



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

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MCCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	PC
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, August 31, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Joseph Arthurs, Victor Barber, Len Lintick, all praying for the passing of An Act to incorporate Dauphin General Hospital Foundation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 22, The Liquor Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Doer: I would like to speak to it briefly under Rule No. 85, Mr. Speaker, pas de problem. Briefly, the Bill that we are proposing under Rule 85, for the information of the House and the public of Manitoba, will allow The Liquor Act to be amended to provide provisions that are not contained in federal legislation, contrary to the requests of many Attorneys-General in past years, to prohibit knives being carried in licensed beverage rooms in the Province of Manitoba.

This legislation has been requested by the Canadian Police Association, indeed, the police officers and Chief of Police in the City of Winnipeg. It obviously will not solve all the problems of crime that we are all in this House concerned about, but the police feel it is just an added improvement to the laws and regulations in terms of some of the spontaneous and unfortunate violence that takes place from time to time in and around the licensed premises of our province.

So we thought this would be helpful to our police and helpful to our citizens, and we believe it is good law and a useful improvement in terms of The Liquor Control Act of this province. I would so recommend it to this House. Thank you.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I have a statement I would like to make to all Honourable Members. Due to the fact that last evening we had this traditional baseball game between all Honourable Members and the members of the press media, there seems to be a little misconception as to who won. As I was the impartial umpire, I would just simply like to state to all Honourable Members that the final score was: News Media, 16; Honourable Members, 15.

Order, please; order, please. This is not a debatable question. The ruling of the Chair may not be challenged on this issue.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Foster Care Telephone Survey

* (1335)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I can only say that it was obvious because the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) and I were not playing last night that those results were as they were because they certainly were not that way when we were playing, Mr. Premier. I am sorry, Mr. Premier, I was given inaccurate information. Even with your pitching, we did not win. Obviously it was my lack of presence that did it. I am sorry about that, Mr. Speaker.

Members of this side of the House were relieved in learning yesterday that the Foster Parents Association and the Government had come to a Memorandum of Understanding with regard to funding for the foster parents of this province. While I appreciate this progress and comment positively on it, I think that it is important to understand that events of this past weekend have underscored the concerns that I have been raising with regard to disclosure of confidential information.

Yesterday, in reply to my question or the question of my colleague, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) said: "Manitobans' privacy was something that should be regarded as sacred and something that should always be safeguarded." Can the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) tell this House today, other than the names, addresses and telephone numbers of foster parents, was the polling firm provided with any additional information about the foster parents and their families?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would just begin by saying that the Leader of the Opposition's (Mrs. Carstairs) inaccurate information about my presence or absence at the baseball game last evening is consistent with her lack of information in asking questions in this House.

I might say that the question of the information provided to the firm that was doing the telephone survey on behalf of the Government is one that I am pleased that she raised here today because I want to assure her, all Members of this Chamber and all the citizens of Manitoba, that no information was provided to the telephone survey firm beyond the name, address and phone number. I have checked it in every way possible. That information was not available to anyone surrounding this decision to obtain information from the foster parents themselves, and it could not have been provided to the firm that did the telephone survey.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), can the First Minister give any reason why foster parents were asked

questions in such a manner that the questioner, the pollster, appeared to have information with regard to their being on welfare and appeared to know the number of children presently in their care?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, given that the allegations were made and repeated both personally to me and through the media, I have examined every possible answer to that question. I can only speculate, but I can say that in the past I have been phoned by people who had been phoned by polling firms and they gave me their assumption of what the questions were in the polling. Hearing from two or three different people, I have frequently gotten two or three different views of what was being asked, of what the slant was, of what the bias was and all of those things.

* (1340)

I can only say that I have gone through an exercise, and the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) may well have done so, in attending communication seminars in which you are asked, as an example, to pass along a one short sentence message to an individual verbally, and have that go through three or four different people, and then have the message at the end compared with the message at the beginning, and it is entirely different. That is because people orally or verbally, passing along messages, oftentimes do not pass them along in the manner in which they are delivered, and they may have changed along the way by virtue of what they have imputed in the slant of the questions.

I can tell you that the information sought—firstly, it was very up front. It was identified, unlike many forms of polling, that this was being done on behalf of the Government of Manitoba, and the questions were very specific and they had to do with the knowledge of the issues in dispute, the knowledge of the Government offer, the support for the Foster Parents Association and the availability of homes, should there be the unfortunate prospect of a moratorium, nothing beyond that. The questions were very specific, and I know the reason we wanted to have it done professionally was: (a) to have it done immediately; and (b) to have it done accurately, and I am assured of that.

Mrs. Carstairs: In light of the answer that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) gave yesterday, will the First Minister today release the name of the polling company, the cost of the polling, and would he also provide us, something which he did not agree to do yesterday, with a list of the questions that were asked?

Mr. Filmon: The surveying was done by Western Opinion Research, the cost was \$1,000, and the nature of the questions I have provided in summary to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) today.

Mrs. Carstairs: This is such a serious matter that I think that it is absolutely imperative that the air be cleared in this province as to what kinds of questions were asked to the foster parents. Will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) tell us why he will not release the questions that were posed to the foster parents?

Mr. Filmon: There are a number of things, of course, that one should consider. One is, firstly, we have arrived

at an agreement with the Foster Parents Association of Manitoba, one which was too long in coming, one which perhaps should not have gone to the stage that it did of the irritation between the Foster Parents Association and the Government before the settlement was made. Perhaps it should not have attracted the threat of a moratorium in order to arrive at that agreement, but it is an historic agreement, and it is very, very progressive, the most progressive agreement that has been arrived at by foster parents in this country. We are very proud of that. We believe that it was very important for us in order to go into the final stages of negotiation, in which I personally became involved, that we have all information at our disposal before we agreed to certain things.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) knows that we had to have available to us, for instance, the opinion of the foster parents as to the effectiveness of the association or at least the status of the association, because we are being asked to recognize them as the sole voice on behalf of foster parents, certain other information with respect to their knowledge of what offers had been made.

All of this was important for us to arrive at this agreement, and I am delighted we arrived at this agreement. I do not think it is productive for us to go into rehashing whether or not certain questions should have been asked, whether or not we should have done other things. The reality is we have arrived at an historic agreement, one of which we are very proud, and one that the foster parents are happy with.

Mrs. Carstairs: The privacy of Manitobans is very important. His own Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) has agreed to that. Will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) agree to show the list of questions to the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) and myself so that we can have a public statement indicating that there was nothing in those questions that should have frightened the foster parents, many of whom have told Members of my caucus that they were indeed frightened?

Mr. Filmon: I regret that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) wants to try and politically colour the kinds of questioning that was made and make this a political issue, because in fact it is not. I can assure her that there was nothing in the questions, and I have since looked at them again myself, that would in any way frighten or intimidate the individuals who were being questioned. I am giving her that complete assurance that it was to seek information that was relevant to the discussions that resulted, I might say, in an agreement that I believe she should support because I know it is a good agreement for foster parents. It is a good agreement for the Province of Manitoba.

* (1345)

CSIS Agreement Confidentiality Information

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a final question to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

For over a week now, I have been urging the Attorney-General to amend the CSIS agreement in order that Manitobans can be protected. We are not being protected in this House today by a Premier who will not divulge clear information. Will the Attorney-General now agree to rescind the agreement with CSIS in order for an independent study to be conducted so that the personal records of Manitobans can be better protected than his Government has been prepared to protect them?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): In attempting to make her case on the issue of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Province of Manitoba and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has referred to the Alberta Memorandum of Understanding between Alberta and CSIS. I would remind the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that nowhere in the agreement between Alberta and CSIS is there any reference to the Attorney-General's Department being involved in the vetting of requests. That is in the Manitoba Agreement. Also, there is no obligation in the Alberta agreement on the part of CSIS to maintain records, as there is in Section 6 of the agreement with Manitoba.

I might also remind the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) about the provisions contained in The Freedom of Information Act of Manitoba and remind her also of what the New Democratic Party House Leader in Alberta had to say. She said that the situation in Alberta screams the need for access to information legislation, which is precisely the kind of legislation we have here in Manitoba to protect the rights of Manitobans.

Foster Care Telephone Survey

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Indeed we were very pleased at the tentative resolution of the foster parents issue yesterday. I think all Manitobans are pleased about that.

My question concerns the long-term style and relationship of the Government dealing with the whole child welfare community, a very important community, we know, in this province. My question is to the First Minister: Why was the Department of Community Services, in obtaining the names from the child welfare agencies, only informing those agencies that they wanted the names to send out a letter, and why were these agencies not informed that indeed those names, addresses and phone numbers would be used for a survey?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): They were informed that these names were required in order to provide for contingency plans and that the initial objective was to write to them. But the letter, which has been made public, asked for some feedback, for some response. I believe only two out of 1,600 people who received the letter responded to the Minister. So the further step

was taken of doing the direct telephone survey to obtain the information which we felt was vital to our ability to negotiate a successful agreement. We negotiated a successful agreement, and we believe that indicates that we were responsible and that we did everything possible to ensure that we were armed with the proper information in going into the final stages of discussion and negotiation with foster parents.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the agencies themselves feel that their relationship with the foster parents, in handing these names to the Government, has been jeopardized by the fact that this was not used for the purpose the department stated but was rather used further to conduct a survey with the perceived attempt to divide the Foster Parents Association from the foster parents. Is that an acceptable standard of receiving information from our very vital child welfare agencies?

Mr. Filmon: The perceptions that are improperly placed on this are being improperly placed by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer).

Our purpose was to ensure that we had all the relevant information necessary to face the prospect of negotiations breaking down and the moratorium taking place, which none of us wanted to have happen. We avoided that. We avoided it by face-to-face discussions and negotiations at which we put on the table our desire to work cooperatively with the foster parents and with the Manitoba Foster Parents Association Inc.

* (1350)

Part of that agreement, part of that historic agreement is the acknowledgement that we recognize them as the spokespersons, the representatives for the foster parents of Manitoba. That does not imply in any way, shape or form that we do not recognize them, that we do not acknowledge the contribution they make or the fact that they have a valuable role to play. We do not want to have an adverse relationship or an adversarial relationship with either the foster parents or any of the child welfare agencies in Manitoba. We have face-to-face worked that out with the Manitoba Foster Parents. If there is any problem with the community-based agencies, the social service agencies, the child welfare agencies, we will ensure that there is no misunderstanding that is being perpetrated by anybody on that side of the House to prevent us from having a good, positive relationship with those agencies.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Child Welfare Agencies Amalgamation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, your credibility and the Government's credibility has been stretched by obtaining information for a name, address, phone-numbered letter and, on the other hand, using it for a survey, information that was not related at any point to the agencies until they found out.

My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) in terms of the credibility of this Government in terms of

the child welfare agencies. In this House, he gave an unequivocal no to any amalgamation of the child welfare agencies of the City of Winnipeg. Outside of this House with the press, he started giving, maybe in the future we will amalgamate these agencies. Is the answer we received, the unequivocal answer to amalgamation of no in the House, the answer on the public record in terms of the child welfare agencies of this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): It is the credibility of the Leader of the N.D. Party (Mr. Doer) that is a problem. He did not ask whether we were going to do it at all. He asked were there any plans, and I said no because there are no plans for us to amalgamate those agencies. That is the case and that was the case in terms of the answer that was given by the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson).

We are looking for ways, of course, to improve many of the problems that continue to exist, problems that all Members in this House are aware of with respect to the delivery of child welfare in this province. If we can improve it, if we can make it more efficient, more effective, better able to serve the needs of the children of this province, we will. We will, Mr. Speaker, and that is our objective.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, with a final question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

I do not believe the children's needs are better served with comments that, "Filmon fuzzy on fate of Child and Family Services." We would like to know that the Government is not going to proceed with any reamalgamation of the Child and Family Services, and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) communicate that to all the child welfare agencies of this province so they can get on with the business of providing decent service in this province, as they have been required to do so.

Mr. Filmon: The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) forgets so quickly. I can recall over and over and over again his colleagues, when they were in Government, chastising the media for putting things in print that were not factual. I know that there are members of the media who can confirm that. In making my comments last Friday, or Monday it may have been, to the particular reporter, I said to him under no circumstances should it be suggested that we have any plans, any intention of doing this amalgamation. The Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) did not put that forward but, because she did not rule it out, they took the reverse role and the reverse angle on the story. So I said make sure that you do not put forward the fact that we are looking at amalgamation of these agencies in Winnipeg in the story.

So what happens? The headline put on because we could not say that we did have specific plans, merely that I gave the answer that I had given to him that we are looking for every way possible to improve the service, to improve the delivery of the services to children and because you said, "Well, what are your plans?" I said we do not have specific plans now. The headline says, Filmon fuzzy on plans for child welfare agency. Now is that my fault or is that an example of what journalism does to what politicians say?

Sewers Hazardous Waste Dumping

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

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery).

Last week, the citizens of Manitoba saw the spectacle of flying manhole covers which has been traced to the dumping of gasoline into Winnipeg's sewer system. Capping only one dump receptacle will not solve the problem. Four other sites remain where noxious and possibly dangerous substances may be dumped into the sewer system. Degreasers, solvents, farm fuels, industrial wastes and other unidentified substances go into these manholes.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Environment assure the safety of the people and live up to his responsibilities as the provincial chief environment officer by designating where the dump sites should be, what they should be receiving and how they will be regulated?

* (1355)

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): There is, of course, the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation that is there to facilitate the disposing of hazardous waste. Our department is working with the city officials to ensure that these other ones are manned or closed down. But let us keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that there are many, many ways that if somebody is determined to dispose of hazardous material, there are many manholes and many efforts that they can do it.

We want to ensure that this does not happen. That is why we have the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. Right now, they do not have disposal sites but they have methods of helping people to dispose of it. Some material goes to Ontario. There is also the exchange where recyclers can handle it. Bad gas should go back to the oil companies, whoever handled it. They look after it and refine it so that it is not a hazard.

But as far as these other disposal areas, our staff is working responsibly with the City of Winnipeg. The sewer system is really the domain of the City of Winnipeg, and we are working with them to ensure as best as we can that this does not happen.

Mrs. Charles: Can this Minister tell me why, on Monday, when he said that he was responsible for the environment and that he was responsible for the City of Winnipeg sewer system, why he still allows uncontrolled manholes to be out in the boondocks of Winnipeg and to be allowed to have any dumping occurring there? Is he the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery), or is he just sitting there talking words? - (Interjection)-

Mr. Connery: Well, there are quite a few manholes out there. Mr. Speaker, March 31, the City of Winnipeg came under The Environment Act but at no time did

I say the sewer system was the responsibility of our department. But if there is environmental concern, then we get involved with the City of Winnipeg.

We can make a lot of irrational and very quick decisions. That would not be in the best interests of the City of Winnipeg. Our officials are communicating with them. We do not want to have indiscriminate dumping of hazardous goods anywhere. There is a way to do it and, if they need help, the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation is there to facilitate them.

Mr. Speaker, there are severe fines for those who get caught doing these things under The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act. There are fines up to \$50,000 and/or six months in jail. We would be delighted to catch the person who put this material into that unmanned hole. We are working with the City of Winnipeg to ensure that it does not happen again.

Mrs. Charles: Will this Minister tell me how he is going to catch these people who are disregarding the law if he does not regulate or have any way of monitoring the disposal of these chemicals?

Mr. Connery: Under The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act, there are very severe regulations in place to regulate and control the handling and the storage or whatever of dangerous goods. The regulations are there. If people choose to break them, that is a concern.

I can tell you that, right now, the City of Winnipeg Police are investigating the possibility of trying to find out who put that whatever substance into the manhole. We think it was a petrol-based substance because it exploded. The City of Winnipeg is pursuing that very rigorously and hopefully will catch that person.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Selkirk, with a final supplementary.

* (1400)

Mrs. Charles: To a new question, Mr. Speaker. I would be very pleased to discuss this matter with the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) because he does not seem to understand. Out in the outskirts of the City of Winnipeg are designated disposal sites for sewage. Going into those designated sites is definitely oil and who knows what, definitely gasoline because of the explosion we had last week.

My question to the Minister is: Because this is not a matter that we can slough off any more, not one more day, will he bring to this House immediately a procedure where these manhole covers will be locked and there will be designated sites which can be monitored so that we can ensure the safety of the citizens of Manitoba and the citizens of Winnipeg?

Mr. Connery: It would be easy to lock the three or four of those unmanned disposal units for septic-tank trucks. That would be the easiest thing we could do. You would have to secure every manhole cover in the City of Winnipeg. I think there are something like 100,000 catch basins in the City of Winnipeg. These

would have to be secured. In the middle of the night, a truck could go down any deserted street where there is a catch basin and dump their product into it. So just locking up those three or four is not the solution. The solution is to ensure that people know the hazards, the penalties, and that our people are trying to catch anybody who is doing it.

At the same time, you have to preclude anybody from just dumping anywhere in the province. So by encouraging people to use the Management Corporation for the flow-ways, we will make sure that it is disposed in a safe and proper way. If it is not able to be disposed, as in the case of PCBs, we have to ensure that they are stored safely, and we will do that.

Mrs. Charles: A supplementary to the same Minister, does this Minister know that at both the north end sewage treatment plant and the south end sewage treatment plant are receptacles that sewage and other wastes can be disposed of? Does the Minister not believe in the people enough to think, if they had these four regulated sites where disposal companies could use them, people might be more prone to use them, or is he just going to continue with making excuses for his department with which he has to take responsibility when it comes to the safety of Manitobans?

Mr. Connery: I can assure the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) that we take the safety of Manitoba citizens and Winnipeg citizens very, very seriously. Would that Member want a load of gas deposited at that site with the danger of a huge fire? Is that the kind of responsibility the Member for Selkirk takes? Maybe she does, but we do not take that responsibility in that way.

We have the corporation established to make sure that hazardous waste is disposed of properly or it is stored properly until we have determined a method of disposal. Those are there for their use. Some people want to be lazy and do not want to drive to those sites or maybe do not want to pay the cost of it. That is where we have a problem. That is why the penalties are there and that is why the penalties are so severe, that people, once they are caught if you get caught, others will not take that chance.

Mrs. Charles: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, this Minister does not understand the problem. Will the Minister indicate what he is going to do immediately to assure the safety of the Red River for the citizens of Selkirk who at times have to have their drinking water from that source, for the citizens along the river who use it for recreation, for the farmers and for the consumers who use the water for irrigation? Will this Minister indicate how he is going to assure the safety of the river, given that now there is incomplete manner of monitoring the substances in that river and given that there is an incomplete manner of monitoring of how the substances are dumped into that river?

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) has such a short memory. We are in Interim Supply and the Member

asked that very same question. In Interim Supply, we had an opportunity to go into some very long debate over the problems that the City of Winnipeg has and the water quality of the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers. I explained to her that the City of Winnipeg has a mammoth problem in sewage disposal, that it would cost over \$100 million to correct the Winnipeg—

Mrs. Charles: Monitor it.

Mr. Connery: Now the Member says monitor it. I told her during Interim Supply that the river is monitored by three levels of Government. The federal Government monitors it, the provincial Government monitors it, and the City of Winnipeg monitors it so the water is being monitored. I can tell you it is not good. It is not good for swimming. It is not good for doing very much in because of the quality. We recognize the quality is bad, but we are working with the City of Winnipeg, and the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) should know that this problem has been ongoing for many years. It will take many years to clean up the sewage problems that we have.

Sewers Hazardous Waste Dumping

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Selkirk, with a final supplementary.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): My final supplementary is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). Earlier this week, we asked the First Minister to help another Minister who was unable to look after her department. Will this Minister now step into the Department of the Environment and help them understand the problem and deal with it immediately?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I thank the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) for the tremendous confidence that she is showing in me, Mr. Speaker. I know that she believes that I could help in solving all of the problems of Manitoba and I agree that I can. The important thing is that we have Government departments that have expert staff, that have people who are trained in their areas of expertise. In the area of environment, we have scientists, we have laboratory technologists, we have engineers, we have people who know very well how to address the problems that are being faced with our environment and to propose solutions. We have people who inspect, we have people who regulate. We have people who do all these things, and those things have not changed with a new Government.

What we are doing is strengthening from a policy position our ability to address those issues that were being left on the back burner. I know that her predecessor, the former Member for Selkirk, left the problems of the Red River and the pollution on the back burner and just promised over and over again that, yes, they would do something. This Government is committed to solving the problems of the environment.

Our Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) has been demonstrating—he has been taking a greater

personal interest in the environmental pollution problems of this province than any other former Minister. He has been going out personally to the sites of pollutions. He has called today, with the support of the federal Minister of Environment, a national meeting to be held next week of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers to look at the serious problems that are being faced in the environment right across this country. He will have my utmost support. He will have my utmost confidence and I can assure the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) that, with his efforts and the efforts of his department, we will solve the problems that we are looking at.

* (1410)

Free Trade Agreement Hydro Legal Opinion

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst).

I have to think that Manitobans are becoming increasingly sceptical about this Government's ability to come to grips with the real problems that face Manitobans when it comes to energy because of the Free Trade Agreement.

Yesterday, in response to the tabling of an opinion which was provided to Manitoba Hydro which indicated very clearly that Manitoba's sovereignty, when it comes to the pricing of both export and internal pricing of Manitoba Hydro, is in jeopardy. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) responded by scoffing at those suggestions despite the mounting evidence, both legal and informational, from outside groups that there is in fact any danger. He indicated that he had legal opinion on this issue.

I would ask the Minister, in face of the tabling of information by Members on this side, information that comes to him from every source indicating there is great danger, will he table the opinions that he has which would satisfy Manitobans that there is no danger?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has raised the same issue that his Leader raised yesterday unsuccessfully, and that was the suggestion or the allegation that Manitoba Hydro could not sell energy to the United States at a rate that was negotiated with their American customers that was different from the rate that was charged in Canada or in Manitoba. The fact of the matter is that all of the opinions that we have say that they are free to do so, that they are free to charge whatever the market will bear and that, despite the outdated information which they have from their research director, evidence is absolutely there that we can sell our energy for whatever the market will bear in the United States and that we are not in any way inhibited from doing so by the Free Trade Agreement.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Storie: I believe that Manitobans are seriously coming to doubt the credibility of this First Minister.

Mr. Speaker: With a question.

Mr. Storie: My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

The comments made by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) yesterday, that Manitoba could direct the Government, that Cabinet could direct Manitoba Hydro to export to the United States on the basis of some 50 percent above provincial price is clearly contradicted by the legal evidence provided to Manitoba Hydro, is clearly contradicted by the legal opinion that was tabled by my Leader, is clearly contradicted by every legal interpretation of the agreement. Will the First Minister now table any of the opinions, any of the studies that he has which would contradict this solid legal opinion, an opinion which had been provided from many sources? Will he quit giving assurances? Will he act in the interests of Manitoba and table the opinion, if there is such an opinion?

Mr. Filmon: The very opinion to which he refers was one that indicated that nothing within the Free Trade Agreement prevented Manitoba Hydro from selling energy in the United States at a rate that was greater than the rate being charged in Manitoba or to customers elsewhere in Canada.

There was a question involved as to the commercial relationship, whether or not the fact that these contracts would be commercially negotiated on a free-market basis could be overridden by the fact that technically Cabinet approved export agreements to the United States, the prices in export agreements. That opinion has since been clarified to indicate that, in fact, the mere fact that Cabinet has to approve those agreements does not constitute an unwarranted interference or price fixing on behalf of the Government in doing so. As long as they were freely entered into by a negotiated process, they can continue to be sold for whatever the market will bear, even despite the fact that they are at greater prices than energy is being sold for in Manitoba or elsewhere in the country.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), with a question.

Mr. Storie: The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) misinterprets the legal interpretation that has been provided for him. Clearly, he is in error. The question, Mr. Speaker, is—

Mr. Speaker: Will the Honourable Member kindly put his question?

Mr. Storie: —whether any direction will be given by this Government? It is clear this Government—

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Storie: —will not give direction under any circumstances.

Free Trade Agreement Impact Natural Gas

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

Manitobans are net importers of approximately 70 percent of their energy requirement. Could the Minister indicate whether he has asked the department, any staff in his department, to determine what the cost of free trade might be to Manitoba users of natural gas where there are some 200,000 in the province? Could he indicate whether he has asked the department to do such studies, whether such studies have been undertaken and, if such studies had been undertaken or will be undertaken, will they be tabled in this House?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): I am sorry, I missed the question. He started off asking a question on hydro and ended up on natural gas. If he would repeat the question, I will try to answer it.

Mr. Storie: I will repeat the question for the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Clearly, he does not take the concerns about energy needs of Manitobans as seriously as I do.

Mr. Speaker: The question.

Mr. Storie: The question is, quite simply: Has this Minister instructed staff at any time to review the cost to Manitobans in terms of the natural gas consumption in the province of the Free Trade Agreement? Has he instructed staff to do that and, if he has, will he table any reports, studies that he has done on that question?

Mr. Neufeld: The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) well knows that gas prices are negotiated by the distributing company with Interprovincial Pipelines. The cost of the gas will not be known to Manitobans until that contract has been negotiated. When that has happened, this House will be so advised.

Mr. Storie: The Minister has misinterpreted the question. The question was: Has the Minister or any of his staff undertaken to study the question of the impact of the Free Trade Agreement on the cost of natural gas consumers in Manitoba? It is quite simple to understand that, if our natural gas is exported to the United States in large measure, our reserves are depleted and the cost is going to increase. What is going to be the additional cost? Is it the \$55 billion that his departmental report states or is it higher?

Mr. Neufeld: The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) obviously believes that, if the Free Trade Agreement is put into effect, natural gas will be of less supply, there will be a lesser supply of natural gas for Manitobans. It is not our belief that there will be a lesser supply, and it is not our belief that the cost of gas to Manitobans will be in any way increased. The Member believes that there will not be sufficient reserves to cover the needs of Manitobans and other Canadians. It is our belief that there will be and that the price will not be adversely affected.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): I would ask leave of this House to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Mandrake: August 27, 1988 -(Interjection)- he never learns Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), with his non-political statement.

Mr. Mandrake: In 1988, August 27, the Portage Trail Soccer Team, girls aged 16 and under, won the Manitoba championship in their division.- (Interjection)- He thinks it is funny.

We on this side of the House wish Trisha Winton and her teammates all the best in their forthcoming regional playoff against Saskatchewan on September 10, 1988. I am positive they will be victorious. To Trisha and her teammates, all the best. We in Manitoba are very proud of you. To the coaches, Kurt Driedger, Dave Thompson, keep up the good work! Thank you for your time and effort. It is volunteers such as yourselves who make our communities strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1420)

HANSARD CORRECTION

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): - (Interjection)- Quit bugging me.

On page 882 in Hansard, I wish to offer a correction to Hansard. In my discussions that night, I made reference to the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans) and, in parentheses after that, they have Mr. McCrae down and I wish to have the record corrected. I do not want Mr. McCrae to be known as the Member for Brandon East.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to continue to consider and report of Bill No. 7, Interim Supply.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to continue to consider and report of Bill No. 7, Interim Appropriation Act, 1988; Loide 1988 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, for third reading.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

INTERIM SUPPLY

THIRD READING

BILL NO. 7—THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT

Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko: The Committee of the Whole will come to order, please. The business before this committee is detailed examination of Bill No. 7, The Interim Appropriation Act.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I believe the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) had asked some questions right at the end of the day yesterday, and I just want to respond to those questions.

One of the questions I believe he asked was, for those applications in Thompson that did not receive the full amount of funding, whether they could reapply through the Community Places Program for another phase of their project. I have indicated that the only projects that are not eligible under the new guidelines are those that have received \$125,000 to date from the Community Places Program. There were two such that were denied approval last time as a result of that, because we felt it was only fair that all projects in the Province of Manitoba be given some consideration, all worthy projects. Those that had already received \$125,000 should maybe wait a while until other worthy projects in the province receive some funding.

If the projects in Thompson have not received a total of \$125,000 from the Community Places Program, they can certainly reapply under a second phase of the program and receive consideration. I do not know if that was all the . . .

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I thank the Minister for the response on that.

Another concern I had, which I did not have time to raise yesterday was, in the June announcement, there was an announcement that all projects would have to be fully under way within six months of receiving the grant. I have had some experience from Thompson in seeing that sometimes that is not possible.

I will use the example, for example, of the Thompson Rotary Club which has received funding for the drop-in centre portion of an overall complex from the Community Places Program that is not under way yet. Now this is not a problem, as I understand it, because they previously had received it. It was not a part of the June in-take, and they have received assurances that they would not be affected.

I will give the Minister another example, and that is the Juniper Centre in Thompson. They applied under the program. They received, I believe, \$75,000; that was changed to \$56,000.00. The problem they have is they received notice of the actual amount they were to receive in June and they are looking at additional funding. They are putting together various possible sources of funding so that they can proceed with the

project. So it may be very unlikely that they will be able to start up. Then they have a double problem because, in the North, we have such a short construction season that the window for them to be able to start the construction—and once again the qualification is that it is fully under way—is actually very short. If you take June and the normal construction season running probably no later than September, you are talking about maybe two or three months.

My question to the Minister is whether she would consider either some general flexibility in regard to those guidelines because there may be similar problems in southern areas, or at least if she would consider having some additional allowance for the particular circumstances in the North. I do not overexaggerate the situation, but the construction season is so short that I am concerned that there may be other community groups that will receive funding and then find that they cannot pursue it. I would appreciate if the Minister could look into that particular concern.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I can understand where the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is coming when he indicates that there is a short construction season in northern Manitoba and, in some instances, some projects cannot get under way maybe within the six-month period, if they are trying to raise extra revenues.

I want to indicate that, with our program under review, those are going to be the guidelines that are going to be set up and we have implemented them already. We want applicants to be fully aware, when they are applying for funding through the Community Places Program, that they do have to get their projects under way within a six-month period, or they should be waiting until they have money in place or community support and applying so that, when they do get approval, they will be able to start within six months.

I know that there has been a transition and a changeover from that, and of course we are going to look individually, and we are certainly not going to hamper any one application. But if it should so happen that the centre he was talking about cannot get their project under way for the next year—so we do not want to tie that money up, sitting there, waiting for that project in Thompson to get under way. I would appreciate if they would come back and apply when they could get started within six months.

* (1430)

Of course, we have already felt that it was a worthwhile project and a worthy project and we would look at it at our next round of approvals under the program. But we want to make sure that the money that is there to be used this year is going to be used and the communities that have applied have their funding in place and are ready to go so that money can be used in a proper way to benefit the most communities as quickly as possible.

Mr. Ashton: Just one final comment, I want to ask you, in the specific case of people who had applied initially under the original criteria which is one of my particular concerns here, if there could not be some

allowance in a transition period. I realize, if the Minister is going to change the policy, it becomes fairer if people are aware in advance. The problem with the Juniper Centre, and it may be a problem with others, is that they were under the impression that they would receive the funding and then be able to access it when they had additional funding in place and they were not aware of the six-month guidelines. I am wondering if she could perhaps work out some interim arrangement with the Juniper Centre and other groups who would take allowance of that circumstance.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to get the Juniper Centre to put something in writing to me and I will have my department look at it. Maybe they could indicate in writing when they think they could possibly get started and get things under way or what time period there is going to be, what the problems are, and we will take a look at it from the department.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): I wondered how many more times the Honourable Member for Thompson was going to say "one final comment." At any rate, I just have a couple of questions for the -(Interjection)- you do not keep track, oh, well maybe three.

My question, Mr. Chairman, is about the International Baccalaureate Program which a lot of people in the House know is a recognized comprehensive, cohesive program for academically motivated talented students. In the I.B. Handbook or in the International Baccalaureate Handbook, the statement indicates that a diploma is recognized by universities throughout the world, not necessarily true for Manitoba. I would like to know from the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) what recognition the various universities in Manitoba give to students who have a full I.B. diploma and for those students who have International Baccalaureate recognition in various subjects, if I may.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): The International Baccalaureate Program certainly is an interesting and important program especially in the City of Winnipeg. It is not being offered anywhere else in the province because of the nature of the program and because of the concentration of population.

However, the universities in Manitoba at the present time do not recognize the Baccalaureate Program per se as a specialized program and do not give special recognition to it beyond the Grade XII. However, the Department of Education at the present time has put the program into a pilot stage. It has been there for some time and we have to review whether or not we are going to be able to expand the program or allow it to operate in other parts of the province.

As you know, it is a franchise type of program where the school divisions have bought the franchise to be able to offer it, but that poses a problem for the rest of the province in that students in other parts of the province cannot access the program. So what our objective is, I think, is to be able to somehow provide enhanced programs in schools in the province for students who can access it from other parts of the province.

In terms of the recognition, that is another matter and one that we have to start dealing with in terms of trying to get the universities in the province to give some recognition to the fact that students have invested a lot of hard learning and time into an advanced learning situation, but that cannot be addressed overnight. It is going to take a while because we do have other programs on stream. For example, the Advanced Placement Program is another one which has to be addressed as well.

So the Member raises a good point, a point whereby we have to start recognizing that there are students in our society who have advanced talents, who have specialized skills and learning abilities that should be taken note of, and we should do as much as we can to enhance that kind of learning.

Mrs. Yeo: I cannot tell you from my knowledge exactly how long the I.B. program has been around, but it seems to me it is the early 1980s. It has been in the pilot status for some length of time.

When the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) says that we cannot do it overnight, I am certainly appreciative of that, but I wonder just how long Manitoba Education is going to leave it in the pilot status and what consideration they are giving to perhaps lifting that particular status, because it seems to me to be somewhat unfair to the students in other divisions that do not offer an I.B. Program and certainly to our rural students who have some difficulty in accessing the program.

Mr. Derkach: The program has been around since 1981. As a matter of fact, it is offered at several locations around the city: at Kelvin High School, Miles Macdonell Collegiate, Silver Heights Collegiate and Westbrook Collegiate. I think it started there in 1987.

As the Member knows, we are awaiting the High School Review Report at the present time, and I think it would be premature to take some action at this time in terms of either trying to expand this type of program to other high schools, either in the city or in the province, without first considering what the High School Review has to say with regard to programming in the province. So when we do the review, when we take a very close look and start tearing apart the report of the High School Review, I think that is the time that we will be able to address better the whole issue of programs like the Advanced Placement or the International Baccalaureate Program.

I can assure the Member that we are not going to wait another five or six years before we take any action on it. As a matter of fact, that is one of the very important priorities.

Mrs. Yeo: One final question I think, Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell me if there is any possibility of altering Section 41.5 in The Public Schools Act to allow for qualification and access to the program by non-resident students without having them pay the penalty, so to speak?

Mr. Derkach: I cannot give you the specific details of that question at the present time because I do not

really know the legalities of that. I would have to refer that to the department and get a legal opinion on that, because you know that the program itself is purchased from outside of Canada and therefore there would be some legal aspects to doing the very kind of thing that the Member is indicating. I certainly can research that and get back to the Member with the answer.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Chairman, I have a very short question to, I suspect, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

My questions actually relate to free trade and are very specific. I was wondering if you would mind getting in either somebody responsible for Agriculture or somebody responsible for Industry, Trade and Technology to answer these questions, or do you want to try yourself?

The basis of the question starts with: Have you put any money aside to help Manitoba firms react to free trade? Whether it be positive or negative, undoubtedly, it is going to be passed today. So it seems to me that a responsible Government would put themselves in a position of saying, okay, we have got this massive new legislation. Let us put some programs together to either make the best of it or let us put some programs in place to help those people who are going to be hurt a little bit by it and help them respond more accurately. So I am not sure how you want to deal with that.

* (1440)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Chairman, let us, for the record, again lay a fact out that has been done so many times in the past. My understanding is that the regular adjustment that takes place across all industry in this nation in a given year was roughly in the area of one-quarter, approaching one-quarter of our work force. As a nation, therefore, if our total work force is in the area of 10 million to 12 million people, roughly 2.5 million of them change positions in a year. To me, that is massive dislocation.

What is expected under the general conception of free trade right at this point in time is something in the magnitude of 10 percent of that. You bring that down to the Manitoba context and, given that we have employed in Manitoba today roughly 500,000 people and if we assume that roughly 80,000 to 100,000 of them change positions in the space of a year, and therefore 10 percent of that number are ultimately going to be affected through free trade, we are talking roughly about 8,000 to 10,000 people.

It is well known that the effects of free trade in the first instance will not be great. Secondly, many of the provisions are going to take a whole five years for the greatest impact to be felt. So once you begin to put those criteria at the 10,000 people, all of a sudden, we are talking about a number in the area of possibly 500 to 1,000 people a year.

Within the existing programming of the Industry, Trade and Tourism Department of Government, most of the programs are directed toward the support of all growing businesses, businesses that are going to be doing

activities in a whole host of areas. As the Member will realize once he moves into detailed Estimates with the Minister, there is in my mind, indeed the Government's mind, sufficient resources available to deal with normal adjustment, readjustment and of course the impact of free trade.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Chairman, the spread of the net becomes wider, based on the response, and I would like some clarification in sort of rapid fire.

Are the 500 to 1,000 jobs on an annual basis that are going to be brought in, are they in addition to the existing growth in employment that is documented in various programs?

Mr. Manness: I will let the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) specifically reply, but let me again say for the record I did not say there were going to be 500 or 1,000 jobs that were impacted. I am saying, if you go through the theoretical approach, as has been done in many cases, and you have factored out some share of the Canadian market to Manitoba, in theory, that is what you might come down to, but that is purely a theoretical number.

With respect to your detailed question, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, I am sure, would respond to it.

Mr. Angus: Perhaps, just for the benefit of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), I will just revamp or rephrase the question. It was in relation to the fact that undoubtedly free trade is going to be passed today in the House of Commons.

Have we earmarked any money or any program to work with the Free Trade Agreement, both positively and negatively. With respect, I do not need to hear for the 43rd millionth time how good it is going to be. What I am looking for is there are going to be companies that want to take advantage of the Free Trade Agreement. They want to learn how to handle the paperwork. They want to export their products to the United States. Have we put programs in place? That is the first question.

The second one, there are going to be people who are going to be unfortunately not as able to compete as others. Are there programs in place for them?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The short answer to the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) is yes. There are two areas, the first area, those who wish to partake of the advantages of free trade. Our sectoral divisions within the Department of Industry are well versed in the matters of free trade so that they are there on a regular basis in every sector of our economy, speaking with the people who are involved there, answering their questions, preparing them for the possibilities that will come to them under the Free Trade Agreement. On the other hand, there is a National Adjustment Committee, of which we are a member, dealing with the question of adjustment for those industries which will be impacted as a result of free trade. I do not think anyone has said that everyone will benefit and that

there will not be some impact and some need for adjustment.

We are working with the federal Government on the question of adjustment. Appropriate programs will be put into place once the impacts are known. We are looking at the possible impacts at this time with that adjustment committee. Once the actual impacts are evident, then we will, in conjunction with our colleagues in the federal Government, be implementing those kinds of programs to assist those who are impacted.

Mr. Angus: I thank the Minister for that response. I am not trying to be facetious. There must be some people in your department who have tried to make some predictions and are perhaps going to be trying to put programs in place before the impact hits. I raise that not expecting the Minister to identify for me those areas where they think that it might be a little soft. If I can counsel him, the businesses that find themselves in a non-competitive situation, in not being able to compete, they find that in return on investment of sales and, when the sales stop coming in because they are not able to compete, they have to start letting people off. It is oftentimes too late to react.

So what they need is assistance in flagging the troubled areas and the potential disasters and the zones. So I would hope that the Minister would take that under advisement and look at the prospects of free trade in both of those lights, the example of trying to help companies become more competitive and also help those people avoid it before it is too late to avoid it. - (Interjection)- You do not want to respond to that? No? Thank you.

A supplementary question on the same issue, it has been indicated, and a number of times, that there are going to be a lot of jobs created which are going to pay taxes, etc., etc. The Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) was hypothesizing that the increase in employment, theoretical employment, would be certain numbers. Do we have more specific numbers from the Minister's department as to the expected growth, when it might take place, whether or not it will be on top of natural trends over the last, say, 10 years of growth, things of that nature?

Mr. Ernst: I believe that information is available. I do not have it here with me today. During the Estimates process of the department over presumably the next few days, although that has been kind of submerged over the past few, but presumably I guess tomorrow will be the first day that we will be back into departmental Estimates. At that time, I should be able to provide the Honourable Member with some further information in that regard.

Mr. Angus: It is not unreasonable, I appreciate that. Like the Minister, I hope that we can get back into some constructive discussion on the Estimates with his department soon.

I would also like, if it would be possible for him to identify the programs, the types of programs that he is going to have and the money that is going to be invested in those programs because, while we both

agree that a certain amount of investment is required to make these things work and respond to them, the investment of the money and the return on that investment is something that I think should be the subject of a discussion at the committee level as to how best we are going to accomplish that task.

* (1450)

The second thing is that it concerns me when I read in the Finance Minister's (Mr. Manness) Budget statements that his own economists have suggested that growth is likely to be only in the 1 percent area of employment. I think that we should all be concerned about a minimum amount of growth faced with the impact or the potential impact of the hypothesized growth of employment as a result of the Free Trade Agreement.

I would hope that the Minister will be able to address himself to some of those issues when we do get in to discuss the free trade, and I will leave further discussions on those until we have some of the administration with us and we can more specifically get into them.

I have a subsequent question on free trade to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). It relates to agriculture and to some of the rural representatives that you have. They would be aware that there are various concerns about free trade that are going to have a negative impact immediately, and yet long-range, positive returns are not likely to be seen as quickly. I will give a specific that comes to mind without my file, but the canola producers immediately are going to be losing their subsidies in transportation to the West Coast, as you are aware, but the tariffs, for instance, for selling their product across the line are not removed for several years in totality. Is there any program or money put aside to help them bridge that gap that you are aware of?

Mr. Manness: No, there is no money being set aside. I must tell the Member opposite though that, if he were to do an analytical study and no doubt this has been done to some degree by the Canola Growers Association of Canada, it would recognize that, in the terms of lost revenue because of a removal of a transportation subsidy, the global impact on Manitoba canola producers would be very, very small.

The canola producers and growers that I am familiar with, and I have spoken to many of them throughout the province, of course were just delighted with the fact that we have such a superior product, one that is making an incredible impression on the U.S. market, and ultimately one that is going to be sought in much greater demand in due course. That process of acceptance and leading to greater demand can only increase the demand for the good, and therefore the overall revenue coming and flowing to Manitoba farms. In all honesty, canola growers end up, because of what has happened with respect to their product, very much on the positive side with respect to trade.

What would happen if we did not have this trade agreement? This is the greater concern is, in spite of having a transportation subsidy, if they sense that there

were some other problems with this product, they could again throw into place a non-tariff barrier, and that is in essence what this Free Trade Agreement was attempting to do was trying to remove these non-tariff barriers. That is ultimately where we could experience our greater concern. Although 90 percent of the product today is exported to Japan, we still know that our growth with respect to canola growing is in the U.S. market. We want diversity of demand, and I say that the canola growers who I have talked to are foursquare behind the Free Trade Agreement, particularly as it applies to the future of canola. That is taking into account the fact that there is going to be a momentary loss with respect to transportation subsidy.

Mr. Angus: I have no doubt of the growers' and producers' ability to compete and I have no doubt of the superiority of their product. I think that they applaud the potential opportunities that they are going to be given by the reduction of the tariffs. The only concern that I believe they have is the fact that the tariffs are going to be removed gradually while the subsidies are being taken away immediately, and that stretches the rubber band a tad too tight. So that is something that obviously, if they have a problem, they will come to the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness).

I had some questions for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) as well, but he appears to be leaving. I will pass on that series of questions.

I have a question for the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), if I may. I have expressed to you on a couple of occasions some circumstantial difficulties that we have within day care centres in my area in relation to getting them licensed and/or accredited to have spaces. There is one in particular called the Tree House Nursery that I have mentioned to you a couple of times and tried to send material over to your office. The circumstances that these people are facing is a penalty for initiative, if you like. They went out and have worked for two years trying to keep the program going within the school and incurring certain expenses and making sure that they have been trying to meet all the regulations.

Now that school is starting again, day cares again become a very sort of important aspect of society. I am just wondering if you can advise me, not particularly about Tree House although I would like to know about them, when are we going to be able to suggest to these people that we have at least a formula so that they can see some light at the end of the tunnel? Is there some method of solving these problems that they have and allotting the money and reviewing the spaces, or should I quite honestly tell them that there is not going to be an immediate answer and that it is going to be many, many months and that, you know, they are out of luck? I am just not sure what to do with them, how to tell them.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): Mr. Chairman, I am scrambling my mind to remember the exact details of Tree House, and I have had several of these of course come across my desk and I cannot remember the particulars on that one, whether it is expecting to open right away. Is the

Member indicating that? -(Interjection)- Okay, well letters are going out at this time after the Budget process and so forth. There have been letters going out to many of the centres, and I would hope that particular one, the Tree House, is in receipt of a letter by now. I know that some letters have gone out and I know there has been a problem because of delays in getting answers. I guess it is really peculiar to this year and people are concerned that they will not be able to open but, as far as I can understand at the moment, letters have gone out.

In fact, there is one particular one that another Member of your caucus has raised. The letter has already gone out, so I am anticipating—perhaps maybe even the signatures that are in front of me could possibly be some of the ones that you are concerned about.

With regard to the whole day care situation, we are looking at that very closely to see how we can expedite and get the most spaces going for the money we have. In particular issues that are raised, it could very well be, if it is some long-term problem, addressed by the task force that we will be shortly announcing. Some of these problems may be ironed out by that but, if the Member has some specific problem—or I will undertake to look back in my file on the particular one he mentioned and see what we can do for that one.

* (1500)

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I have questions for a number of Ministers. I appreciate the fact that, from time to time, individual Ministers may have to leave and I am prepared to adjust my schedule of questions around them.

I would like to begin with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), if I may. I have a few questions following up on my original questions with respect to the negotiations going on for the divestiture of Manfor. If memory serves correctly, the Minister had indicated that a company had been retained to assist in the negotiations but, at this point, the Minister was not prepared to table name or names of the individuals under contract. I would still like the Minister to put those names on the record. I think it is a fairly standard practice followed over the last many years to table the names of individuals under contract to Government and for us not to have to wait until Public Accounts to have those names made available. However, I will await patiently for further development on that score.

A further question on Manfor, I wondered whether the Minister of Finance could indicate whether any additional money has been set aside in this year's Budget for any support that might be offered from the provincial Government to any potential buyer?

Mr. Manness: The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is well aware that there is no—when he asks whether additional has been set aside in the Budget through the various appropriations and I am trying to think within the area of training, I am trying to think in the area of Industry, Trade and Tourism -(Interjection)- the Jobs Fund no longer exists. It is a nonentity. I do not use it anymore. The answer to the question is no.

Mr. Storie: I am assuming, given the lateness of the tabling of the Budget, that the Minister by that is suggesting that their analysis indicates that the provincial Government would not be likely to require to put up any substantial amount of money to assist in negotiations. Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. Manness: The Budget which is very specifically the appropriations in the Estimates has no inclusion for additional funds. I guess if the Government of the Day thought it were working towards a completion of a sale that required some continuing liability, whether it was in the form of a guarantee or in the form of actual cash, that probably would have to be included within loan authority. I deem that not to be part of the Budget. The Loan Act that was part of the material that was released that night does not include any provision for additional provincial requirement of funds.

Mr. Storie: I know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) prides himself on being both practical and visionary and has chastised previous Finance Ministers on more than one occasion for not including in the Estimates or The Loan Act sums of money which were foreseeable at least from the Member's point of view. I wondered whether in fact changing sides has now changed the Minister of Finance's opinion and whether he now believes that it is better not to speculate, if you will, on what cost might be forthcoming as a result of divestiture, as a result of any of the pending Western Diversification Initiative projects that might be coming forth. Has there been a change of opinion on the part of the Minister of Finance?

Mr. Manness: Absolutely not, quite to the contrary. When I was a critic, I was very critical of the provincial Government from time to time in bringing forward Loan Act authority granting large amounts to Crown corporations, in particular, for some years forward where it was not known specifically what their plans were. I was very critical of that, and I continue to be.

As a matter of fact, I know the other Crown corporation which I have some responsibility for, Manitoba Data Services, gave me a number that they wished to see included within Loan Act authority, which I brought back significantly because they could not prove to me that funding all was required within the present fiscal year. So quite to the contrary, I still am of that opinion.

The Member should realize that, if and when we come to a conclusion that may necessitate additional funds, and we are still sitting, then there will be obviously a Loan Act (2) that will be brought forward to the Members of this House for their due consideration.

Mr. Storie: I must say that the Member's answer both assures me and causes me great concern.

My subsequent question, Mr. Chairperson, is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), who is currently involved in discussions and, I hope, negotiations with the Department of Regional and Industrial Development (DRIE) and the Western Diversification Initiatives office with respect to the

modernization plans at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting in Flin Flon.

I know that discussions have proceeded to the point where HBM&S has tabled a final development plan where they have put in place a multi-phase development plan for not only the modernization of the plant in Flin Flon for their smelting operations, but also for continued exploration and development work at a number of locations in the immediate vicinity. Could the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) provide any information on the state of negotiations, on the amount of commitment that may be made by the provincial Government and the Department of Energy and Mines with respect to those negotiations?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Chairman, the negotiations, of course, are a three-way negotiation between the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, the provincial Department of Energy and Mines and the federal Government.

The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is quite accurate. The Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting have provided us with a detailed plan. They have been asked some additional questions to which we have not had the answers. I spoke with Hudson Bay as recently as yesterday, and they will be supplying additional information to us and to the federal Government.

As to the state of negotiations, they are at a stage still where we are unable to give any information with respect to the funding that will be available.

Mr. Storie: I do not think I have to remind the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). I know that he is indeed sympathetic to the proposal that HBM&S has put forward. It is obviously the important industry in the northwestern part of the province, important not only to the people of Flin Flon now because of the latest acquisitions by HBM&S of Sherritt Gordon's interests. It is important to many communities, including Snow Lake, Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake, the surrounding communities, including some smaller communities where they have interests such as Sherridon, Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake.

Mr. Chairperson, I just have one further question for the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Given his comments, does he believe that there is likely to be an agreement during this fiscal year between HBM&S, the province and the federal Government?

Mr. Neufeld: I sincerely hope there will be an agreement. We, on this side of the House, need not be told how important that is to the northern part of Manitoba. We do indeed sympathize and we are doing everything we can to hasten the negotiations and the agreement that will be coming forward. I have every hope that, before the end of March of 1989, such an agreement will indeed be in place.

* (15 10)

Mr. Storie: I would like to thank the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) for making my point. I would certainly hope that such an agreement is possible. I

know that there is a good deal of good will on the part of HBM&S, the Department of Energy and the Minister and the federal Government in terms of this particular project.

I would be interested to know, given the likelihood—and I certainly would like to think that there is a great likelihood of an agreement—whether or why there is no provision for that either in The Loan Act or in the Budget. The budgetary Estimates that were presented by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) perhaps would have been a case where it would have been advantageous to make known the Government's intention.

I would also like to remind the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was in Flin Flon to make a solemn commitment to the people of Flin Flon for provincial support for the modernization effort and we look forward to that happening.

A question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness): Could the Minister of Finance indicate how much The Energy Rate Stabilization Act will cost the provincial Treasury this year?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, that figure, I believe, is detailed in the Estimates, Finance, and I will refer to that. Specifically, on page 79 of the detailed Estimates, the figure is \$4.636 million.

Mr. Storie: That, I believe, is a significant reduction from the estimate that was tabled by the previous Minister of Finance, which I believe was more in the neighbourhood of \$36 million. I cannot remember specifically, but I believe it was substantially more than \$4 million plus that is in the present Estimates. What does the Minister attribute, specifically, to the difference?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Chairman, the Member, in asking the question, cannot keep the smile off his face. I take it that is because he is anticipating the answer.

As indicated by myself during the day that the Budget came down, as was indicated by myself to the press, the media and anybody who wanted to ask specific questions dealing with why the servicing of public debt figures, the interest costs, had diminished from the defeated Budget, the answer to that then was and it still is today, that the Canadian dollar has strengthened relative to the U.S. and indeed to some other currencies, and the net benefit of that of course is the people of the Province of Manitoba. Subsequent to that, the Canadian dollar has fallen in the last couple of weeks and the 4.636 million that is written in the Estimate Book may not, in fact, be the number as of today and that number today could be somewhat higher.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I have some questions to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), the first being in regard to Meadows West Day Care, Inc.

I believe in giving credit where it is deserved. The past couple of months, the Minister and myself have been cooperating fully to try and ensure that Meadows

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West did receive their day care spots. I was glad to hear that they did receive the 40 spots.

My question is: When can Meadows West Day Care, Inc. expect to receive the monies so the day care can start to function, starting September 1?

Mrs. Oleson: I thank the Member for giving me notice so that I was able to get an answer for him.

In my letter that I sent to them on the 26th of August, I indicated that they would be getting their 40 spaces, 32 preschool and eight infant spaces, and that would be effective immediately. I understand from staff that they will be getting their funding immediately for that. They will be getting a maintenance grant of \$968 per space and a start-up grant of \$450 per space. I think if there is still some concern about them when they get their cheque, perhaps they could phone the day care office and see if it can be expedited but, from my understanding of this, they should be getting their funds immediately.

Mr. Lamoureux: Another question for the same Minister, a very brief one, maybe she can inform me on the current status of the child care centre at the Stanley Knowles School.

Mrs. Oleson: Once again, I thank the Member for giving me notice of that.

Apparently, there is some delay in that they do not have their parent board in place yet. When they get their parent board in place and their licensing approved, then they will be getting their funding. I am not sure, that is the latest information I have is that their parent board is not in place yet. In the last short while, that may have taken place.

Perhaps the Member, if he is still concerned about it, we will check into it further but that is the information I have this afternoon is that they are getting a parent board in place. Then, of course, after that, there would be the licensing and then the funds would flow to it.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I would like to ask a few questions of the Minister responsible for Economic Security (Mrs. Oleson) in the Government. This is particularly with regard to the implementation of a one-tier system of social allowances.

As the Minister knows, the previous Government had planned to introduce a system gradually whereby the municipal Governments outside of the City of Winnipeg would be eventually relieved of the responsibility of providing this social service, and that we would work, therefore, towards a more equitable system whereby everyone who was eligible would receive the basic minimum rate and not have the situation that we have today which is, in my judgment, very inequitable when you have rates varying by more than 50 percent among municipalities, and very inadequate for many, many reasons.

I think the Minister should agree with me on the inadequacy because I believe she, herself, when she was the critic in Opposition, did a survey of municipalities and I remember her giving us some notes

about all the problems some of the municipalities were having.

I do realize that, during the campaign, a promise, I thought, a position was taken by the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, now the Premier (Mr. Filmon), with regard to a system of implementing a one-tier system in the province which would require regulation of the municipalities. That is always an option.

It is an option, I might mention to the committee, that we had looked at very seriously. In one way, it is a little cheaper but, on the other hand, it is a way that is fraught with all kinds of difficulties because, when you get into regulating municipalities, you get into a potential area of conflict between the two levels of Government. Most provinces in Canada that have moved to the one-tier system have moved to it as a provincial Government. Seven out of 10 provinces in Canada today have a one-tier social assistance system with the provinces looking after the entire administration. Only three—Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba—have the so-called two-tier system, and even the other two provinces are involved in some way or other. I believe Ontario, for example, sets a minimum rate and ensures that it is provided by the municipality.

However, having looked at this, the research that was done by the department and a lot of discussion, it was felt that it was far better in the long-run to simply absorb it and that we would do it gradually to ease the burden on the provincial Treasury, but that it was the right thing to do and that it had to be done. Because what we were getting and what we are getting now in some ways, you could say, is forced migration because you have many people who could qualify for social assistance—this is the unemployed employables we are talking about—who are required to go to the larger centres such as Winnipeg or Brandon where assistance is more readily available for whatever reason. So you have got that possibility of forced migration.

* (1520)

You have a situation where many of the municipalities are just not equipped to handle welfare cases, where the whole council has to be gathered together to hear an application by a person for welfare. I do not think that is a good process. It is not good for the council. It is demeaning to the individual to have to go cap in hand, so to speak, and beg for financial assistance when they do not have to do that if they were in the City of Brandon or the City of Winnipeg or some of the larger centres that have the staff to deal with these things.

I might add that our process in Manitoba in the inequities that we have is subject to court challenge. I believe there is a case now before the federal courts. I do not have the details with me, but there is a court challenge under way.

Of course, there are a couple of other arguments for bringing it into the provincial sphere, one of which and not least of which, I would say—is among, I would say, not the least important of which, in fact, probably among the more important reasons—is the employment linkages that could occur within the department because

we do have various training programs now for social allowance recipients, and the province would be in a better position, in my judgment, to zero in on those people to train them and try to help them become fully employed. That was part of the plan. By not having it into an integrated provincial system seems to me that it is more difficult to provide the training, the employment and the encouragement.

The last point I would make is leaving it on the shoulders of the municipalities is rather regressive because what you are doing is putting a social service on the property taxpayers. I have long believed that social services should be financed at the federal and provincial levels. They have far wider sources of revenue, whether it be income tax, sales tax or whatever. The municipalities are simply restricted to property taxes and what you are doing is putting the burden on property taxpayers.

So I think you could make a case in this area as well that the municipalities should be removed, and I say not holus-bolus but do it in a gradual, rational way. We are not talking, incidentally, about tens of thousands of people. We are only talking about a couple of thousand. It is actually a small percentage of the total number on the provincial welfare roll and certainly a tiny percentage of what exists in the City of Winnipeg.

So what I would like to ask the Minister is: Where does the Government stand, where does she stand now with regard to their promise to do something about the one-tier system?

I believe the Premier (Mr. Filmon) did indicate a method which would involve regulation. Are they intent on pursuing that route, or are they reviewing the options and looking at the possibility of doing what we had thought could be done, and that is to integrate it into the provincial social allowance administration that we have?

I would point out, you see—many Members may not be aware of this—those long-term cases, the disabled people, the mothers' allowances and so on are already cared for province-wide by the department, by the staff. So there are staff out in the field. I was never one who thought that, all of a sudden, you have to hire hundreds of civil servants to do this. I did not look upon that as a problem at all. There would be very minimal impact on the staff. The system is in place, and now that we have it computerized, the most advanced computerized network of any province, I believe, involved in welfare administration, it is very easy to get that information, do your checking, tracking and so on. I think the department is equipped to deliver the service. So, just repeating: (1) Where does the Government stand on the promise made by the Premier about implementing the one-tier system; (2) Is the Government still intent on pursuing the regulation route whereby the municipalities will still be involved in spending their monies, still be involved in the administration, or are they reviewing this with the possibility of going to the absorption system, if I can call it that, the absorption method that we had previously talked about?

Mrs. Oleson: I suppose I could just give the Member a short answer and say we are reviewing, but there is

really more to it than that. When the former Minister announced his intentions last winter, one of the concerns that I had and reminded him of at the time was that there had been no consultation with the municipal officials at any level as far as I can understand, with the Union of Municipalities, with the MAUM organization, as to what they felt about how this system should be.

I think that is very important, to sit down and discuss with them what would be the best method of providing service and come to some consensus or agreement. I mean, it may not be an absolute agreement but at least let them have some input. As the Member knows, he and I have had discussions about it in Estimates for several years. I do have a very great interest in this and that was one of the first things I discussed when I came into this department.

What we are doing right now is, I am going to be—some time when the Session is over, because there is no time now, I have told the municipal officials that I will be setting up meetings with them and we will have discussions and consultation on just where this should go.

One thing that concerned me about the Member's announcement early this winter was that I immediately started getting letters and I am still getting letters from municipal officials who were just not very pleased with that, with his suggestions. We made suggestions during the election. Those ideas are being considered. The previous Minister's ideas of course will not be just swept out of hand and not considered.

We will take everything and perhaps what comes out of this after the consultation and discussions with the municipal officials may very well be a combination of the two. I am not saying it will, but it is much better to effect change in a system if you involve the people who are going to be changed.—(Interjection)—I know there is a great deal of inequity in the system. There is no real guarantee in life that you will get rid of every inequity, but we will want to work toward the best system we possibly can.

I think that if we do stay even with the system as it is now, which I am not saying we will but even if we do, we can still incorporate some of those people in the municipalities who wish to take part in training programs, where there may be some way we can still work with that. I do not think it is impossible to include them just because we are not on a one-tier system. So those matters are being looked at very seriously.

One thing that did concern me when I read the task force report in the first place—and you know, that was published I believe it was in '83, and now the Member is coming and telling me we have inequities and I am supposed to do something immediately. I find it rather odd, because he had considerable time in which to do it.

Back to what I was initially going to say about the task force report, one thing that really concerned me about it was the huge cost involved. I have never been able to discover why we would need to be spending \$23 million, because that was the projected cost. That

report was tabled, I believe in '83, so if that was the projected cost of a one-tier system then, I would shudder to think of what it is now and what it would be in the future. But I was never able to discover why they were projecting \$23 million because the Member has just said now that we would not probably need to hire a lot of staff and that might very well be.

Back to the plans for this Government, I hope to meet in the near future with the municipal officials, to sit down with them, receive suggestions from them as to how they feel we should deal with this matter, and give them suggestions of what I think might be appropriate. I know that there are inequities in the system. I know that some people, in order to receive assistance which they desperately need, do have to go through quite a few hoops. I am sure, if we sat down with the municipal officials, that some of those things could be ironed out without making a great deal of change to the present system. I repeat, I intend to meet with municipal officials some time hopefully later this Fall, and see what agreement we can come to with how we can best help the people in our society who need help.

Mr. Leonard Evans: The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that this is a problem that we have had for many decades and we have had the task force, but eventually we did come around to preparing—I do not know what the staff are doing now but there were a lot of staff working to get this system in place. The Minister can tell us what they are doing. The fact is that preparations were being made, and I am just wondering exactly what is happening now with all of those preparations.

The fact is that everyone wants to consult. Consultation is good, it is important. I might add that we did receive correspondence from municipal officials supporting the one-tier system, supporting absorption. They were on urban associations and the municipal—in fact the Union of Manitoba Municipalities at one point passed a resolution—it was in Brandon—supporting the one-tier system a couple of years ago.

An Honourable Member: In Brandon?

Mr. Leonard Evans: They rejected it. That was about a year or so later but, at one point, they urged the Government again on implementing a one-tier system. This is the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. Then we received correspondence from the Urban Association saying they supported the one-tier system and the former Minister of Municipal Affairs had discussions with many officials and so on.

* (1530)

The point is and what I want to find out is: Is this Government going to fulfill the promise made by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to bring in a one-tier system in the province? That is really the first thing. You can have consultation, that is fine. The Minister is hinting they are moving towards it but I want to know: Are you committed to a one-tier system, whether it be by regulation or whether it be by absorption? That is the point. Is this Government going to move towards a

one-tier system and, if you are going to move toward it, will the implementation take place in this fiscal year or not?

Mrs. Oleson: I think the Member should have been listening when I said that we will be presenting different options to the municipal people. We will be discussing it and to announce exactly what I am going to do today would be premature. There is no plan in this Budget we are discussing, or Estimates we will be discussing shortly, to implement any changes. We are progressing in the way it has gone and, hopefully, after I have met with municipal people, we will come up with a better plan which will better serve the people.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I had difficulty hearing the Minister because of the interjections of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), among others, but if I heard her properly, she is saying there will be no one-tier system implemented this fiscal year. I think that is what she said. If I am wrong, please correct me.

An Honourable Member: She did not say that.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, she is nodding her head in the affirmative, that there will be no one-tier system. This will be a great disappointment, I know, not only to the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization but to the many church groups that I met with over the last years.

An Honourable Member: Why did we not do that three or four years ago?

Mr. Leonard Evans: We should have done it three or four years ago. It should have been done decades ago. It should have been.

I am saying that we made all this preparation, we brought it to a point of bringing it in a gradual way. The Premier announced during the election, the Conservative Party said during the election, we will bring in a one-tier system. The Conservative Government will bring in a one-tier system and we will regulate the municipalities in the process.—(Interjection)—We will bring the clippings from the newspapers. We will bring the statements. We will bring the news releases of the Leader of the Conservative Party. He said, we will bring in a one-tier system—that his Government would do that. He wants to regulate the municipalities. Fine, I have no problem with the Minister sitting down with municipal officials. That is great. The sooner the better. That is fine. That is good. Maybe they will have some ideas.

The fact is this matter has been studied for a long time. The Minister referred to the Ryant Task Force that was done five years ago. I can tell you there are many people in this province, they may not be in her riding, but there are many people I know in greater Winnipeg and I know in Brandon who are very concerned about the simple lack of social justice that prevails in this province because of this two-tier system that we have. There are church groups, there are activist groups, there are social agencies in the City of Winnipeg that I have met with over the year. I would invite the Honourable Minister, if she has not yet, to sit down

with some of these people and they will tell you what they think of the inequities of the two-tier system that we have.

What we had proposed was very modest. It was not \$25 million that the Member alluded to. That amount of money would be involved if brought in the City of Winnipeg where 85 percent of the welfare cases are. We were not proposing to do that. The Winnipeg rates were pretty well close to the provincial rates, so we decided we would go the more modest route and just include those outside of the City of Winnipeg. So there you are talking only a fraction of that. Incidentally, the \$20 million to \$25 million was before CAP cost share. Once you take the federal contribution off, you divide that in half.

Similarly, with a much smaller amount, you are talking five -(Interjection)- well, it is taxpayers, but it is distributed in a different way. Of course it matters. What matters are those people in this province who are not getting a fair shake. What matters are those people who are being given a one-way ticket to the City of Winnipeg or the City of Brandon because their rural council cannot be bothered with it. There are many rural municipalities in this province who have no welfare load whatsoever. They are proud of it and so on. Okay. But I would like to know how many of those municipalities who say they have no welfare or caseload have forced those poor people to go to the City of Winnipeg or to the City of Brandon? And so what you have got is a forced migration pattern that is existing today.

I say, if there is injustice, there is injustice because of the involvement of certain municipalities in the welfare system. They are not equipped to deliver it. They do not have the expertise. I am even suggesting they should not be required to finance it. That should be removed from the municipal tax burdens. It should be removed from property taxpayers and paid for by provincial and federal levels of Government. We would have a system, therefore, that is far more equitable, far fairer than what we have today. So I am disappointed that the Government is not going to move on this this year when the department is all set up. They have done all the research; they have done all kinds of preparation. It is not as though we are starting from scratch. All that work has been done; it is there. Staff are ready. They have organized it. They have done the planning. They have done the research. We have now got the most advanced computerized system for welfare payments in the country and so we are very much on the technical side capable of handling this.

I say again that if the Minister thinks it is going to be easier to keep the municipalities involved and regulate them, she is in for some tough times ahead, because I think you are going to have a situation of confrontation between this Minister and between many of the municipal council officials if they implement the one-tier system on a regulation basis. It is a matter of policing to make sure that they are abiding by your rates and then when you raise the rates each year, they are going to come across with additional money each year as well. I think you are going to find that you are going to have a lot of difficulty in that respect.

* (1540)

I think simple social justice demands that this Government, any Government, any Party in this province, get on with the job of implementing a fairer system. I say again we are not talking about tens of thousands of people. We are talking about only a couple of thousand people. The biggest welfare load is in the City of Winnipeg and then if you add Brandon and Portage, a couple of regional centres, you have almost got about 95 percent of the total load of the unemployed employer, so we are talking about a very small group. Regardless, even with one person being treated unfairly is not good enough. We have to have a system which was meant in spirit of the original federal legislation as well. As I said, what we have now is subject to court challenge and I would suggest that under scrutiny we do not come out looking very well on this.

I am sorry to hear that the Minister is not going to implement any kind of a one-tier system this year. Some kind of a system would probably be better than nothing at all, but we are going to carry on with what you have today. Now these figures are about a year old, but I do not think the differential is any—as of January 1987 provincial social allowances for one single adult - (Interjection)- Mr. Chairman, this is a very important topic and I would wish the Members opposite would take it as seriously as they should take it, as seriously as we should all take it.

The province paid \$201 for a single individual. That does not include rent or shelter. So with food, clothing and personal effects, a single adult as of January 1987 received \$201 of provincial social allowances. The City of Winnipeg was slightly below that, \$179.00. But when you get down to places like the R.M. of Minitonas, they are paying them \$92 at that same period of time. Woodlands is marked down as \$72, and on top of it they pay them with vouchers rather than cash. That is considered to be very regressive as well. There may be some cases where you need vouchers but usually you are better off to pay cash to those individuals.

What I am saying is the facts are that there is a very inequitable system where you get a small R.M. paying less than half. In one case we have got it where they are only paying about a third of what the province pays for food, clothing and personal effects.

I know we are not into the Minister's Estimates on this. I think it is going to be awhile before we get to the Minister's Estimates and I wanted to take this opportunity to raise it here and would like to have her confirm if they are not going to do the one-tier system this year is she—and I know she said she is going to consult with the municipal officials, but is this Government committed to bringing in the one-tier system at any time in the life of this Government?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, I am really interested in the concern of the Member who had the portfolio that I am now holding for, I think it was, six years at least, and all of a sudden, after I had been placed in this department as the Minister, four months later, I am supposed to have all these problems solved, right? Everybody is treated equitably and everything is great.

I would like that to have happened. Yes, that would be wonderful, but let us face reality here.

We had a Budget on the table in this House a very short time after we were elected. I have many programs to look at. I have looked at the program that he put forward. I have also looked at the letters that were written in opposition to it. So I have to say to myself and to my department let us have a look at this. The Minister that was in place before had put in a program, or a suggested program. Well and good, that was his job, but why did he wait after the Task Force Report had come in in '83, why was it in 1988 that all of sudden he is getting interested in this?

He tells me that I will have terrible confrontation with the municipalities if I do this, that and so on. I hope to avoid that for the Member's advocacy, by sitting down with them and having, at the end of these discussions, a plan that people can agree with and people can live with. I know that there are inequities. He is quoting rates to me about the provincial rate and the rates that are in the municipalities. That has been going on for years. That is no revelation to me. He is not revealing any great and exciting news to this House today by telling us that these rates are different. The rates were in place when he was in Government, and I find it rather strange also that he goes on about the computer. The computer is great, and it is working, it is working well and we are able to get far more information on social assistance than we could before. But a computer does not solve all the problems in the department. A computer does not provide the funds. A computer does not provide a plan that would best serve the people of Manitoba.

I have undertaken, I have said this afternoon, I have said it several times, that I am undertaking to do a study of this. My department is looking at it, and when we come up with a good program which serves the people well, which the people involved can agree with, then we will be announcing a program. But to suddenly come into the office and announce a program within a short while, I think would be a disservice. I think we want to see where we are going before we go there. My colleagues are very supportive of this; we are going to have a good thorough look at the system and make sure that we do what is the proper thing to do.

Just because it has not been done and is not announced this minute, I do not think that is fair to say that we should do that in a first Budget. I think the Member would be the first one to get up and criticize if two or three days after the election we had announced a program that we were going to put in place without proper investigation. I think probably some of the problems that were inherent in the former NDP Government were the fact that they rushed into things headlong, never talked to the people that were directly involved and got themselves into all kinds of messes over this. I am trying not to repeat that.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): I have some questions I would like clarifications from the Minister of Employment and Economic Security (Mrs. Oleson). I must apologize if some of these -(Interjection)- probably, no trick here. I must apologize if some of these come from the

Estimates, but at the speed we are going here, we will never hit your Estimates in this department, so I hope you will bear with me in questions.

On Monday, there was an answer to the question the Minister said that a directive had been sent out, Madam Minister, in reply to a question you had mentioned that a directive was sent out to social workers on Friday morning in regard to school supplies for families who are on social assistance. I would be interested to know was that directive sent out in response to questions by myself and questions from the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), and if it would be possible for me to get a copy of that directive that was sent out?

Mrs. Oleson: I am sorry to disappoint the Member, but actually the directive was going out while Question Period was going on, in response to queries that had come to the office. I cannot in all honesty say that it was just because the question was raised by his side of the House that the directive went out.

No, we found it necessary to send another directive out. It must have been some misunderstanding among the field staff. They were instructed, I believe it was in July—I do not have the date at the tip of my tongue, but they were directed in July—that the school supplies could be purchased through the Special Needs Fund.

Several people, of course, through some circumstance or other, have exhausted that fund and the social workers, the field officers were instructed to access other Special Needs Funds, especially for school supplies.

We felt that this was a good way to address this school supply problem which, of course, occurs every year at this time, specifically to the people who needed it most, that we could address their needs if they spoke to their worker and identified the need for school supplies that their budget would not cover. Then we could address the ones that actually needed it the most in this method. I am hopeful now that that misunderstanding has all been cleared up and that the people are getting the help they need.

Mr. Rose: Unfortunately, the second part of the question was not answered as to whether I could get a copy of the directive. I am wondering, to the Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security (Mrs. Oleson), if indeed there was a directive being issued in the morning.

I realize that the Minister never tells anything but the truth, because the only time I have seen you emotional is when somebody accuses you of such, and that is a pretty good sign that you are really true to this.

Mrs. Oleson: I try to be honest.

Mr. Rose: I am wondering, in specific questions by the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and myself, as to whether you would you issue a directive, you never responded at all that one was in the process of being released. If you would read Hansard, there is not even a hint that you had considered the subject ahead

of time. I would like you if you could to explain that, and also see if I could get a copy of this directive.

Mrs. Oleson: I see what the Member is getting at now. No, I did not know the directive was going out. After Question Period, when I went upstairs to my office, the staff said well, we already sent one out this morning. Things get done, you see. I do not have to direct them to do everything; they were already doing it. That is the kind of good staff I have.

No, they had had calls at the office and realized there was a problem. I did not sign the memo, if that is what the concern is about, and I do not know that there is a problem with giving the Member—and I do not know why he would want to be bothered. It is an interdepartmental memo directing how these things should be done. These sort of memos go out all the time. I would have to produce quite a few of them in the House if we were going to—(Interjection)— Well, I will undertake to see if that could be done.

Mr. Rose: Now, it has been just stated by the Minister that these came from special needs and that some people had used up their special needs, which has a \$150 limit, I understand, and that there is a further fund that goes up to \$400 for excess special needs, if you want to say it. Now, there was no indication in this, in questions by the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) or myself the other day, that this is where the funds were coming from, in excess special needs. In fact, in your initial statement, you do not even really make that clear, but the information that we have is that all of these funds are not coming out of the \$150, but that is being kept intact for its original purpose and that all the funds are coming out of something that would be in excess of \$150.00. Could you confirm whether that is correct or not?

* (1550)

Mrs. Oleson: I will have to get the specifics on that for the Member. In some cases it would be done one way, and one another. I will get the specifics of it if he can give me a case where this is a problem. I would not want him to put it on the record, of course, but if there are problems I would like to know the specifics, because we certainly do not want anyone who is in need of help not getting help.

Mr. Rose: I must apologize. I did give you the questions as notice. If you have not got them—I thought you would be prepared, but if not, it is not much notice and I apologize for that and I will be patient in getting the answers. In regard to that, and attached to my notice to you, there is a letter from a person where this does affect where they were told specifically that it would come out, and her friends were told that it would come from Excess Special Needs Funds.

From the same Minister, I would like to know if at all possible, in a ballpark figure, and I really do not need it today if it is not available, but I would like to know the approximate number of children that are involved in this type of program in this province. And being that this program, by your admission, was

cancelled—that is the one-time-only program instituted by the previous administration for the year 1987-88, then that program was cancelled—I would like to know if additional funds were put in on the line on the Estimates for Excess Special Needs and, if so, how much money was added to the budget, once you had cancelled the previous program?

Mrs. Oleson: It was not really a case of cancelling the program. There was no program. It was a one-time grant for school supplies. So in that sense there was no program, but I will get the Member the exact numbers. I do not have them with me today of how many people were able to access that last year, and of course we do not know yet the figures for this year.

Mr. Rose: I would also like to know for the future . . . the question has been said, what is the obvious school funds . . . for members What is the ballpark figure, the upper limit per child, and I might as well phrase the other question I have at the same time? That is that in this program, and we are being asked this question, they seem to allow for running shoes, but they do not seem to allow for sweat pants and duffel bags which are asked by the school for a specific item on the curriculum, which is physical education. Thank you.

Mrs. Oleson: I would have to get you the specifics of that too. I know there is a concern and it has been raised to me by groups that I have met with to do with the social assistance, that if it is a problem for children, on families on social assistance when they get those lists from the school, because some of them are—well, I would hate to incur their wrath by saying they are unrealistic, but for a family that is on social assistance, they almost border on that. I would have to check with the department officials to see how much of that we cover, if we cover at all.

There is of course built into the social allowance payments an allotment for clothing. So whether or not this is considered as special school clothing, I would have to check in to that and get the details on it. I do not have that at my fingertips at the moment, but I would remind the Member that there is a clothing allowance built into the social assistance payments.

Mr. Rose: I have two very brief questions left for my information and I am pleased that the Minister used the word "unrealistic" for some of the school's demands for school supplies.

Mrs. Oleson: I said you might call it that, I did not really—

Mr. Rose: Well, might or well, I agree with you that it is. Some of them are unrealistic when the school at the beginning of school year asks for 20 pencils right off the bat. I am sure that they could say "five" and buy the rest later on. But if this may be unrealistic for families who are on social welfare, it certainly could be unrealistic for other families in Manitoba, and I am wondering if the Minister in recognizing that may be a problem has approached perhaps the Minister of

Education (Mr. Derkach) to see if schools could not be advised to be a little bit more realistic in their demands for certain items, like expensive dictionaries instead of reasonably priced ones, etc. Has there been any communication on that?

Mrs. Oleson: I could take that up with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) but really we have school boards in place to look after each school district. I think if the Minister of Education starts sending out memos or directives or whatever to tell them exactly what they are supposed to ask for from each teacher to each classroom, we may very well be accused of interfering.

Mr. Rose: If you have to resolve the problem and interfere, I guess that is what Government has to do.—(Interjection)— I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, thank you. Yes, I had mentioned there were two.

To the same Minister, it seems to me, and far be it from me to ever give even a little bit of praise to the New Democrats but it does appear to me on the surface that the one-time program last year —(Interjection)— first time, one time, and I will agree with both of you on this one, that this saved a lot of bureaucracy. It was a set figure for different age groups. It dealt specifically with a specific amount which could be sent to the parents of children on welfare, on social allowance ahead of time. It certainly, in that regard, saved Government accounting. It introduced more equity in the program. As well, it saved the parents the need to go around pricing ahead of time to submit to the department the various prices, and that is an almost impossible job. My question to the Minister there is, would you anticipate the possibility of reverting back to that type of a program in your next budget?

Mrs. Oleson: That is something we could look at. I do not know whether the Member realizes that that cost \$1 million last year. Sometimes \$1 million is just a little difficult to come up with.

The way we are doing it this year, it addresses a specific need. He talks about equity. I think it is better to give it to the people who really need it the most, than just to, blanket, give it to everybody.

Mr. Rose: It prompted another question in that the Minister is alluding to the fact that last year the program cost \$1 million dollars. I have asked the Minister, and she will reply to me at a later date, how much was budgeted this year for that program? My guess is that it was going to cost you more this year than last year because you are being more generous. I do not fault you for that. But the people that I have talked to have gotten more money out of this program by far than they got last year. So where it was \$1 million last year— and maybe that proves my point, is that you put a cap on things and have more fiscal control on it. I will be looking forward to the answer as to how much was budgeted. I also would ask that, when the final figure is in, what the final figure is compared with 1987-88.

Mrs. Oleson: I would have to get the Member the figure. It will be budgeted in the Special Needs line of the social assistance. As the Member alludes to, it will

be interesting to see how much it costs. Of course, we have no way of knowing at this moment how much it will cost. That will be an interesting figure. I will not be able to provide it, of course, for some time till it is all tallied.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I appreciate the Member for St. Vital's (Mr. Rose) good questions. I could ask a lot along those lines but I have one on the one-tier, and I have two other questions. I understand, knowing how these Estimates are going, I doubt if we will ever get to the Department of Employment Services in Estimates so there is some importance to ask some of these questions now.

* (1600)

The one-tier system, the Minister—I just want to get this clear—said there will be no one-tier system this year. I want to ask a very short specific question: Is there a commitment? I know you are going to have discussions. I have heard that. Are you committed to bringing it in, in the next fiscal year? Yes or no?

An Honourable Member: Maybe yes, maybe no.

Mrs. Oleson: I would like to just tell the Member that there will be changes of course, hopefully for the better, in next year's Budget. But I cannot categorically say what those changes will be at the moment.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I can appreciate the Minister cannot go into detail, but either we have a one-tier system or we do not. But I would gather she is working on it—

Mrs. Oleson: Working on it, right.

Mr. Leonard Evans: —but there is no absolute, final commitment.

Mrs. Oleson: No, I do not decide before I consult.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Chairman, I am not talking about the method or whether it is regulation or absorption. You either have that one-tier system or you do not. You are either out on the pier fishing or you are not fishing. You know, either you are or you are not, so I gather there is no commitment.

I have one question on Economic Security and one on Employment. The one I have relates to—I know this has been around a long time, when I was Minister and so on, but that does not mean we cannot change it and make it better—the limitation we have on youngsters who are of school age who are children of social allowance parents, they are social allowance families. There is a very small limit; I think it is \$400.00. We have been receiving phone calls and advice that this limit is unrealistic and that it is very discouraging to the young children who are in these families.

In fact, in the long term it will hurt them. We should do everything possible to make it easy for them to go out and earn some money and bring it into the household. As it is now, there is at least one case where

the young person could not work because that young person was going to make over the set limit, and therefore be deducted. He was discouraged from working.

I believe the limit is \$400.00. I would like to ask the Minister, would she be prepared to see whether the limit could be raised or perhaps even eliminated? Because if you are talking about school-age children they cannot earn that much. I mean it is not as though they were children who were out of school and still in the welfare family. That is a different scene.

If you are talking about children who are of school-age, there is a limited amount of money that they can make. Should we not allow them to go out and do it, whether it is baby-sitting, or carrying groceries on Saturdays, or whatever they do, and allow them to have it without discouraging them from getting out and doing some work. Would the Minister look into this? Does she have any views on that?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, I do agree with the Member that we certainly want to encourage young people to get jobs when they possibly can. We are looking at that. Staff are looking at that and we may very well come up with a different method. But I am not saying that we definitely will, I am saying that we were looking at it and hopefully we could make it so it would be an incentive for young people to get jobs. That is very important. I think that is one thing we need to encourage, the work ethic, and make it possible for young people to have jobs and not penalize them for doing so.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I have one final question that I will ask because I know we are limited for time today and there is a need to probably pass this today. In the area of employment programs, the unemployment situation has worsened according to the July labour force statistics for the youth of this province, regrettably. There is also information from the Student Youth Employment Office that there were fewer job opportunities.

Therefore, it is very important that we address this question and ensure that we can do everything possible to create and provide job opportunities for young people in particular. The one major program that led to training on the job, led to permanent jobs, was the Job Training for Tomorrow Program.

I want to ask the Minister whether that program is still accepting applications. Is that program still active? Is it still operating? Is it still bringing in people who wish to get trained, and employers who want to get some subsidy? So these are usually small employers. They hire people, train them on the job for permanent, ongoing jobs.

Mrs. Oleson: I have been concerned in looking at the statistics too. I hope it is not forming a trend that youth employment gets worse. I must indicate to the Member though that we are not receiving applications for that program after the 30th of June. There are still, of course, ongoing jobs in that and the money is being used that way. But I will be indicating to the—and we can discuss

this more when we discuss the Estimates of this. As the Member says, if we ever get to them. I wonder if maybe I will spend the rest of my life debating the Community Services.

But anyway we are contemplating other job initiatives programs that hopefully will help people get jobs. We are hoping to put some more money into some of the other programs that were in place. I share the Member's concern with youth employment. We are looking at every way we can possibly improve the job market for young people, for all people who need jobs.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Just to clarify that. The program, Job Training for Tomorrow, stopped receiving applications as of June 30. As I understand it, and I just want to get this clarified, the Minister is saying that program is now terminated and will not be carried on. Is that correct?

Mrs. Oleson: It has received all the applications it will for this year. Then we will consider whether or not we would continue that program, or we will change the program and have another one in its place. But we still are going to be having programs for young people.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Chairman, I have a few questions for the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey).

During the last year, during successful . . . (inaudible) . . . Limestone training authority which combined with the Northern Affairs capital program to, I think, very effectively deliver some programs in the community. I am wondering if the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) will continue to allow his department to use the capital dollars along with the community-based Limestone training authority to deliver some projects to the Northern Affairs community.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): I am pleased that the Member for The Pas has finally seen fit to ask a question on Northern Affairs. I have been sitting here for several weeks now and wondered when he was going to be motivated to show some concern for the area in which he was elected to represent.

However, Mr. Chairman, I would like the Member to know that, as he is well aware, some of the particular Limestone work is winding down, particularly as it relates directly to the Limestone project. However there were some other activities dealing with, as he makes reference to, some specific community projects that were identified by some of those people. Our efforts will be put into some of those programs because there is a continued need for development of personnel, for the development of those people who have taken some of the programs. There is a definite need for both infrastructure and work activities in those communities. There are no plans to make any major changes other than try and enhance some of the activities that are taking place in some of the northern communities.

Mr. Harapiak: I thank the Minister for that answer. There is another area that I have a question in, and

that is the whole area of Grand Rapids Forebay, when Cedar Lake was flooded to provide the forebay for the Grand Rapids Band, the communities of Easterville, Grand Rapids, Moose Lake were affected to a great degree. There was compensation paid to these communities and it has been argued if the compensation was sufficient, and there are still discussions going on, there were efforts to try and develop some economic development opportunities in those areas. We are working in that direction, together with the communities.

The one community that was not compensated because the people who were in charge of the program at that time did not realize that the community of Cormorant would also be affected. In later years, it showed that the Department of Natural Resources have the facts to back this up, that the community of Cormorant was affected and their way of life was affected to a great degree. Taking that into consideration, we set up a committee to deal with this problem that the community of Cormorant faces. There was representation on committee from the community of Cormorant itself, the Department of Northern Affairs, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Energy and Mines. I am wondering if this committee will continue to function, and when they will be meeting.

* (1610)

Mr. Downey: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) for bringing that to my attention. I have had some communication dealing with those communities, particularly with my legislative assistant, the Honourable Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell), dealing with some specific issues in those areas. As far as the committee is concerned, I am not aware of the membership of that committee. I had not had any requests that I am aware of that have come to my attention or to my office from that community. However, I will follow up following these questions from the Member today to see if in fact the committee is still fully constituted, what comments or reports have come forward from them. We will do everything that we can to make sure that community is treated fairly and has the opportunity to fully put forward their concerns and deal with them at an appropriate time and manner.

Mr. Harapiak: A question to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner). In that same area, where a committee is studying the ramifications of the flooding in the community of Cormorant, there was a proposal received from Ducks Unlimited, more than a year ago, on how they would develop the Tom Lamb Wildlife Management Area. There is some concern being expressed in the communities of Moose Lake from both the Band and the community, and also the community of Cormorant, and The Pas Indian Band who have traditionally hunted and trapped in this area, that they would be consulted prior to any permit being given to Ducks Unlimited to proceed with a project that they put forward.

Has there been a committee set up, or will there be a committee set up to deal with this project when they are prepared to move forward on it?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): The question dealing with Cormorant Lake or Moose Lake, and the area of the project that the Honourable Member is referring to, is one that I was not aware of until very recently. I understand there has been a substantial amount of work and study given to the area. There was a proposal put, which was a fairly elaborate proposal, which would have run into just over \$20 million if the project had proceeded. It was a fairly large one, which also included the installation of some fairly large pumping facilities to raise and lower Moose Lake as was needed.

However, residents in that area, as you have indicated, were concerned about the project and consequently another study was done and was substantially modified. I am not aware at the current time to what extent this study has now proceeded, although I am told that it will be substantially smaller than what was first indicated. I am not sure of how much communication there has been between the communities that you are discussing. There has been no committee established yet to deal with this matter or to consult with. Until the matter has proceeded along further than where we are now, I really do not think there would be much point in going to the communities and establishing a committee. I think what we need to do is wait until the study that is now in process has been completed and then assess where we need to go from there.

Mr. Harapiak: One additional question: I would like, in connection with the same area, I hope that you will not be making any movement to grant Ducks Unlimited authority to proceed with that until that committee is in and the local people have the opportunity to have their input.

One other area that was affected by the same flooding, the forebay, was the Grand Rapids area and in compensation for the damage that would be done to the fisheries industry because of the dam being built, the Grand Rapids hatchery was built and it was supposed to be supporting the commercial fishing industry in that area. Over the last few years, it has been closed down during the winter months but in speaking to the people who are directly affected by it, they say that if we were to use pickerel spawning in the spring of the year, whitefish in the Fall of the year, and trout during the other period of time, that could be viable on a year-round basis if Hydro would pick up some of their commitment that they had made originally and pay for the heating of the plant.

I know that there has been some structural damage to the hatchery over the last couple of years because of closing down during the winter months. I am wondering if the Minister has had any further consultations with Hydro to see if they will live up to the commitment that they first made to support the commercial fishing industry in the area and if it can be looked at to utilize the trout to a much greater degree by having the new strain of trout that they have in that area now be used as a brood stock, and to further enhance the trout propagation throughout all of Manitoba.

Mr. Penner: The Honourable Member raises a point that I think has been of considerable interest in the

Grand Rapids area. Ever since the Hydro dam was built, water levels on the downstream side of the dam have been reduced. However, I think it is also fair to say that the upstream area of the Grand Rapids area has substantially been increased. Fish stocks, for instance on Cedar Lake, have increased drastically and whereby the allowable quota was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 200,000 lbs. some four years ago, the allowable take of all species of fish is now in the neighbourhood of two million to 300 million lbs. We are taking now every year commercially some hundred million lbs. of pickerel out of the Cedar Lake area so that commercial fishery industry has increased substantially.

I think it is also fair to indicate to the Honourable Member that the previous administration made a conscious decision to decrease spending or decrease costs at the hatchery and decided to close during parts of the year the fish hatchery. As you know, when the hatchery was initially started up and built and it was basically built by—as an agreement of the dam being built that was put in place, that there was some \$20 million walleye fries raised a year in that hatchery, which contributed somewhat to the fish population on Lake Winnipeg.

* (1620)

However, since the previous administration some two years ago decided to decrease costs of operations in that hatchery and reduce the employment there and closed for parts of the year, the facility has been used partially to raise at times some trout. We actually exchange, have sort of an exchange program going now with Alberta of fish hatched in that hatchery. We now do not really keep any pickerel breeding stock in that facility. We now take the eggs out of the lake and bring them in and hatch them and then release them. That is basically the only activities that go on over there at present.

There have been no discussions, or no discussions while I have been in office, with Hydro to find out whether they would be willing to provide electricity for heating of the facility during winter months. Of course, if we did that and if we reverted back to the operation of the plant during the winter, it would increase our cost again substantially. We would have to, I suppose, as a Government, make a conscious decision as to whether we would contribute in a long-term basis to the fisheries in the province by opening that facility again on a yearly basis.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): My question is to the Honourable Minister for Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), and I appreciate her cooperation.

This House is new. We have not been standing here very long, but we have had great discussions on women's shelters, women's abuse shelters. I would hope to think that we, the Opposition, have encouraged the Minister to take certain directions, but I also congratulate the Minister on what I am sure has been hours of long, hard work. I congratulate her in particular for the support she is giving the centres.

However, my question to the Minister for clarification of policy and perhaps to direct her in forming policy

on the ongoing year should she have that opportunity is to ask her what the procedures are for determining the amount of grants given to the various communities. In particular, I am thinking of Osborne House. Is it just a lump grant given or is it based on bed nights or amount of people, population density? Is there some formula that these grants are given? Could she explain that, please.

Mrs. Oleson: The centres are run—and I would have to stand corrected if I do not give full information because I do not have it in front of me of course, but centres like Osborne House get a per diem. For instance, a centre like Osborne House that is pretty well full and overflowing all the time, they get considerable per diems so they can operate well.

What I have seen since I have come into this department is a major problem with the smaller centres of which she is aware, of the Selkirk one. One of the problems with some of the smaller ones is that they also are on a per diem and there is a discrepancy in per diems in the province. Problems with the smaller shelters is that they may not be always full, so they do not get as much in the way of per diem and this causes them problems, not that I would want to say for a moment that we would want them to be full. But that is one of the problems that has arisen and why some of them are in such financial difficulty.

I hope in the next short while to get a better handle on what we can do. First of all, exactly what is the problem—to identify their funding better and get a better handle on how they are operating, and then to figure out some way of stabilizing them so that they do not have so many problems in the future.

One of the reasons for my announcement last week was to go some way this year, in the shorter term, in giving them that extra funding to try and stabilize them and get them on a course where they can be sustained. That, I know, is not just the only answer. I think the answer is they need a different funding formula, perhaps a different way of operation. I am not sure at this point what the answer is, but I certainly, over the next short period of time, want to have a really good look at that and see what we can do to help those shelters.

Mrs. Charles: I thank you for the response.

I guess what I am looking at is it was brought to my attention, in phoning Family Dispute Services, over the last three months of this fiscal year, Osborne House has had 2,047 bed nights. In the rest of the province, there has been 51 bed nights in hotels, 395 bed nights in safe homes, and 932 in the rest of the shelters in the province. Obviously, Osborne House is providing more bed nights, and I understand the per diem will compensate for some of that amount, but the overall grant, if I am correct and I hope I am, is about \$89,051, I think, went to Osborne House with some \$9,000 of that being nonrecurring.

I appreciate that you are trying to fund equally and find a balance there, but I want to point out the difference that Osborne House is from the rural areas and the rural areas from Osborne House and encourage

the Minister to come up with some long-term strategy, I guess, fearing that we do not want any recurrence of the foster care problems where things were not kept up to date, per diems and per-child quotas were not kept up to date, and our future Government may fall behind. I hope we can work together in solving this problem.

Even over the '87-88 year, 7,753 bed nights were in Osborne House and there were 5,217 in the rest of the province. So, over the years, we are seeing that Osborne House continually gives more in bed nights. I was just wondering whether that was taken into account with the block grant they were given, or was this just giving out the money this time and, as you say, sustaining and stabilizing? I point out to the Minister that I am not trying to corner her; I just am trying to find information on this.

Mrs. Oleson: Not having all the figures in front of me, I cannot really indicate just exactly how much they get or agree or disagree with her figures. One of the things, of course, Osborne House gets funding for is the programs that they run for abused women and that sort of thing enters into their grant funds.

I agree with the Member that there needs to be a great deal of work done to try and get this thing on track, because that has been one of the problems with those shelters in the past, has been underfunding. I do not think enough attention was given to them in order to get them on a solid footing so that they could continue.

It seems to me, and we all wanted them to be there, but I do not think sufficient planning went into it. We certainly do not want to have any of them fall by the wayside because they are desperately needed, unfortunately. I would love to be able to stand up here and say we do not need any more shelters for abused women any more. That is the goal, of course. In the meantime, when the problem does exist, and we must recognize it, that is one thing that I want to set my mind to is trying to get some stable way that we can fund those shelters so that we can keep them viable and provide the service that is so badly needed.

* (1630)

Mrs. Charles: Mr. Chairperson, can I ask the Minister if we will be able to see, over the next period of time, a formula that will bring these onto an even balance, that there is some adjustment in the per diem so that they are fair and equal from rural to city, perhaps some pay schedule that will bring the workers in these homes up to at least minimum wage, because I understand they put in so many volunteer hours, really, on top of the duties they do?

I hope that in this department, of all departments, we are not using women as underpaid servants of the public. I would encourage the Minister to come forward with a formula so that perhaps discussion can be taken over the months before the next budget comes down so that we can have some settlement amongst all the shelters and in this House as well.

Mrs. Oleson: I cannot give the Member a firm timetable for exactly when we will come up with a formula. I will

undertake, of course, to tell her again that we will certainly be taking a look at, and it will depend on what funding we can come up with. That is always the bottom line; we have to look at what the costs are.

I think, if we have some sort of a plan that we could go on whereby we could phase things in and not maybe have to do it instantly, that might be the answer. At least then people would know where they were at, and I think that has been one of the problems. There has been no real firm plan of where we are going, they were sort of done ad hoc, and I think this has created the problems.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): My questions are to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). It has been an ongoing practice, for the past 10 years now, at least, maybe 11 years, that a number of schools in northern Manitoba have a shortened school year. Those communities, as of the latest breakdown, were Brochet, South Indian Lake, Cold Lake—which is just outside of Sherridon—Granville Lake and Moose Lake.

In those communities, it has been found that in the month of June, because of the traditional lifestyle, the schools empty out because the students who would normally be going to school to finish a school year go out on the trapline or go out fishing with their parents.

About 10 years ago, it was determined that, in keeping with the cultural values and the traditional lifestyles of those communities, that a shortened school year would be instituted. That called for an extension of school days by a number of minutes, 15 minutes or 30 minutes each day, or over a number of days, to make up for the lost time.

The system worked very well. The system gained the acceptance of not only the Frontier School Division, which is responsible for those schools which I just mentioned, but also it gained the support of staff, it gained the support of teachers and principals, it gained the support of community residents and the parents. More importantly—in fact, most importantly in this instance—it saw an increase in the school attendance during the month of June go from under 60 percent, or in that area, up to 80 percent or 85 percent. Excuse me, it saw the attendance over the year go up that much, whereas in the month of June you had much lesser attendance, which brought the average down over the year.

The schools require the permission of the Minister of Education to shorten the school year. That has been a matter of course for the last 10 years, and in every instance the permission was sought and the permission was granted.

It is my understanding that this year the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has indicated that he will not approve those adjustments to the school year under the system that has been in place for the last 10 years, and he has done so without consultation with the communities and without consultation, of an extensive nature, with representatives of the Frontier School Division.

My question to the Minister, directly, is he prepared to rethink that decision and is he prepared to grant

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those communities the opportunity to have extended hours and a shortened school year, as they have for the past 10 years, for at least the upcoming year, during which time he can more fully acquaint himself with that situation and undertake the consultations and the discussions that should certainly precede any decision on his part that would change the status quo in this area.

Mr. Derkach: It is true that there has been a shortened school year in the northern communities that the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has mentioned. It is also a fact that we want to recognize and respect the way of life of the people in northern Manitoba. However, as has been the case for 10 years, the school year ended in the first week of June, I believe, and the time was partially made up by extending the school day by 10 minutes in many cases.

What has happened is that in many instances, when you take a look at the number of teacher in-service days and a request for an extended Christmas holiday and a shortened school year, instructional time to students has been severely limited. In not allowing the system to continue the way it was, our intention is to improve or increase the instructional time that students are going to receive in northern Manitoba.

However, the time can be made up in different ways. It does not mean that school has to go on in the last three weeks in June. We can still accommodate that area of request in that parents may wish to take their kids out in June because of their way of life. That still can be accommodated.

What has to be addressed is the fact that the school year has to be made up in other ways. That may mean that teachers may in fact be asked to conduct their in-service days at other times than they normally schedule. It may mean that school may have to start a little earlier, or it may mean that the school day may have to be made up in larger chunks rather than the 10 minutes that was the case in many situations. So as long as there is a meaningful amount of time in which the school year is made up, I see no problem in continuing the process that has been in place.

I have spoken to the chairman of the board of the Frontier School Division, and we have agreed that we will meet on this issue and will discuss ways in which this can be accommodated in a more favourable way so that students in fact get the optimum amount of instructional time that is possible.

Mr. Cowan: It is my understanding that the shortened school year is made up in segments of 30 minutes, approximately, per day. I think, if the Minister goes back and checks the record, he will find that it is indeed in many circumstances 30, some circumstances 15.

I want to just make comment on a couple of points he made. No. 1, school has started now. The teachers went back to the school, the parents sent their kids back to school, indeed, the kids went back to school on the basis of an assumption that the shortened school year, as has been in place for the past 10 years, would be in place this year. There was no indication on the

part of the Minister previously, and perhaps this issue was not brought to his attention previously, but there was no indication to the schools, at least, that they were going to be faced with this sort of a problem.

I have had contact with, for example, the principal of one of those schools who said to me that when that principal learned about this problem, he talked to staff, the staff were quite upset, the parents are upset, the community is upset. I also talked to residents from that community directly, and they told me that they were quite upset with what they considered to be an arbitrary decision on the part of the Minister which came, at the very least, on very short notice.

What I would suggest to the Minister is that, for the purposes of this year, that he allow the present system to continue, that those communities which I listed earlier, the communities of Brochet, South Indian Lake, Cold Lake, Granville Lake and Moose Lake be allowed to continue with exactly the same system that they had in the previous 10 years. During the course of this year, he would have the opportunity to undertake consultation with representatives of the community, with parents, with teachers, with staff, to determine if in fact the system should be changed.

* (1640)

I would hope that would be done early enough so that if there were changes that could be agreed to by all those groups, that the Minister would then be able to give notice early enough that they could plan accordingly. But given that we are already in the school year, given that this came as a surprise to many residents, many teachers, many supervisors, given that there is a great deal of concern, that it does have a negative impact on morale, it does have a negative impact on the traditional lifestyle and the ability of residents to carry on a traditional lifestyle and to enhance their cultural values, I would ask the Minister directly if he would be prepared now to rescind his earlier decision, or at least amend his earlier decision, to allow the school years to carry on in the way in which they have and to undertake consultations during the next year to determine if a change in the system can be agreed upon by all the Parties.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): The Member from Churchill (Mr. Cowan) does not make an unreasonable request, and that is for sure. I can assure the Member from Churchill that the request to address the situation is still there. I have talked to Mr. Zong (phonetic); we have agreed to meet with him and his board and the superintendent of Frontier School Division to address the situation in terms of how the school year would be made up.

There is some discrepancy in terms of the length of time that various schools have extended their school day by. Our information has been that in many instances it was as little 10 minutes per day, which really does not make up the adequate amount of time. So those are the real issues that we have to address, is how do we provide the optimum amount of instructional time to those students.

In addition there was a request for another school division in northern Manitoba to extend their Christmas

holiday to three weeks. So therefore, if we do that, again in this situation we have to investigate ways in which we could extend the school year so that in fact that school time is made up.

But, yes, we do not want to interfere into a way of life in northern Manitoba, which is special, which is unique, in upsetting the apple cart. In terms of it being an abrupt decision, it was not because a letter went out quite some time ago—and I am sorry I do not have the letter in front of me right now to give you the exact date, but that was done I believe in July, and staff should have been notified long ago that in fact this was going to be the case.

Having discussed this with members from the northern communities as well as members from Frontier School Division, I am confident that we can work this out so that the request of the people from northern Manitoba can be accommodated in a reasonable fashion. We do not want to be unreasonable in the way we deal with these communities.

Mr. Cowan: I am clear in my mind then, the Minister is saying that the status quo can continue until he has had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Zong, and chairperson of the Frontier School Division Board, and an opportunity to discuss with the other groups that are affected, the local school committees, the parents, the teachers and the staff, how they might make changes in the future in order to ensure that there is optimum time for children to attend school in these communities. I just ask for a nod of the head, is that what the Minister is saying, that the status quo can continue, and if changes result in those discussions, there will be consensus changes to the extent possible, and that there may be an amendment of the system on an ongoing basis issue, or may continue this year for changes coming in the future year. But as far as he is concerned, they continue with the shortened school year this year, on the basis as it has been structured for the past 10 years.

Mr. Derkach: No, before that decision is made as to whether or not we will continue with the shortened school year, or the extended school year, we want to ensure that there is a plan in place. That is why my staff are going to be attempting to have a meeting with not only the superintendent but also the chairman of Frontier School Division as quickly as possible.

I understand school is starting. If we lose a few minutes a day for the next week or two, it is not going to throw the whole thing out of balance. We are a long way away from June at the present time and there will be communication with the northern communities to ensure that once a final decision is made in this matter that the communication will go out quickly. But I also have to indicate to the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that we do want to hear from the people from northern Manitoba and our vehicle is through the Frontier School Division, because they do in fact represent people from across the North.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Chairperson, that is not satisfactory. The Minister says he does not want to interfere. Those

were his words. There is a circumstance that has existed for 10 years. It has met with the acceptance of the communities, it has met with the acceptance of the parents, it has met with the acceptance of the teachers, it has met with the acceptance of the principals, it has met with the acceptance of the Frontier School Division, and it has resulted in an increase in school attendance on average over year from, say, 60 percent to 70 percent up to 80 percent to 90 percent. So it has worked, it has deemed acceptance by all the groups because it does in fact reflect their special needs, their cultural values, their traditional lifestyles.

The Ministers says that if they lose a few minutes a day over the next little while until he has had an opportunity to better acquaint himself with this situation, then I would suggest that nothing would be out of balance. I would suggest that he does not understand the situation. It is already out of balance; he has thrown it out of kilter; he has upset the cart; he has said to those groups that they cannot continue with the process that has been ongoing for 10 years, and they are now starting to revise their whole schedule. They are revising teachers' schedules. They are determining when they take their holidays differently than they would. Everything is a mess in those communities with the school system because this Minister has interfered in an arbitrary fashion which runs counter to the cultural and traditional lifestyles of those residents. That is not acceptable.

What we are asking him to do is very, very simple. We are asking him to acquaint himself with the situation better, so that he does know that it is working and it does have that general acceptance. This includes the situation with the Sundance School which worked well last year and was found to be satisfactory. We are asking him to continue with the process, to undertake the consultations and the reviews, and if he finds there is a better way of doing things which is acceptable to those communities and the Frontier School Division, then fine, implement it.

But if there is not a better way found than to continue on with the process that has been in place for the last 10 years, this year, if the Minister does not do that, I am afraid that he is interfering not only with the cultural values and the traditional lifestyles of those communities, but he is doing a disservice to students, staff, and those who try to give a better education to northern residents in those communities.

He says—and I will end on this point because I know the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) wants to address it as well and others—that he is attempting to provide the optimum time for students in those communities. He thinks that by a shortened school year and increasing the day by either 10, 15, 20, 25 or 30 minutes they are not providing that optimum time. Well, optimum time is not just an equation that considers only the school hours. Optimum time is an equation that considers how many people are in school for how many hours. What he is more concerned with, in a very rigid sense, is the school hours and what he is less concerned with is getting kids into those schools in a way that they can participate in educational opportunities that are important to them in their community and at the same

time allowing them to participate in traditional educational opportunities such as going out on a trap line, going out fishing, which are important to them as well.

So I give notice to the Minister that we will not accept that sort of approach, that arbitrary approach, that interferes with the role of the Frontier School Division, the local school committees, and the students generally. He is in for a bit of a fight on this because his approach is one that reflects very badly in a Government which suggests that it is going to consult and be open and at the same time takes a very arbitrary decision that interferes with the process that has been working extremely well for 10 years.

* (1650)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I am afraid the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), as usual, does not listen. He simply wants to stand up and put rhetoric on the record.

I had indicated to the Member for Churchill that I am meeting with the chairman of the Frontier School Division, that there is nothing cast in stone that there is a problem. Although something has been in place for 10 years, there have been abuses of the system in terms of the amount of time that students are spending in class, an instructional class, and that is what we have to do to correct.

We can do that in several ways. I have indicated that we can do that in several ways, and it is going to be the choice of people in the North and the Frontier School Division as to how they wish to make up their time. That is a point of discussion that we are going to take under discussion through our consultation process.

The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says it has been in place for 10 years. I know of a lot of things that have been in place for 10 years that are not working in our society that we have to change. I know a lot of things that have been in place in this society for six years that finally Manitobans changed.

Mr. Chairman, I have to tell you that we are not in an inflexible position. We are going to meet with the Frontier School Division. We are going to accommodate the people from northern Manitoba. It is just going to take a matter of a few days or a week before that is done. There is nothing in the system that is inflexible, and my desire is to consult with the people from northern Manitoba, through the Frontier School Division, and ensure their needs are in fact met. I am not, in any way, suggesting that we are inflexible as the Member for Churchill wants to do.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has boxed himself into a corner and he did so by an arbitrary use of the discretionary power that the Minister of Education has. It is extremely unfortunate and I think it reflects the attitude of this Government and that Minister of northern Manitoba that he chose to use that discretion, to use that arbitrary power without, in the first instance, consulting with the people who have been making the decisions in a very responsible manner when it comes to the education of their children.

The Minister of Education sent out a letter directing the superintendent and the school board what was going to occur, not leaving open any door for consultation or change of opinion. So let us not have the Minister of Education now stand and pretend that there is this unlimited flexibility on the Minister's part. The fact is that without any substantive information which supports his conclusion that somehow there have been abuses or that the current circumstances do not meet the educational needs of those children, he has arbitrarily made a decision about the length of the school year in one instance and the length of Christmas holidays in another instance.

I give credit to my colleague from Churchill (Mr. Cowan) who put on the record the question of whether this Minister was going to maintain the status quo rather than arbitrarily enforce his own decision, which was not based on any substantive statistics or information he gathered from anywhere, but on his own whim that he leave the situation as it is.

We know that the situation has worked in those communities. My colleague gave statistics about the increased attendance, the reduction of absenteeism in those schools.

I think we had better get from this Minister some clarification about the role he sees for Frontier School Division. Is it a school board with responsibility for delivering education? What is the role? (a) Is this Minister going to continue to undermine their authority? (b) What is the role of the school committee? Do they not have some responsibility for making those decisions and recommending to the Frontier School Division about the time for school closure, the number of days and the times that the students will attend? Is the new Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) saying he is not going to take the advice and counsel of those people who have served their communities for years and years?

Perhaps the first question the Minister should answer is on what basis did he make this decision? What substantive information does he possess which the Frontier School Board does not possess, that the principals do not possess, the communities do not possess? What substantive information made the Minister make this foolish decision without any consultation?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, to the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) who once said, "Read my lips," I suggest that he open his ears because he has not had that them open in the last few minutes.

First of all, I would like to indicate to the Member for Flin Flon, if he can hear well today, that I have indicated that Mr. Zong, the chairman of Frontier School Division, the member of the board who the former Government did not authorize any authority to, is going to meet with me and with the superintendent of Frontier School Division to discuss this whole issue of lengthening the school year. I hope that is clear to the Member for Flin Flon.

Secondly, in determining their own destiny in terms of educational needs in northern Manitoba, that has not been tampered with in any way, shape or form. As

a matter of fact, our desire is to ensure that students have more exposure to instructional time, more time spent in the school year in school. We recognize that there is a different way of life in northern Manitoba where students may move away from a community in the spring of the year. That has to certainly be taken into account, and we are prepared to do that. There is not any inflexibility in that. I think I have mentioned this three or four times now.

I have had already one meeting with the Frontier School Division on a different matter, a matter which could not be resolved when the former Government was in place, and we will resolve it. This is just another matter and Mr. Zong has expressed a real desire to meet and talk about this. As a matter of fact, he is not upset by the situation that is at hand. It is just one of those issues that has to be addressed, and we will address it in the very near future. The process is already in place; it has been in place for several days.

I can assure the Member that we will be getting back to you in the next day or two, or in the next week.

Mr. Storie: The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) did not answer the question. I asked specifically, the Minister, what information he had that made him override a longstanding decision to allow those communities to operate their schools in a matter which satisfied them and the educational needs of their children. He clearly had no such information.

Let it be clear to everyone that the Minister of Education arbitrarily used his discretionary power before he consulted. He now tells me to open my ears and understand that he is prepared to meet.

Why was the Minister not prepared to meet? Why did the Minister not consider meeting with the Frontier School Board and the school committees of the communities affected before he made this foolish, foolish decision? That is the question that needs to be answered.

Mr. Chairman: Is the committee ready to consider the Bill clause-by-clause?

Order, please. Is it the will of the committee to adopt the Bill? (Agreed)

Is it the will of the committee to report the Bill for third reading? (Agreed)

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I believe, if you were to check with Honourable Members, you would see that there would be leave, on the part of all Honourable Members, to proceed with all questions necessary to dispose of Interim Supply prior to Private Members' Hour.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? (Agreed)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Mark Minenko (Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 7, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1988, and reports the same without amendment.

I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

THIRD READING

BILL NO. 7—THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988

Bill No. 7 was read a third time and passed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's gallery, where we have with us today Dr. Olafur Olafson, Director-General of Public Health for Iceland, and Mrs. Olafson, who are accompanied by Dr. Albert Kristjansson.

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

I am advised that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor is about to arrive to grant Royal Assent to Bill No. 7. I am therefore interrupting the proceedings of the House for the Royal Assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Roy MacGillivray): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

His Honour, George Johnson, Esquire, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in the following words:

Mr. Speaker: May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in Session assembled, approach Your Honour with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and Government, and beg of Your Honour the acceptance of this Bill:

Bill No. 7, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1988; Loi de 1988 portant affectation anticipée de crédits.

Mr. Clerk, William Remnant: His Honour the Lieutenant Governor doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence, and assents to this bill in Her Majesty's name.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Dauphin, Resolution No. 6, Rural Postal Service—the Honourable Member for Dauphin.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): There seems to be a suggestion by some Members that we call it six o'clock, with leave. I would like to, of course, have the opportunity to speak on this matter when Private Members' Hour comes forward next, tomorrow. With leave, I would be prepared to do it.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock?

The Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): As I understand it, the Honourable Member is asking leave of the House that the list remain as it is so that

his resolution would retain its place on the Order Paper. If Honourable Members would agree to that, then I think we could find consent in the House to call it six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? (Agreed)

When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) will have his full time allotted.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

ERRATUM

Remarks ascribed to Mr. Manness on page 607, Wednesday, August 17, 1988, which read "Mr. Deputy Speaker, I indicated that there were no charges laid, that nothing was proven in this regard. But I want it" These words were spoken by Mr. Maloway.