are in the room with that handicapped child should also have that opportunity. So whatever we come out with at the end of the review, we will be providing opportunities. What form they will take, Gary, I do not know.

(Mr. Frank Pitura, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

We do know we have to connect with a wide variety of people, and we would like it to be a more relaxed atmosphere as opposed to the public hearing, glare of camera kind of review. Although, I am not ruling it out, I just think from my perspective at this point, I think it is unlikely that we go to public hearings.

**Mr. Kowalski:** One recommendation or comment I will make about the review, one element, the paraprofessionals. The paraprofessionals have a lot to do with special needs students, yet at present to be a paraprofessional the only qualification is you get a job. There is absolutely no requirement for any type of course, any licensing, any standard. You just get hired and you are a paraprofessional. In the meantime there are courses out there. I am presently taking one now for interest. I am taking a paraprofessional diploma course right now, and I am working with a lot of these paraprofessionals and find them to be very dedicated people who, in the course I am taking at the University of Winnipeg, are accumulating a great deal of knowledge that they are sometimes not respected for. One thing they might want to take a look at in this review committee is, should there be a standard for paraprofessionals in Manitoba, because as they are called on more and more to do things, and there is a certain amount of politics involved in this, I am talking about small "p" politics, within the educational structure between teachers and administrators. At at one time paraprofessionals, years ago, were viewed as possibly taking jobs away from teachers. Now teachers very much appreciate the presence of paraprofessionals in the classroom. I think we have to look, re-examine with the integration, the requirements to be a paraprofessional in the Manitoba educational system. I hope the review task force or committee will take a look at that element.

I will just go on to another subject. I received a letter—

\* (1630)



**An Honourable Member:** Just do not make it 25 questions.

**Mr. Kowalski:** No, no. I received a letter from someone who was concerned about low-incidence funding, and the letter is from someone in the Rhineland School Division. The letter says that in the past they have received a lot of support as a result of low-incidence funding, and there is a concern in this letter about the end to the supports and the end to the funding. Could you tell me where the money for this low-incidence funding—what line in the budget—where it comes from, and has there been any decrease in that? Is there any danger of a decrease in low-incidence funding?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The staff will check that, and, while they do, I will answer your first concern there.

It really is a concern about the paraprofessionals. We have money being transferred from Health right now to Family Services, which may address the concern the member is bringing forward; \$250,000 this year, because of the secretariat, is going from Health to Family Services to provide training and ongoing supervision of health care routines which may be delegated to nonhealth care professionals or paraprofessionals working with children in the community.

Teachers are not required to, and teachers are not expected to, carry out health care routines in the schools. I do not know if it is happening. It may be, but that is the way it is. They should be free to teach, in my opinion, and I am sure the opinion of teachers as well.

School divisions can access that fund for the training of paraprofessionals or people who are going to do health-care type work, nonprofessionals, in the school. School divisions can access that fund from the Children's Special Services in the Department of Family Services. It is new. It is just starting, and I think we need to keep building on that because there are many chores that need to be done with handicapped children. Some of them are actually relatively simple, but others are deceptively simple.

Some are, as I indicated, diapering, which is awkward and cumbersome but maybe not technically difficult. There might be other types of things. Pummelling, which looks kind of straightforward, may require a particular technique. Then, of course, there are the true medical

things that you really do have to have somebody with a little more skill and knowledge—the injection of medications intravenously, for example, catheterization. Those types of things require a health-care type training

We are moving in that direction—to address the concern the member has mentioned—because we have heard that concern expressed from the field.

In terms of the details for Level I, Level II, and Level III, that would come under School Grants in 16.5(d) and would require—I just checked with my staff here, and, as I was asking them, I remembered, so I will give you the answer there.

There has been a decrease in Level I funding and an increase in Level II and III funding for an overall amount that is about the same, the amount of funding. There is virtually no change in special needs funding from last year to this, but the Level I rates went down by 2 percent. In other words, they went from \$43.7 million down to \$42.8 million, and Level II and Level III rates went up by about the same amount of money. Now, some of that was due to increased student participation in Level II and III. The net result is that the amount given overall is virtually unchanged from last year, but you can see that internal shift, more money to the higher needs, slightly less money to the lower-level needs.

**Mr. Kowalski:** The funding for Level I is done on a per-capita basis, I understand. If I remember from last year's Estimates, for the independent private schools, it is done on a per-capita basis, that there is an assumption that in an independent school there are Level I students in there. Now, does that mean because the rate has gone down, the amount of money going to independent schools for Level I students has decreased this year?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, that is not how the funding formula works because it is based on their expenditures, not on their revenues, and the Level II and Level III students, again, they are a case-by-case analysis in any school, whether it is an independent school or a public school or wherever the student happens to be.

**Mr. Kowalski:** I have a question on standards testing. In regard to standards testing in private and independent funded schools, the marking of those tests, who does the marking of those tests?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** It will be central marking to mark all the standards tests and everybody will write them. It does not matter whether it is an independent school or a public school and they provided us markers as well. That is the difference between a partly funded school and a nonfunded school. The partly funded independent schools have to abide by our curricula, hire our certified teachers and abide by standards exams, et cetera, just as you asked. The nonfunded schools, of course, are truly independent but anybody who wants to qualify for a partial funding has to abide by those criteria.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. Kowalski:** Last year in Estimates on this line, I asked for a list of members of the Committee on Education Finance, and I do not remember receiving it. Okay, I may grant you that it could have come, but I do not remember ever receiving that. Can I get a list of Advisory Committee on Education Finance, a list of the members on that committee?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Yes, indeed, and I apologize to the member. We handed in all the documents we thought had been asked for and I think that was one we overlooked, but the staffperson who will know the answer is in the room and, hopefully, within the next 10 or 15 minutes we can table that advice. Again, my apologies for not having submitted it with the other documents.

\* (1640)

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, we look forward to seeing that document tabled.

I wanted to ask the minister about the Special Education Review. Earlier this week in the House, I asked some questions about that and my concerns were that this Special Education Review had been contained in the most recent annual report as being underway, that it has been I think now in three Estimates books. The minister in her response in the House said, I believe, that she had been consulting with stakeholders over that period of time. So I wonder if the minister could tell us who she has been consulting with and where and when and how this has been accomplished and why it has taken 18 months.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, this review has been underway in terms of planning and structure, et cetera, as

the member correctly identified, for about a year and a half now, and the member has asked who I have met with? I cannot possibly list them all, but I will attempt to list as many as I can recall off the top of my head without going back through my appointment book.

Aside from about 48 of the 57 school boards in Manitoba who have all mentioned something about the issue, I have met with several parent councils on the issue. I have met with the Assiniboine-South School Division Advisory council on special needs, which is a multidisciplinary group of educators, teachers, parents, medical people, counsellors involved with that division. I have met with the Association for Bright Children. I have met with the Special Education Administrators. I have met with the Council for Exceptional Children. I have met frequently, many times, with the deaf and hard-of-hearing people, with the advisory council for the deaf. I have met with the ideology people. I have met with speech therapists. I have met with the Manitoba association of resource teachers. I have met with the guidance counsellors' association. I have met with the people from the CNIB.

I have met with several institutional programs, repeatedly, on an ongoing basis with places like Marymount and St. Amant. I have been out to those places, spent time in them. Oh, let us see who else? I have met with the—[interjection] Yes, I mentioned I have been out to St. Amant several times. I have met with the ministers, of course, who work with the Children and Youth Secretariat. I have met with parents of children with learning disabilities. I have met with some of the parents who send their children to the Laureate Academy. I have met with some of the people who work in the hospitals. I have met with people from the Shriners hospital. I have met with the people from the Variety Club. I have met with the special needs co-ordinators from five or six of the divisions. I have been to visit the fetal alcohol syndrome special needs class at David Livingstone School. I have been to see the integrated blind and autistic students in the inner city schools of Winnipeg. I have been to—let us see, where else have I been?

I have had in to see me the people who work with amputees. I have spent time with the special needs home care co-ordinators who work with multihandicapped children in the home setting. I have worked with—well, I

think you probably get the picture. I have done a little bit of consulting. I mean I could list more because I have many, many more that I could list; I just cannot recall them all because I try to do this on a regular basis.

Oh, I have been in communication with some friends of mine who are staff members at the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre, friends of mine who work with the psychiatric wards that, unfortunately, from time to time, have children in psychiatric care. Their needs are unique and very special. All of those people, of course, have given me ideas and insights as to what they see as needs for the various groups that they represent, and I have spent many hours with these people. When I say meetings, I am not talking about 10 minutes; I am talking about meetings where meaningful dialogue has opportunity to occur.

As well, of course, not to be neglected are the dozens and dozens of parent advisory councils I have met with who are not particularly associated with special needs, but who have children who attend school sometimes with special needs students, and they have made commentary to me about their indications and reflections and observations about the impact of special needs students in the classrooms with their regular children. I have visited in rural schools all around the province, in the North, in the city, in small towns, in communities. I have been in multigrade schools with handicapped children and talked at great length with parents in those schools about how they feel about the interaction, what they see as the pluses and minuses, the pros and cons of those kinds of interactions.

\* (1650)

I will indicate the Minister's Advisory Committee on Education Finance, of which I have the membership here. The chairman is Mr. George Buchholz from the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. He is the chairperson. The alternate representative of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents is Mr. Don Wiebe. From the Manitoba Teachers' Society, Ms. Diane Beresford. The alternate for the Manitoba Teachers' Society is Mr. Art Reimer. From the Manitoba Association of School Trustees is Carolyn Duhamel. The alternate for Carolyn Duhamel is Gerry MacNeil. From MASBO, the Manitoba Association of School Business Officials is Mr. Dave Bell. His alternate is Gord Olmstead. From the Manitoba Association of Parent

Councils, we have Viola Prowse as a citizen member. We have a northern representative; that is Mr. Dan Reagan.

The staffing to the committee is Mr. Jim Glen, who is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Administration and Finance. He serves as secretary to the committee, and, as well, an ex-officio member is the Assistant Deputy Minister of School Programs Division, Carolyn Loeppky.

Those people are members of the Advisory Committee of Education Finance. They have been in place for approximately five years. The membership will alter from time to time, but they are, the deputy informs me, a very good, well-functioning committee. As you can see, it is a representative committee representing the various organizations with the two department people as staff.

Mr. Chairman, I will table this because the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) has had to go back to the other committee, so there, I read it into the record, but you can have the paper too.

**Ms. Friesen:** The list of consultations that the minister read out I can see in the context of a minister preparing herself in this area for a review that she wants to make. I think 18 months is a long time for people in the field, and we are looking at another two years. What I want to put on the record is the very, very serious concerns of people in the field or in the schools and in other areas of society who are seeing a great growth in costs in this area, Winnipeg No. 1 in particular, St. James School Division.

I am sure the minister is aware people had believed that this study had begun, having seen it in the annual report, having seen it for two years in Estimates. I think there was a general belief that departmental planning had gone perhaps to be more specific.

I would look for some indication from the minister of what was done in those two past years where the Special Needs Review was included in the Estimates. Was there staff time spent on it? What was the end result of that? What was the product of that and how has that helped us to get to where we are now?

Another thing that I am interested in in this area is the hiring of people for this review. The minister mentioned

three parts to it. The first part would be a steering committee composed, I assume from the way she talked, of existing civil servants. There were then project researchers and a technical support committee, so I am interested in how many people are being hired, what the staffing levels are going to be for these areas and where we find them in the budget and some indication of what was done in that Special Needs Review line in the past two years.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** 16.2(c) is the area of assessment under which that should properly come. I do indicate to the member that the staff indeed have been working hard as she implies in her question when she says, I assume your staff have been working and indeed they have. They worked very hard and they have done a tremendous amount of preparation for the review. They have established terms of reference, parameters, a whole draft document in terms of the types of things that we need to have for goals, the purpose, the parameters. I believe I read much of that into the record for the member for The Maples earlier today, so I will not repeat myself on that. I did read for him, in his questioning on this topic, the parameters, and it may have been before the member for Wolseley arrived, but those have been read into the record today.

The member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) was asking questions earlier so you have heard the parameters and the goals then, so you know I have already answered the question. I do not see any need to sort of reanswer it except to confirm that indeed over the last two years, the last 18 months, the staff has worked hard to develop goals, parameters, et cetera, which I read into the record earlier and, as I say, will not waste the time of the committee repeating. I will indicate that the member is urging a quick study and I, of course, would like to have the study done as quickly as possible

It is contrary to her request on the arbitration study, which she wants to be a slow study, and sometimes I get the feeling, and I may be wrong, that I am sort of damned if I do, damned if I do not. If I take lots of time to prepare the field for a study and take lots of time figuring out exactly how it should be done and then lots of time doing a thorough job, I am criticized for going too slow. If I move swiftly and put out documents in record time with tight time frames for conclusion, then I am accused

of moving too swiftly. I am sure if I walked on water, I would be accused of not knowing how to swim.

But I do indicate that we would have liked to have had this review underway earlier, as well. One of the reasons we did not have it underway, and I will be expecting some indication from the member that this is exactly what she wanted me to do, was that we had a lot of projects on the go in the field. The member has been saying repeatedly, over and over, that we have too much on the go, that we should slow down and quit trying to take on so many things. In fact, just the other day in this Chamber—I think if she checks Hansard she will see—she indicated that I should not be putting anything more on the system. The system was already overburdened with too many ideas for change. I am hoping that she then will understand that with that as the criticism from the opposition, to not be putting any more impetus for change into the system at the current time, that while I was following my own agenda, I was at the same time harmonizing very nicely with her time lines, as well.

The review will take 18 months at least, I am sure, to complete. Maybe it is possible to get it done faster, and, certainly, we will try to move swiftly, but we need to look at staffing level, we need to look at a wide complexity of issues, and they are interwoven with many different departments. We have reviewed literature on trends. We have reviewed the Winnipeg 1 review. We have a lot of research documentation available, and I believe we are in good readiness to be able to announce very soon the structure of this committee and the details that would go along with that.

\* (1700)

When we have those details available, we will be pleased and proud to be able to announce them to the people of Manitoba which, of course, includes the members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, I do not believe there were any accusations in what I said. The minister chose to see that. That is her choice.

What I want to do is to put simply on the record that there is a great sense of urgency about this in the public school system, that there is a great sense that there is overall a capping of funds, and we can look at that issue

when we come to that line. I am conveying to the minister that that is what people in the field believe. That is what parents are believing is happening. The minister says the overall funds for special needs are remaining the same, and we will look at how those are distributed later.

I am conveying to the minister what the serious urgency is and is felt in the field, and I am sure that having talked to as many people as she had, she must be very aware of that. I do not think there was any urgency to remove Canadian history. I do not think there were great urgencies about many elements of some of the changes that the minister has wanted to make quickly.

I do believe that there was a very seriously felt urgency about the expansion of special needs students in the schools and the cost to the school divisions.

#### Point of Order

**Mrs. McIntosh:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, just because I think it is important that we be accurate, I have not seen a sense of urgency about Canadian history. In fact, I have slowed that process down, and I think that, you know, it is important in a point of order that—I know it is a dispute over the facts—that we try to be factual.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

**Ms. Friesen:** Same point of order.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** I have ruled on it.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Friesen:** I had my hand up before you spoke, Mr. Chairman.

I am absolutely delighted the minister has slowed this down. I am continuously puzzled and very concerned that it took almost two years for the Minister of Education to hear those voices from the field. My concern here is to put on the record—

**An Honourable Member:** . . . you know damn well. I am sorry. Carry on. Carry on.

**Ms. Friesen:** Does the minister want to put some more comments on the record?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Yes, if I—

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please. If all honourable members asking questions or giving answers would put their comments through the Chair, please.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The member for Wolseley has kindly offered to allow me to put some comments on the record, and I do appreciate that because the member for Wolseley has asked the questions that she is just stating incorrect conclusions from. I actually feel quite resentful that she has asked the questions about Canadian history before in another venue. I have answered them and explained that the slowing down of Canadian history was not for the reasons that she has implied, was not caving in to public pressure, but rather was for the reasons that I gave her at the time. She either did not hear my answers then or did not understand my answers then or has chosen to ignore those answers and then come to the microphone here and state incorrectly, inaccurately, that it took me two years to slow down after public pressure.

First of all, I have been minister for 11 months, and I have indicated to her exactly why the process was slowed down. I would appreciate her being a little more honest in her responses because I think that she did know, when she put her statements on the record, why I had slowed the process down and chose to put on the record that it was for some other reason. I do not think that is very nice.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that the minister has slowed down the process because the new curriculum is not ready.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Exactly. You said that I had slowed it down because of public pressure.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley has finished her question?

**Ms. Friesen:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the minister did respond informally that that is exactly right, and I am correct to say that. Is the minister saying that there was no public pressure, no letters from the social science

teachers, no letters to the editor which said, Madam Minister, slow this down because you have not shown us what the new curriculum is? I remember very distinctly, for example, asking that exact question in the House, but perhaps the minister does not consider that to be public pressure. I think the minister is very defensive upon this one.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** No, Mr. Chairman, I am not defensive. I am just interested in a little honesty. I am just interested in a little openness. I am just tired of seeing things twisted. When I said that the implementation of the new history protocol would be delayed a year because the new curriculum was not ready, I said that. That is what I meant. That is what I told the member. The fact that letters came in on the subject, which they did, has nothing to do with the fact that the curriculum was not ready. The member comes to the microphone and says, is the minister saying that she did not get any letters, as if getting letters would cause me to change my mind.

The member, because she listens to every special interest group that walks past her caucus room door and tries to be everything to everybody all the time therefore becoming a jack of all trades and master of none, does not understand that some people know how to make up their own minds. We listen to the people, and do not confuse this and twist this, we listened to the people. We read all the correspondence and, where the people make suggestions that make sense to us, we are quite willing to be flexible and adapt and respond to those needs. But that does not mean that we automatically respond to every request that is put to us, and sometimes we make decisions that lead to a similar outcome for a different reason. The member knows that.

So her earlier comments were deliberately and consciously manipulated to give a different impression than reality has, and those who observe her know that she does this. It is not a pleasant characteristic, but we endure, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** If I might, just for a minute here, I would ask all the members around the table, those asking questions, those giving answers, it is ten after five and it is getting a little bit late in the day. Perhaps feelings are running a little bit high because perhaps we are getting hungry maybe. I would just ask everybody to take a deep breath and choose your words carefully.

**Ms. Friesen:** It seemed to me that the minister did have representations from the social science teachers groupasking her to delay the introduction of the new Canadian history because the new curriculum was not ready. I did ask that question in the House. Why does the minister not delay this, because the new one is not ready and people have not had a chance to see it. What I understand the minister saying is that questions in the House, letters from interested citizens, letters from the teachers who were involved in this, had no bearing upon what she said and what she decided.

It seemed to me that was what the minister was saying, and that is where the difficulty has arisen. It seemed to me, I would classify that as some form of public pressure. Clearly the minister does not, and that seems to be where the difficulty is arising. I do not know if the minister wants to pursue this any further under this line. We certainly can, but is it that the minister does not assume that questions in the House and letters from organizations are indeed public pressure?

\* (1710)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I think, when a person becomes elected and governs, one as a governing body has to make decisions. When one is elected as an opposition, one is in a situation where no decisions need be made. An opposition member has the luxury of being able to take any position without having to be accountable for it, because they are not in a position to be able to implement any of those decisions.

The governing body, if it is a responsible governing body, will listen to all points of view put forward. Letters, questions in Question Period, questions that come forward here at the Estimates table, and certainly we have had some very good suggestions made here at the Estimates table that I have taken under consideration, one from the member for The Maples and one from the member for St. James, who have made some good points as we have gone through this. So we receive questions, we receive opinion, we receive direct lobbying from people who have special interests who come and say, my interest is this and this and it is a compelling interest to me, we want you to listen. We listen. A responsible government listens, a responsible government reaches out and consults. A responsible government does not just sit back passively and wait to be talked to or wait to be

advised. A responsible government goes out and says to the people, what do you think, how do you feel? Do you have any input, do you have any feedback that you could provide me that would help me in my decision making?

But at the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, the member makes a decision based upon the member's judgment, the member's knowledge, the information that has been presented to the member. The member does not make a decision based upon how loud the screaming was or how hot the pressure was or how squeaky the wheel was, at least a responsible member does not make a decision that way. A responsible member examines all that has been heard, all that has been read, all that has been presented, and then makes up his or her own mind without, if he is really a good member or if she is really a good member, feeling they have to make a decision because some group lobbied them.

What I am saying, as far as history is concerned, is that I rather like the idea of new upgraded curricula that are relevant to Canadian experience, that include pre-European Canadian history, that condense into 10 years the work that used to be taught in 11, so there is more concentration, more detail, more relevancy taught earlier and more thoroughly. I like the idea that in the last two years of school students can take extra history, enhanced history, more history than they would have been able to take under the current system. I think that is not a bad thing. The member thinks it is a bad thing. We differ.

But for the member to say that my decision to delay the implementation of the new history protocol for one year because the new curricula were not yet ready, to say that I made that decision because people wrote me letters is not to deny that people wrote me letters. When I said, and this is the part that I resent about the style of questioning that comes from the member opposite, I did not make the decision to slow down history because I have been lobbied or because of a pressure group or because of presentations from the history teachers, I made the decision to slow it down because the curricula were not ready.

When the member then comes back and says, is the member then saying she did not get letters, is the member then saying she was not made representation to by the history teachers? No, that is not what I am saying. I heard from the history teachers association, I received

letters from history teachers, I received letters from history professors at the university. I got those documentations, and I read them and I considered them and I weighed their merits, and I still feel that the ability to concentrate in the first 10 years what was learned in 11 and then add extra history courses for enhancement at the end with more relevant up-to-date curricula is a better way to provide history for our students than the old way. So rather than cave in, as the saying seems to go, to the pressure, as the saying seems to go, I simply made up my mind in what I hope was a well-reasoned approach to support the initiative laid down by the previous minister, having been in the portfolio for as long as I have now, about 11 months, based upon all the research and documentation put forward by staff that has convinced me that he was indeed correct. If it takes longer to do, I will not speed it up just to get it done in a hurry. We will take the extra time it requires.

So I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this issue, but I do want the member to understand how decision making is done by this government. I do want the member to understand that if I say I made a decision based upon a time line problem that she is then not to interpret in her mind that statement as meaning that I have not received any correspondence on it or to make that assumption, because it is a wrong assumption, and what is obvious to those who are watching this table is that it does appear the member knows it is a wrong assumption but says it anyhow.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, the minister continues to impugn motives. My comments were based upon the fact that I know that she received deputations and delegations saying, minister, you have a time problem here. We have not seen the new curriculum. Hold it. It was a very simple statement. It had no more intent than that and the minister continues to leap to these kinds of somewhat unpleasant conclusions, but that is her choice.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The member then is even more inaccurate. We never received letters from the history teachers association saying that we had to slow down because we did not have enough time. We received them saying we should not do it because they did not like it. We never got correspondence saying that we should slow down because they did not have enough time. They wanted to retain the Grade 11 history as compulsory. That was the issue. Now, if she would like to provide for

me and perhaps table here in Estimates the letters from the history teachers association saying that the reason they wanted me to slow down was not because they did not want history taught the way we are planning to but strictly and only because it is a time problem, I would be pleased to receive that, because I do not recall receiving it in my files. So if you could bring that tomorrow, I would be grateful. Thank you.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, yes, I will certainly look for that. The minister is interpreting time. I said time line. I believe that the teachers said to the minister that there was a problem because the new curriculum did not exist, nobody had seen it, and the old one was being abandoned, that there was a time problem there in graduation issues and there was a time line problem because nobody had seen the new curriculum. I want to be quite clear on that. I am not trying to do anything that the minister seems to be impugning to me and it was a very straightforward comment.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, if the member is referring to letters from people who were talking about the whole process of implementation, the time line then is correct. But if she is talking as she was about history teachers, history teachers were writing to express concern that they did not want Senior 3 history dropped. If the member is now no longer talking about history teachers but is now talking about ordinary teachers concerned with a wide variety of time lines problems, then I have those letters. But she referred to history teachers, I believe, and it is the history teachers' documentation she refers to, where she says the history teachers wrote to say they were concerned about the time line, that I am looking to have her table.

\* (1720)

This has happened before with this particular member and me. It does not seem to happen with some of the others. I do not know why because I have no problem answering questions for the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk), the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), a lot of other people, but with this member somehow, this seems to happen quite a lot.

I think it is isolating one issue, using information out of context. The entire matter in context rests on the cornerstones of reform. We want rigorous relevant

curricula. We want appropriate assessment. We believe in involving parents and choices, including making options compulsory if they wish, and we believe in allowing students, as they approach the midpoint of their senior years, to make choices as they begin to mature into adults.

The social studies group, however, did not ask us to delay. The social studies group asked us to change policy, but we did delay, dovetailing our work with the Western Protocol, which is why the curriculum was slowed down, because we want it to be dovetailed with the others in the west who are doing just as we are doing, Saskatchewan, the NDP neighbours to the west, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories and the Yukon, all doing as we are doing, working together to develop this new Western Protocol.

This is not a knee-jerk response to public pressure as the member tries to imply. The member tried to imply it in her public statements on the issue, as well, when she congratulated me for finally listening to the people. I am indicating to you that we listened to the people, the people being the history teachers largely who wrote to us, but our conclusion was different from theirs.

The member confuses listening with agreeing, and good government demands practicality. We slowed down because the curriculum was not ready because we are trying to get it together with all the others in western Canada who want to do it the same way we do.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** 2. School Programs (a) Division Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$250,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$61,200—pass.

2.(b) Manitoba School for the Deaf (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,633,700.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask about the connection between this section and section 16.2(g), which also has administrative aspects for the School for the Deaf. I just wondered how these two sections of the department gel.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, the Manitoba School for the Deaf has its own line because it is a school. Like.



it is a bonafide school. The principal of the school reports to the Director of Student Services.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could give us an update on the moving plans for this school. We spent a considerable amount of time discussing this last time. My understanding is that the new school in St. James is being renovated, or that was the anticipation, and there was the anticipation also of either the purchase of a separate building near the school for residential facilities or some incorporation into the new school of residential facilities. So I am just looking for an update.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, the decision that was made was to renovate the existing school, or the school in which the learning experience will take place, and it has been great. There were some initial apprehensions as people moved from an area of familiarity to a new area, but the members have been influential in developing plans for the building, their building consensus for space allocations, and designing appropriate technology and residence in the school. So it has been going along very, very well.

I would like to introduce, if I could, Mr. Chair, while I am on this topic, Howard Miller, who is currently serving as principal of the school, and Bert Cenerini, whose title is Director of Student Services. We have all the titles, and I sometimes get them mixed up. Sorry, Bert. They have done a lot of work with the parents, staff and students in this school. So the parents seem to be very pleased. The students are excited about the potential date for moving in which we hope will be early in the fall. We are not sure of the exact date yet, but they are looking forward to it, especially the new science room. They really like that.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The honourable member for Wolseley, with a very short comment or question.

**Ms. Friesen:** It is a question. I am wondering if the minister is anticipating any increase or decrease in enrollment. It is April now, so that next year's enrollment should be at least becoming clear. Is there an increase or a decrease? Again, the same question really for the residential facility. I understood the minister to say the residential facility is included in the old Alexander Ross School. It is not the purchase of a separate building.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, that is correct. We have been looking at a variety of alternatives, and we looked at separate off-site residence, but the parents wanted on-site residence. Since they are their children and buying houses or renovating—you know, six of one, half a dozen of the other in terms of cost—we opted to go for what the parents and students wanted. It also in terms of a government facility, it is convenient to have it all housed in one building. The number of students anticipated in the school enrollment for next year will be about 82, which is similar to what it was this year if I recall. This year it was 84 or something.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please.

The time being 5:30, committee rise.

## HEALTH

**Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau):** Order, please. Would the Committee of Supply come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber at this time. We are on Resolution 21, item 2.(b)(1).

### Chairperson's Rulings

**Mr. Chairperson:** At this time I would like to bring in a few of the rulings that I have before me on points of order.

Point of Order No. 1, April 18, 1996. On April 18, 1996, a point of order was raised by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) alleging that the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) had imputed motives, was taken under advisement by the Acting Chairperson. I reviewed Hansard and note that the words spoken by the honourable minister were, "... the member for Kildonan wants to stifle decent, hard-working people who want to provide service to their home-care clients."

In my opinion, these words did impute motive and therefore are out of order. I am requesting the honourable Minister of Health to withdraw them unconditionally.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Chairman, I withdraw those words.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I thank the honourable Minister of Health.

Point of Order No. 2 was on April 19. On April 19, 1996, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the honourable member for Kildonan in which he claimed that the honourable Minister of Health had imputed motives. The honourable minister's remarks as reported in Hansard were: "The NDP wants to abandon the clients of home care."

It has been ruled on many previous occasions in this House that language which may be unparliamentary if applied to an individual member is not unparliamentary when applied to a group. I am therefore ruling the honourable member did not have a point of order.

However, I will conclude my ruling by again calling on all members, both in government and in the opposition, to choose their words with care in order to continue to maintain an appropriate and desirable level of decorum in this Chamber.

On Point of Order No. 3 on April 26, 1996, I took under advisement the point of order raised by the honourable member for Crescentwood alleging persistent repetition and irrelevance by the honourable Minister of Health. I have carefully reviewed Hansard and note that the honourable minister's responses to the questions, although related to the very general Estimates area this section of the committee was considering at the time, were often not strictly relevant to the specific question asked. I also note that prior to this point of order, the honourable minister had already made about 15 requests for a recess, all of which had been denied.

Rules 16 and 45 indicate that obstruction and persistent repetition or persistent irrelevance are infractions against the rules of this House. Our subrule 70(3) indicate that speeches in a Committee of Supply should be strictly relevant to the item under consideration. The honourable member for Crescentwood, in my opinion, did have a point of order. This committee is currently proceeding in a procedurally appropriate and correct manner, and I would urge all honourable members to continue to observe the letter and spirit of our rules as they are doing now.

On Point of Order No. 4, on April 26, 1996, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the

honourable member for Kildonan, respecting words spoken by the honourable Minister of Health. The words questioned were: "somebody in the New Democratic Party will probably make that subject of some public information campaign where they can smear and have a little more fun."

The honourable minister's remarks did not allege that any other specifically identified member of this House would undertake the action suggested. Also, I have reviewed the records of this House and the relevant portions of Beauchesne and find nothing to indicate that "smear campaign" has previously been ruled unparliamentary. Therefore, based on the precedent and context, I am ruling the honourable member for Kildonan did not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Chairperson, the minister is just indicating that your very delicate balancing act has shown itself in the rulings, and I appreciate the difficult job and the fact that we are functioning quite effectively in this committee presently.

Mr. Chairperson, we are still at 21.2(b) and I believe we wanted to move on to 21.2(c). I just have one question that I posed to the minister when we last met. In the Supplementary Estimates book, it is indicated on page 36 that the branch administers and manages "collective contracts between Manitoba Health (or the funded facility) and these Associations."

So my question to the minister was general, if the minister could give us an update with respect to collective bargaining in the various component parts of the Department of Health. I recognize the fact that the MHO carries out negotiations and then negotiations are conducted between the specific institutions. But it is fairly clear that the Department of Health has standards and guidelines that they provide, and I am wondering if the minister might give us an update as to the status of collective bargaining.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, I think the status of the situation between the employers in the health system and the agents for the employees is such that, other than what is happening in the home care dispute, I believe things are—I suppose if there is no withdrawal of services one

could argue nowadays that things are not going so badly. It is certainly not our wish that there should be any disruptions. We had a disruption at Thompson General Hospital and a potential one at St. Boniface, which was averted through some very cool heads, some very creative thinking on the part of the agents for the employees as well as the employers. It is our hope that kind of attitude and sense of reason will prevail in the future.

We were very heartened by the demonstration of that in the vote taken recently by the Manitoba Government Employees' Union where a large majority of Manitobans who work for the government voted not to resort to that sort of thing in the resolution of any future disputes. That bodes well, I suggest, for the discussions that are coming up. I think there will be reason that will prevail and that the citizens of Manitoba will be the beneficiaries.

\* (1500)

I was going to say something else while I am on my feet, but I will wait until such time as the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) can distinctly hear me.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, is the minister in a position to outline for us what guidelines have been communicated from the Department of Health to the various bodies and institutions concerning collective bargaining and wage provisions and the boundaries and parameters of such?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, the input of the government occurs when those negotiations come up, and it is very hard to speak on this in the way that I think the honourable member might like me to do. Certainly, everybody knows that it is the law in Manitoba that we have a balanced budget, and everybody knows, most people know, that the best way to ensure that we have quality health, education, and social services each and every year is by adhering to that. So it is within the framework of the budget and the fact that we cannot exceed revenues with the expenditures. In other words, we cannot go into the deficit situation. That is the fundamental guideline. It is felt that within that guideline we can deliver to the citizens of Manitoba quality services in health, education, social services and in all areas of government endeavour.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Item 2. Management and Program Support Services (b) Funded Accountability (1) Salaries

and Employee Benefits \$2,035,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$378,200—pass; (3) External Agencies \$67,300—pass.

Item 2.(c) Health Information Systems (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,328,200.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I note that Mr. Alexander is now present in the committee, and I wonder if the minister could outline for me what role specifically Mr. Alexander occupies in terms of the various roles and activities he occupies.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Glenn Alexander is the director of Health Information Services for the Department of Health for Manitoba. In that capacity it is his job to supervise and co-ordinate all information systems activity within the department, and, of course, a major initiative is the Health Information System that is in the course of being brought into being in the province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, within this area, would Mr. Alexander be the managerial position that is outlined in the appropriation in the Estimates which notes one staff year? Is that Mr. Alexander's position?

**Mr. McCrae:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister indicate where Mr. Alexander is therefore located in terms of the process and in terms of the Estimates?

**Mr. McCrae:** If you look on page 39, as part of subappropriation No. 21-2C, you come down a quarter of the page, Contract 1 staff year, and that is the line.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, so Mr. Alexander is on contract to the department for a sum of \$85,400. Was he also on contract to the department last year for the sum of \$53,500?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, and last year that line covered a portion of Mr. Alexander's contract because he was brought from another area of government, Economic Development Board.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Alexander's other duties, I believe he also sits as a director on the Crown corporation that has been established. Can the minister confirm that and

outline other activities? Or he at one time sat as a director on that Crown corporation.

**Mr. McCrae:** Not anymore, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Could the minister please table a list of those individuals who are directors and employees of the Crown corporation that has been established that Mr. Alexander was formerly a director of?

**Mr. McCrae:** There are three directors: Mr. Julian Benson, Secretary to Treasury Board; Mr. Frank DeCock, Associate Deputy Minister of Health; and the Honourable Eric Stefanson, Minister of Finance. Oh, I have the wrong Eric. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, Eric Rosenhek, Comptroller for the Department of Finance.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can we have a list of the employees of that corporation?

**Mr. McCrae:** There are no employees. The president of the corporation is Mr. Alexander who is not paid for that function specifically. He is paid by the Department of Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** So the corporation that was set up is—and this is not a derogatory term—basically a shell corporation to transact, I would assume, financial and related matters. Is that a correct characterization?

**Mr. McCrae:** It is an administrative vehicle.

\* (1510)

**Mr. Chomiak:** What is the name of that corporation?

**Mr. McCrae:** Health Information Services of Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, while I am on my feet, I would like to say that on April 30, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) requested a list of insured services. I am pleased to provide the honourable member with the following information which is currently in effect. The regulations are amended from time to time as required. I am turning over to the honourable member a copy of The Health Services Insurance Act, regulations under the act which include the physician's manual and regulations under The Prescription Drugs Cost Assistance Act, which

is Pharmacare, which I myself will deliver to the honourable member.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the government has entered into a contract between the Province of Manitoba and SmartHealth Inc. to implement an HIN.

Can the minister outline for me what the structure of HIN is, whether it is a legal entity and what role Mr. Alexander has with respect to HIN?

**Mr. McCrae:** Last year I think we spent a fair amount of time describing the structure of the Health Information Network and what was being done at that time or what was being contemplated. Now those things are beginning to be done with the help of our Health Information committee, our Privacy committee and the various partners that are referred to in last year's Estimates. Basically, except that we have now signed the contract and moved forward actually to take some of the steps that we talked about, what we said last year applies this year as well.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister provide a specific update as to what has been done under the HIN project to date?

**Mr. McCrae:** We have signed the contract, released it to the public, incorporated the Health Information Services of Manitoba Corporation. There have been five work plans agreed to. The first is about the assessment of the DPIN; the second is about laboratories, the so-called Diagnostic Services Information Network; the third is dealing with the target architecture which is work related to the design of the total network; the fourth is the communications work that is agreed to; the fifth is a general facilitation function, which is all about building relationships between the government and all of the partners involved. There have been stakeholder meetings already. The two committees I referred to have had meetings, and there are more meetings scheduled.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Would the minister be prepared to table those agreements?

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member has a copy of that, we have released that all when we announced that agreement.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister indicate how this project integrates or relates to the DUMC project, the Drug Use Management Centre?

**Mr. McCrae:** At this time there is no link or relationship, but it is expected that there will be in the future.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister give us an outline of the DUMC project?

**Mr. McCrae:** At this point, the proposed Drug Use Management Centre is simply a concept.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is there a concept paper or study that the minister can table?

**Mr. McCrae:** We will have a look at what documents the Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association has produced and consider tabling them for the honourable member.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister provide us with a list of employees of the SmartHealth corporation?

**Mr. McCrae:** SmartHealth is not a government corporation. The honourable member would have to ask the principals of SmartHealth for that information.

\* (1520)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the minister indicating that since it is a nongovernment corporation and has no contact with government that individuals hired by that corporation have not been recommended, approved or dealt with in any way between the government of Manitoba and SmartHealth corporation?

**Mr. McCrae:** SmartHealth is a private company; they can hire whomever they want.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister indicate what contracts or subcontracts have been entered into, just a listing, as part of the HIN project?

**Mr. McCrae:** The only contracts are the ones the honourable member has been provided with.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The province entered into an arrangement to provide credit to the Crown corporation

that was established. Can the minister indicate how much of that money has been expended at this point?

**Mr. McCrae:** None yet.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The contract between the government of Manitoba and SmartHealth indicates that SmartHealth can subcontract on section 4.(2)(0). The contract indicates that SmartHealth may contract the performance of any project services and deliverables to KPMG, InfoMagnetics Technologies Corporation and IDT, information training, without the prior approval of Manitoba. Does that, therefore, indicate that any other subcontracts entered into between SmartHealth and subcontractors require the approval of the government of Manitoba?

**Mr. McCrae:** With the exception of the three companies named by the honourable member, SmartHealth can contract with others, but with the approval of the government under the contract.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Insofar as it is a contractual obligation between the government of Manitoba and SmartHealth therefore for subcontracting, can we get a list of which contracts have been entered into that had been approved by the government of Manitoba between SmartHealth and third parties?

**Mr. McCrae:** There are none, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Just for clarification, the minister is saying that there are no contracts entered into between the Crown corporation and outside agencies, and that with the possible exception of the three corporations confirmed in Section 4(20) of the contract, there are no contracts or subcontracts that have been entered into between SmartHealth and any entity?

**Mr. McCrae:** Outside the three companies the honourable member named, SmartHealth has not approached the department under the contract for approval for any other subcontracts to this point.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Has SmartHealth approached the government with respect to any personnel contracts in relation to their operation?

**Mr. McCrae:** No, that would not be something pursuant to the contract.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wonder if we might get an update as to what projects or portions of projects these three identified corporations are working on.

**Mr. McCrae:** I am advised those companies are working to carry out the components of these five work plans that I referred to a little while ago. Their work would be related to parts of those, and it is those five work plans that those three companies are working on.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I have spoken with individuals who are working on these projects who are not part of those three entities and who are not employed by SmartHealth and who are not employed by the government of Manitoba, and I am trying to understand under what vehicle or agency these people are employed to undertake work with respect to this.

**Mr. McCrae:** Well, I do not know who they were working for; maybe the honourable member can tell us.

**Mr. Chomiak:** So again for clarification, Mr. Chairperson, with respect to the HIN project, we have the government department, we have the Crown corporation that is an agency for administrative purposes, and we have SmartHealth that has subcontracted to three contractors. Outside of those agencies and bodies, is there anyone else working on the HIN project, or the information project in general?

**Mr. McCrae:** There are a lot of people working on this: people in the department, the SmartHealth company, and the three that the honourable member has named. Who knows how many others working who are employed by the various stakeholders with whom we are consulting and with whom SmartHealth is consulting, so that we can make sure we have the appropriate public and stakeholder input that we require? I really do not know how many people, but I would assume that, as we develop this project, there will be literally hundreds of people involved, all wanting to accept our invitation for public input into the process.

\* (1530)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Could the minister indicate who would be the stakeholders that would be hiring outside agencies to undertake work in this regard?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not know what the stakeholders do. That is not part of my purview here. If I were in charge of, for example, the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons, maybe I could answer the honourable member's question about who in the organization is involved with the process of consultation. I cannot answer for the all the stakeholders whom they hire or do not hire.

**Mr. Chomiak:** In the release that the minister put out in this regard on February 22, stages of a number of steps were outlined that dealt with the various projects and the various deliverables as they proceeded. Can the minister indicate what stages we are at and the various component parts with respect to the deliverables, and I am referring to Stage 0, Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3, Stage 4, Stage 5? Can the minister give me an update as to what the stage is for each of the component, earlier-indicated aspects of the project?

**Mr. McCrae:** On April 30 the honourable member for Kildonan requested information with respect to the Advisory Committee on Mental Health Reform, specifically the names of the committee members and the date of their last meeting and current recommendations or issues under discussion. The committee last met on February 19, 1996; their next meeting is scheduled for June 7, 1996. The last meeting of the committee, the issues discussed included urban health design team report and recommendations, rural health regional development, rural health associations.

These are the members of the Advisory Committee on Mental Health Reform: Dr. William Bebchuk of the Department of Psychiatry at the PsychHealth Centre, Dr. Jeff Ivey, medical director of the Eden Mental Health Centre, Sister Jean Ell, social work for Sara Riel Inc., Mr. Ed Ziesmann, occupational therapy consultant, Ms. Ellen Ledieu, registered psychiatric nursing for the Central Region.

Dr. Steven Feldgaier, psychology, Winnipeg, Dr. Garey Mazowita, family medicine, Winnipeg, Ms. Veryl Tipliski, registered nursing, Winnipeg, Mr. Bill Martin, Canadian Mental Health Association, Dr. Gary Altman, co-ordination of child and adolescent psychiatric services for St. Boniface Hospital, Mr. K.P. Aujlay, Vita and District Health Centre, Ms. Darlene Dreilich, Community Coalition on Mental Health, Winnipeg.

Mr. Bill Ashdown, consumer/family representative for the Society of Depression and Manic Depression, Mr. Jerry Marek, consumer/family representative from Swan River, Ms. Catherine Medernach, consumer/family representative from Winnipeg, Ms. Katherine Davis, consumer/family representative for the Schizophrenia Society of Manitoba from Winnipeg, Ms. Heidi Mortensen, consumer/family representative from Winnipeg, Mr. Ed Driedger, consumer/family representative from Roland.

Ms. Laurie Cenerini from the Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba, Mr. Jim Mair from the Thompson Region, Ms. B.J. Cooper from the Norman Region, Ms. Anna Pajdzierski from the Interlake Region, Ms. Lorraine Compton from the North Eastman Region, Mr. Del Epp from the South Eastman Region, Ms. Linda Lehmann from the Central Region.

Maureen Lennon-Borger, executive director of the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society, Winnipeg, Ms. Linda Earl from the Westman Region, Ms. Odette Wright from the Parkland Region, Ms. Sue Hicks, assistant deputy minister for Community and Mental Health Services and Dr. John Biberdorf, legislative and program analyst for Manitoba Health.

The honourable member asked about a progress report on the five work plans. The DPIN, that is an assessment, it is a one-time project and it will be followed by Stage 1 work plans. The DSIN, that is the Diagnostic Services Information Network, that is at Stage 0. The target architecture that I referred to is a one-time project, and with respect to communications, is not related to a specific network, so that will be an ongoing undertaking, and the same comment can be made with respect to general facilitation.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister give us a description of the last three projects, that is, the target architecture, the communications projects and the general facility project?

**Mr. McCrae:** By target architecture, we mean the design of the whole network. By communications we mean an ongoing function for SmartHealth to communicate with the public and keep the public informed of developments in the project, and general facilitation refers to the ongoing job of building relationships, remembering to invite people to meetings,

remembering to make sure that the right organizations are consulted and, I guess, generally manage the project, which is a multidimensional project.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, can the minister indicate for me what staff or individuals are undertaking the communications function?

**Mr. McCrae:** On April 30, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) requested information with respect to the Health Links program. In 1994, the Misericordia General Hospital began operating a telephone information service known as Health Links. During the emergency physicians' work stoppage in September of last year, the Health Links service was expanded to a 24-hour operation to ensure that consumers had access as required, and that 24-hour-a-day coverage is continuing at this time.

I am just preparing to respond to the question put by the honourable member for Kildonan.

\* (1540)

From the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Therese Mickelson is involved in this part of the project. Mr. Glenn Alexander, who is with us today, and the communications subcommittee of our HIN stakeholder group, which is the group composed of all the nongovernmental agencies that we are consulting—they are involved in this. There is, of course, staff support from SmartHealth as well to carry out the recommendations of the communications subcommittee of the stakeholder committee.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, are there any contracts or subcontracts that have been entered into between the communications subcommittee and any outside individuals or groups?

**Mr. McCrae:** The committee has no authority to contract with anybody.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister give us a brief description of the general facilities function? That is relatively new to me, and I wonder if the minister might elaborate as to what activities that body or group is involved in?

**Mr. McCrae:** General facilitation refers to the role that we know that SmartHealth is able to play in regard to reaching out to the various stakeholder organizations that are interested and supportive of the building of this public health information network. So that general facilitation includes things like, as I said before, working with the various stakeholder groups; keeping the stakeholder organizations informed of developments as we go along; making sure they get invited to meetings or get invited to consult in some way with us; approaching them to ask their advice perhaps on technical matters. That kind of facilitation is what I mean.

**Mr. Chomiak:** So is it a correct characterization or summation to state that the DPIN project and the Diagnostic Services Information project are the two tangible developments thus far, and they are at the stage—I will have to check Hansard, but I think it is one and zero respectively—and then together with the target architecture and the communications and the general facilitation, that is the status of the HIN project at present? Would that be a correct characterization?

**Mr. McCrae:** I would say that we have made some progress with respect to the Diagnostic Services Information Network. We have the people that we need to consult, ready to be consulted, or have been already consulted. Design has begun.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister just give an update of what roughly the design entails at this point, I mean, what direction the project is going?

**Mr. McCrae:** As you design a public health information system, you want to make sure that you are designing it to meet the needs of our collective vision of the future of our health system. It requires collaboration so that everybody can be using the same vision so that we are not designing a system that meets the needs of yesterday but designing a system that meets the needs of today and tomorrow. I think, in short, that is the best way I can put it for the honourable member.

\* (1550)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, in the last information put out by the minister, it was indicated that network charges would be \$27.6 million; hardware and operating, \$35.2; software development, \$55.9; SmartHealth

contribution, \$25 million to \$35 million; subcontractors, remainder.

Can the minister indicate whether or not those figures are still valid?

**Mr. McCrae:** Those numbers are believed by us still to be valid, yes.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, can the minister indicate whether or not any funds have been forwarded from either the government of Manitoba or the Crown corporation by way of loan or expenditure for any of the projects or developments undertaken?

**Mr. McCrae:** For the work done prior to the end of the last fiscal year, the prefunding arrangement was in effect, so that will be paid out at a later date.

Mr. Chairman, the other day the honourable member was asking about waiting lists. In March 1995, interim funds were approved for the period of March 15 to June 15, 1995, as a short-term strategy for reducing waiting lists. These dollars were redirected institutional funds and were shared with seven hospitals to reduce the waiting lists for joint replacement surgery, open-heart surgery, MRI scans and radiation oncology.

The final statistics for 1995-96 are not yet available, but we do know that 58 additional joint replacement surgeries were funded the last fiscal year. We have also been advised that St. Boniface Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre expect to have performed approximately 1,000 open-heart surgical cases the last fiscal year, compared to 749 cases in the previous fiscal year. We also provided funding for an additional 450 MRI procedures and have continued to work with the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation to address waiting lists for radiation therapy.

Manitoba Health will continue to work with the physicians and hospitals this fiscal year to improve the system, to ensure that Manitobans receive surgery within appropriate time frames and specific issues will be addressed in this consultative process. I believe we have made some good progress in the area of the reduction of our waiting lists for important surgeries and services in Manitoba.



**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, in the minister's preceding answer, he indicated that no money was expended in the last fiscal year because of the prepayment conditions that applied. Is the minister saying that no money been paid this fiscal year as well?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, no money has yet flowed under the prefunding arrangement.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, but the minister will agree that \$26 million in the form of money placed in trust has flowed from the Province of Manitoba to its Crown corporation. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** No cash; borrowing authority.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, so the Crown corporation has the authority, backed by the government of Manitoba, to borrow up to \$26 million in order to meet the terms of payment of this agreement. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, there is a provision in the contract that deals with the expenditure of the \$26 million. The provision is that whichever comes first, an 18-month period from the signing of the contract or the aggregate expenditure of \$26 million, will then see the authority utilized in the \$26 million and the money expended. Is that a correct interpretation of the agreement?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Sir.

(Mr. Mike Radcliffe, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, how can the public be guaranteed that the cost benefits, as outlined by the government in the establishment of this project, will be met when we have expended an aggregate sum of \$26 million?

**Mr. McCrae:** The modular approach constantly monitored and evaluated by the stakeholders.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, yes, I understand that, but there were very optimistic projections of savings as a result of this project, and yet within the agreement the

only protection basically that I could see is that—well, there is none effectively insofar as when they submit their bills and once \$26 million is expended and ultimately \$100 million is expended, the government is required to pay to contractor of SmartHealth.

**Mr. McCrae:** The work plans have dollar values. Each work plan is subject to approval by us as we go through, and we do not work alone. We work with many, many stakeholders who are all part of the process. The beauty about going into an important new endeavour like this is that we are not going in alone, we are going in with the support of Manitoba.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, is the minister saying that there are specific dollar figures and savings that must be achieved on each work plan before the money will be expended? Is that what the minister is saying?

**Mr. McCrae:** I think the honourable member will remember last year we made reference to go and no-go decisions and, obviously, the department and the stakeholders with whom we are working will ensure that there is a commensurate benefit for the people of Manitoba before they expend taxpayers' dollars on something that does not show evidence that we can achieve what it is we are setting out to achieve.

\* (1600)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, that is not quite what I asked, and I may have not made my question clear. Are there specific dollar figures attached to the work plans that must be achieved prior to the expenditure of the funds?

**Mr. McCrae:** I can only repeat what I said, Mr. Chairman. If savings are not achievable—I think cost efficiency or cost benefit is probably the better language to use. His will be what the stakeholders will be looking at as they make their decisions along the way. If there is not a level of satisfaction amongst the stakeholders that we ought to move on a particular dimension or a particular module of this network, then no doubt they will make the decision not to proceed. That is allowed for under the contract.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Last year, or perhaps the year earlier, the department made available computer hardware for

pharmacists and outlets, et cetera, to deal with the DPIN project. In regard to this overall HIN plan, has there been offered to agencies or institutions or facilities any type of hardware in order to effectively integrate this system?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not think we are advanced far enough in the project that we would have been brought to a conclusion of that discussion. I know it has been informally discussed with various stakeholders.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Have those discussions generated a policy paper or an outline or anything that the minister could share?

**Mr. McCrae:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I recently visited a hospital in Winnipeg that was considering new software and hardware with respect to the operations in the hospital. How have various institutions been integrated in order to participate in the whole project? In other words, have they been integrated? Have they been alerted? Are they plugged in? Or is it too early in the process?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Alexander has regular contact with the information technology people in the various facilities in Manitoba.

**Mr. Chomiak:** What is the exact relationship between ISM and HIN and/or the Crown corporation and/or SmartHealth?

**Mr. McCrae:** There is not one.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is a relationship contemplated?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, one of my concerns about the SmartHealth contract is that certain provisions and terms in the contract have not been included—[interjection] The minister is asking where? On page 16, subsection (c)(i)(ii), Clause 3.28, and in addition, 3.39 of the contract, just for a start. Page 16 of the contract (c)(i)(ii), the management fee in subsection 3.28, and the rate of interest on the \$26 million on the borrowing authority between the Royal Bank and SmartHealth, which is 3.39.

**Mr. McCrae:** When we released the contract, that part was blacked out, and that was done for proprietary reasons.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Well, I am not going to dispute the proprietary reasons, although I question them. I am not going to get into a long argument. I do not see why the interest rate on the loan could not be provided as well as the costs that Manitoba will be paying to SmartHealth for work under the work plan. I do not see how that is proprietary, but I am not going to get into a long dispute with the minister on that.

My comment, or whether we just move on.

**Mr. McCrae:** I guess a politician never wants to give up an opportunity to make a comment. We think it is a good deal. It was worked out very, very carefully. It took a long time to work out the contract, but it was, at every step, worked out with the best interests of Manitobans and the taxpayers at heart.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, can we get a rough estimation of where we expect to be in the process at year's end?

**Mr. McCrae:** That depends upon our stakeholders, and how much work they see fit to approve that we move forward with.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, we are behind schedule, but I am not posing that as a criticism. It is obvious that we are not within the time lines of the original schedule, but, given the undertaking, that is not a surprise. [interjection] I would not say we are behind where you set out to do in the contracts. Certainly, in the feasibility plan that was put together it was expected that the project would be much further ahead at this point than it is right now, and that is on page 22 of the feasibility schedule, the strategic assessment that was originally—

\* (1610)

**Mr. McCrae:** I remember, if we are behind, I know why. It is because last year around this time we were being told, oh, do not sign anything because the NDP is going to win the election, and they will not. So we said, well, let us just relax. We will not sign anything. We

will be very, very careful just what it is we are signing. Well, the rest is history, of course.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, so the minister is saying that the contract was delayed in terms of signing because of the provincial election and specifically and only because of the provincial election. Is that what the minister is saying?

**Mr. McCrae:** I certainly am saying that the election intervened and did give us cause for pause, and that was taken very seriously. I recall the Premier (Mr. Filmon) saying during the election that there will not be any contracts like this signed during the election and after that time any delays that were occasioned were occasioned because of the extreme care with which we approach our work here. We listen to the honourable member and his colleagues when they raise warnings about different things that are going on in the government, including Health, and when they make an allegation or a suggestion that something might be wrong with this, that or the other, we check it out very, very carefully and only after we have made sure that members' concerns have been properly addressed, then we proceed.

So, yes, I think the writing up of the contract took longer than probably we expected because it is a very complicated and important contract, and it is important that we bring the best possible legal considerations to the construction of a contract like this. That all having been said, the honourable member has me at a significant disadvantage with the legal training that he has. I am not very good at reading a contract and interpreting what it all means. That is why we have smart people like the honourable member for Kildonan, and others working sometimes with us to make sure that we do a good job on getting our contracts written properly.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I am not at all clear on the relationship between DPIN and HIN and the way DPIN is presently operating and functioning and the way it is to be integrated with HIN. I wonder if the minister might outline for me precisely what that relationship is and where it is going.

**Mr. McCrae:** I think the honourable member has heard me describe the DPIN as the first spoke of a wheel, and that is about the best way I can describe it. It was put together as a result of a tendering process. The

Systemhouse company got the deal and helped us build the Drug Program Information Network. I recall saying then that this will be the first spoke in a larger wheel. That must be nearly three years ago now I guess we got that going. It has really been of significant benefit, is very popular with Manitobans.

I have given some statistics already about how many additional consults have happened between physicians and pharmacists as a result of the Drug Program Information system, how many prescriptions have been changed or cancelled because of the information contained in that system for the protection of the consumer, the convenience that it has brought for people with respect to their deductibles and all those things. Once you add these other components to our health information system, appropriate information shared with appropriate health professionals can really inure to the benefit of the consumer of health care services in Manitoba. Simply, it is that one first spoke in a much larger wheel.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Has that spoke been integrated with any other aspect of that wheel at this time?

**Mr. McCrae:** That is the work that is going on nearing completion, I understand. That is the work going on in that first work plan that I referred to earlier on in the assessment of the DPIN.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is Systemhouse still undertaking the project?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister indicate who is undertaking that project?

**Mr. McCrae:** The department runs the DPIN.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Are there any subcontracts that have been entered into between the department and any other outside agency concerning the DPIN project?

**Mr. McCrae:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** If an individual establishes a pharmacy and requires the software and the hardware to plug into the network, how can they integrate their system into the

department? In other words, what is the connection between the department and that particular outlet? What is the relationship?

**Mr. McCrae:** They have to register with the department, and we have to approve the software.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Outside of the department and the outlet, who has access to the information that is contained within the network or that system? That is, outside of the direct people in the pharmacy, who deal with it and the department? Does anyone else, any other agency or body, have any access to that information?

**Mr. McCrae:** The department has that information, the pharmacist has that information, and only on proper application to the department can a regulating agency like the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the pharmacy association might they be able to access that information.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, so outside of regulatory agencies, nobody has access to that information. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** The department and the pharmacist.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The department and the pharmacist. Would that information be available, for example, to the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation upon proper application?

**Mr. McCrae:** We have not given out any information to organizations like the centre to this point. They can access blinded information which blots out the name of the consumer or the patient, and that can only be done through the privacy with the approval of the access and confidentiality committee.

\* (1620)

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for that response. Is the minister indicating that that has not happened? It potentially can happen, but it has not happened. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, at the end use, that is the pharmacy, there is also a fair amount of information,

which from the minister's comments, I take it, is protected other than by application. Is the minister aware of any outside organizations or agencies having access to that information?

**Mr. McCrae:** This information will not be made available to anybody except under the circumstances we have described.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the minister is aware that there have been concerns expressed about information relating to pharmaceutical use and data, and I am pleased to see that the minister is indicating that that data will not be made available. Can I take it that it is Manitoba policy that this information is not available to any outside organization or body or group or individuals other than those that we have already earlier identified?

**Mr. McCrae:** I would just like to remind the honourable member that there is a law in this province called The Drug Cost Assistance Act and prohibits what the honourable member is talking about. We have no intention of changing that.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I actually would like to pursue the whole question of confidentiality and go down that line; but we traditionally take a break at this time, so perhaps we should at this point. I know the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to ask some questions, and then I will come back so that I can do it in a more systematic basis. So maybe if it is agreeable we will take a five-minute break for the benefit of the staff involved and ourselves, too.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe):** Is it the will of the committee to recess for five minutes?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe):** The committee will recess for five minutes.

*The committee recessed at 4:22 p.m.*

---

#### After Recess

*The committee resumed at 4:34 p.m.*

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe):** he committee will come to order, and I believe the honourable member from Inkster has a question. Is that correct?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** That is correct. Mr. Chairperson, this is in fact an area I alluded to earlier in my response to the budget where I had given the government sound criticism, I like to believe, in different areas. But this, quite frankly, is one of the areas in which we think that the government is moving in a very positive direction. The agreement that has been entered into allows for the province, I believe, ultimately to have an opportunity to be a leading force in this whole area, not only in the province of Manitoba but, in fact, Canada.

Even though I have not read through the detailed contract that was made available to me through the department in trying to get a bit better of an understanding of it, I acknowledge right up front that this is an area in which we support the government in its agreement with the subsidiary, SmartHealth, which is a subsidiary of the Royal Bank, acknowledging that, yes, there is going to be some profit going towards the subsidiary but, given the potential of return that Manitoba could see in the future, I think it is just overwhelming where the potential is there.

I know at times when you come up with the programs you might be criticized, and part of the concern—actually, we did meet with Royal Bank representatives and expressed first-hand some of the concerns that we had in terms of making sure that Manitobans in particular are better informed of exactly what is happening here, along with some of the departmental officials. I know I have had opportunity to comment on this particular program, because there is always the opportunity to spread misinformation. It is not a hundred million dollars going to the Royal Bank, as an excellent example, as some have indicated.

What I really like about it is that it is going to be multifaceted in the sense that there are many different ways, whether it is going to be patient oriented, policy oriented in another form. His data bank, as I said, has wonderful potential.

Having said that, there is one area of concern that we do have, and that area is in regard to privacy and

confidentiality of files. I would ask the minister what he could indicate is or has been done in order to ensure that the confidentiality element is going to be there for the privacy for the citizens.

**Mr. McCrae:** I certainly appreciate hearing those words from the honourable member. I remember the early days of my career in this place, watching the Liberal Party as it moved into the world of information technology in the carrying out of its function as a political party, and I sometimes wonder if that is part of the reason why we see a recognition on the part of the Liberal Party that the world is indeed changing, that there is technology available to us that we have not used to the extent that we could. Maybe that accounts to some extent for the understanding that is displayed today by the honourable member for Inkster for what we are trying to do.

But, indeed, he is right to focus on the issue of privacy. As we enter a world which has turned from an industrial type of world to an information type of world, that information can be misused if appropriate safeguards are not put into place. It is for that reason that we have enlisted the help of the privacy or the confidentiality committee component of our Health Information Network initiative. They represent a number of interested organizations from society, from the community, and we say that privacy, security and confidentiality of health records is of paramount importance to us, too, and the government will ensure that this information technology will be used in such a way as to enhance the right to privacy that people are entitled to. That includes security and confidentiality measures being taken that should be integral components of a project like this, and to ensure that the necessary security is there, we plan to follow some pretty important paths and take very important steps to ensure that.

We want to clearly identify and understand just what information must be protected and from whom it must be protected, and we are going to do that by consulting extensively with consumers, health care providers and regulatory bodies, all of which people and organizations share that very same concern the honourable member is raising. We have already set up that Privacy and Confidentiality committee and the members include regulatory bodies like the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Manitoba Association of Health Care

Professionals and consumers groups like the seniors organization and Consumers' Association and the Association for Rights and Liberties, and as required for the appropriate input, others might as well be added.

\* (1640)

We need to look at the broad alternatives that are available to us, and it is quite probable that action will be taken in any area where that is available to us because of the strict emphasis that we want to put on this aspect of this project. Among the initiatives and actions that can and will be taken will be legislative and regulatory action. We want to amend existing legislation to tighten access rights and provide for stiffer penalties should there be breaches of security. We need to know what new legislation might be required in terms of this, and we are doing research on a world-wide basis to see what regulation or legislation are in effect with respect to this. So we do not really miss out on opportunities to find whatever ways there are to protect people's privacy.

Of course, the technology part of this very significantly allows for enhanced privacy of health records. We have heard too many horror stories about breaches in the past and we do not want that to happen. Things like encryption and card technology and dedicated lines and passwords and system security, all of which are not exactly my forte in terms of my knowledge of the way the computer world works, but to people that like SmartHealth and people like Mr. Alexander and his staff, those words do have very much meaning, and they know exactly how to design a system that will use these technologies to ensure that our rights to privacy and confidentiality are indeed respected.

Management practices will include the signing of nondisclosures and oaths of confidentiality, and there will be the opportunity for punitive action, including firing people who abuse other people's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

We know that there are experts with respect to this, and through the vehicle that we have with this contract, we can access those people. Manitoba Health and our vendors have the expertise to deal with the technology required to ensure that the necessary security for health records is indeed in place.

All of the things that I have been talking about thus far in this answer have been guided by the consumers, by the health care providers and regulators with whom we have been consulting thus far, so it is not something that I made up or that Mr. Alexander made up or something that the honourable member might even bring forward. These things have come forward from our extensive consultations with consumers, providers and regulators.

We have now completed a preliminary review of the need for legislation, and we have announced that there will be legislation to enhance the rights of the public to the privacy and confidentiality of their health records.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** That, in essence, was leading to the next area of questioning that I was wanting to get from the minister; that is, if the minister was looking at legislative means in order to enforce privacy that would enhance the assurance to Manitobans that the government takes this issue quite seriously in terms of privacy.

The question I would ask the minister is: Does he have any indication on when we would see some legislation brought forward, keeping in mind, of course, the new rules of the Chamber which, in essence, allow for—the minister would have to bring in first reading prior to the summer breakup, or would we anticipate that any legislative requirements would be met in the spring of 1997?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, and we have announced our intentions in that regard. We expect to be able to introduce legislation in the spring of 1997 after a further period of consultation, which will include things like discussion papers and meetings and that sort of thing.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister indicate if—I believe they call it the Confidentiality committee, or there is a Confidentiality committee. Has that committee met already? Is it something that meets on a monthly basis? What sort of a process is put into place to ensure that those different stakeholders are having some input into the framing of the legislation?

**Mr. McCrae:** There is a Confidentiality committee that has been in existence for decades, but there is one specific to SmartHealth and it is the one I referred to, which is a subcommittee of the stakeholder committee and has the representation to which I referred. It met

three weeks ago, for example, and will meet again in a couple of weeks and certainly on an as-required basis as we move through the various modules of this project.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Before I move on to another area here, just to confirm from the minister. This committee will then have direct input into the framing of the legislation?

**Mr. McCrae:** I should perhaps correct myself to this extent. It is not a committee associated with SmartHealth. SmartHealth is the vendor here. It is a committee associated with us as the government. The question was, will they have direct input? Yes, of course, they will have direct input into the legislation, they and others as well.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, just on a note of high-tech technology that is out there, the other day I received some correspondence, and I believe it was the federal government now has a health online service so people can actually tap in and find out all sorts of things that are happening on the national scene with respect to health. I am wondering if the minister could give some sort of indication, does the Department of Health have something that is, whether it is on the info-highway, is there any development that is consumer oriented dealing with computer technology.

**Mr. McCrae:** We have had material, Mr. Chairman, on the government's home page on the Internet, for example. I got word from somebody I know that they saw my picture on there, and I thought, well, my, are they not lucky. Anyway, there are opportunities in that regard for the Health department to use that government home page more than we are already, and we fully intend to do that since the access to that is free, as I understand it. That being the case, we can utilize that as a communications resource as well.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am somewhat familiar, I am still trying to get an understanding, in fact, our caucus just got on to the Internet in a significant way, and we are hoping to develop that. I would not want to see, for example, the governments—and I am sure the government will go ahead either way. I am very familiar that the government caucus, and I believe even the Premier's office has a cover

page on the Internet which you can click, and you can find out all sorts of things the government is up to.

That is not necessarily what I am looking for. What I am looking for is more of a service to individuals who want to know what is up with health. Maybe they want to find out the types of clinics that are available or the types of services offered through the Department of Health, this sort of an informational type of service being provided. Is that being considered?

**Mr. McCrae:** Well sure, Mr. Chairman, and any suggestions the honourable member might have that he **thinks** might be helpful to the population and to the world for that matter with respect to health issues that consumers might be interested in or might be educational or instructive, we would be interested in knowing. If the honourable member has suggestions, we would be happy to look at them.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I do have one suggestion in terms of an area in which we think that the Internet would be a good place to provide this, and that is more so with health prevention, you know, prevention with dealing with health care. This is an area in which there is always a need for establishing more communication links, different sorts of programs that are made available, whether maybe it is the new wellness centre that is being set up by the Seven Oaks Hospital or the Reh-Fit Centre which complements the St. Boniface Hospital and other facilities.

It might be programs that are provided through our different health community clinics, this sort of thing, whether it is a foot care, whether it is other type of prevention-type programs being made available through a network, might be somewhat beneficial, which would be sponsored in essence through the Department of Health.

I know the other day I had received, and I think it was from the Department of Industry and Trade, a CD-ROM or disk which had all this wonderful promotion about tendering, and it is fairly impressive. The minister nods his head; I think he might have seen the disk. It is in fact fairly impressive. This is the type of [interjection]—OBS, the Minister of Labour calls that particular disk. The idea is that this is something that can be circulated virtually en masse. I do not think there was any cost for

the department or for the consumer that wanted this particular disk, and I think that those are the types of things—like you open up the white pages and it shows, you know, if you are choking, here is what you should be doing. It has all sorts of illustrations, if you like. I think to a certain degree that sort of information, because you can do so much more on the computers today, would be somewhat beneficial.

I would leave that with the minister. I would be interested in getting some sort of a response back. Maybe the minister can have someone from within the department at least look into the possibility, potential for cost of establishing something that would be made available to the population as a whole. I think that what we are seeing is more and more of the population gaining access to computers and the Internet and so forth. There is always some concern that there are those who do not have access, but that is maybe for another debate.

I do not know if the minister was going to respond to that. Otherwise, I know the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) had some more questions that he was wanting to ask at this time.

**Mr. McCrae:** I appreciate what the honourable member said. I have already asked the department to do that, but the department is going to be delighted to know that the honourable member feels the same way. I think that we ought to use whatever technologies there are available, and just in case not everybody in the province has a computer to access this type of information, as the honourable member already knows, we have other efforts underway as well through direct public information spots in the newspaper or on television to make sure that the public is aware of the things the honourable member is talking about.

We will do what we need to do, but certainly the specific suggestion is very helpful, and I will make sure that it is understood by the department.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Just before I start, just on administrative matters, I anticipate I will have a fair amount of questions yet that will probably take us into tomorrow, so I wonder if—[interjection] No home care calls.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, I think that what the honourable member says is something we can

accommodate. However, does he have any general idea how long he might be on Information Systems, so that we can be ready for Home Care later in the afternoon?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I anticipate probably no more than—although I must admit, sometimes questions lead to other questions, but my guess would be no more than probably an hour tomorrow.

Mr. Chairperson, there is a Privacy and Confidentiality committee that has been up and running, as the minister indicated, for decades. The minister also mentioned a specific privacy committee in relationship to SmartHealth. Can the minister outline for us who comprises that committee and what its mandate is?

**Mr. McCrae:** It is not in relation to SmartHealth. It is in relation to the Health Information Network, as I corrected myself a little earlier, and it has representation from, among others, the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties, the Consumers' Association, the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals, the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, and others may be added as their expertise is required, and we do appreciate the willingness of all these organizations to take part.

\* (1700)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I am going to ask some questions with respect to confidentiality just so that I can clarify in my own mind how procedures work at present.

I will start with the issue that we discussed yesterday, and that is the income tax information, the authorization. I sign and authorize the release of that information to an appropriate Department of Health employee who then has the right to access that information from Revenue Canada, that being line 150, I believe, of my income tax form—[interjection] My assessment form.

Now, that particular piece of information is confined where, and to what extent can that information be disseminated throughout the system? Is it only Department of Health employees who have access to that, or will that information be on-line with the pharmacist?



**Mr. McCrae:** That information is restricted to Manitoba Health staff whose function it is to administer the program.

**Mr. Chomiak:** So that information is restricted to the employees who receive the application form and verify or not verify the information. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes.

**Mr. Chomiak:** What is the policy with respect to the Department of Health and that information? Will it all be verified or is there a policy or policies that apply to the use of that particular information?

**Mr. McCrae:** We are just going to check on that one and answer it tomorrow.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Has that issue been dealt with or reviewed by either of the Privacy and Confidentiality committees and, secondly, will that area be looked at in terms of proposed legislation?

**Mr. McCrae:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is that no to both questions?

**Mr. McCrae:** As I recall, the questions were, was the access and confidentiality committee involved, and, no, and then the next part was, is there a future role, I think, for the access and confidentiality committee. This is an administrative matter and not a matter relating to people's health records, and so that is why the no encompassed both parts of the question.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I understand that and I thank the minister for that response, but it will mean still at the computer end, at the computer terminal, there will be a figure that will come up that will indicate to the pharmacist whether or not that person has to pay. There is a trip-in point where that will happen. Is that correct?

**Mr. McCrae:** What the pharmacist will know is the dollar value of the prescription. That will be there. The pharmacist will know how much to charge the patient, and the pharmacist will know how much has been charged within a given year.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The value of the prescription, how much has been charged that year, and if the pharmacist could ascertain that—

**Mr. McCrae:** I believe where the honourable member is taking us is that the pharmacist could conceivably do a calculation and find a way to determine the income of the customer or client standing in front of him or her, and that is acknowledged. They are under pretty strict rules of their association. If they misuse that kind of information, they are going to be in big trouble.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Actually, I was not taking it there. I was actually trying to understand the functionality of it. The pharmacist enters into the screen, the line goes into DPIN and automatically that information comes up on screen as to the levels, and it is at that point the pharmacist knows, oh, this person is within \$10 of their deductible and this prescription is \$12, so they are only going to have to pay \$2. Is that how it functions effectively?

**Mr. McCrae:** For those people who will spend enough money to reach their deductible, at which parenthetically the member has pointed out is not as many as used to be, the pharmacist will know for those people on that one occasion what deductible a level has been arrived at because the computer screen will say, these drugs are \$20, you charge zero, or \$2 or \$10 or whatever it is. At that point and at that point only will the pharmacist have an opportunity to know what this patient's deductible amount is going to be. It is from that point on subsequent visits will it only show the amount, dollar value of drugs purchased up to that time, but it will only show one time the deductible level.

And, yes, from that number, for those people who do qualify, the pharmacist, if the pharmacist was wanting to do something wrong and against the rules of his or her own association for which he or she would be punished if he or she were caught, yes, that calculation could be made in those cases.

\* (1710)

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Let me take another similar piece of information and try to work it through the system. An individual is diagnosed with some kind of a disease where a stigma may be attached, a mental illness, for example, and is taking an obvious drug that shows up on the screen. But that always happened because the pharmacist dealt with it when there was paper before, and

I suppose staff had access to the same paper, staff had access to the machine. It also appears at the Department of Health where it is correlated, et cetera.

Ultimately, we are looking for an expansion of the network to go to doctors' offices, laboratories, et cetera, and that is where we get into the layers of confidentiality issue. I guess what I am asking is: Where are we at in terms of development of that, and how far down the road are we in terms of ensuring as best we can that in fact those protective devices are in place?

**Mr. McCrae:** We are in the early design stages of the development of the technology required to achieve what the honourable member is talking about. I think we had a fairly lengthy discussion about this technical aspect last year, and I think everything I said last year I would probably say again this year if I were asked, but we are at the early design phase. We were not there last year, we are this year.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I could assume, though, that those issues will be dealt with in the legislation forthcoming in the spring?

**Mr. McCrae:** Legislative draft persons are no doubt keeping up on the changing nature of technology and having to find language that appropriately reflects the legislative requirements that would accompany the changes in technology, and yes is the answer.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Are we still looking at the development of a plastic card or some kind of a card that will be utilized to access or to function in this system?

**Mr. McCrae:** We are looking at replacing the paper card with a plastic one, and in the future we will make decisions about what information to put on that card.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I noted how the minister answered that, because that is of course a fundamental issue in terms of what information is or is not contained in the card and where the information is stored. Is the purple card we presently have and the nine-point designation number a vision to be the future course that we are going in the future?

**Mr. McCrae:** The Department of Health for the purposes of administration of the program would have

access to the information in the program for its purposes and those purposes only, subject to people having to take oaths of secrecy and things that public servants have to do, not unlike we have today.

Epidemiology sections of the department would receive information but on a blinded basis that we talked about before. Any research agency that might be able to access this sort of information would get it on that sort of a basis, so the patient identifier information is removed from the information that they would use. It is clearly being put forward as a tool to us to help us in epidemiological studies, so that we can make good health policy decisions in the future. We do not need to know people's names in order to develop good policies. We need to know some information, and we have that now, and that represents no change.

What all our stakeholders need is the assurance and the comfort that the technical protections are built in, so that information does not flow more freely than it does already and, in fact, perhaps can be held back with more facility today from those eyes that are not supposed to be viewing this material and information.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Chomiak:** The minister raises a good point about the question of confidentiality and the security on-line. Actually, I may pursue that further, but I wanted to go down another line at this point, and that was the Center for Health Policy and Evaluation and other research agencies that obtain the information, who is the contact person, who is it obtained from, and where is the authorization for the release of that information?

**Mr. McCrae:** Applications for data from the system or from the department are channelled through the access and confidentiality committee chaired by Dr. Walker of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

That committee then makes a determination on whether or not information ought to be made available, and, of course, it would have to abide by whatever legislative or regulatory mechanisms are in place. Then it comes to the people in the department who are able to access and retrieve the information for the party applying for that information.

**Mr. Chomiak:** On page 38 of the Supplementary Estimates, it indicated that one of the results of the activities of the department is to disseminate information on population-based health data to regional health authorities. Who is doing that? Who is releasing that data? Who is it going through and who has access to that data?

**Mr. McCrae:** What the honourable member refers to on page 38 is the line that says: "Co-ordinate and facilitate data dissemination to Regional Health Authorities." That information is now part of established statistical reports that are produced now.

What needs to be done is to arrange the information that is already going out in a way that works for these 10 different regions we have in the province. Rather than having one big book covering the whole province, for example, dealing with the number of tonsillectomies or whatever, it will be broken into 10 books, so that each book will have the number of tonsillectomies in each region. That information will be used for the purpose of health planning in the regions.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The data is presently available, as the minister indicated, to Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation and other research bodies or organizations. Is it available to any commercial—are there any commercial entities or proprietary agencies that have access to that information?

**Mr. McCrae:** Proprietary organizations are able to access whatever information is available generally to members of the public, in other words, public documents and public registers or public data, information that you might, for example, table in the House under ministerial statements and tabling of documents. That is available to everybody, including proprietary interests, but nothing that is not available to the honourable member or me is available to proprietary interests.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Just for clarification, did the minister take as notice my question about information about DUMC? Is the minister coming back with additional information on DUMC?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for that response. How do we ensure at present, given that the arrangement between an institution and the province is via software, that that information is protected from unauthorized access at the level of the various institutions, the various pharmacies and other agencies? What protection do we have to make sure that that information cannot, insofar as the hardware is significantly different, I would think, at various agencies—what protection do we have to ensure unauthorized access to that information?

**Mr. McCrae:** In addition to the technical possibilities for protection of information to which I referred earlier on when I talked about encryption and all of those things, we have laws, and there will be laws specially designed for a new computerized system that will, as I said, be introduced about a year from now.

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are absolutely certain at this time that if none of the information on, for example, drug utilization and the like is being made available to those other than—in other words, it is not being made available to pharmaceutical companies, for example, to determine patterns of buying or cost pricing, et cetera?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The hour being 5:30 p.m., committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

#### IN SESSION

**Mr. Deputy Speaker (Marcel Laurendeau):** The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 1, 1996

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>		<b>Introduction of Bills</b>	
<b>Presenting Petitions</b>		Bill 13, Highway Traffic Amendment Act Findlay	1558
Home Care Services		Bill 14, Manitoba Trading Corporation Amendment Act Downey	1558
Friesen	1553		
Cerilli	1553		
Dewar	1553		
Santos	1553		
Maloway	1553	Bill 15, Tourism and Recreation Amendment Act Downey	1558
Lamoureux	1553		
<b>Reading and Receiving Petitions</b>		Bill 16, Charleswood Bridge Facilitation Act Reimer	1558
Seasonal Camping Fees			
Ashton	1553		
Home Care Services		<b>Oral Questions</b>	
Cerilli	1553	BFI Landfill Site Doer; Cummings	1558
Lathlin	1554		
Martindale	1554	Home Care Program Chomiak; McCrae; Filmon Lamoureux; Filmon	1560 1564
Santos	1555		
<b>Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees</b>		Social Assistance Martindale; Mitchelson	1561
Committee of Supply		Headingley Correctional Institution Mackintosh; Vodrey Reid; Vodrey	1562 1564
Laurendeau	1555		
<b>Ministerial Statements</b>		Landfill Sites—Winnipeg Lamoureux; Cummings	1563
Provincial Flooding Update		St. Boniface College Friesen; McIntosh	1566
Pallister	1555		
Struthers	1556	Hugh Goldie Sale; Filmon	1566
Manitoba HydroBonds			
Stefanson	1557		
L. Evans	1557		
<b>Tabling of Reports</b>		<b>Members' Statements</b>	
Judicial Compensation Committee		Deputy Prime Minister—Resignation Tweed	1568
Vodrey	1558		

May Day Barrett	1568	Home Care Services Santos	1569
RCMP Rescue–Emerson Area Penner	1568	<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
Lyme Disease Sale	1569	Education and Training Health	1570 1591