



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

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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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	LIBERAL
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

Monday, November 7, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I have a statement for the House. I should like to inform all Honourable Members that I have received a communication from the Honourable Hugh Edighoffer, Speaker of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, with respect to the proposed Constitutional Amendment 1987.

In addition, Mr. Speaker Edighoffer has been kind enough to provide me with a copy of the report of the Ontario Select Committee on Constitutional Reform regarding the Constitutional Amendment 1987, which was adopted by the Ontario House on June 29, 1988.

I am pleased today to table both of these documents. Members wishing to examine them may do so by contacting the Clerk of the House (Mr. W. Remnant).

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have, from the West Park School, seventy Grade 6 students under the direction of Mr. Ken Doell. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

CN Rail Layoffs Manitoba Employees

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my first question is to the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). Wescott Fashions, Doerksen & Gronau, and now CN Rail—last week was quite a week for Manitoba's labour force.

Thousands of Manitobans earn their living in this city and in other communities like The Pas from CN Rail. Already many have been put out of work. As for the others, for years they have been haunted by constant speculation that it is only a matter of time before they too would be out of work. Recent reports of 17,000 being laid off does little but aggravate the situation. CN employees have a right to know what lies ahead and not from leaked memos or memos otherwise received. They need to hear from Government and CN representatives.

My question to the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) is what assurances is he able to provide

today that there will not be this massive layoff that an internal memo said would be created at CN Manitoba?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): There seems to be conflicting stories as to what is going to happen. Senior officials from CN have indicated that there will be no layoffs.

* (1335)

Future Job Losses

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, that is not quite what they said. They said that in five years, between now and then, there would in fact be 4,000 layoffs. Can the Minister tell us how many—

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

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, according to the report given to the House of Commons by CN Rail, there will be 4,000 fewer jobs in the next five years. How many of those jobs will be in Manitoba?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): It was my understanding that there would be no layoffs, that they will use attrition in some cases to allow some of the jobs to elapse.

I have indicated already at a time previously that I have made an arrangement with the CN people from Manitoba here that before any changes will take place in Manitoba that will affect the employment factor, that I will have an opportunity to discuss it with them because I am as concerned as anybody else that there be no layoffs, that there be no jobs lost. I will do whatever I can in terms of negotiating with CN and discussing this with them.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a supplementary question to the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). The memo talks about 5 years to 10 years and it talks about 17,000. Has this Minister met with CN national officials or will he meet with them, not local but national, and will he find out how many jobs in this province are forecast to be lost?

Mr. Albert Driedger: I can indicate that I will try and find out exactly what impact it will have. I will also try and have written documentation based on the comments made by CN officials that there will be no layoffs in Manitoba.

Awasis Agency Meeting Government Officials

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a question to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). Once again, and

tragically, the Awasis Child and Family Service Agency has made the news. The incidents that have been reported over the past months are tragic and I am certain that the Minister would agree that everything must be done to improve the level and quality of services that this agency provides to our Native children living throughout this province.

My question to the Minister of Community Services is: has she met in the past weeks with Awasis officials to discuss the problems in the agency, and if she has, what resolution has been reached?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): Yes, I share the Member's concern with another tragedy in that agency. I should indicate to the Member that I had recently met with officials from Awasis last month, and after that meeting I indicated to my staff that they should meet with officials of Awasis, plus the officials from the federal Government, to review the operation of the agency and any help that can be given it.

New Protocols

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the same Minister. Can the Minister table in this House today new protocols which have been established for the Awasis Agency so that events that we have learned about in the weekend and previously cannot occur again?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): We are all anxious that these events do not occur again. My concern is that the problems at Awasis Agency be resolved and the care and protection of children, of course, is utmost in our minds.

I have not with me anything that I can table today with respect to the Member's question, but I can take it under advisement.

Standards

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). Standards of service, training of workers, training dollars, appropriate staffing: all are required, and everyone knows that.

Will this Government, under this Minister, commit themselves today to meet with the Department of Indian Affairs, who are the primary funders of the Awasis Agency, to ensure that those standards and training dollars are put in place immediately?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): As I had indicated in my first answer, that is part of what is going on at the present time. We are reviewing and recommendations will come from those meetings with federal officials.

* (1340)

Manfor Ltd. Negotiations for Sale

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is for the Minister responsible for Manfor. Certainly, Manitobans have been concerned over the last period of time with the negotiating style of the present Government—the evaluation of the Manfor plant down to \$1, the lack of any specific information on the forestry cut area, the highway weight size and other important factors for Manitobans.

My question to the Minister responsible for Manfor: can he advise the House on the status of negotiations in light of all the rumours that are in the North about an imminent sale, and can he also advise the House whether there is any federal funding involved in the modernization and capitalization of the Manfor plant as part of the negotiations for the sale of Manfor?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for Crown Corporations): Negotiations with interested parties continue. As I said the last time that I discussed this issue on the floor, we will not disclose the specific items working towards divestiture of Manfor. We are still fully committed to seeing a major infusion of capital that will guarantee the long-term viability of the operation plus the long-term viability of the jobs. With respect to the other matters, we will not talk in an open fashion about them.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Member should realize that the forest area, the highways, many of the other important decisions that he is making are Manitoba assets and Manitobans have a right to know the status of their assets, not be left in the dark by this "open Government."

Federal Funding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question to the Minister is in light of the fact that Domtar received millions of dollars in federal funding for modernization by the federal Government of a plant located in the Province of Quebec, and in light of the fact that all evidence is clear that the Province of Quebec is receiving close to 34 percent of federal financing, up from 29 percent under the former Liberal Government, almost three times more than the western provinces, can the Minister confirm whether any federal funding has been obtained as part of the deal in light of the precedent that the federal Government has established with Quebec with the Domtar plant?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for Crown Corporations): It should come as no surprise to anybody that this Government is pursuing a course whereby, hopefully, there will be federal activity with respect to an increase in the activities within the paper industry that might occur within The Pas region.

I say to the Member opposite, though, he knows fully well nothing has changed. We will not discuss in public the private matters and the private discussions that we have with people interested in the purchasing of Manfor. Indeed, his colleague, the former Minister responsible

for Manfor, would not discuss in public those types of discussions. We will not either.

Mr. Doer: The former Member did discuss the criteria and the conditions for sale, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that those are rights that Manitobans have. Our forestry cut area is a right of all Manitobans, not just the purview of a particular Government at a particular time.

Work Force Size Guarantee

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question to the Minister responsible for Manfor: is the Minister, as a part of a condition of the sale, obtaining the same cut area in terms of the Manfor plant; and (2) is he requiring from his negotiators a guarantee, in contract, in written form, of the work force size, including the work force at the sawmill, in writing?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for Crown Corporations): Yes, and yes.

Contracting Out Employees

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): A final question to the Minister. Is there any change in the policy of the Government in regard to the work force operating in the woodlands area? Is there any truth to the rumour that two-thirds of those staff may be potentially contracted out in terms of the work force in the cut area? I said rumour, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for Crown Corporations): I will not respond to any rumours. I expect to respond to questions of fact.

* (1345)

RCMP Protection The Pas

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is for the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). In the Speech from the Throne, this Government made a commitment to strengthening police services, and in particular rural police services in Manitoba. Just Friday of last week, the Attorney-General cited the work on improving rural RCMP services as an early accomplishment of his department. Again, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we see words without action or, in this case, words and then action to the contrary.

My question is, why have six RCMP telecommunications officers been ordered removed from The Pas, a town with a violent crime rate over 3.5 times the provincial average which we know is already the worst in the country? What will this Attorney-General be doing to replace the 24-hour availability of police at The Pas police station, if anything?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): The telecommunications personnel to which the Honourable Member refers are being redeployed. It has absolutely no effect on services provided to the people in the The Pas area.

Mr. Edwards: I beg to differ with the interpretation of the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). It does not meet with what the mayor feels. It certainly does not meet with common sense. The police station will not have police officers for 24 hours.

My further question is, given that the overall crime rate in The Pas is 2.7 times the provincial average and the Town of The Pas has had its provincial grant capped at \$100,000 and will be required to employ two further clerks to do some of the work that the six officers did, will the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) reconsider his decision to strip The Pas of these officers and at least reconsider his decision to not listen to the request by the town council to at least keep three of these in The Pas?

Mr. McCrae: I could tell the Honourable Member that I have had one meeting with the mayor of The Pas about this issue. I can also tell the Honourable Member that the crime rate in The Pas will be unaffected by this move.

Mr. Edwards: I am certain the crime rate will be unaffected. It is crime prevention and dealing with the victims of crime that the police are concerned with and that the loss will be felt in.

Mr. Speaker, to add insult to injury, crime prevention in The Pas—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Edwards: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Would you kindly put it now?

Mr. Edwards: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Crime Prevention Programs The Pas

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My final question is: when will this Attorney-General fulfill his commitment, given again just a week or so ago at the crime prevention breakfast to make crime prevention a first priority, and come through on that commitment in particular, for the Town of The Pas, which as of today has zero full-time officers working in the crime prevention, yet has the highest crime rate per capita in this province?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): I appreciate the comments of the Honourable Member. I see that he has come around to agreeing with the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba with respect to crime prevention.

I really have to tell the Honourable Member that these communications personnel, the services of communications are still being provided and will still be provided and there will be absolutely no reduction in service whatsoever. The Honourable Member might be able to assist, if he wants to have a discussion with me, about how the communications officers have taken part in crime prevention programs that are sponsored by the RCMP.

Royal Order of the Buffalo Hunt Governor of Maryland

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). Some years ago, we established an order in this province called the Royal Order of the Buffalo Hunt. It was an award to be given to Manitobans who had given dedicated service in a variety of fields. In fact, the most recent beneficiary, to my knowledge, was one Eric Wells who was given it in recognition of his incredible contribution to the broadcasting industry here in the Province of Manitoba. Can the First Minister tell us why he has used it as a wager with the Governor of Nevada?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I made no wager with the Governor of Nevada.

* (1350)

Undignified Use

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): We, on this side of the House, have been issued with a press statement that says Premier Filmon will award and accord Governor Schaefer with a similarly rare honour of becoming a Scout in the Royal Order of the Buffalo Hunt. This side would like to know why all previous recipients have been demeaned in this manner.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, Governor Schaefer of Maryland last week approached my office suggesting that we have a friendly exchange whereby, depending on the outcome of tonight's battle between Donny Lalonde—and I hope that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has some support for the efforts of Donny Lalonde because of what he has done as an individual in support of, for instance, the fight against child abuse and many contributions that he has made to the community. Therefore, I might correct her on a number of counts.

She said that it is only awarded to Manitobans; indeed, that is not the case. There have been many people from outside Manitoba who have been given this award. If she would go through the list of recipients, there are many people who are visiting dignitaries, governors or other levels of people who have visited this province who were accorded that award by previous administrations.

There are various levels within the Order of the Buffalo Hunt, some of which are more distinguished levels than others, I might indicate. Since the Governor was offering to have the Premier of Manitoba made, I believe, Captain of the Chesapeake, which is their equivalent of the award, on behalf of the province, we offered to have the Governor of Maryland made a Scout of the Order of the Buffalo Hunt should their state's representative be victorious in tonight's fight.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, this has nothing to do with Donny Lalonde and everything to do with a Premier who has no sense of dignity for this province. This is

an award of dignity and should not be awarded on the basis of a wager.

Why did this First Minister (Mr. Filmon) wager away and put on the line an award that many Manitobans think to be of significant value? Why did he eliminate its significance?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the significant value of such an event is to call attention, for instance, to the work that Donny Lalonde has done in the fight on child abuse. As a matter of fact, I might indicate that I publicly announced three or four weeks ago that Donny Lalonde was being initiated into the Order of the Buffalo Hunt, and that is win, lose or draw, because we believe that he has done a great deal on behalf of Manitobans.

Whether or not he is successful in this particular event, we believe that what he has done in terms of recognizing the importance of the fight against child abuse is important. The attention that he has called to it regardless of the fact that he is a prize fighter is important to the people of Manitoba and indeed to the abused children of this province.

Donny Lalonde is going to be here to receive his Order of the Buffalo Hunt in a matter of days and that was announced some three or four weeks ago.

* (1355)

CN Rail Layoffs Minister's Awareness

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). I was surprised to hear earlier in Question Period today the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) raised the prospect of employee reductions of some 17,000 by CN across the country because it was her colleague, the Minister of Transportation at that time, Lloyd Axworthy, who pushed forward with deregulation in this country with undue haste, pushed forward with deregulation in the rail industry, followed, without losing a step, by Don Mazankowski and John Crosbie with the same plan. I find it very strange that the Liberal Leader now is taking the other side on this issue.

In view of the fact that the Minister said earlier in the Question Period that CN would sit down and review their plans before making any reductions or change in the work force in this province, I would ask, in honouring this request, did CN share with the Minister of Transportation their plans to reduce their work force by some 17,000 workers across this country, or indeed, Mr. Speaker, does he only get the information after the fact?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I would like to indicate, as I did before, that it is my intention to meet with people from CN to discuss if there is going to be a possible impact on the workers in Manitoba.

I find it most interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the Member who had a press conference, Mr. Blaikie,

indicating a leaked memo, and he was critical of the Conservative Government about the deregulation aspect of it having impact on it and the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was involved in signing the deregulation aspect of it.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate if this Minister would get his facts straight. He has been known to get confused and mixed up on issues before and he has done it again. I would ask that he withdraw that allegation because, in fact, rail deregulation is strictly a national issue at the federal level. The National Transportation Act is a federal Act and we protested that action every step of the way. I ask that Minister to withdraw that allegation.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. A dispute over the facts.

Government Intervention

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Dauphin, with a supplementary question.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): It is fine, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister engages in that kind of innuendo which is not correct in this House. I do not think that is becoming of a Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Plohman: In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Would the Honourable Member please put his question.

Mr. Plohman: In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the federal Conservatives and Liberals have been forcing CN to act like a private company concerned not with the employees, concerned not with their social and economic responsibilities as a Crown corporation, what action has this Minister taken in view of this startling revelation of some 17,000 employees facing the loss of jobs in this country? What action has he taken in contacting the federal Minister to have a stop put on this insanity that is taking place there?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated before, there are two lines of communication that seem to be coming forward; one from a leaked memo supposedly, and the assurance that we have from top CN officials that there will be no layoffs in Manitoba.

I will undertake to make sure and find out what impact there will be, if any, because I am very concerned that there should be no layoffs in Manitoba from CN and I will have discussions along that line.

Transportation Minister's Removal

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

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, this Minister should be erring on the side of caution, not

saying there is not going to be any layoffs, because, in fact, they are reducing by 17,000.

I ask this First Minister (Mr. Filmon) if in fact he is going to allow his Minister to sit idly by without contacting the federal Government, or will he remove this Minister from his portfolio, and will he commit to contacting the new Prime Minister after November 21 and have a stop put to this insanity at CN?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I might indicate that the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) has been doing an excellent job in all of the responsibilities.

Long before the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), who speaks out of both sides of his mouth—on one side, he enters into agreements on deregulation; on the other side, he calls upon our Minister to do certain things—our Minister has been in contact with CN officials. Our Minister has said that he wants assurances that Manitoba will not lose employment. Our Minister has set up lines of communication so that should CN have any desire to make changes that would affect their employment here that he would be made aware of it, he would have an opportunity to meet on it and he would be able to express the concerns of Manitobans. Our Minister is doing a good job unlike the previous Minister, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

* (1400)

Free Trade Agreement Hydro Legal Opinion

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I wonder if I might table a matter. While I am on my feet, I wonder if I might respond to a question that was asked of me on August 31 by the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

An Honourable Member: August 31?

Mr. Filmon: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Filmon: We are responding with full and complete information and a desire to be open with all the Members opposite.

On August 31, the Member for Flin Flon asked - (Interjection)- If the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wishes to say something, he can do so when he is recognized. On August 31 -(Interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: On August 31, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) asked me to table any legal opinions that outlined the position that the Free Trade Agreement would put Manitoba Hydro in vis-a-vis a number of issues. At that time, the Member for Flin Flon quoted from an earlier opinion by Cassels, Brock and Blackwell,

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a Toronto firm that had been hired by the former NDP administration with respect to opinions on how the Free Trade Agreement would affect Manitoba Hydro.

As a result of those questions, Manitoba Hydro sought to have all of the points that were raised by the Member for Flin Flon and others vis-a-vis Manitoba Hydro's ability to sell its electricity under the Free Trade Agreement. A comprehensive -(Interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Honourable Members, I am sure, are aware we have 40 minutes in which to do Question Period. The Honourable First Minister is trying to respond to a question which was taken as notice. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: A comprehensive response has been prepared by that same Toronto legal firm of Cassels, Brock and Blackwell. They have responded to the questions that were asked by the Member for Flin Flon and others. I would like to table that opinion today because it says in summary that specifically a two-tier pricing policy approved by Manitoba Hydro's Board, providing that prices charged to Manitoba customers will be at cost while prices to U.S. customers will be at the best market price available does not contravene the Free Trade Agreement.

As a matter of fact, this distinguished law firm believes that Manitoba Hydro's policy of using revenues from all export sales to keep electricity rates low in Manitoba is not limited by the Free Trade Agreement. It further says—

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

May I remind the Honourable First Minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

Mr. Filmon: There were a series of questions. I would like to respond to them in terms of what the legal opinion says. I will—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Filmon: —just be three more sentences, Mr. Speaker, if I may.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister, to wind down his answer now.

Mr. Filmon: If I may, just three sentences—

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): A point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Concordia, on a point of order.

Mr. Doer: You have mentioned to all Members of this House that when you stand up we are to stop speaking, not have three or four or ten more seconds. I would just raise that in terms of our point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. The Honourable First Minister did make

reference to the fact that it was a legal document and he was just going to finish explaining. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: The opinion further says that the provincial Government appointment of the Hydro Board will not undermine Hydro's status as a commercial entity because the sale of power is a commercial activity, not purely a Government activity. Also, that neither The Manitoba Hydro Act nor The Manitoba Energy Authority Act requires amendment to comply with the Free Trade Agreement.

Port of Churchill Continued Use

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): This year an all-Party committee was struck to lobby on behalf of grain shipments to Churchill. This year, Churchill received only 51,417 metric tonnes. The average of grain shipments was 500,000 metric tonnes in previous years. My question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) is: what efforts has he undertaken to ensure continued use of the Port of Churchill?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I would like to first of all take this opportunity to compliment the all-Party committee that was struck that worked on that very diligently. I think his counterparts were involved in a very good discussion and I think if it had not been for the lobby efforts of the all-Party committee, that possibly no grain would have moved through the Port of Churchill this year. So I think it was a very positive action that the all-Party committee had and I would hope that we can continue working in that direction, hopefully, with a better crop and not having a drought next year, that we can have an escalated program.

Also, I would like to indicate my department is working on a variety of initiatives to try to make the Port of Churchill as well as the community a more viable operation.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, Hear!

Diversification Plans

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): To the same Minister: I would hope that he would table those plans in this House.

What plans are there for the diversification of Churchill's economy being implemented today.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I may have trouble implementing them today but I have indicated to the Member already that there is a list of 41 initiatives that my department is looking at. We have an interdepartmental joint committee that is working and looking at all the aspects of things that could enhance any activity that could take place in Churchill. We are working on that.

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All-Party Committee Meeting

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): To the same Minister, in a letter from Charles G. Constant to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), dated November 3, it states that the next meeting with regard to Churchill should be held at Churchill. No such meeting was held. My question is: will this Minister today reconvene the all-Party committee to lobby, even during the federal election, on behalf of Churchill to get a commitment from Ottawa that will stand the test of time and listen to other interested groups with regard to Churchill?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I would like to indicate to the Members of the House that I am prepared to call the all-Party committee together to review what next steps could be taken in that regard.

As far as having the committee meet in Churchill, I would just like to indicate that the cost would be pretty prohibitive in terms of having all Members fly down and having a meeting in Churchill. I would encourage anybody that has special interest for the Port of Churchill, that they take the opportunity, get down there and acquaint themselves with exactly what is happening in Churchill. Any suggestions that they have to make, I will certainly take them under advisement.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Heritage—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Brandon East, on a point of order.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I believe it is the turn of the New Democratic Party.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Leonard Evans: You were up twice.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member. That is my mistake.

* (1410)

Free Trade Agreement Impact Campbell Soup Ltd.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, there have been media reports that Campbell Soup of United States is ready to put on extra shifts at their Chicago plant to produce more output and ship to Canada if the Free Trade Agreement becomes a reality.

I would like to ask the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst), has the Minister received any information from his department on the negative impact of the Free Trade Agreement on Campbell Soup Limited in Portage la Prairie where 350 people are working? Will there be any layoffs in Portage? Will there be any plant closures in Portage by the Campbell Soup Company?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to respond to that question because it just happens

that approximately six weeks ago I met with a number of people from Campbell Soup in the regional management area, their sales manager for western Canada and their vice-president from the East, who were here to speak about a variety of opportunities that they were pursuing in terms of diversification that they might be looking into that might involve some further investment in Manitoba.

I had the opportunity to ask directly what Campbell Soup Company's position was on free trade. They are supportive of the Free Trade Agreement and indeed look upon it as an opportunity for expansion and growth in Canada.

Impact CSP Foods Ltd.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst). Has the Minister been in communication with CSP Foods Limited of Altona with respect to the negative impact of the Free Trade Agreement? That company which employs 85 people has stated that it will lose millions of dollars in sales and generally will be hard hit. Will this Minister, will his department, be able to help CSP Foods Limited of Altona in any way?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated during my Estimates, I was going to meet and have in fact met with a wide variety of people from various industry sectors in Manitoba.

On the day that I met with the food processing people, CSP Foods was present at the meeting. They did not indicate anything of the like that was reported in the newspaper article the other day. As a matter of fact, they indicated to me that they had every confidence that they were able to compete in the oil seed sector. I do not know where that article came from and I have not yet had an opportunity to contact CSP Seeds to determine whether that is an accurate statement or not. The indication to me during the public meeting was, in front of any number of other people also associated with that sector, that they were not fearful of free trade; as a matter of fact, supported it.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, for the information of the Honourable Minister, it was a Mr. Al Hoffman of that company who was quoted in that respect.

Impact McCain Foods

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): My last question to the Minister, again in the food processing industry and leaving marketing boards aside, Mr. McCain of McCain Foods Limited has stated categorically that they may be forced to close the plant in Portage la Prairie if the Free Trade Agreement becomes a reality. Again I ask the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst), has his department any contingency plans to offset such a closure in Portage la Prairie?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I find that strange because last night on the news I watched an indication—as a

matter of fact I believe it was Venture which followed the national news last night, the fact that McCain Foods signed a \$45 million contract with Burger King, U.S., to provide french fries to that market. They also indicated at that time that they had acquired a plant in South Dakota to also service that market, the fast food market, as well as one in Washington State in the United States. The plant in Portage la Prairie provides french fries for two major suppliers: one is McDonald's in Canada; and the other, about 50 percent of their exports go to the country of Japan.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The time for oral questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Mr. Speaker: First of all, let me thank the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) for bringing that point forward. I would like to remind all Honourable Members of our Rule 38.(1) which states quite clearly, a Member addressing the House, if called to order by either the Speaker or on a point raised by another Member, shall sit down while the point is being raised. I am sure that all Honourable Members would like to be aware of that rule.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable First Minister have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, at least I hope this is a non-political statement. I will leave the others to judge it.

Tonight, Winnipeg's Golden Boy, Donny Lalonde, will face Sugar Ray Leonard in a 12-round bout for the World Boxing Council's Twin Championship in Las Vegas, Nevada. At stake is the WBC's Light Heavyweight Championship as well as the vacant Super Middleweight Title.

Manitobans, of course, are all rooting for Donny Lalonde and wish him well as he enters the ring this evening. We know that he will bring honour and attention to his home town and his province; and as a matter of interest, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate, as I think it has been raised to public attention previously, that I have made a friendly wager with William Donald Schaefer, the Governor of Maryland, Sugar Ray Leonard's home state.

If Mr. Leonard loses, Governor Schaefer will bestow upon me the rare honour of "Admiral of the Chesapeake" and present me with a bushel of famous Chesapeake Bay softshell clams; and, if Lalonde loses, I will accord Governor Schaefer the honour of becoming a "Scout in the Royal Order of the Buffalo Hunt" and I will treat him to a dinner of Manitoba buffalo steaks.

We have indicated as well, very recently, our support for the tremendous work that Mr. Lalonde is doing in calling attention to child abuse and a project by New

Faces. Northeast Winnipeg Family and Child Welfare Agency is undertaking a project under the Victim Impact Assistance Fund to fight the incidents of child abuse and to support the people who are unfortunately victims of child abuse. That was a decision of the administration just last week.

I know that Mr. Lalonde will have the support of all Manitobans in this endeavour and that win, lose or draw, he will bring very positive attention and credit to our province. So, on behalf of all of us, Mr. Speaker, I extend a message of congratulations and best wishes to Donny Lalonde.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, if I could have leave to make a non-political statement?

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

Mr. Kozak: Boxing has a proud history, Mr. Speaker, but in recent times it has been a controversial sport. Nonetheless, Canadians recognize the superb achievements of our boxing team at the Summer Olympics in Seoul and there is no controversy about Manitobans' pride in one of our native sons, Donny Lalonde.

Don has brought honour and recognition to Winnipeg and Manitoba by winning the World Boxing Council Light Heavyweight Championship in a bout against Eddie Davis last November. He successfully defended Manitoba's first World Boxing Title against Leslie Stewart in Port of Spain, Trinidad, earlier this year.

Manitobans honour Donny Lalonde not only for reaching the pinnacle of his physically demanding and character building sport but also for becoming an inspiring world-wide advocate on behalf of abused children. Don Lalonde is Manitoba's athlete of the year. I am proud to count him among my friends and the Liberal Opposition wishes him success in his title fight this evening against Sugar Ray Leonard in Las Vegas. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would also request leave of the House to make a non-political statement.

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

* (1420)

Mr. Doer: I will not make my Burgess Meredith statement. I want to add our words, and I am sure all of us have the same idea—and perhaps the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) would like to get into this non-political statement, too, Mr. Speaker. I hear he has had some history in this area before.

I would like to add our words, and I am sure all Parties have had the same thought today with joining

Canadians, Manitobans and Winnipeggers on the fight tonight taking place in Las Vegas, Nevada.

I know a number attended the event last week that was held in honour of Donny Lalonde. I had the opportunity to attend it as well, an event sponsored not only for Donny Lalonde's fight but also sponsorship for the Jets for Kids Program, and the child abuse, Donny Lalonde's fight against child abuse. Those of us in northeast Winnipeg know first-hand the work with Donny Lalonde with the agency directly. He has been a speaker at various fund-raising events in our area. He has worked with Ellen McConachy on programs for child abuse and getting into the schools, the communities, the areas at first-hand where the child abuse problem can be identified at its earliest stages.

I am sure that Donny Lalonde will do well tonight. I know his friends from Fort Rouge particularly are all down there this evening as well as other Winnipeggers.

I know we contributed some Golden Boy pins and I hope they find themselves on our American friends this evening in terms of a good-will gesture. We have no problem giving Americans our friendly pins and inviting them back to Canada, but we do not want them to take our water with them—but that would be a political statement.

I know that he will do well tonight. I know all Manitobans wish Donny very well. The former Minister of Sport had the privilege of presenting the last award to Donny Lalonde. He did so in his own community refreshment area in Fort Rouge. I am sure that Manitobans and Canadians will want to join with Donny Lalonde when he returns in having one of the greatest victory parades worthy of a great person and a great fighter. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I have a non-political statement.

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

Mr. Derkach: One of the finest investments that Manitobans can make is certainly in the field of education and in providing our youth with a vital education that is going to make our province a strong province and is also going to contribute to the strength of our nation.

However, it is recognized that a child does not learn in isolation, but rather from a total life experience. An understanding of a joint venture in this area of education between parent and educator ensures that we are able to provide for the youth of this province the finest education system in the country. It is in the best interests of the child that the cooperation of parents and educators is so important.

The Home and School Parent-Teacher Federation has done a great service in providing and encouraging the promotion of cooperation between educators and parents. The Home and School Parent-Teacher Federation has also provided information to parents on such important issues as literacy, child abuse, family life and AIDs education.

Because of the ongoing contribution that the Home and School Parent-Teacher Federation has made, as Minister of Education, I would like to proclaim this week, November 7 to 12, as Home and School Parent-Teacher Federation Week.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a change to the Public Utilities Committee. I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Findlay for Cummings.

* (1430)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Education; and the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I would like to call this meeting to order to discuss the Estimates of the Education Department. We are on item 4. Program Development Support Services, (b) Curriculum Development and Implementation: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I have some responses to hand out this afternoon for questions that were asked and that we took as notice, or said that we would provide information.

First of all, copies of the AIDS curriculum for Grades 7, 8 and 9 are attached to this information. Copies of the AIDS Bibliography available from the Department of Education Library are also attached, and copies of completed writing and science assessments are attached.

There was a question asked of the number of teachers who will be attending the AIDS in-service meetings in the current year, and we are estimating 194. There was also a question asked, Mr. Chairman, about the average age of retiring teachers prior to the implementation of the age 55. In 1984, the average teacher age was 39.5 years; in 1987, the average age of teachers across the province was 40.2 years.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Just a comment, I was somewhat taken aback when we met last Thursday

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evening by the Member for Flin Flon's (Mr. Storie) statement that he had allowed the Member for Sturgeon Creek some latitude in questioning. When I heard that, I must admit I was sort of surprised. This morning, I looked up the word "latitude" in the Webster Dictionary, and it means freedom of action or choice. I am just wondering how the Member for Flin Flon could say that he had allowed me some freedom of action or choice when I felt that I was participating as a duly qualified Member of the team to use whatever latitude we are allowed within the parameters of the committee meeting.

The other comment that rather surprised me was last Monday when he asked me how much longer I felt the committee would be sitting. He wondered if we could aim at finishing all questioning next Monday, meaning today. I must admit that I found that rather surprising in that he chose to take some one to two hours to question the Minister with regard to teachers' retirement, and then another one to two hours questioning on the teaching of AIDS. I feel if he, in fact, did want to speed up the process, I certainly do not feel that I have been at fault in slowing the process down, being that we now have gone some 19.5 hours. I did not sit down because I felt it was a fruitless exercise to indicate the numbers of hours that I had spent in questioning and the number of hours that the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) had spent. At any rate, I am certainly pleased that the Member for Flin Flon has allowed me the latitude, and I can assure the committee members that I shall continue to take whatever latitude I feel is necessary in order to get the answers to the questions that I might have.

I was asking questions last Thursday with regard to the home ec, phasing out of the home economics from school divisions because that had been a concern that had been raised with me. I was certainly pleased by the Minister's response with eyeballs protruding to say that, yes, he was emphatically in favour of the home ec continuation. The schools—and I did promise that I would refer to the various schools that were mentioned to me—one of the schools was Lindenwoods, a K to 9 school. There may even be two schools, K to 9, in Lindenwoods, both of whom are in the process of developing their architectural plans and both would very much like fairly swift response as to whether in fact they will be able to have home ec rooms in their new facilities.

Another school that I have been told has been denied the building of a home ec room is a K to 9 or certainly a junior high school in Transcona. Another, I understand, is Fort Garry, the Arthur A. Leach Junior High School. It is my understanding that there is a new French Immersion high school to be built in St. Vital, and they are hoping that they will be given permission to build industrial arts and home economics rooms in the new French Immersion high school in St. Vital.

Those were the ones that were mentioned to me, and I am hoping that the Minister will fairly promptly have someone in his department notify these particular schools if in fact the denial is there and the Minister is saying that these schools should be permitted to go ahead with the building of home ec and vocational arts

or industrial arts classes. If I am to ask that in the form of a question, I can certainly phrase it in the form of a question.

* (1440)

Mr. Derkach: With regard to the Member's comments in her opening remarks and the amount of time she has spent in asking questions, I would have to say that I have appreciated the questions that the Member has asked because certainly they have been for information purposes. That is what we are here for is to try to provide as much information as possible. I must express a little disappointment in some of the areas that we have spent a great deal of time, where I think we could probably have invested it more wisely in some of the other areas. However, I am prepared to stay here as long as necessary to complete full discussion of these Estimates, regardless of the number of hours.

With respect to the home ec facilities, there was a moratorium as I understand it, put on but that was for the conversion of existing facilities. It is not at least my intention to have a moratorium on supplying those kinds of facilities where they are needed for a new building. Certainly, I will take the comments that the Member has made under advisement and research this whole area to get a better understanding of what really has transpired in the past. Then I will be able to report back in a more informed way.

Mrs. Yeo: It is because of my concern and the fact that, to me, home economics does not just mean—when the Home Ec Faculty at the University of Manitoba change their names from home economics to human ecology, my children and some friends of my children and I attended an open house at the university. One of the signs intrigued me that said something to the effect that home economics ain't just cooking and sewing, which maybe it ain't just English as well but it was trying to make a point and I think it did. Home ec means family life style, family living, instruction in family violence, that sort of thing. I am certainly pleased.

I understand that home economics in December of 1985 was given the accreditation as a 00 standing and was also given permission, if you will, to be used as a university entrance course. This was given by the Curriculum Policy Review Committee. This decision was then revoked, I believe, in February of 1986 when the High School Review Committee was announced. Again, I emphasize my desire, along with many others in this province, for a fairly hasty review of the High School Review's recommendations.

I was asked just yesterday by an individual who called with concern actually in relation to the IB Program who said, what happens to the High School Review Report when it is submitted. My response was, I assumed that it would be tabled in the House by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and I hope within the next couple of weeks at the most. Tomorrow or the next day would be fine. Once it is tabled in the House, I was not sure what would happen to that particular report. May I ask the Minister today what will the next steps be with regard to the High School Review Report,

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being that it seems to me every fourth or fifth sentence that any of us utters says, well it depends on the results of the High School Review Committee?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I think we are all waiting in anticipation of the High School Review at least being tabled. Certainly, we understand that once that process is complete then we have to embark on the next stage, which would be a thorough reading or review of the report itself. From there, we will have to develop a strategy as to how we are going to embark on implementing those recommendations of the report that we accept and then what we will do with those that perhaps we reject. I am not speculating on accepting some and not accepting others. I simply think that we have to do a thorough examination and evaluation of the recommendations that will be made within the report and then proceed from there.

Hopefully, we can embark on that task very quickly after we have had the High School Review tabled. Certainly I intend to, in tabling the High School Review, give some indication as to the direction this department will take with the High School Review. I do not intend to leave Manitobans and the Opposition Parties sort of wondering where we go from here. I think it is important that as a department and as Minister we do embark on a direction which is going to indicate some positive direction with regard to the implementation of those recommendations that are accepted.

Mrs. Yeo: Mr. Chairperson, I have not had a chance obviously to review these responses to questions that were raised but, No. 3, "the copies of completed writing and science assessments are appended." Is that the results of the science and writing assessments that are done of the young people in our schools? Is it just for 1987?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, the science was the 1986 final report that you have in that package of material that has been handed around. The writing assessment was the 1987 writing assessment, and that is the preliminary report of the writing assessment that was done in 1987.

Mrs. Yeo: Not having had the time to read through them and without taking the time right now to quickly read through them, can the Minister tell us whether the young people in our schools are getting better in their responses? Are the results of the testing increasing or are they decreasing since, say, 1980, 1982?

Mr. Derkach: The final assessment on the science assessment test indicated that there was no significant change from the science assessment that was conducted previously.

I believe that was 1980 and that was in the Grade 5 area. In the Grade 8 area, the overall performance seemed to decline a little bit in terms of the six topics that were tested. The Grade 11 students, the overall test results indicated that here again there was a decline in the performance on the six topics and there was a bit of an improvement on three topics. So therefore, there is not any real significant change over the previous test.

The writing test is just a preliminary test, so we will not know what the overall is until we get the final report in.

Mrs. Yeo: What about the comparative results for mathematics, and I am thinking more in the high school level? What is happening to our assessment of our students in Grades 10, 11 and 12 in mathematics over the past six, seven, eight years?

Mr. Derkach: The overall performance was somewhat disappointing in that the results generally indicated that there was a decline and the results therefore were somewhat unsatisfactory both in the 300 and, to a lesser degree, in the 301 math.

Mrs. Yeo: Can the Minister give any rationale for this drop? Can there be some sort of reasoning developed around this drop?

* (1450)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how you can quantify this but most of the students who excel in mathematics and especially those who in the semester system—I guess just those in the semester system—will take mathematics in the first semester. The weaker students or the students who find math a little more difficult will take it in the last semester. That is sort of a general rule. Because the assessment was done in the latter part of the year, it may have been that those students who were tested were the weaker ones and so, consequently, the results were somewhat lower than expected or more disappointed than were expected.

Mrs. Yeo: Is there any research done or any attempt made by this department to try and correct this drop? What sorts of things are being done that will hopefully correct this situation?

Mr. Derkach: I guess two significant things that are being done are: one, there has been an increase in the amount of professional development work that is being done with teachers across the province in mathematics; and, secondly, the staff in the department are now working on revising the math curriculums to ensure that in fact we do have a greater emphasis on the skills that perhaps are lacking. Hopefully, through the High School Review, we will get some indication of where the weak areas are and where we need to be concentrating more of our efforts.

Mrs. Yeo: What about reading? I suppose that comes under language arts, but I am wondering what the results are. Are the results similar to those of the assessments in science where they remain fairly steady although there has been a little bit of a drop or are they similar to those of the assessments in mathematics where there has been a drop?

Mr. Derkach: In this area the results were considerably improved over the results in the math area. As a matter of fact, in a general sense, in the Grade 3 area, right through to the Grade 12 area, the results were satisfactory and that includes in the Grade 12 area both the 300 and the 301 areas.

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Mrs. Yeo: I have had a couple of concerns by individuals from various parts of the province actually asking if there was any thought to doing a study on the relevancy of the new curriculum for language arts as a teaching guide. There have been statements made that it is in part poorly written and anti-literate for its lack of commitment to the teaching of literature, but it tends to take a fairly singular approach on how to teach and tends to be a tool used by administrators to manipulate teachers. Those are pretty harsh words and they were copied from one particular phone call that I received and since then, and that was early on, since then I have received a few other concerns raised by parents and by teachers about the new language arts curriculum.

Mr. Derkach: I dare say that the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) is not alone in the kinds of concerns she has heard because I too have heard concerns across the province about the language arts program and certainly that causes me some concern.

However, I can say that the approach is somewhat different than the traditional approach in that we are dealing with the whole language approach to teaching language arts and I can say that the language arts committee, the English Language Arts Committee, is continuously monitoring the program and hopefully in the next few weeks I will have the opportunity to address this area and talk to the committee and see what kinds of results they have found from their meetings and then we can embark on addressing the concerns of the people that we have heard from.

Also, I think, try to substantiate whether those concerns are really out there or whether it is just isolated in a few areas, but I have heard those as well.

Mrs. Yeo: I believe that the children starting in kindergarten, I think it was this year, will graduate in the year 2000. I am wondering if there is any projection or any possible type of data that would indicate of the number of children that started this year, in September or late August of 1988, how many are expected to successfully complete Grade 12.

Mr. Derkach: We do not have that kind of data available right now. Certainly that is something that would fall into the category of Planning and Research. I have not discussed it with Planning and Research to see whether or not they are intending to embark on that kind of an investigation or survey or projection?

Mrs. Yeo: I realize sometimes it maybe difficult to follow these students too because we are a transient society and there are students who move from one part of the province to another part, from one part of the city to another, from school to school, from province to province, and even from country to country. Is there some form of numerical system utilized to identify students to follow them as they move in this way from school to school?

Mr. Derkach: This is a direction I think that the Canadian Ministers of Education Council had suggested that we perhaps move in terms of trying to get this

kind of data. We have a system that is now present in 85 schools which is a computer system. The school administration system is capable of getting that kind of information and storing it and then we could be able to share it. So therefore, with the new computer systems being installed in schools across the province, certainly we will have the capacity to do that in the near future.

Mrs. Yeo: We are living in a numerical society where we are tagged with numbers for every darn thing that we apply for, credit cards, etc. However, we are all issued a Social Insurance number. Is there any thought or would there be any merit in utilizing the Social Insurance number instead of having a student number sort of thing? This is something that an individual has and carry with them hopefully for the rest of their lives. Would there not be some merit in considering the SIN number?

* (1500)

Mr. Derkach: I think two things, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the Social Insurance numbers are not issued to children at a very young age, so therefore we cannot use that. Where that system is used, school divisions or provinces are moving away from that system to the student number rather than the reverse. There is no thought of going in that direction at this time.

Mrs. Yeo: I can certainly appreciate using the student number—kids in university and kids in high schools have them, but I do not think that properly addresses the transiency of our society. Certainly it is fine to say that a young child is not issued a number. My son, at the age of seven, was told he had to have a SIN number if he wanted to continue playing hockey. Surely, a child at the age of five could be issued a Social Insurance number. For goodness sake, a child at birth could be issued a Social Insurance number.

I think there must be something, and I realize this is a bit away from the Curriculum Development and Implementation, but we got on the line and I am concerned about losing records of students or not having records follow students with any relative ease. I have seen students who have come from Ontario, who have had difficulty getting their records after having been in Manitoba for two, three years. I really think that this is something that could be addressed by the Council of Ministers far more effectively than it has been.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I think there are several problems in terms of trying to use the Social Insurance number. One of the problems is that it has been found that there is a problem of duplication of numbers, and the fact that every time you use that number or want to get access to that number or whatever, you are involving the federal Government.

Now the Council of Ministers have pointed to a direction that is different than using the Social Insurance number. As a matter of fact, there has been a meeting of the western Education Departments in coming up with an approach using a student number, not the Social Insurance number but a student number whereby it

would be easier to track students as they move from one jurisdiction to another. Hopefully, in the future, we will be able to come up with a system that is going to be adopted nationwide whereby we can then keep easier track of records of students who move from one area of the country to another.

Mrs. Yeo: It is rather sad to see that Big Brother even makes mistakes in recording numbers, but I am pleased to see that the Minister and his counterparts across the country are looking at a better method.

Just a couple of quick questions with regard to—and again I think it would come under Curriculum Development—the teaching methods, the types of strategies that are used in teaching reading. I think it is appropriate to have some concern raised that I have had for a number of years actually, especially seeing that the Minister has allocated such a tremendous amount of money to look at the problem of illiteracy. When I think as Mary Johnson said in her book, “there is some programmed illiteracy in our schools,” is the phonics method utilized today in teaching of reading in our early education by children?

Mr. Derkach: I think over the last few years we have heard a considerable amount of controversy over the phonics method as opposed to the whole language method of teaching reading. I can honestly say that there are still some areas in this province where the phonics method is preferred to the whole language approach. However, the whole language approach that is used today in the teaching of reading is not the pure whole language approach, I do not believe. I think that within it we have the areas of phonics and of spelling and of grammar and of all the components that make up the reading and comprehension aspects of reading.

But certainly I have to say that we have heard some concern about preferences being given for one system over another. But right now in the province, the language arts curriculum does use the whole language approach, but within that it also uses the method of phonics and sight reading and so forth.

Mrs. Yeo: I think we have lost a number of children down the pike because of this word recognition type of attack. I can well recall—I have four children, all who have graduated from high school, none of whom I hope are illiterate in the broad sense of the word, but each one of our kids, although they have done quite well academically, have had a very tough time with English literature, language arts, whatever it is called at university.

In Grade 7, we raised the concern with the principal of the school. I am not a single issue parent in any way, shape or form. I believe wholeheartedly in our school system, in our public school system in particular. But I was concerned when we raised with the principal of our daughter in junior high school the difficulty she was having in reading, etc., and the lack of love of reading. Although in our home we have had books since Day One, I have read to our children from the time they were a few months old, we were told, well, just have her skip over the words that she does not

understand and the meaning of the sentences will come to her. That child, the oldest of the four, and each one of our children who have been taught in the same methods of teaching have had difficulty with English.

I am concerned and it is a concern that has been raised with me on several occasions, and I would hope that the Minister would look very carefully at the method of teaching reading. Certainly, there is stress on the need for parental involvement. However, I feel badly, in homes where the parents have not had the opportunity or the desire to obtain the books for their children and these parents rely solely on the school system to build up the ability of their children to read. I would suggest that the Task Force on Literacy should, in their research and in their investigation, take a very good look at how our children are being taught throughout across the province in their methods of teaching of reading.

Mr. Derkach: I can honestly say that I am and so is the department aware of the problems that are associated with the teaching of reading, and we are dealing with that in terms of addressing the issue by taking a look at what is happening in the school divisions. Certainly, I am going to be very emphatic that we in fact address this very directly.

I have to indicate to the Member that I was a chairman of a school board when controversy broke within our school division on the approach to reading. The school division was using the phonics system of approach, and there were a group of parents who thought that perhaps we should be moving in the whole language direction and so, therefore, the controversy started. Certainly, it is an issue where parents are aware of problems associated both with using one system as compared to the other and one that we are going to have to involve parents when we start talking about developing a program. But I do not know that it is an easy solution, but it is certainly one that we do have to address.

* (1510)

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): In committee after committee that I have sat in, when we have spoken of affirmative action, most Ministers will respond that it is a need in the educational system to bring the awareness front and forward with our youth so that when they come out into the working society, they will be aware as women or as handicapped people or as minorities that they have as many equal rights to have employment wherever they wish, whether it be as a plumber or whether it be as an engineer.

So my question to the Minister is: is there any program or process established whereby, in the educational system of Manitoba, affirmative action is being employed within the curriculum itself?

Mr. Derkach: Within the new curriculums, that is sort of emerging in the new curriculums that are coming out in that there is an emphasis on making sure that affirmative action is addressed. I can tell you that an example of that is the recent announcement by the

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federal Minister that the science scholarships, for example, will be going to those students who want to enter the science and technology area, but 50 percent of those will be going to women. Both in the curriculum itself—we also addressed that—and the new curricula do have that woven into the curriculum.

Mrs. Charles: I just want to go a bit further on that. I was not particularly speaking of what is available as to courses. I am more concerned with how it is portrayed within the study process itself, whether the readers portray handicapped people, whether the readers portray minorities, and whether they have roles that are established roles or whether they indeed have roles that we would like to see as a future development for equality.

Mr. Derkach: Within the content of the materials that are presented, certainly those areas are included to ensure that those people are fairly represented, whether it is the minorities or the handicapped or the women, to ensure that there is an awareness by the student who is taking that particular program and that there is an attitudinal change perhaps towards the way that we perceive all people of society and the need for affirmative action to be part of our normal living world.

Mrs. Charles: Indeed, this subject often brings up reactions in people and they feel as though they almost have to excuse themselves. I am certainly not trying to put anyone on the spot, because I think it is all of society's errors in the past that have allowed these roles to continue. I would ask the Minister if there is any means whereby there is perhaps a crediting system. When they review what texts are going to be used for the year, is there any way that they may score points as to the content as to the affirmative action process within the books that are used?

Mr. Derkach: Just a clarification from the Member as to what she means by "score points."

Mrs. Charles: I am just wondering by which means the texts are decided upon and if, in this manner of deciding upon which text is being used, they are weighed as to the value of affirmative action goals.

Mr. Derkach: I am not going to sit here and say that we have got a perfect system in terms of the way that we approach the whole issue of affirmative action. I am not going to say that in each and every program we address the concept of affirmative action in a complete form. But I have to tell you that within the department there has been a selection committee in place which, in selecting the materials, has looked very closely at ensuring that in fact those kinds of areas are addressed when materials are being selected for the curriculum.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister tell me if there have been any in-service programs on affirmative action goals within the curriculum?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, in the list that we handed out of the in-services that we are providing this year,

I think the Member will notice that there is a section there on affirmative action in-services or sessions that will be offered. Certainly, those are addressed at such things as women in science, women in math and so forth.

Mrs. Charles: Just to stress again, I realize what the Minister is getting at and I do not want to be defensive because, as I point out, I think it is awareness that is just becoming part of our lifestyle. I wonder if these in-services also are planned to bring awareness as within the roles and the study areas within the schools that affirmative action should be given more priority than perhaps it is at the moment. Through awareness, we can allow our children to be raised and seek equality for who they are as people, not perhaps what sex or what handicaps or what race they may be.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, this is not new to the department. Certainly, the department has been working on this for a number of years. As I indicate, it is not perfect. Certainly, as we move along, we are endeavouring to in fact improve as we go. Hopefully, as time moves along, we will get to a point where in fact we will have done all we possibly can in ensuring that there is no discrimination against minorities or against women or against handicapped people, that we are all equal in terms of the workplace, in terms of the world itself.

Mrs. Charles: Just as a closing remark then, I would urge the Minister to maintain a priority in this manner because I think, if we are going to have our youth develop in the world where there is equality, that they have to be taught very young, not only by their parents and by society but indeed within the classroom.

I guess my question to the Minister, is this an ongoing priority and where would he rate it as into the priority of curriculum development?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I would have to say that this department itself is one of the probably leading departments in terms of providing opportunities for women. I would have to say that some 40 percent of our administrative staff right now are women, I think. In this particular division, I am told, 50 percent are women. In the Finance area itself, I think we have got about 70 percent.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Chairperson, I just have a few areas that I would like to cover fairly quickly. Could the Minister give me some idea of what the status of the peace education curriculum is?

Mr. Derkach: In the spring of this year, Mr. Chairman, the materials I understand for Grades 7 to 9 and 10 to 12 were distributed, and it is all apparently incorporated into the social studies program.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, then is this something that all students that this is part of their regular curriculum, or is it an optional program that may or may not be taught in the schools?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, it is an optional section that teachers may select if they so choose.

Ms. Hemphill: Can the Minister tell us what, if any, information he has about how many school divisions are choosing to implement peace education?

Mr. Derkach: It is an integrated kind of program so, therefore, we do not have an accurate indication, but a ballpark figure would be, I am told, about 30 percent.

Ms. Hemphill: It is a bit difficult to try and figure out just what kind of an animal it is then if it is integrated into a regular curriculum and they are all receiving it in the regular curriculum but it is optional so that they can choose whether or not to cover it. It might be a little hard to understand whether it is optional or regular.

Is the department doing anything to encourage the promotion of the peace education program and are they doing anything to help teachers prepare them, since this has not been part of the curriculum before, for handling the unit and the curriculum?

Mr. Derkach: There have been some requests for in-services in this regard but certainly not an overwhelming number. To date, we as a department have not structured any in-services that would zero in on this particular issue.

* (1520)

Ms. Hemphill: Could the Minister give me some idea, when a program goes out like that and it is a new program and it is an optional program and school divisions can decide whether or not to use it, is the decision a school division's decision or is it an individual teacher's decision, as the first question, and the second question is, what are you doing to follow up? How do you follow up then to find out how good the curriculum is, how it is being used, what deficiencies or problems it has and what improvements should be made?

Mr. Derkach: In terms of the implementation of the program, it is entirely up to the school and the teacher as to whether or not they will incorporate this within the program if it is an optional program. With regard to this particular aspect, the social studies assessment will cover some evaluation of the program in that there will be some questions asked with regard to this particular portion.

Ms. Hemphill: Just in another area but along the same line, could the Minister give us some indication of how many school divisions are using the optional unit in the Family Life Program, the sex education unit? Is this a school division policy or an individual school policy, and how many school divisions in our province are now utilizing it?

Mr. Derkach: There are 450 schools presently using the optional section of the Family Life Program, and 33 school divisions have now incorporated it into their program.

Ms. Hemphill: Does the Minister have any plans in the near future of making it mandatory and, if not, why

not? I would wonder, I think when you bring in a new program like that initially and it is very sensitive, teachers are not prepared to handle it, may need training, may not have enough qualified staff to handle it in a short period of time, that it is a program that needs time for implementation and for people to adjust to it, but at some point I think you have to make the decision of whether or not you think all the children in Manitoba of those ages are entitled to receive that information, and, having given them a reasonable period of time to prepare themselves, require it. Do you have any intentions of doing that and, if not, why not?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I have no intentions of making it mandatory at this time, and I think by and large we have to respect the fact that parents have some say in the education of their children and certainly it would be moving in an opposite direction if we, in fact, imposed this on the children and said to parents that you have no say in this matter and your child "must" take the program.

I think it is important that parents be involved and certainly we feel that by using an optional approach more schools, in fact, and more students will eventually become involved and will want to take it, and that is an approach that I favour. I, at this time, do not have any intentions of moving in a direction which would make this a mandatory program in the schools.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, to the Minister. I quite agree with all of his principles and all of his goals, but not his conclusions. I agree with choice, parents being involved and parents having choice and no child or no parents being obligated to have their children take the program if they do not want to. But you do not have the choice if the program is not available, and the freedom is in the right to opt out; in other words, any school that has the program, that has parents who do not want to participate, all the parents have to do is say they do not want their children to participate. But, on the other hand, if parents do want it and the program is not being offered, then they in fact are not being given the choice.

So I am wondering how the Minister feels, since he supports choice for parents in this matter, about those parents who would want their children to have the program, but do not have the option because the school division is not providing it.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I think, as an education process in Manitoba, we have to allow parents and school divisions some autonomy, in some instances, and this is one of those programs I think that we have to be very careful and very cognizant that there are differences, community and individual differences, throughout our province which have to be respected. That is why parents elect school board officials to school boards, because they are representatives of the community. If a community, or if a group of parents want to have a program which is available offered to their students, certainly it is their responsibility then to approach those people who have the responsibility in the community to make those decisions and ensure that program is offered.

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But I have to reiterate, once again, Mr. Chairman, that at this point in time I do not favour moving toward a mandatory system whereby we are going to impose on each and every student in each and every school to have this particular program taught.

I must say we are always in a changing society today and so therefore I qualify that statement by saying that is the position at this time and when further evidence comes that indicates perhaps that there should be a change, I am not going to have a closed mind to it at all, but at this point in time I favour making the choices available to school divisions and to parents.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Chairperson, just one other area. I am wondering if the Minister can tell us what the status is, if any, of the integration of some of the courses in the high school curriculum between the 00 and the 01?

Mr. Derkach: I think there was a move a few years ago and I remember bringing this very same point to—I think the Member for Logan was Minister at that time, as to the move towards a unitary type of language arts program in the high school area. My understanding is that in fact even in the term of her being Minister, that was a move that was initiated at that time and is still prevalent.

There is a difference in terms of the 300 and 301, in the content, in that the 300 course would be more of an analytical kind of program whereas the 301 program would be a more practical approach to the language. But in terms of the course, it is basically the unitary.

Just if I may at this time, Mr. Chairman, go back to the number of school divisions that are offering the Family Life Program. I said 33 were. The correct number is 37, have implemented the program. There are 12 school divisions across the province that are now considering the program and will be hopefully implementing it in the near future.

* (1530)

Ms. Hemphill: Those are pretty good figures.

Just to see if I understand the answer to the last question, does that mean that there is not any integration between 00 and 01 in language arts? Did we scrap it because people were having a problem with it or does it still exist?

Mr. Derkach: No. I guess the objective of the language arts program is to ensure that both 301 and 300 students have a good knowledge and a good basis of the English language and of the reading, writing comprehension and so forth. However, the expectations perhaps of the 300 as opposed to the 301 would be somewhat different. Perhaps the activities, in terms of what we expect of the student who is going to get a 300 standing would be somewhat different than of the one who would be taking the 301 program.

Ms. Hemphill: Just to get at one of the reasons that there were recommendations in the department to look

at that was the concern that has been going on for a while, that when we are streaming kids into 00 and 01, that they in fact rise to the level of the expectation of the program that they have been put into; and that the original idea, which was that there could be a lot of movement between the two streams and that there would be nothing to stop somebody who had been put into 00 from climbing up and going into 01 never became a reality.

The concern is that some kids, for any number of reasons, and we know how easy it is to label kids and how easy it is to label them inaccurately, may be put into a program below their capability or the level that they are achieving at that given time can be sort of doomed forevermore to achieving at that level which rules out all sorts of opportunities down the road in terms of higher academic training. Are there still concerns about that? How are we trying to deal with them so limitations are not put on kids that are not real and should not be there?

Mr. Derkach: There are no concerns or limitations in terms of allowing students to move upward. As a matter of fact, it is far easier for a student who is in a 301 program to move upward and to be able to gain that 300 credit today, I suppose than it was several years ago. It is easier for that student to move upward than it is for the 300 to take a second credit.

Ms. Hemphill: Is the Minister telling us then that there is movement from between the two streams that children put into 00 are moving into 01?

Mr. Derkach: I think the Member is asking from 01 to 00? Yes, that is correct.

Mrs. Yeo: Just in response to a statement made by the Minister to the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), we have searched through the list on the workshop seminars, etc., and the only thing we could find with regard to women was a title "Women in Trades." Now I assume that this is not affirmative action. Also, in light of the fact that other material that was provided to us show that despite the fact that there are 557 more females than males in full and part-time positions, I think it is under Professional School Personnel, that there are still, assistant superintendents, 85.4 percent of them are male.

Directors, down here, department head for directors, not department heads, directors, 77.2 percent are male. What is this one here? Superintendents, 92 percent are male; vice-principals, 75 percent males; despite the fact that there are quite a few more females than males. So I do not know if the Minister can point out to me where the affirmative action aspect is under the workshops and seminars presented but, as I said, we respectfully suggest that we could not find it.

Mr. Derkach: Just to give the Member some indication, we are just looking for that information right now, but some of the workshops that have been held or are being held, one is entitled "Math - Who Needs It?" and that is in the affirmative action for women; "Science for Girls" is another and then there is a conference at the University of Winnipeg as well.

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In terms of the hiring of women in the various occupations or in the various positions in education, first of all, it must be mentioned that school divisions have the responsibility for their own hirings so therefore the department cannot get physically involved in who they hire for their principals or vice-principals or so forth.

I think there are some inherent problems in school divisions with women taking on responsibilities of principalships and superintendencies. I know that when I was teaching in school, women would leave their profession to raise a family and certainly an interrupted career like that has its own problems in that person being able to come back and all of a sudden fit into a principalship. Sometimes these principalships do not come along that quickly as well, as the Member knows, especially in rural Manitoba.

With regard to the department, I think we are trying to do everything we can, in the short time while we have been in Government, to ensure that in fact we do embark on an affirmative action kind of program. I might say that we have, for the first time, the chairman of the Board of Reference is a woman. The vice-chairperson of the Public Schools' Finance Board is a woman. We are endeavouring to ensure that there is good representation of women on all our boards, and in addition, the other affirmative action groups as well. Certainly, we are cognizant of it and I guess I can assure the Member that when we do our Estimates next year certainly those numbers, at least on the boards and commissions, will be better represented of affirmative action groups than they are today.

Mrs. Yeo: Maybe even the Minister of Education might be represented by an affirmative action group.

Mr. Derkach: I do not intend to have a sex change, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Yeo: Now I have lost my train of thought.

Mr. Derkach: You should have.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I can provide a little more information on these workshops. On the workshops that are being proposed, one in Career Development, there is one in Women and Science, and also the Multiculturalism workshop. There is one being planned which will take in a variety of areas, the northern, the St. Vital and the Morris-MacDonald area. Hopefully those will, at least be a stab at affirmative action.

Mrs. Yeo: I am aware that the deadline for applicants for the Deputy Minister's position was, I believe, October 24. I wonder if I might ask if there were any women applicants.

Mr. Derkach: I am sure there were, Mr. Chairman, but I have not seen the list yet, so therefore I cannot answer that.

* (1540)

Mrs. Charles: Just to once more time try this again. Are there planned any in-services on the discussion of the topic of role models as portrayed in the curriculum of the educational system in Manitoba?

Mr. Derkach: This is not a new concept. Anybody in the education field will know that through the Manitoba Teachers' Society and through the department there have been a series of workshops throughout the province for the last number of years on this specific concept.

Mr. Chairman: 4.(b)(1)—pass. Item 4.(b)(2), Other Expenditures, \$1,195,700—the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I just have, I think, one question. For this whole area I notice that the total amount is down. The total Other Expenditures is down and the statement at the bottom of the page concerns me. I am wondering if there is a reduction in the number of committee meetings, the number of times the committees get together. Is this going to retard the evaluation of the curricula in any way?

Mr. Derkach: No, there are no cuts anticipated this year and certainly it is not affecting the work of the committees.

Mrs. Yeo: Just to follow up on that. It is felt then, I gather from that statement, that even though there is a reduction in the number of committee meetings, that the work can be carried out effectively and the evaluation will not be hindered in any way, shape or form?

Mr. Derkach: Most of the development work has already been done, so therefore we have steering committees in place now that are looking at the implementation, which does not require the intensity of meetings that were held before. That is why there is a reduction in that particular area.

Mr. Chairman: 4.(b)(2)—pass. Item 4.(c) Native Education: (1) Salaries, \$531,600—the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: Mr. Chairperson, in this area is there a good deal of cooperation between this section and the Curriculum Development and Implementation section so that the appropriate materials can be included in standard curriculum which create a very positive need of awareness?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, there is a lot of positive cooperation between those two branches. Also I might indicate that there is a good working relationship between the Inner City Branch, the Regional Services Branch as well. So certainly, it is not a branch that works independently. There is a good working cooperation between other branches.

Mrs. Yeo: Well, I am pleased to hear that it is not an island unto itself, that there is a lot of communication and liaison. I am wondering too, if the term "Native"

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includes Metis, or is there a coordinator department or whatever with BEF.

Mr. Derkach: No, the "Native" does include Metis as well.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I wonder if the Minister could indicate who is currently director of the Native Education Branch.

Mr. Derkach: The acting director is Dianne Cooley.

Mr. Storie: Is the Minister currently looking for a permanent director or what is the status of that position?

Mr. Derkach: The position is an acting position at the present time and the department will be reviewing this whole area in the next while, and certainly will be embarking either on a full-time director or perhaps the acting director may become a full-time director. That decision has not been made at this time.

Mr. Storie: The Minister is indicating that he may be reviewing this matter. Is he talking about reviewing the acting status of the position, or is he reviewing the branch or the position itself, or what specifically is the Minister—

Mr. Derkach: Both.

Mr. Storie: Then from that can the Minister indicate whether he has any concerns with the approach that has been taken by this branch? What creates the necessity for a review in the Minister's mind?

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have no concerns with the branch per se, but certainly this is a new Government and before we fill positions indiscriminately we want to take a look at the branch and the way it is structured and satisfy ourselves that it is the best way of approaching the needs, and also have an opportunity at that time to explore whether or not we can better meet the needs of Native people or of any branch that we are examining.

Mr. Storie: I think that we are heartened to know that the Minister is interested in improving, developing the services this branch provides because it is an important area, and certainly to a large number of students in a significant portion of Manitoba.

I am wondering whether the Minister could indicate whether there is any current support from the Department of Education, either through this branch or otherwise, to the development of Metis education in the province.

Mr. Derkach: I have to say, yes, there is consideration given by this department to the support of Metis education. I have met with the Manitoba Metis Federation. On one occasion I have also met with the group that is organizing a conference on "Metis people in Education"—I think is the right title—and certainly we are going to be supporting the education conference

that is coming up on the 17th and 18th of this month, I believe, and yes, we are interested in ensuring that Metis people in Manitoba have their rightful place in the history of this province.

Mr. Storie: Could the Minister indicate whether there continues to be a grant to support the work of a Metis education coordinator within the Manitoba Metis Federation?

Mr. Derkach: The funding for that coordinator came to an end, I believe at the end of August, August 31, and we have not continued that funding to date. However, as the Member probably knows, the Manitoba Metis Federation did approach me with regard to funding the Louis Riel Institute and providing some support in that regard. The decision on that has not been made yet and therefore when we consider the overall funding, of course, that will include this particular position as well then as an overall core funding area.

Mr. Storie: So if I understand the Minister correctly, the decision has been made to cut the funding to the only person, in effect, who was specializing in development of and support of Metis educational aims and objectives and has not made a decision to support in a financial way the Riel Institute.

* (1650)

Mr. Derkach: It is not a simple matter of saying yes, we are going to support this particular position and then later try to rationalize it or try to duplicate funding when you are addressing the funding of the Louis Riel Institute or the Manitoba Metis Federation per se. When we were given the presentation, Mr. Chairman, I think what was required was some time to examine how our approach to funding of Metis people in Manitoba, and part of that is not only the funding of the Louis Riel Institute and the Manitoba Metis Federation, but also our approach to funding the Metis Conference on Education. I think that instead of trying to approach it on a piecemeal basis, we want to take a look at the overall aspect of Metis people in Manitoba and ensure that we are doing the correct thing in a funding aspect.

Mr. Storie: If memory serves correctly, the support that was provided from the department to the Metis Education Conference was somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$10,000 in previous years. In addition, some \$48,000 I believe was used to support the education coordinator. I am wondering whether the Minister could indicate whether that amount is likely to be reduced through this exercise or are we actually going to see additional support going into the area of developing the aspirations of Metis people.

Mr. Derkach: That is a very hypothetical question. As I indicated, we are going to be supporting the Metis Education Conference that is coming up and that will be supported in the same way that it was last year. With regard to the overall funding, that decision has not been made yet and I am not going sit here and speculate on how far we are going to go or what approach we are going to take. I just can tell the

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Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) that we are approaching this in a positive light and certainly our intent is to do everything we can as a department to ensure that the proper approach is taken in terms of the funding or the support for Metis education in Manitoba.

Mr. Storie: We are in the Estimates of the Department of Education. I thought one of the most appropriate questions would be to ask directly how much the province intends to spend to support the activities of those interested in the development of Metis education? The Minister can say well we have not made that determination. I guess it is rather late in the year to have a group still considering, still uncertain as to what amount of money they may expect and what objectives they may be able to meet as a result of funding arrangements with the province.

Can the Minister not indicate are they going to get something? Are they going to get half of it? Are there any major concerns with the objectives that the Metis Federation set up for the education coordinator?

Mr. Derkach: As I indicated to the Member for Flin Flon, we will be supporting the Metis Education Conference to the same level as we supported it last year.

With regard to the other issue, and that is the Louis Riel Institute and the funding for the educational institution, I think the Member should know that we support Metis education and that this issue itself is not one that is simply addressed by the department in a single way. The approach to support is going to be one that is federal. Also the Department of Northern and Indian Affairs is involved in that, along with the Department of Education. I have met with the MMF maybe three weeks ago, at most I guess, and certainly we have not had the opportunity or the time to be able to meet with the federal people, the representatives, and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for Manitoba to discuss this in full detail. Once that happens though, certainly we will be in a better position to make a decision.

Mr. Storie: I am moving along to another issue. I am wondering whether the Native Education Branch is still providing significant support to both band operated and Department of Indian and Northern Affairs operated schools in the province.

Mr. Derkach: I guess the area that is most significant is the fact that the Department of Indian Affairs and band operated schools are invited to send their representatives to our regional in-services that are organized in the provincial school divisions. Also, all Department of Indian Affairs and band operated schools receive initial copies of new provincial curricula and we do not charge them for that but additional copies must be purchased from the Text Book Bureau. I might also add that the department does provide in-services when they are requested by the band schools.

Mr. Storie: I am wondering whether the Minister has followed up on concerns that were raised by the

previous Ministers of Education with the federal Government, and that is the impact of the devolution of previously supported activities by the Department of Indian Affairs to band controlled schools that have subsequently fallen in the lap of the provincial Government.

If I recall, I directed a letter to Mr. McKnight almost two years ago, with respect to the funding that the province was utilizing to support the objectives of Indian education on reserve and in the urban centres, that should rightly have been the responsibility of the federal Government. I am wondering if he has this issue raised with him. Is he aware of the offloading that is occurring? Has he addressed it with his federal colleagues?

Mr. Derkach: I guess all of our problems are not resolved with regard to this area. Certainly there has been some good progress made in the province in that discussions and meetings have gone on with officials within the province and some of the issues have been resolved. But certainly we cannot boast that we have resolved all of the issues that are outstanding.

I can say that although the branch does provide and handle in-services, it cannot begin to address all their requests, and there is a cost recovery for that. So certainly the issue is an important one that has to be addressed. Officials are dealing with it at the official level. Also the Canadian Council of Ministers has addressed this issue with regard to cost sharing and responsibility. So it is an ongoing situation, and I guess we cannot claim that we are totally satisfied that the situation is resolved.

* (1600)

Mr. Storie: Just so the Minister, who may not have had the same kind of experiences I have had or had an opportunity to meet with the groups that I have met with over the years. But to put it in perspective, Frontier School Division spends approximately \$7,000 per pupil in Manitoba. The Department of Indian Affairs spends more like \$2,700.00. If you can imagine the difference between the quality of education that can be provided to Native students with those two discrepant numbers, you might have an idea of the dilemma that a lot of band control in the Department of Indian Affairs controlled schools we have in the province.

The difference between the quality of education that is being provided in two communities, where one is band controlled and the other is provincially controlled is astounding, in some cases frightening, making it clear that this is no reflection on the personnel that work in the Department of Indian Affairs schools or the administrations, whether they are from the department or band control. It reflects the fact that they get significantly fewer dollars to deal with the same number or more problems than the average, Frontier School.

It is a major issue, as far as I am concerned, that the province is continually being requested to provide support to band controlled schools, and Indian Affairs schools, both in servicing and curriculum development by way of special needs services. I know this Minister may not be as likely as some other previous

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Ministers to attack the federal Government, to object to the offloading of services onto the Province of Manitoba. But I think that it requires some action on his part, not only because the taxpayers of the province may be picking up financial responsibilities of the federal Government, but because unless the province voices its concern, I think the problem is going to deteriorate.

The new funding structure for reserves, both in terms of capital and operating that are being put in place, make it more obvious all the time that these groups are going to be less and less able to deal with the improvement that is required in their educational system.

Now the Minister may feel that it is not his responsibility. I recognize that it is not directly, but the problem is that we are being requested, if not required, to assist in some cases. It is very difficult as a professional teacher, as a professional in the Department of Education to know that there is a crying need with respect to a school, or a school's development educational need, and not respond. In the past, they have been quite generous and I think with the consent of various Ministers of Education.

But I would certainly encourage him on behalf of the 30,000 to 40,000 students that are currently under the jurisdiction of the Department of Indian Affairs federally and band controlled schools, to make the argument with the federal Government that they need additional support, that the amount of money that is being spent per student is simply not adequate in 1988.

To give you an example, the Federal Government recently implemented a new Special Needs Funding Program. They provided \$300,000 for the province, for the region. That amount is so inadequate it is barely describable when you consider the money that is spent by the province to support special needs students.

Anything that this Minister can do to encourage a healthier attitude towards education in our remote communities and our reserve communities I think is something that he should do and, to the extent that he spends time on it, would be time well-spent.

I am wondering if the Minister has actually met with the Minister of Indian Affairs and expressed his concern about these issues. Has he written a letter? Has he informed himself of the current deteriorating situation on some of our reserve schools?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I guess the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says that I am not as apt as other Ministers were to attack the Federal Government, and he is quite right. We do not use that particular tactic and I am not about to attack any federal Government or any federal Minister as he would maybe be inclined to do.

Rather, Mr. Chairman, we have been discussing this particular issue, which is an important issue with the federal Government with federal officials, and certainly through the Canadian Council of Education Ministers there has been—and when I was chairman of the council I might add, Mr. Chairman, that we initiated an intention to meet with the federal Minister. And I understand

that under the new chairman, who is Mrs. McLeod from Ontario, that meeting will take place and I guess it will take place after the election on November 21.

But, Mr. Chairman, we understand and recognize the problems that are prevalent in especially the Special Needs area with regard to support to the Natives of Manitoba. But as the Member well knows, this is an area of federal jurisdiction and we are not washing our hands of it. I just can reiterate the fact that the officials from my department are continually working and pushing to ensure that those band operated schools are receiving the attention so that those students can get a fair opportunity for education in the province.

Mr. Storie: I appreciate the Minister's comments, Mr. Chairperson. I would indicate that "attack" may not be the right word. It was an inappropriate use of the word. It certainly felt that sometimes that was the approach that was required to get attention from the federal Government to address some of those issues. I cannot say that I or other Ministers have been extremely successful to date. I make the point that the situation is deteriorating and the gap between what the province is spending and what the federal Government is spending is the widening and the arrangements that are currently being made to fund social services, including education on reserves, is almost certainly destined to increase that discrepancy further. It is a concern.

On the other side of the coin is the question of what is being done in the Inner City to support not only Indian and Metis children who live there but those who are currently relocating from remote communities to the City of Winnipeg. I am wondering whether the Native Education Branch has anyone particularly focusing on the problems of urban Native students.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, as the Member knows, the Inner City Branch is certainly responsible for this area. In addition, the Native Education Branch is involved there as well. There is a cooperative kind of programming and work that is being done in the Inner City with the Natives that are there and those that are moving in as well. If the Member would want to wait, in (XVI) 4.(j), we cover the Inner City Initiative. We could probably address those questions in a more specific way.

Mr. Storie: I recognize that there is an Inner City Initiative. My question was what specifically is the Native Education Branch doing to support the activities? Is there a particular curriculum being developed? Are we in the process of developing new material for use in the Inner City schools?

* (1610)

Mr. Derkach: First of all, the branch does support the Inner City area through program development. I can indicate that there is a draft report before me now of Native studies in early years. Also there is one for the senior years and one for middle years. That is for the social studies area. So in terms of the involvement of the branch, it is specifically through program development.

Mr. Storie: Perhaps the Minister can direct me to which section he would like to discuss the question of local control. I have got some questions relating to Frontier and some other Inner City questions dealing with that question. Would it be appropriate to discuss the Frontier questions here?

Mr. Derkach: I will not know until you ask the question. Ask the question and we will see.

Mr. Storie: The first question to the Minister is that several years ago there was an intention to begin to expand the level of control of Frontier local school committees. It was made clear to Frontier communities that if they wished to broaden the scope of the mandate of the local school committees that they could do so. At present, the school committees do things like approve hiring and establish school policy but, if they wanted to become more intimately involved, they were allowed to do that. Very few communities actually indicated an interest at that time, and I am wondering where that initiative is, whether we have communities interested in becoming more directly involved in the delivery of education.

Mr. Derkach: I have met with the Frontier School Division council or members of the board on one occasion, and I met with Mr. Zong on a couple of occasions now, and certainly they have a desire to be treated like any other school board in the province so that they could have some say in the matters that go on in terms of the Frontier School Division. They recognize their differences as compared to other school divisions and the unique situations that they have in northern Manitoba. Certainly, there have been meetings with Gillam, Wanipigow and Norway House in terms of community schools as opposed to the band controlled schools.

So all of those kinds of situations are being considered, and certainly we have not been able to make any very hard decisions at this time because it does involve a lot of meetings and a lot of discussion. I think that once the House does adjourn and where I have an opportunity as Minister to be able to travel and to be able to have those groups in and discuss these issues, we are certainly going to embark on further discussions and consultations in that regard.

Mr. Storie: Recognizing that Frontier School Board has delegated some of its responsibilities to school committees, I think one of the concerns that I have raised with this Minister before was the question of, I guess, the involvement of the Minister in decisions which have traditionally been left up to local school committees. The Minister will recall that earlier this fall several of the schools in Frontier School Division, which had adjusted the school day over a period of time to allow for an earlier dismissal in June, complained quite bitterly because the Minister had arbitrarily decided that they would be no longer allowed to continue what had been a practice for some 10 years. I am wondering whether the Minister can indicate what has been the final resolution. The communities obviously were concerned about it and, I believe, set forth a fairly good case to the Minister for maintaining the practice as it had existed. What is the outcome?

Mr. Derkach: I have to tell you with some pleasure that there has been a change in the way that we are approaching the early dismissal in June. That is that the former Government through neglect, I might add, allowed the situation to occur where there was a deterioration, almost an abuse in the way the situation was handled, and there was no meaningful time allotment given to compensating for the time that would be lost when students were dismissed early in the spring.

Because of recognition of the fact, we were able to, along with the Frontier School superintendent and the concurrence of the board, establish a process where those northern schools which have a unique situation where some families move away from the area where the school is located, in those particular communities, they will be allowed to dismiss school early, as they were in previous years. The time will be made up in a minimum of half-hour slots rather than 10 minutes or 15 minutes or whatever the case may have been before. So there is a consistent approach in that, if they want to make up the time, they will have to make it up in a meaningful amount of time so that students in fact will not lose the number of contact hours they have with instructors and the amount of instructional time that they spend in a school.

Mr. Storie: Well, Mr. Chairperson, it has never been made clear to those communities or to Frontier School Division Board, I believe, that in fact that those irregularities were occurring. Certainly, the intention had always been that there would be no deficit in the number of hours that the students attended school.

Mr. Chairperson, we have another example of the Minister's rather arbitrary use of his powers as a Minister in a more recent example. I understand that the Minister has indicated there would have to be a change in practice in Flin Flon where teachers for some years now have been dismissing students early by a number of minutes to accommodate team meeting and school planning during the week. I understand that the Minister has now indicated to them that practice, in his view, is no longer acceptable. Can the Minister comment on where that issue is at?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I guess the Member knows that within the School Act the Minister does have the responsibility for the school hours in any particular school in the province. Therefore, my entire objective is to ensure that students in fact have as much contact time as is required under The Public Schools Act and is necessary.

Now, yes, I found that it was inappropriate to have 15-minute extensions on a school day, because that kind of a request is going to be made right through the province if it is allowed to go from one school to the other. Therefore, there are 11 in-service days. There are after school hours that teachers can plan their working day and can have their team meetings. For those number of reasons and to ensure that students in fact get the required and the appropriate instructional time, the decision has been made that they will not be able to cut school short by 15 minutes in order to have their team meetings.

Mr. Storie: Well, if that is the Minister's understanding of what has happened, I can see why he has erred in his decision—

Mr. Derkach: I have not erred.

Mr. Storie: —because there was no shortening of the contact time. There was no shortening of the contact time. It was an adjustment of the lunch hour period to accommodate an extra period where team teachers could get together and plan and where intergrade meetings could be held and schools could plan.

The Minister, it is quite obvious, has arbitrarily interfered in operating the Department of Education as if it was his own little fiefdom, rather than a consultative process with professionals in the field. I think what he has done is an insult to the school division and an insult to the professional staff, and I am wondering whether the Minister has answered the letter of concern that he received from the Flin Flon Teachers' Association.

* (1620)

Mr. Derkach: I will get back to the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) with regard to that particular letter. I cannot recall whether I have seen the letter or whether it has been across my desk or whether I have answered it right at this moment, but I will certainly go back and check my files and then be able to get back to the Member as to whether or not the response has gone back to the Flin Flon Teachers' Association.

Mr. Storie: The simple question to the Minister, can we have the Minister's assurance that if in fact his understanding with respect to the amount of contact time that has been maintained, if his understanding is in error, then will he agree to allow those schools which have, through their own negotiations, discussions, come to the conclusion that this would be a valuable thing for the educational system in that division, will he now agree to allow school divisions to operate in what they see as their best interests as long as they are meeting the requirements of the Department of Education, which they are?

Mr. Derkach: The amount of time the students were required to make up those 15-minute chunks was to allow the teachers a block of time so that they could have their teacher meetings. My attitude or my response to the teachers was that they could take time after school hours to have their teacher meetings if they so required. Certainly, what they were doing in essence was taking time away from the students, either through their noon hour, taking some of their noon hour away or extending the day in another fashion.

Quite frankly, I found that it was not a wise move for those teachers to be doing that and, for that reason, I have indicated to the teachers that we would not allow that process to continue for this year. Certainly when I have seen the letter—and I am not sure I have seen the letter from the Flin Flon Teachers' Society yet. I cannot recall it but I will not say definitively that I have not seen it but, when I do, I certainly will be pleased

to meet with the president of that association and discuss the matter with them.

Mr. Storie: I want to point out that the Minister has not only insulted the teachers. He has insulted the school board who were quite prepared to accept that practice, believing it was in the best interests of both the students and the educational system in that division. I believe, if the Minister checks, there are probably other divisions who are using similar practices either overtly or covertly.

The fact of the matter is that this Minister assumes in his rather arrogant position that he knows better than the professional staff at Flin Flon, he knows better than the parents, none of whom I believe have complained to this Minister, that he knows better than the school board, that he knows better than the superintendent. He is using arbitrarily his power to, I believe, the detriment of the school division and the students.

The system has worked very well both in terms of developing a school esprit de corps, in developing school planning, intergrade planning, and I can see no rationale for it. The Minister has said he would only interfere if the students were losing time. They were not. The students did not lose any contact time. There have been no complaints, certainly that I am aware of and I was involved in that system, with respect to the parents, so we can only ask that the Minister take on his responsibilities somewhat more seriously.

This is not a fiefdom for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). This is a serious exercise and the people involved, the professionals involved deserve the courtesy of a hearing before this Minister makes his arbitrary decisions, responding to his own biases or whatever. My understanding was that there was no consultation on this, that the Teachers' Association, those who had been involved and had found the practice to work, were not consulted, and that is not acceptable behaviour for a Minister of Education. I indicate that he did the same thing to Frontier School Division and he had his knuckles rapped and has backed away. It is unfortunate.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Storie: I want the Minister to indicate, if he finds out that he is wrong, that there is no loss of contact time, if he finds out that the school division supports this initiative, will he in fact reverse his arbitrary decision and leave the practice stand because it was working?

* (1630)

Mr. Derkach: I guess the next request we could have is for some school to say, well, we want to eliminate noon hours altogether except for five minutes for the students to eat so that we as teachers could have planning time blocked off so many days per week and then we could leave the students at home on those days. I think that there is some responsibility on myself as Minister or the department to make sure that in fact there is some reasoned and practical approach to the

way we conduct our activities across the province and in terms of offering students the best opportunities of an education.

When the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about moving in a unilateral way, I only have to remind him once again that he is the former Minister who tried to take teachers salaries away completely by saying that they should have a zero percent increase. Then when he got his nose slapped, he backed away pretty quickly and allowed teachers their rightful negotiation process and allowed their salaries to increase through a negotiation process, which is only appropriate in a democratic society. Certainly taking rights away from people, nobody knows better than the former Minister or the Member for Flin Flon what that is all about.

Mr. Chairman, I have to tell you that I am not opposed to meeting with the association from Flin Flon. If they want to meet and discuss this issue with me, certainly I would be pleased to do that whenever they can come into the city and we can strike a meeting. I would be more than happy and more than open to discussing this issue and to then also assess it on its merits after they have made their proposals or their argument for it.

Mr. Storie: The Minister wants to confuse the issue by raising the suggestion that I made which did not arbitrarily impose anything on anybody for the Minister's information. He probably knows that.

The fact of the matter is that this Minister has again insulted, by virtue of his comments, the professional staff at Flin Flon, the superintendent, the school board, by suggesting that next they will be asking to take their lunch break away entirely from the students. What a ridiculous comment. The people in Flin Flon and including the parents and the students have accepted the practice, and I emphasize the practice, that has occurred for a number of years in Flin Flon as one that is beneficial. There is no loss of contact time. There is only a facilitation of in-school planning, intergrade planning, team-teaching planning time. It is done to accommodate the system, if you will. There is no loss of teaching time.

For the Minister to trivialize it, to make silly assertions about what the next recommendation will be underestimates seriously the professional competence and the professionalism of the people in the field. I do not think I have seen any kind of proposal which is frivolous or ridiculous, contrary to the Minister's suggestion.

It is also a little bit after the fact to suggest I will meet now, after he has written and imposed his will arbitrarily on a school system to say, well I will meet and discuss. That is not professional. That is after the fact rationalization. If it takes this kind of behavior for the Minister to be chased back into his hole, if it takes this kind of effort on the part of the teachers and the public to make this Minister more accountable, then I suppose that is the way we are going to operate.

I do not think it is a satisfactory way to operate. If the Minister would just contain himself and not make arbitrary decisions before he has consulted with what

is an extremely professional staff in our school systems and consulted with the people who are ultimately directly responsible, and that is our school boards, I think we will have a more satisfactory relationship between the provincial Government, this Minister and the educational system.

I simply note for the record that the kind of behavior exhibited by the Minister is not acceptable. It is not well-received, I can assure him, by teachers in the province. We look for some remedial behavior on the part of the Minister. Item pass.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, thank you for passing the item.

I would just like to add the comments that this Minister is going to consult with teachers. However, when a decision is required to be made we will make that decision. We will not back away from it like the former Minister did on every occasion because he never had a spine to stand up against the odds or for the students of the province. That is what we are doing, ensuring that students in this province have an adequate and a fair opportunity for educational opportunities. Whether that is Flin Flon, in the Member's own backyard, or whether that is in Winnipeg here, we are going to continue to act in the best interest of students.

Mrs. Charles: Can the Minister indicate whether there are any textbooks available having Natives or Metis people as role models within the textbooks or, if not, whether there is any program to develop such textbooks?

Mr. Derkach: There are no textbooks as such but there are resource books that are a part of the curriculum; there are videos; there are posters. Certainly, within the new curriculums that are being developed, that part of it is going to be incorporated into the textbooks. There are no textbooks per se that would be channelled towards the Native education area.

Mrs. Charles: Just for clarification, is this in all areas of schooling, both in Native and non-Native schooling departments?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, indeed it is, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: 4.(c)(1)—pass; Item 4.(c)(2), Other Expenditures, \$185,000—pass. Item 4.(d) Manitoba School for the Deaf: (1) Salaries, \$2,484,800—the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: I am wondering about deaf high school graduates. I have heard that after standardized testing that they have an average reading level of Grade 4. I am wondering if this is a true statement that I have heard, and if it is, what is being done to address this.

Mr. Derkach: Yes, indeed, I think the facts speak for themselves in that the achievement level of deaf students is certainly less than it is of regular students. This is of some concern to me as well. Although there is some action taken to date, certainly we have to attempt to do more. We have to probably concentrate

some resources in the area to ensure that in fact those students are getting the kinds of assistance that they require to achieve higher levels, because certainly a Grade 4 level is unacceptable.

Mrs. Yeo: I am sure that there are very complex psychological processes involved in reading and a lot of these are not understood. They are not even understood for a hearing individual.

In the Professional/Technical numbers of 65.44 staff years, how many psychologists are there employed?

Mr. Derkach: There is one psychologist employed.

Mrs. Yeo: I assume this psychologist is fluent in ESL?

Mr. Derkach: The individual is fluent in the English sign language and has some fluency in the ASL, the American sign language, as well.

Mrs. Yeo: What about a Native who is hearing impaired or is deaf? Is there anyone involved in this number of individuals who would be able to deal with this particular individual?

Mr. Derkach: There are eight or nine students involved in this area who are Native and there are no special supports other than what the other students are receiving in terms of language training and communications skills.

Mrs. Yeo: Are there any interprovincial cooperative measures that are used to assist the deaf students in Manitoba?

Mr. Derkach: There are continuing contacts between the jurisdictions, but certainly there is no interprovincial kind of programming done for children with hearing impaired or the deaf.

Mrs. Yeo: Is there no interprovincial committee established or is it just—it sounds as though the communication is on a very piecemeal manner, just from the comment that I heard. Is there not an interprovincial committee established that would meet once or twice a year even, or two or three times a year?

Mr. Derkach: I guess there are two things that happen. One is that the department officials do meet through their association, and also the administrators of the various schools for the deaf are in communication with one another. But in terms of a committee structure per se, that would include members from other provinces. At the present time, there is nothing that is going on.

Mrs. Yeo: I believe very strongly that communication in a language of one's choice is a fundamental human right. The term ESL, I think was used a moment ago. I think ASL, American sign language, is more acceptable as an official language from what I have heard. Is this a true statement or is it not?

Mr. Derkach: There are two schools of thought, of course, and one of them is that the American sign

language is one that can be used internationally, I guess, or across the borders. Parents of children who are deaf have a desire to have their children learn the English sign language so they in fact can communicate better in the communities that they will hopefully be living in right here in Canada. So there is some desire for those parents who have deaf children to take the English sign language. For parents who themselves are deaf, there seems to be a desire to go the other way and have the American sign language taught. I guess the difference is because parents who are not deaf, and have deaf children, want their children to communicate with them and with other non-deaf individuals, whereas parents who are themselves deaf would prefer the sign language which is a shorter version and a different kind of approach to communication. But within the school itself, I might say that there is an overlapping, I guess, of the two programs.

* (1640)

Mrs. Yeo: I am certainly aware that there are arguments pro and con and they have been going on certainly in both Canada and the United States. As a matter of fact, I think there is a thrust to encourage the deaf individual to speak, and in some cases they are successful and in some cases they are not. However, I know as well that there are many, many courses offered at Red River Community College, at Sturgeon Creek Regional Secondary School, University of Winnipeg, University of Brandon—many, many locations. I am not familiar with what KCC and ACC offer but I think they, also, have courses and I think the majority of them are in American sign language.

I think the majority of interpreters that are found at conventions, and this is becoming more and more common that when one attends a meeting across the country, that they usually provide interpreters. I would hazard a guess, now it is just a guess, that the majority of these interpreters are speaking in American sign language. Is there any input from the deaf community itself to say what they desire?

Mr. Derkach: Well, I think that the ASL is one that is picking up momentum and has certainly done so in the last couple of years. At the present time, they are—starting January 1989 there will be courses offered in the American sign language for staff at the Manitoba School for the Deaf. So there is a move to go in that direction, and also I might say that the Manitoba School for the Deaf have two advisory committees which, among other things, are looking at this very aspect to ensure that if the need is there and we obviously see that it looks like we should be moving in that direction to a certain extent, we need to have trained personnel and trained staff to be able to deliver those programs.

The last question of the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) was with regard to communication with the deaf community, and I might say that representatives from the deaf community will be meeting with the Manitoba School for the Deaf and the Home and School Association.

Mrs. Yeo: As I was saying, I am pleased to hear that. I know a good number of deaf individuals, and when

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the Minister says that the parents often wish to have their children learn ESL, I even find that difficult because the majority of families that I know, the parents, hearing brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, a good number of them, speak with the deaf individual and I do not know anybody who uses anything but ASL. I very recently attended a wedding that was very beautiful, I might add, that was given in two languages simultaneously and this is certainly something that is interesting to watch. The grandparents and an aunt were all hearing impaired, were all grossly hearing impaired, they were totally deaf, and the grandchildren took turns during the toast to the bride, during the responses to the toast, etc., so that grandma and grandpa and great aunt could be active participants in the wedding ceremony.

So I am pleased to hear that ASL is going to be taught. I assumed that prior to January of 1989 it had been a language that had been presented and actively participated in by the teachers at the School for the Deaf.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, just for the information of the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), I could add that about 10 percent of the children at the school have parents who themselves are deaf; whereas 90 percent of the children have parents who are hearing parents. It might be interesting to note that although the ESL is sort of the common-speaking language of the people, there are no curriculum at the present time written in that language, so that makes it a little more cumbersome and difficult to swing into the American sign language immediately. We have to have a language where we have curriculum written, and that happens to be the English-based sign language.

Mrs. Yeo: Well, maybe I could encourage this particular department to move into the 1989 year and be a little more current because I think that is a little slow.

Under the Expected Results there is a statement that says, "residential service is provided to an estimated 15 rural northern students," and I am wondering who qualified, how do they qualify?

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Chairman, is they live in an area where they cannot commute back and forth on a daily basis then they would qualify for the residence, and there are 15 such students right now.

Mrs. Yeo: Does this 15 in number encompass all students who are deaf and cannot commute, or are there other students out there on a waiting list?

Mr. Derkach: There are none on the waiting list, Mr. Chairman, those are all the students that require accommodation or residence.

Mrs. Yeo: Where do the funds for travelling come from?

Mr. Derkach: The school, or the branch, provides transportation for those students back home, or to their residence, and that is in the line on Social Assistance. Okay? That line also includes other things besides the transportation.

Mrs. Yeo: Are these children given grants, as well, to go home on weekends or are they in residence for the time between starting time and, say, Thanksgiving, or—I am wondering about them keeping in touch with their home surroundings.

Mr. Derkach: The students are allowed to go home every weekend and so therefore the assistance would apply in all those cases.

Mrs. Yeo: What ages are these 15 children?

Mr. Derkach: There is a fairly wide range of students who are at residence right now. The age ranges from eight to 19.

Mrs. Yeo: I have heard about Gallaudet University and I am wondering if many of our students from the School for the Deaf end up going to Gallaudet.

Mr. Derkach: Out of five graduates last year, three attended the institution.

Mrs. Yeo: That is a nice ratio. Is there any knowledge of any such university being established in Canada?

Mr. Derkach: No, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Storie: Following up on that question, has there been any discussion interprovincially about the possibility? I do not know whether the Member asked that question, but has there been any discussion interprovincially about the establishment of an institution?

Mr. Derkach: In Canada?

Mr. Storie: Yes, either in western Canada or Canadian ones?

Mr. Derkach: There is one being proposed in Ontario, but it is just at the proposal stage. So there is no concrete evidence right now that that will go through or not, but that is the only one in the entire country. There was some talk about one a couple of years ago but that did not amount to anything.

* (1650)

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? Item 4.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, \$512,900—the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: There is a—where is it? 96, oh, that was up under salaries and I missed it. Can I ask you what the Other Benefits 96,100?

Mr. Derkach: That is overtime, severance pay, vacation pay and those kinds of things and, included in that, I guess, will be maternity leave.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

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Mrs. Yeo: Food services, if food services are provided, under what allocation—and I think they are provided, are they not? That is the first question.

Mr. Derkach: Yes, it is provided under Supplies and Services.

Mrs. Yeo: Under what SY category do the preparers and servers of the food services fall in?

Mr. Derkach: All the staff are in the Professional/Technical category. There are nine staff who are involved in that, in the food services.

Mrs. Yeo: What then would be the average hourly salary for these individuals?

Mr. Derkach: The range is from \$9 an hour to \$11 per hour.

Mrs. Yeo: This would be for individuals, who are basically serving children food for breakfast, lunch and for supper?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, that is correct, but it should be noted that 80 percent of the meals are for the Youth Centre.

Mrs. Yeo: Can the Minister explain that a little bit further? Are there kitchens at the School for the Deaf that are utilized for other places, other than the children in the residence at the School for the Deaf?

Mr. Derkach: There is an arrangement between Community Services and Education that food services be provided for the Youth Centre. The meals that are provided are noon hour lunch for all-day students and residents, plus the evening meal and breakfast meals for the resident students.

Mrs. Yeo: Could the Minister tell me what the average cost per day per student for meals would be then?

Mr. Derkach: The cost is \$1.21 per meal, but might I say that in the arrangement with Community Services, there is a recovery for those meals that are served to the Youth Centre.

Mrs. Yeo: Are the numbers of students at the School for the Deaf increasing or decreasing?

Mr. Derkach: Over the last four or five years, there has been a gradual decrease in the number of students at the Manitoba School for the Deaf. It looks like we are losing about four or five students per year.

Mrs. Yeo: I find that interesting when I look at the healthy increase from '87-88 to 1989, and yet the numbers are decreasing by four or five per year. Can the Minister attribute that to anything other than rising costs?

Mr. Derkach: I guess you can associate the increased costs to a lot of things, whether it is costs in salaries, costs in food costs, all of the normal increases that one would associate with all the things that go on in

the centre. Also, the cases that are coming in are somewhat more complex and also require more intensive programming. Then we have, of course, the overtime, the severance, the vacation pay and all those things mount up to increased costs.

Mrs. Yeo: Can the Minister give some indication as to why there is a decrease in enrollment in the school?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, as the Member knows, there is definitely a push towards mainstreaming within our public school system. Therefore, some of the students who would normally go into the Manitoba School for the Deaf are now being accommodated within their own community schools in the whole concept of mainstreaming.

Mrs. Yeo: Back to the 15 rural northern students, I find that a very low number and I am wondering if there is enough advertising done for this school. I have heard of a case, I think, a child who is currently enrolled at the School for the Deaf, who was from a northern community and who was thought to be mentally retarded by her family in the North. In fact, that child was sexually abused for a period of time, now is in a foster home and is an incredible young 13 year old, 14 year old, a beautiful child. Is there any effort being made to reach out to these kids who may in fact be in fairly secluded areas where diagnostic processes are a little less likely to occur?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I think a couple of things need to be noted. First of all, we have seven consultants out in the rural and northern areas who deal especially with the hearing impaired or the deaf. It should also be noted that many of these students who come from rural and northern areas have relatives who live in the city. Therefore, they do not require the residence as such, so therefore the figure may be low, but it could be inaccurate in terms of the number of students who really come from the northern or rural areas.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass? The Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Chairperson, just a final question. The transportation costs that are included here, does that include the transportation costs related to the integration efforts at the school, or is that a different element?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know which line the Member is talking about?

Mr. Storie: No. 1002, Transportation and other Expenditures.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, that has to do with staff travel and the Government vehicle that is used to transport these students at the school.

* (1700)

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

SUPPLY—HEALTH

Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko: We will continue to consider the Estimates of the Department of Health. We are presently on item 1.(d) Research and Planning—the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Chairperson, I have a few questions with regard to the effect of the Free Trade Agreement on Health. I continue to hear that the health care facility management firms are to be given national treatment. American firms will have the same rights and obligations in Canada as Canadian firms. The scope of this application of this agreement, while limited, I repeat is not insignificant. The rise of the health care facility management industry is an American phenomenon and it has occurred in the last 12 years as private investors sought and found opportunity for profit in the fragmented financial system in the United States.

In Canada, under our universal health insurance system, the system of financing hospitals and medical services has provided a good service in the past, but, however, this profit oriented organization might establish a base in Canada. The question must be raised to understand the implication of this service management sector under free trade. My first question is what are the implications of an increased use of private management services for the delivery of health services in Canada?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, let me answer in general terms, because as I pointed out in the debate Thursday afternoon, this is not an advent of a new policy. Management is able to be contracted out anywhere in Canada right now to Manitoba management firms, to Alberta or Ontario management firms or U.S. management firms, or for that matter I suppose European management firms. That exists right now and it is the decision of the funders of the health care system in the long run as to whether they wish to pursue that avenue as an effective policy management tool. Nothing changes with the Free Trade Agreement. Boards of facilities presumably will still make decisions as to how they wish to approach the management of their facilities.

In terms of the implication, I cannot say whether there is any implication in Manitoba and I do not believe there is any implication in Manitoba because a history does not exist. However, let me again review for my honourable friend, and I will pose to him the question which I hope he will answer on behalf of his Party.

* (1430)

In Hawkesbury, Ontario, a hospital funded by the Ontario Government was going to close. That hospital decided they would contract management apparently with a U.S. firm. I do not know the name of the firm, but a U.S. management firm came in and managed the Hawkesbury Hospital. They are managing it to Ontario Department of Health standards which is what any management must do. The people of Hawkesbury now have a hospital serving them. Their option was no

hospital to serve them, or a hospital managed by apparently an American management firm providing services to the people of Hawkesbury.

I think the example that exists at Hawkesbury is one which is positive because that private sector management gives them hospital services in Hawkesbury that were not going to be provided under public management, so that the example is rather dramatic for the people of Hawkesbury. I simply ask my honourable friend if he were living in Hawkesbury or he were Government and had the choice of closing a hospital or allowing the board to privately contract management to keep the hospital open and serving people, which would he choose? Would he choose closing the hospital or allowing management, bearing in mind that the hospital has to be run to the standards that Government imposes so that the quality of care, the level of care are guaranteed by regulation applicable to health care facilities in the province the same as it would be in Manitoba. So the decision I want my honourable friend to indicate to me on behalf of the Liberal Party, would they close hospitals or would they allow management of private sector management if that was the only alternative?

Mr. Cheema: My next question is, considering the possibility of management services being extended to Canada, will the scope of those private management services extend beyond the hospital for the ambulatory care or not, and which services can the Minister identify that could be a risk, and what guarantees are included in the free trade which exclude those areas?

Mr. Orchard: I do not understand the nature of my honourable friend's last question. He rolled a number of different topics all into one and I simply do not understand the question. I note that he did not answer my question as to where the Liberal Party stands on closing a hospital versus having it managed privately if that is the only alternative.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, my question was that private management services could easily extend beyond the hospital and the one area of their concern is ambulatory care. What guarantees are included in the Free Trade Agreement which will exclude these areas also?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, there are no mandated requirements to allow management or to disallow management. There is nothing in the Free Trade Agreement which allows or disallows or brings in a new management technique, nothing changes.

Is that clear to my honourable friend? I notice he is shaking, he is nodding his head that he understands that nothing changes, post-Free Trade, pre-Free Trade Agreement; that if the funders of the health care system desire, as they did in Hawkesbury, Ontario, to allow private sector management, that can happen. That is the choice of Government.

Under the Free Trade Agreement, you cannot discriminate against a United States management firm over a Japanese management firm, over a British

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management firm, over a Canadian management firm. Nothing has changed in the ability of the funders of the system to decide on the management structure. It is neither mandated, required nor mentioned. It is simply an opportunity that has always existed with or without the Free Trade Agreement. My honourable friend nodded his head earlier on as if he understood that to be the case.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, under this new agreement, there is a possibility that the U.S. Blood Bank Laboratories carry on business in Canada, and how that business will affect the voluntary system such as run by the National Red Cross and other voluntary organizations?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, no effect, because today an American Blood Bank firm can locate in Canada and establish business. A private donation firm, and I forget the exact terminology, but let me describe it and my honourable friend will know what I am getting to.

In Montreal, it is my understanding that an American firm has come in. They allow you to go in as a customer, draw your blood, store it for you or your relative in the event of surgery, and that is a private firm that is operating. It happens to have American parents, but they operate to Canadian standards and regulation, and nothing is preventing American firms today without free trade from doing that.

It is a market decision that will be made. It is a market decision that I believe will not be made because we are talking about a voluntary blood system that has worked and will continue to work for the benefit of Canadians in Canada. I do not see Canadians changing the longstanding tradition of donating blood for the common cause of human good, with or without the Free Trade Agreement, because without the Free Trade Agreement, American firms can, or Japanese can, or British firms can locate in Canada, and nothing changes with or without the Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Cheema: Under the Free Trade Agreement, there is one area of grave concern which is the question of subsidies. It is unclear if the educational bursaries or the incentives to practise to the underserved areas in Manitoba, such as rural communities or the northern communities, could be affected by this agreement. What specific clauses, if any, are under this agreement that will ensure that this type of subsidy or incentive will not be impaired by the agreement?

Mr. Orchard: There is nothing in the agreement which prevents us from offering scholarship incentive, remote location underserved area salary enhancement grants to physicians or to other professional disciplines to locate in remote areas. Nothing in the Free Trade Agreement changes our ability to do that, nor will it be called a subsidy, as my honourable friend alleges, because that is part of our Medicare Program which is excluded from the Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the section to pass this item?

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): There are indeed a number of other issues which one would like to discuss under this particular item if time allowed, but as you are aware and others are aware, we have a schedule to maintain with respect to Estimates, so we would indicate at this time while there are other items and they will probably come up within the discussion of the particular lines, we are prepared to let this particular section go in the interests of moving the Estimates along.

Mr. Chairman: Item 1.(d)(1)—pass; item 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures—pass. Item 1.(e)(1) Communications: Salaries—the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Under Communications, can the Minister tell this House why he has reduced the salary of the professional and administration support staff and the benefits, or are there still four staff years, and how many vacant positions are there at present?

Mr. Orchard: As indicated in the sheet that I passed out to my honourable friend about 10 days or two weeks ago, there are two vacancies in this Communications shop and the salary decrease is simply the level that we anticipate would be needed to adequately compensate for all four positions if they were filled. However, I reiterate, two positions are currently vacant.

* (1440)

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us the details of the media campaign under this section?

Mr. Orchard: The media campaign, I presume my honourable friend is referring to the Activity Identification is he?

Mr. Cheema: Yes.

Mr. Orchard: Basically this group is in charge of fielding questions, if you will, from various media outlets who wish to contact myself or the department regarding issues, where to go for information on given issues. They are also responsible for putting the final touches to press releases that from time to time are released from the Minister of Health's office and indeed coordinate my activities in most part with the media. I just want to indicate to my honourable friend that the actual expenditures for any media campaigns are not found in the Other Expenditures line here. Those are found directly in the delivering divisions of the department and are part of other appropriations such as communicable disease, etc.

Mr. Cheema: What policies are in place to direct the Government's public information programs and can the Minister identify a few programs which are already in place as regard to media campaign?

Mr. Orchard: There is, for instance, the "Break Free" campaign to encourage Manitobans to stop smoking. That is under health promotion and there are fitness and nutrition campaigns that are under way modestly funded. I suppose the major single communication undertaking within the department this fiscal year is

going to be the AIDS campaign and that is going to be the biggest single media-coordinated campaign that we have in the department.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister please tell us, what stages are the, again, AIDS pamphlets because the Minister promised that they should be ready by this month, because for the last seven months we do not have new pamphlets at the Village Clinic. And what are the other methods he is going to use to elaborate the campaign as to the schools or the community centres or the hospitals or the various other teaching institutes? What are the programs he has in mind?

Mr. Orchard: Our AIDS pamphlet ought to be ready for distribution this month and it will be distributed to all of our regional offices, various health centres, hospitals, physicians' offices. As well, it will be part of the information that is available throughout our school system and through such areas as, for instance, Village Clinic which has a fairly substantial role in terms of AIDS education and awareness in the core area of Winnipeg.

Mr. Cheema: The Minister has indicated in the past that as the information comes that he will need to change this pamphlet quite often. What mechanism has he in place to do that so that we do not have to wait another few months to get the new pamphlets? Does he have any mechanism in place at present to address the needs, maybe in two months time or three months time?

Mr. Orchard: There are two areas. First of all, the pamphlet which hopefully is available and distributed for distribution this month—that is, if you will, a generic pamphlet that we hope will last for approximately a year and a half. I believe the last one that came out probably had a life of about a year and a half as well. But in addition to that, there are facts sheets which are under review and those do not require, if you will, the art work production—like they are not a pamphlet that you want to draw people's attention to so you are concerned about what the pamphlet's aesthetic appearance is. Those facts sheets of course are updated on an as-needed basis and so there are the two aspects to the campaign.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister indicate to us what other avenues he has other than the pamphlets which he is going to address in the months to come?

Mr. Orchard: There is the media campaign itself which we expect will be completed this fiscal year and that will involve radio, as well as television ads and will be, I suppose, the major media thrust, backed up by the pamphlets and other information that is available. But in addition to that, we have decided that we will place some additional staff resource in the regions. I believe six new positions will be available in the regions. Those positions will use our material and other materials that are available from elsewhere that is appropriate and deal extensively with the schools, community groups, and act as a resource base for any groups who wish to put on in-services and other areas of information

appropriate to education, community interest, medical interest—for instance, hospital boards etc., etc., that we are expanding that sort of human resource throughout the regions by having six positions and newly available for AIDS education.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister indicate to us what are the other areas he had identified under this media campaign other than the AIDS program?

Mr. Orchard: I mentioned some of the other major ones: the smoking reduction program, "Break Free" is what it is called. There are nutritional programs, fitness advocacy and a number of other specific programs which are available throughout the various departments. There is no question that the advertising budget, if you will, is going to be in the majority used up in the AIDS campaign—the media campaign on AIDS. We go so far as to have, for instance, the senior citizens handbook is being updated to provide current information to seniors as to program availability, etc.

Mr. Cheema: The other areas of grave concern which could be easily implemented are the awareness of public on osteoarthritis, coronary heart disease, drug abuse and sexually transmitted diseases. I am sure the Minister must have allocated funds in the different programs. My question is what is going to be the total amount spent out of this \$164,000 on the media campaign?

Mr. Orchard: As I indicated to my honourable friend earlier on, this is not where the funds for the media campaign appear. Those are, as my honourable friend will note, on page 30 under Other Expenditures, the only Communications there, and that is telephone, telegraph, mail, courier service, fax, that sort of communication but no media campaign. Those are found as part of each appropriation.

Mr. Cheema: I asked the Minister, I will repeat my question again now. Is this sexually transmitted disease other than AIDS also included in this media campaign or under the section of communicable diseases?

Mr. Orchard: The AIDS campaign is not part of Communications. As I have indicated to my honourable friends, that is part of the communicable disease appropriation in which AIDS awareness or AIDS advocacy or AIDS education, as a media campaign, is the major part of the expenditures. As well, other STDs are certainly focused in on from communicable diseases. But none of the advertising money for AIDS or for any other advocacy plan, including "Break Free," are present here. These are the Communications people who have the duties that I have described to my honourable friend earlier on.

* (1450)

Mr. Cheema: What are the specific training and expertise the branch staff have? Can the Minister tell us that because it is going to be a major campaign, part of this Communications? What kind of training do these people have? Do they have an ongoing educational service for the staff who are going to implement the program?

Mr. Orchard: Let me reiterate for my honourable friend again, these are not the people that are delivering the advertising campaign on AIDS. These are the people that are involved with handling media requests to the department, to myself. They will attempt to provide the information to the questioner if they have that information available. If they do not have that information available they will forward the person on to the appropriate respondent. They are responsible for the crafting of my speaking notes, for instance. They are responsible for the crafting of press releases, which come out from time to time announcing various program initiatives and changes. They are not the ones who are responsible for the delivery of the AIDS campaign. They have a coordinating role, but they are not the ones who deliver the program.

Mr. Cheema: The Minister has indicated that there is, other than the AIDS campaign—he has a nutritional campaign in mind. Can he tell us, on a nutrition campaign, what are the special areas he has in mind? Also, what are the special programs for the northern communities and the rural communities?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, so we do not again confuse the role of the Communications Branch here, I could answer those questions when we reach Health Promotion and I have the appropriate staff here.

Mr. Cowan: I do want to ask some questions on the particular campaigns when we reach the appropriate items. However, there is one activity that is listed in the detailed Estimates with respect to the evaluation of Public Information Programs. One understands from the Minister that the programs are outlined in a particular line item such as Communicable Diseases and the AIDS Awareness Campaign. Does that particular line or that line section, division, have the responsibility for the evaluation of the campaign, or is the evaluation done centrally by this particular section of the department?

Just on one added point, I may not have been clear. I am actually asking a question in respect to all the campaigns, not just that one particular campaign. I used that as an example.

Mr. Orchard: I have two answers since the Member has broadened the question.

First on the AIDS campaign, apparently the results—an external organization did a review as to the effectiveness of the first media campaign. Other campaigns are analyzed as to their effectiveness internally in cooperation with the Communications Branch, but primarily from the advocacy or the deliverer of that advertising program.

Mr. Cowan: Where then would the Minister like us to ask the specific questions on specific campaigns, under the evaluation of those campaigns per se, not just the planning and implementation of them, under the particular line or in this particular section?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, depending on the detail my honourable friend wants, it might be more

appropriate to ask them under the line when the staff are here because they would have the results. We do not have, for instance, the results on the external review of the AIDS campaign here. So if that would be appropriate under Communicable Disease we could discuss it there.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the committee to pass this item?

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): In the questions that the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) and the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) have asked, it would appear to me that the Activity Identification really says a little bit more than what actually this branch does do. Again, referring to the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), he has indicated that where it says “plans, implements and evaluates public information programs,” that really these three staff in this particular branch do not actually do the evaluation, that they may be involved but do not take any initiation in the evaluation. Would that be a correct assumption?

Mr. Orchard: They are not exclusive in the evaluation, no.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, the Communications staff within each department, do they have any type of reporting mechanism, or any type of inter-departmental committee where each Communications Branch gets together and plans general directions or strategies for the Government?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that central coordination is part of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

Ms. Gray: Would the Minister be able to elaborate on that? Is there one individual who ties these various staff together, or is it a committee? Could he elaborate?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed they are coordinated by the ADM of Communications and I would be glad to give you what little I know, but you might be more appropriate to ask my colleague whose direct responsibility, that is if, and when, her Estimates appear before the House.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, does he agree that to have Communications Branches attached to each department is an efficient use of resources?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether one can answer that without a little more experience. We always had an ongoing concern, as my honourable friend might recall, in terms of the burgeoning of the Communications staff of the previous administration which we, from time to time, were so bold as to indicate was a propaganda bureau. However, being fiscally responsible, ours is a much more active role in providing, as I have described to your colleague, the Member for Kildonan, activities involved when you are invited to bring greetings to a given organization, etc., etc. As much as I would like to claim the wisdom of Solomon, I simply do not have the background on a lot of organizations that I meet with. In that regard,

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the Communications Branch provides me with the background as to how long the organization has existed; what its role has been; what level of funding Government has had; and indeed briefing notes in terms of the outstanding issues, if you will, because every group that one has an association with generally has some issues outstanding that they wish Government to look at.

So I guess all I can indicate to you is that within the Communications Branch of the Department of Health, we utilize those two positions quite fully in providing me with the kind of information I need and support on press releases, and indeed, fielding a lot of media requests, either through my office or through the deputy's office, or elsewhere in the department, or simply providing information if it is readily at hand.

I would not think that at the present time that structure is unwieldy and inefficient because I would not want to be going over to my colleague's department, for instance, to establish a rapport or relationship within my department because if I would have any vision of how that might work there would be dedicated some individuals there to provide the close liaison with the Department of Health. In other words, there would have to be individuals with some knowledge, attachment and association with the various branches of the Department of Health and the Manitoba Health Services Commission. So, from the standpoint of resource use, it might well be the same. I do not at this time see, for the use that I am making of the Communications Branch, either an inefficiency in the way we are doing it or an enhanced opportunity for efficiency if we were to do it as my honourable friend suggests, that being centralized.

* (1500)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, is he aware, is there any move afoot, or are there any suggestions from the Government or from his colleagues that the Communications Branches should be looked at with a view to determining how efficient it is? I had asked the same question with the Minister of Community Services and remember receiving a nod from the Minister of Northern Affairs saying that was not a bad suggestion to look at some of the departments, specifically where there may be relationships, such as, the Seniors Directorate, Department of Health, other departments that are similar in a move to look at perhaps creating more inefficiency. My question would be is there any undertaking with this Government to actually evaluate or review the use of resources within the Communications Branches?

Mr. Orchard: I would indicate to my honourable friend, given the concerns expressed as to organization of Communications by the previous administration, certainly we are looking at that organizational structure. In terms of the specifics of what direction those reviews may well suggest to Government, I simply cannot share with my honourable friend at the present time. I would feel less than competent in asking those specific questions because the Assistant Deputy Minister with responsibility for Communications is under the direct

reporting relationship to another Minister of Treasury Bench and I would feel much more comfortable having that individual answer any of the detailed questions that my honourable friend might have to pose.

Ms. Gray: With the answers that the Minister has been giving this afternoon on this Communications, he certainly seems to have been very forthright in his responses in regard to what the Communications Branch does and what the responsibilities of other areas that the department do.

My impression is that under the Activity Identification with the three specific activities that really No. 1 and No. 2, there is very little of that done and in fact most of the work will be done under No. 3, that is acting as a media contact. Does the Minister agree with that or could he provide information as to approximately what percentage of time would be spent on these three activities?

Mr. Orchard: Well, I would say that if you had to weight the three activities in priority, I would think that the third one occupies probably as much time commitment as the other two, but bear in mind that we have not within the Department of Health undertaken a major Communications program, such as the AIDS campaign—yet that is currently being formulated. But with that campaign, there will be an increased level of activity under Activity Identification No. 1. Certainly today in the way that the Communications Branch has been serving my office and the department, No. 2 and No. 3 would be more appropriate, emphasis probably on No. 3.

Ms. Gray: Given that there is some consultation that is provided out of this branch, could the Minister indicate then do these staff actually provide sort of information on the main strategies that should be employed in terms of how do you get the message across to the public, what methods you employ? Would this be one of the main responsibilities of this particular branch?

Mr. Orchard: No, I would not say a "main" activity of the branch, but I would certainly expect them to tell me when something I was suggesting as a media approach would not work from past experience.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us if his Communications Branch staff have information as to the successfulness of disseminating information and increasing awareness levels with the public using the written word as opposed to using spoken word or audio-visual information. What I am saying is we do spend time and certainly the Government and the Opposition has indicated that pamphlets are important and we oftentimes place a lot of emphasis on that, but have there been any studies or is there any information available to indicate as to how efficient is the written word in increasing awareness in the public or are there other methods that we should be employing to get that message out?

* (1510)

Mr. Orchard: I am told that which is the best medium varies with which message we wish to get out. It varies from campaign to campaign. The evaluation, as I indicated, is ongoing in terms of the rather extensive media campaign in terms of AIDS awareness that was undertaken last year. Let me put it this way, if the AIDS awareness campaign, for instance, by the electronic media, particularly television, raised the awareness of individual Manitobans so that they made further inquiries, and you have to remember that coupled with the AIDS campaign was an AIDS information line, and that AIDS information line was staffed so that during the peak of the campaign they were handling—I forget the numbers, we can get into that when we get to communicable diseases, but there were a substantial number of calls and a lot of those calls requested information.

I think it is (a) there are two prongs to the education approach if you will. First of all, the awareness of the issue, which certainly I do not think there are too many mediums that are better than television or radio to get that instant attention and awareness, but the follow-up was to make available information by the written word in pamphlet or whatever was available. That is where you can, naturally at much lower cost, make available some substantial amounts of detailed information which really would probably be pretty boring on television or radio and extremely costly.

I think what has to be a focus of any media campaign is what your purpose is. Certainly, in AIDS, I guess it is fair to say the purpose was to get everyone's attention first off and then attempt to provide as much factual information after having gained the individual's attention. That required a combination of electronic plus print. I think my honourable friend would probably concur that the printed brochure pamphlet aspect is certainly the least cost method of getting information to those who inquire.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister please tell us, these campaigns that the Communications Branch is involved in, do these mass campaigns—are they basically aimed at increasing the awareness level of the public and possibly the knowledge level, as opposed to aimed at actually creating behavioural change?

Mr. Orchard: I guess hopefully one would want both, ideally. But I think it is fair to say that at the time the ads were running you certainly increased the public awareness. Whether you ended up through your campaign of actually even in the follow-up from the advertisement to the AIDS hotline to the information provided to individual callers, whether you ended up achieving a significant or otherwise change in behaviour patterns is not clear and certainly is not clear, I do not think, in terms of any follow-up surveys of the national advertising campaign, not only in this nation and others. There is some attitude change. There is no question. But it is probably not enough because we still have the "AIDS Epidemic" at our feet as public administrators.

But I do not think there is any question that in terms of the low risk—and let us deal with AIDS specifically in terms of the low-risk individuals, not the high-risk

groups, but certainly the awareness campaign followed up by the education campaign that is available through the pamphlets I think will prevent any venture into activities that cause or can be high risk in terms of contracting AIDS.

In terms of the high-risk groups themselves, the homosexual community, the bisexual community, the needle users, the drug users, I am not aware in Manitoba that we are able to say whether we have changed attitude or behaviour patterns in some of the high-risk groups.

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicated in response to my question that yes, you may want both, i.e., a behavioural change and an increase in the awareness level or knowledge, but I had specifically asked the question and I suppose if we do receive some information as we move through the Estimates or a tabling of perhaps some of the strategies that are being employed in regard to these campaigns my questions will be answered. I had asked the question specifically because often times when campaigns are developed you may target various groups and, in fact, although one part of your campaign may be to generally increase the awareness level of the whole public, you may then want to target various populations such as the Minister has indicated. Actually you want more than awareness in those cases. You may want a behavioural change as in the case of drug users.

This is why I had asked the question, to see in fact if it was a multi-strategy campaign where we were seeking to achieve not only public awareness but where we were actually developing strategies, where we hoped that some behavioural change would occur. Of course, in any campaign, depending on what your outcome, what you wish, that would also make a difference as to the type of evaluation methods you would employ. As the Minister indicated, we hope there is some attitudinal change but unless we evaluate and measure that we really do not know.

With the Communications Branch, it indicates that this branch would be responsible for release of information to the public. Could the Minister tell us what type of information is being made available to the public in regard to The Freedom of Information Act and how people would apply and receive assistance through that? Is anything being done through this branch?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, no, the Communications Branch is not involved in freedom of information. That is the three access officers for the Department of Health, the three Assistant Deputy Ministers, the ADM of Administration and Finance, Regional Services, and Mental Health.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate those individuals he has just mentioned who are responsible are they also responsible for disseminating information so that the public is aware the Act is being proclaimed, and that there are now procedures that can be followed if an individual wishes to obtain information through this Act?

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Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I think that information is available in the access guide which was tabled when The Freedom of Information Act was proclaimed.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us how does an ordinary citizen know that an access guide exists? What I am asking is, if there is no specific dissemination of information through this Department of Health in regard to communication, I would assume specifically since there is interdepartmental relationship among Communications officers' staff, with the main individual in Culture, Recreation and Heritage, that there must be some strategy that is being used to let the public know that in fact the Act has been proclaimed and this is what the Act means to the ordinary person, and here is how they can go about applying. Does the Minister have that information?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that information and the processes of public awareness are the responsibility by and large of the department under whose jurisdiction freedom of information falls. My responsibility as Minister of Health is to assure that the access officers in the Department of Health, the Manitoba Health Services Commission and the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba are in place and can make information available. Anyone making an inquiry of Government under freedom of information, if it involves the Department of Health, will be referred to the access officer appropriate to the information requested.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I am assuming the Minister would have some information or that his Communications staff would have some information as to what the overall thrust is, or how we are letting the public know, since of course the Minister, I am sure, would agree that he would want to ensure that the work that is done by his staff, his access officers, is made as easy as possible for those staff and also for the public who would be applying for information. Does the Minister know, or does his staff know, is there some specific strategy, awareness, or how are the public to know that in fact they can go to a regional office and ask for information and, if necessary, put forth an application to obtain information through The Freedom of Information?

Mr. Orchard: For instance, Mr. Chairman, if someone was to phone the Communications Branch regarding request for information under freedom of information, they would be referred to the appropriate access officer. I cannot guarantee and sign it in blood that all people in the Department of Health and the Manitoba Health Services Commission, when so requested of information, would give the same kind of advice.

Clearly, there is a protocol for access of information which was mandated and required under the legislation that is being followed. Individual Manitobans who wish to find out information will be informed as to the appropriate access route within the Department of Health to make that information available. Certainly, we will cooperate, as is only logical under the freedom of information, to provide that information upon request.

Ms. Gray: I must assume from that answer that there probably is not any particular strategy that is available through the Government so that the general public actually knows about the Act and what it means to the ordinary citizen.

I would ask the Minister—and I did not quite catch his answer earlier on when he had mentioned the Seniors' Handbook. Now was he indicating that in fact that was something that his Communications staff were involved with?

Mr. Orchard: The main deliverer on that is not Communications staff.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us who the main deliverer is?

Mr. Orchard: Gerontology, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated some of the awareness campaigns which his staff in Communications are involved with, and I am quite prepared, as well, to ask more detailed questions as we move through the Estimates. I was wondering if there has been any discussion by the Communications staff or by the Minister in regard to one effective way of communicating is to set examples. Has the Minister thought of initiating—I am referring to smoking and the smoking issue—with his colleagues or the Minister responsible for Government Services (Mr. Albert Driedger) to have the Legislative Building a smoke-free building?

Mr. Orchard: I think we are complying with city by-laws and legislation in that regard in this building.

Ms. Gray: Yes, the Minister is correct. You are complying with the by-laws. However, and I do not know whether this administration agrees with the previous administration, there was certainly a move afoot to encourage regional offices to actually become totally smoke free. I am wondering if the Minister agrees with that guideline? Again, does he feel that he would like to be an initiator of actually having the Legislative Building also smoke free, since we are encouraging that in other Government offices?

Mr. Orchard: Being a non-smoker, that is a goal which I personally would heartily endorse. I think there would be a lot of non-smokers who would personally endorse that. In terms of the legislative mandate, which my honourable friend appears to be requesting, I have not initiated that.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us would he consider initiating that? Certainly, he would have support of some of the Members on this side of the House.

Mr. Orchard: I take my honourable friend's advice in that matter very, very seriously.

Ms. Gray: Again, the Minister had indicated in some of his comments in regard to AIDS education that new positions would be available. Again, I know the detailed

* (1520)

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questions will be asked later on, and the Minister can clarify or correct me if I am wrong. I do recall the Minister using the word a few weeks ago in regards to these positions as using the term "redirected." Could the Minister indicate, are these positions which I am assuming are SYs, are these new SYs in this budget year or are they positions that are coming from other branches in the department?

Mr. Orchard: Redirected, Mr. Chairman, not new positions. Those positions are redirected and not new positions.

Ms. Gray: Is the Minister able to tell us where those redirected positions are coming from?

Mr. Orchard: If you would have the patience of asking that question when we get to Regional Services, I certainly could.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, under the Activity Identification, it is written that there will be time for release of information regarding extra policy.

But, Mr. Chairperson, the AIDS Awareness Week was two weeks ago and we did not hear from the Minister in the House, but did he release any information in that week to the public?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I believe the AIDS Awareness Week that my honourable friend refers to was AIDS Awareness Week in Ontario.—(Interjection)—Well, then that does not fit with the information that my Communications Branch has given to me, that it was an Ontario initiative and not a national initiative. However, let us not fight over who is right and who is wrong.

I am indicating to my honourable friend that particular week of AIDS Awareness Week we, with the concurrence of my colleagues in Cabinet, transferred the AIDS information line to Village Clinic as an initiative to assist the Village Clinic in communicating more directly with the public. I indicated to my honourable friends that that is part of the direction that the department has taken which we think at this period of time is rather appropriate.

And, of course, as I indicated to my honourable friends when they posed questions that week, that the pamphlet ought to be ready this month and hopefully we have, very early in the new year, a media campaign on AIDS.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, that is a typical example because where there is Awareness Week of any illness, it is easy to communicate with the public as a cost factor, and I would request that the Minister maybe should look at the various awareness weeks in the future, and information could be released either to the radio stations or in the press or the other method of communication, however he wishes to do that.

My next question is how does the Minister evaluate the effectiveness of this branch?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, the evaluation is rather a simplistic one if we are able to effectively get out

press releases on program changes, and the branch effectively interfaces with the media and those segments of the general public which they have some contact with and their role is being adequately met.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate to us, in his communication, has he been communicating with the ethnic press also, because our society does constitute 20 percent of the people who cannot read or understand the English language?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, if I admit to one weakness in communication, it is in not adequately providing in a number of languages some of the press releases that we have put out, and I certainly take my honourable friend's advice seriously.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the section to pass this item? (Agreed) Item 1.(e)(1) Communications: Salaries—pass; item 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures—pass. Item 1.(f) Administration and Financial Services: (1) Salaries—the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate the managerial, professional and technical budget lines, under that line, could the Minister tell us the names of the actual positions included in this heading? The actual number of positions under this heading? How many are there and how many are vacant?

Mr. Orchard: There are 25.5 staff year positions and three are currently vacant. That is as of October 7, and I do not believe that has changed.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister explain to us the methods being used to coordinate financial planning for the department? I will give you time to explain then.

Mr. Orchard: The management planning under Administration and Financial Services attempts to prorate, if you will, the various divisional or departmental requests for funding of services, to base those requests and the recommendations to the ADM and the Deputy Minister on the basis of previous years' expenditures, level of service achievement and ability to anticipate and meet any increase in demand that may rightfully be there as the program emerges or the program grows. I guess it is fair to say that the standard management assessment that applies to other departments of Government apply here as well.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us how many staff are assigned to the coordination of the department's funding for external agencies?

Mr. Orchard: Two, Mr. Chairman.

* (1530)

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us, what criteria does the administration use to categorize the different external agencies and their funding? Could he table that external agency funding in the House?

Mr. Orchard: I do not know what my honourable friend is getting at in terms of categories of groups. External

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agencies are funded, and I will provide my honourable friend with the level of funding from last year's actual funding amounts.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister indicate to us what criteria are established to judge the quality of services provided by the external agencies?

Mr. Orchard: As budgets are prepared, each division will establish their objectives or their goals of service, and post-fiscal year analysis will see how closely those established goals, how closely the division or the department was in achieving their stated goals when they made the budget request.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us who ordered the effectiveness and administration of these agencies, and what criteria are again applied to measure the success, and what are the special goals and policies this administration has in terms of the very specific agencies?

Mr. Orchard: The global goal of this administration in the Department of Health and in indeed all departments of Government is the hope for a goal that we provide programming in the most effective and efficient manner possible without unnecessary bureaucratic intervention or overlap of bureaucratic jurisdiction so that a maximum amount of the tax dollars which are expended through this department reach the consuming public through the provision of service.

Mr. Cheema: I have a question in regard to the administration of 240 vehicles. Could the Minister tell us what broad areas are in these vehicles? Do ambulance services come under this or is this just for administration?

Mr. Orchard: Those are only the Government vehicles that are within the department. Ambulances are under the Manitoba Health Services Commission Fund.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate, does this branch have anything to do with liaising with Government Services in regard to office space?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Gray: Since the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) had indicated to me in Estimates that my questions would be better answered in regard to some of the regional office space in Winnipeg, I am asking the question here. Does the Minister have information as to what is the status of obtaining new office space for 1400 Henderson Highway?

Mr. Orchard: I do not have anything that I can definitely announce this budget cycle. I do indicate to my honourable friend that I had the opportunity of visiting 1400 Henderson Highway, and certainly the working conditions there are not optimum by any means. They remind me a lot of working conditions in this building, particularly during the times of temperature extremes, the only difference being that at 1400 Henderson Highway there does not appear to

be a time when it is not cold in the basement, whereas here it is a proposition of extreme heat all the time.

However, I must say that the condition at 1400 Henderson Highway is not, as my honourable friend from experience can indicate, one that has cropped up overnight. They have been there for a number of years and they have always had substantial problems there. They have attempted through various, I guess, mechanical contracts and renovations to attempt to provide better temperature control in there, but that has not worked. As a result, we are investigating the possibilities of different office space for 1400 Henderson Highway.

Ms. Gray: I am assuming there is nothing in the budget for this year for new office space. Could the Minister indicate, is it a priority for the next year's budget for new office space?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, no, there is not anything in this year's budget cycle. We have a lease which is terminating on March 31, 1989. That has certainly put some urgency to the issue of renewal of the offices. It is one of a number of priorities which are being discussed, and we will get some substantial discussion and, hopefully, decision-making over the next number of months.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, I understand we rent that building from the City of Winnipeg. What is the rent that we pay per month for the facilities?

Mr. Orchard: \$20,160 annually.

Ms. Gray: Annually. That is a fairly small amount of dollars when you think of rental costs in other areas, so obviously a move from that building to another one would certainly mean a substantial increase in the rent. Could the Minister indicate, have there been submissions from Workplace, Safety and Health committees in regard to the fact that the building, particularly the basement, is uninhabitable?

Mr. Orchard: I do not think there has been once since I have been Minister, but the previous administration had several.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate, are the Workplace Safety and Health committees at the senior management level a component of the Administration and Financial Services, or where would that fall?

Mr. Orchard: I will give you that in just a very short minute.

* (1540)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister also indicate this particular section, Administration and Financial Services, is this the appropriate line that we would be asking questions about the support for funding for the external agencies? Is this where the detailed information would be had?

Mr. Orchard: This is where the administration and the accounting function, if you will, occurs but certainly the

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agencies themselves are funded, as my honourable friend can see if she has got a copy of the—

Ms. Gray: '87, yes.

Mr. Orchard: —but that comes in a whole number of appropriations and those appropriations are identified under the broad terms like maternal and child, etc., etc. That is where the grants are administered and I think appropriately. If you have specific questions, individual ones, it might be appropriate to pose them at that time.

Ms. Gray: While we are waiting for the answer on the previous question, as the Minister I am sure is aware, the Price Waterhouse Report had indicated that one of the identified difficulties was that in fact staffpeople within the Department of Health or, particularly Continuing Care, oftentimes lacked budgetary knowledge and knowledge of forecasting and general knowledge in the area of financial services. Could the Minister indicate, was this a problem that had been previously identified by the Administration and Financial Services area, and is there an agreement from this branch that in fact, yes, the staff do lack that knowledge which can be an impediment to appropriate forecasting and possibly even living within budgets? Could the Minister indicate, are there any initiatives that may be forthcoming upon initiation from Administration and Financial Services to deal with this problem?

Mr. Orchard: On the Workplace Safety and Health committees, there are some committees established, some in the process of being established and, for Winnipeg North, the committee is in the process of being established. Maybe they might beat us to the punch and have their committee established before we make any decision on the lease at the end of the fiscal year.

I am given to understand that administrative shortcomings were identified previously. In the latest effort to attempt to resolve that, a financial management individual has been provided to the Home Care Program to assist them in their financial management expertise development.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Paul Edwards, in the Chair.)

Ms. Gray: Is this position a seconded position from another part of the department and, if so, who is the individual?

Mr. Orchard: It is a seconded position from, I believe, Administration and Finance.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Edwards): Shall the item pass?

Ms. Gray: May we know who the individual is?

Mr. Orchard: Wendy Rajotte, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Ms. Gray: Going back to Workplace Safety and Health, in giving us some of that information, the Minister still did not clarify for me, is there a central Workplace

Safety and Health committee for the Department of Health, and under what section would that committee fall?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed there is no central committee in the various office locations.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, these various committees in the regions, who do they report to then? Is it anyone within the Department of Health regarding Workplace Safety and Health issues?

Mr. Orchard: To the ADM, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Ms. Gray: To clarify, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Administrative and Financial Services?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Yes. Could the Minister indicate then if it is the responsibility or one of the responsibilities of the ADM in this branch to deal with Workplace Safety and Health issues? Could the Minister indicate, have there been any recommendations that have been forthcoming to the Workplace Safety and Health, the department, in regard to where we are failing or where we are lacking in regard to actually dealing with Workplace Safety and Health issues?

Mr. Orchard: I think my honourable friend's search for information might be slightly premature in that a lot of the committees are just nicely established. Well, my honourable friend shakes her head, so I will let her ask her next question.

Ms. Gray: The fact that the committees are nicely established, I suppose, is subjective. The committees were to be established three or four years ago. How well the committees are operating is another question. Certainly with the previous administration there was the idea of paying lip service to the concept and nothing substantial was done. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate, has there been a move by his new administration? I can appreciate that there is certainly a variety of major issues within the Department of Health, but is Workplace Safety and Health as an issue in regard to productivity and staff in the workplace? Is there any type of recommendations or any initiatives to actually put some teeth into Workplace Safety and Health issues?

Mr. Orchard: The issue certainly is an issue that needs addressing. I quite frankly cannot comment on whether the previous administration did not proceed with the kind of haste that someone working in the regions, for instance, might have wished to have seen pursued. I simply cannot comment on that.

In general, it would be an objective of this Government certainly, to follow the requirements under legislation. I have to tell my honourable friend that does not happen. It does not happen, for instance, at 1400 Henderson Highway, I think in terms of particularly winter month operation in that facility. Certainly if you wanted to walk into my outer office at the end of July where my

secretaries work, we would have been probably required to shut that office because the temperature exceeded what one would expect. The easy solution in the case of this building is about \$6 million worth of air conditioning. It is like any other of the priorities that are facing Government. I mean you recognize the problem and you do your very best to resolve that problem given the financial resources that are at your disposal.

My honourable friend is not going to see the resolution to all of the inadequate space problems overnight because we are faced with, and I say this without hesitation, substantial requests for spending, whether it be on the capital side or whether it be on the operation side. Within reason, we certainly will recognize and try to resolve problems identified not solely because they are legislated and mandated through Workplace Safety and Health, but indeed to provide working conditions that can enable the Civil Service to obtain a reasonably optimum level of performance.

* (1550)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Edwards): Shall the item pass? (Agreed)

Item (f)(2) Other Expenditures—pass. Item 2.(g) Human Resource Management: (1) Salaries—the Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister tell us why there is an increase in the staff years from seven to 10 and what are the positions and titles of these new responsibilities?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, the three support years are part of the requirements to undertake the Home Care Program contractual obligation, the union contract obligations.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister tell us how many of these positions are vacant and for what length of time, and what are the cost savings to the taxpayers?

Mr. Orchard: No, I cannot tell you what the cost savings to the taxpayers are, Mr. Acting Chairman, but there are two vacancies right now, that is as of October 7, 1988.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, for the recruitment phase of professional staff, what is the average cost of selection and placement of a particular staff group?

Mr. Orchard: Let me give my honourable friend part of an answer, that the Human Resource Department this year is going to expend \$632,000.00. Last year, without the Home Care contract, the total expenditures were \$471,000.00. Within the department certainly a portion of the function is to hire individuals. If one wanted to average a cost out of the \$471,000 from last year, you would have to average that by about 500 permanent and temporary placements in the department. You would end up with 500 into \$4,700

so that would be about \$800 per placement. I do not know whether that would be correct or not because there are other activity identifications in the department.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister tell us what is the average length of service acquired by the professionals across this whole department?

Mr. Orchard: Ms. Morris has been there 14 years and represents one of the finest components of this department.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, could the Minister tell us how many staff on average are terminated by the year's end? What are the reasons for the termination and how many wrongful dismissal suits are lodged against the department per year?

Mr. Orchard: Now let me be exactly correct, terminated as in fired. Let us use the vernacular we all understand. I suppose two or three per year and one of them of course was a contract termination as of June 30, 1988.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, my next question is how many wrongful dismissal suits are lodged against the department?

Mr. Orchard: With the small number of terminations, none.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, how many staff are responsible for dealing with the formal grievances lodged against the department per year, and how many constructive dismissal suits have been lodged against the department?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, in terms of grievances approximately 20 per year.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, is there is any financial settlement reached in the past fiscal year for any of the positions, as the Minister indicated there were two or three?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, that would be a maximum number.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, what is the total settlement package and what did they include, and what is the total dollar value for these dismissals?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, that information is not available, I am told.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can we have that information at a later date, how many dismissal suits and how much is going to be paid to these individuals?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think it would be fair to say that under the termination there have not been any settlements.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, what is the average overtime request across the Department of

Health, and also what is the average sick time taken per staffperson?

Mr. Orchard: I am told that sick time is about six days per year, on average. The overtime does vary throughout the department and I could not give you any average that would be appropriate because of the substantial range in the amount of overtime depending on program requirements, time of the year, certain peaks in given program, administration, etc.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us what branches in the department have a higher than average sick leave time?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am informed the mental health centres would probably be reasonably high.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us whether there are specific training programs within the Department of Health to provide AIDS awareness information?

Mr. Orchard: Not under this line, information. Any information that is available is under Communicable Diseases.

Mr. Cheema: In view of the recent regulation by the Human Rights Commission in regard to the AIDS, can the Minister tell us, has he made his staff aware of the current regulation and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that they comply with the human rights regulation?

Mr. Orchard: I do not think the Human Rights Commission has changed the basic policy that has been in place for the department for some time, that of a non-discriminatory policy on sex.

Mr. Cheema: I think there has been recently a change in the human rights regulations in regard to the AIDS population. Maybe the Minister could review that report.

My next question is has the Minister conducted a study within the department to assess the attitude of Health Department staff to AIDS issues?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed not.

Mr. Cheema: It is extremely important to implement any plans, most specifically to such a sensitive issue, that the employees should be made aware of all the regulations which are in place. Would the Minister please include that as part of his program in the health care department?

Mr. Orchard: I will certainly take my honourable friend's advice seriously.

Mr. Cheema: Can the Minister define or tell us what kind of employees' counselling services are available to the different categories of the Department of Health in terms of sick leave or emotional crisis or other significant family problems, or other problems as regards to interpersonal relationships within the department or between the employees themselves?

Mr. Orchard: We provide limited counselling service for some of the problem areas that from time to time crop up, as my honourable friend mentioned, but the Civil Service Commission is the preferred source of that sort of counselling.

Mr. Cheema: It is one of the Activity Identification. I think, when you have such a large number of employees, it is good to have a program of your own so that the understanding could be improved within their own department.

My next question is can the Minister tell us how many staffpeople have been offered the counselling services and can he define the different categories of the illness I have mentioned before or the different kind of problem they are facing? What is the major problem being faced by the department?

* (1600)

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

Mr. Orchard: I appreciate my honourable friend's suggestion that with a department this size we ought to provide our own kind of counselling. But you know, I think a few minutes ago we were concerned about centralizing communications was the tenor of the discussion. When counselling is provided through the Civil Service Commission, I seem to hear my honourable friend saying we should decentralize it and put it in the department.

Those two suggestions coming from the same political Party in Opposition do not necessarily square with a logical approach to governing. I am not for a moment suggesting my honourable friend is not logical in his approach to Government, but we provide a level of counselling which I suppose would give you the minor problem resolution, if you will. Certainly the ability to provide in-depth counselling on some of the more serious matters is certainly available, and appropriately so in the Civil Service Commission. We do provide counselling to the tune of about 165 incidents per year in such diverse areas as job change, career change, the advent of part-time employment, questions, concerns regarding benefits administration, and certainly counselling in terms of maternity leave.

Mr. Cheema: What professional development activities are planned for this year by this branch, and could the Minister detail the activities and the targets, please?

Mr. Orchard: Management supervisory training programs, and we are providing for about 15 days in total. As well, we are expecting about 300 participants in staff training and development.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us who will be coordinating the Affirmative Action Program within the department?

Mr. Orchard: We have an Affirmative Action specialist within this division, the Human Resource Management services.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us to whom that individual will be responsible, either this Minister or to

the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) or a separate director under the coordination of

Mr. Orchard: The reporting structure is, first of all, the Affirmative Action specialist to the director, director to the Assistant Deputy Minister, the Assistant Deputy Minister to the Deputy Minister, the Deputy Minister to myself. To provide further information, my Deputy Minister, Mr. Maynard, is a member of the central Affirmative Action Committee, along with other Deputy Ministers of other departments in assisting Government in implementing your Affirmative Action Program throughout Government.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us, what are the target positions established for the Affirmative Action Program in his department?

Mr. Orchard: There are a number of positions, and if my honourable friend follows the personnel bulletins, those that are targeted positions for affirmative action hiring are so indicated in terms of the advertising that goes on. Now, I will try to get my honourable friend the information as to what the long-term goals are. Basically we have affirmative action targets which I suppose in general follow what currently is the make-up of Manitoba population, and that in terms of, for instance, women is 50 percent, slightly more actually, Natives 10 percent, physically disabled 7 percent and visible minorities 6 percent.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us the procedure to reach these target groups, more specifically, what media has been used to reach these northern and rural communities as well as the ethnocultural community of Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: I think it is, I suppose, several pronged. Government of Manitoba is an equal-opportunity employer. In terms of the advertising for specific positions that I have indicated to my honourable friend earlier on, if those are an affirmative action hiring target group position, it is so stated on the Civil Service bulletin.

Mr. Cheema: As I indicated earlier today to the Honourable Minister, there is a certain population in Manitoba who normally do not have access to these bulletins. There is a certain population who do not even understand or can read the language. I think that system has to be expanded to reach that target group. I am asking the Minister what special steps he has taken or will he take to ensure that this target group is reached.

Mr. Orchard: That is, I guess, what the role of the Affirmative Action Coordinator is within the department.

Not that I want to make light of my honourable friend's question because I know he poses it seriously but there is, let us face it, a series of steps which you have to go through before one is hired into the Department of Health or any other department of Government. The specific example my honourable friend uses is that of an individual who may be a new Canadian who does

not have a command of the English, therefore, cannot read the bulletin. Well I do not want to be negative to my honourable friend but, if the individual does not have a command of the English language, written or oral, many of the jobs within the Civil Service have that as a basic requirement. So our first step would have to be get into English Second Language programs etc., etc., to become conversant, and then that individual may well be a candidate for affirmative action hiring.

I do not think my honourable friend is suggesting that individuals who simply are unable to communicate in the English language with some degree of fluency have limited ability to be hired into almost any position in this department until they gain that basic skill. It does not have to be a level of fluency to have that opportunity for hiring, but certainly an inability to be aware of a job opening because they could not read the advertising bulletin might in itself disqualify that individual from successfully competing in a competition.

Mr. Cheema: I think my message has not been conveyed here. I am suggesting that to reach any target group you have to reach to them through any media campaign. If that media campaign is the first language, is English, those people do not get or do not reach them I think it would be a good idea to go through the various ethnocultural media to reach their target group.

My next question is, under the Expected results, there are 470 permanent and temporary employees will be recruited. Could the Minister tell us the type of permanent and temporary employees that are required? Can you give us the exact number as to how many positions are vacant at present? What is the cost of recruitment for this group of 470 employees?

Mr. Orchard: As much as I would like to help my honourable friend, I do not think that we can give him the cost of recruiting 470 people to the Civil Service and the Department of Health in a given year. Certainly it will preoccupy a fairly significant portion of the \$471,000 expended last year.

A portion of the new staff, which takes us up to \$632,000 will be involved in recruitment and union contract administration and the Home Care Program. As well, within the hiring and filling of those positions, of course, is the involvement of the Civil Service Commission. So I suppose if one wanted an answer, you would take and prorate all of the hirings in the Civil Service per year and divide the entire Civil Service Commission by that figure and come up with an average number. But even that would not adequately tell the story because the Civil Service Commission is involved in benefits and a diversity of other employee relations, so I simply cannot give my honourable friend that number.

* (1610)

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us, is there a directive from his department or from Treasury Board in regard to maintaining any particular percentage of vacancy rate in the Department of Health and, if so, what is that vacancy rate.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, 5 percent.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, with maintaining that vacancy rate, is there any type of appeal process, or justification process that managers and supervisors can use if they feel that a particular vacant position does require filling? Is there a process or is it automatically—if you happen to be in a position that equals 5 percent, you do not have a choice but to have that position remain vacant?

Mr. Orchard: No, Mr. Chairman, it does not reflect the latter position put forward by my honourable friend. The Assistant Deputy Ministers meet weekly, and program managers, if they are experiencing some unusual difficulties with a given position, they have the ability to appeal to the ADMs and make their case for filling of that vacancy.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, are there any positions within the Department of Health that might be excluded from that 5 percent vacancy rate, any types of positions and, if so, what would they be?

Mr. Orchard: There are 578 exempt positions and they are mainly front-line delivery positions.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister give us some examples of what those front-line delivery positions are, and also are clerical staff included in those exemptions?

Mr. Orchard: I guess, for instance, Nurse 1s in the Mental Health Centres; cooks, to make sure people are fed; those kinds of direct service positions.

Ms. Gray: Again, for the Minister, are clerical positions excluded from those exempted positions, and are any of the front-line positions staff-years that would be part of Regional Services who would be providing direct service in some of the Government's priority areas, such as Mental Health Services and AIDS education?

Mr. Orchard: No, clerical is not part of the exempt group, and of course, as I indicated earlier on, the Assistant Deputy Ministers meet weekly to prioritize vacancies and the filling of those vacancies and the requests by management, all of which are appealable, so that if there is a specific circumstance of a vacancy causing their program delivery difficulties, that certainly is open to appeal to the Assistant Deputy Ministers and, quite frankly, to resolution.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, is there any type of staff development and training policy that would emanate from the Human Resources Branch?

Mr. Orchard: As I indicated to my honourable friend, the Member for Kildonan, there is the Training and Development Program for Management in which they are expected to provide training for a total of 15 days this year. In terms of Staff Training and Development, there is projected to provide service to 300 participants this year.

Ms. Gray: I thank the Minister for that information, but what I am asking is, is there any type of policy or

direction that the Department of Health has taken in regard to the importance of ensuring that staff receive ongoing professional development, ongoing staff development, and appropriate orientation to the department? Is there any type of overall policy in regard to amount of time? Do we pay for staff to attend conferences, do we give time off, is there any type of overall policy or is that left up to various divisions or branches within the department?

Mr. Orchard: I think I am understanding where my honourable friend is coming from. With all divisions of the department there is the opportunity for staff upgrading which goes through the management approval process. It is not automatically granted nor is it automatically denied. It depends on the request of the individual. There are provisions in the Civil Service agreement to allow that to happen with certain benefit applications to the individual. As well, individual managers will decide the appropriateness of conference attendance as they have application to the specific area of management that the individual is involved with. They will indicate appropriateness of attendance through their management personnel.

Ms. Gray: If I was somebody who was applying for a job within the Department of Health and I asked what the policy was in regard to staff training, what opportunities I would have for ongoing professional development, whether I could use 10 or 20 days a year, whatever the number would be, would there be a policy that would be firm that I would be told about, or is the Minister indicating it is something that is left up to the various regions or branches? Are there provisions within the various budgets to pay for staff to attend conferences or to attend further training?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, if a potential employee were to ask that of personnel they would provide the appropriate information which is available to them, in terms of their ability to professionally upgrade whilst in service.

Ms. Gray: The Effective Performance Management system, which was initiated by the Department of Community Services—I understand that the Department of Health has also got on board in regard to implementing the EPM system. Is that correct? Could the Minister provide us an update information? Is that program fully implemented within the Department of Health?

Mr. Orchard: I am informed it is approximately 90 percent implemented in the department. As my honourable friend is probably well aware, it was in response to the Provincial Auditor's Report and the concerns he raised in both departments.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated it is 90 percent implemented. What is the 10 percent that is left to be done?

Mr. Orchard: Just that it requires full implementation.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate, does that mean that particular branches of the department are not

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utilizing the EPM system? Are all staff trained under EPM? Are we meeting the objectives as set out by EPM?

Mr. Orchard: I understand that the last 10 percent involves primarily the mental health institutions.

* (1620)

Ms. Gray: Has there been any evaluation or ongoing review of EPM? I understand that one of the objectives is that there are ongoing reviews which should be conducted four times a year by supervisors and employees. Could the Minister indicate, do we know if those objectives are being met throughout the department in regard to the four reviews a year and one formal review?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, so that we have the program, I will tell you what I will do. I will lay out for my honourable friend the program. Its objectives are: to establish clear standards of performance; to ensure a feedback mechanism to the employee; set clear goals and expectations; to ensure an objective performance assessment system; to enhance identification promotion of individual abilities and career planning; and to ensure better documentation in dealing with labour relations issues. Those are the objectives of the program. Following initial joint training efforts with Community Services for implementation and reactivation of the program, EPM is fully operational in the department with the exception of the mental health centres. Performance appraisals are being carried out at all levels in the organization. The minimum requirement is an annual documented review with the employee.

The original objectives of EPM suggested quarterly reviews in order to more closely monitor individual progress. In practice, under time and workload constraints, formal quarterly reviews have often been found to be impractical, although informal supervisory sessions occur often throughout the year. EPM is intended to be a developmental process between supervisor and employee, where progress towards goals and standards is best carried out through reviews over time. It was an ongoing expectation that such performance reviews will be carried out on a regular basis. EPM is intended to apply to all levels within the department.

To date, most middle and senior management staff have received performance reviews. Process is ongoing to apply EPM to all remaining supervisory and managerial levels. Each program of regional director is charged with ensuring the EPM is functioning in their respective areas of responsibility. EPM was developed in conjunction with Manitoba Community Services as at the regional level, field staff from both departments work side by each. The policy's goals and mandates of the system are identical. Concerns regarding start-up and implementation had been communicated and resolved through cooperative approaches between both departments.

Ms. Gray: I certainly appreciate that information from the Minister and it is quite interesting how we receive

varying information from the Department of Community Services and Department of Health. I am pleased to hear that the Department of Health has some recognition that in fact to do quarterly reviews, even informally, with staff ratios such as they are is impractical. Now the Department of Community Services has clearly indicated that in fact they are meeting the objective of providing quarterly reviews which I find somewhat astounding but that is the information I had been given and now I hear from the Department of Health that with their staff, the expectation is different, that at least there should be one review throughout the year.

I am wondering if the Minister could indicate, has the Human Resources Branch—do they see any difficulties in setting up two standards for implementation of a program with staff who, although they are in different departments, work as the Minister might say, "side by each" in the regional offices. Does the Human Resources Branch foresee any difficulties with these two standards so that you have a public health nurse sitting beside a mental retardation worker? One is told that there should be performance reviews once a year, minimally. The other one is told that in fact there will be quarterly reviews.

Mr. Orchard: I apologize for slipping in the Newfoundlandies. It was really "side by side" in the report, but I thought that it was appropriate to make this a national debate.

The formal process is achieved on an annual basis. That does not prevent a quarterly review as needed, and that is what is occurring within the department.

Ms. Gray: There is still a difference however because the expectation clearly for supervisors and staff in the Department of Community Services is that there will be the four reviews within a year. I understand as well that those goals are being met. Again I am wondering if the Minister could tell us if the goals are being met by the Community Services staff, and I would assume the ratios for staff/supervisors might be similar. Is it not possible for that expectation to be the same within the Department of Health?

Mr. Orchard: I am advised in the negative.

Ms. Gray: Just for the record, I tend to agree with the Minister of Health and I would be very surprised if the goals in Community Services are actually being met. My further question, does the Minister know—does he have information on what the staff ratio to supervisor ratio is? I can appreciate this may not mean something because we have a department that has MHSC in the institutions, but does the Minister have that breakdown within various divisions, or would he be prepared to table that?

Mr. Orchard: The average ratio is one administrative support staff year to 4.39 professional staff years. I believe the 4.39 is four years, 39 weeks.

Ms. Gray: Yes, support staff. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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That was a further question, what the support staff ratio was, professional staff. My question actually was, what is the staff ratio, i.e., field workers ratio to supervisors. But before I ask that, I find it interesting. I asked the very same question in Community Services and I got the very same answer from the Minister in regard to support staff, so it must be the way I ask questions.

In regard to the support staff ratio that the Minister has just given us, I am sure his staff are aware that in fact that ratio, although it is an average, it certainly does not occur throughout all the branches within the department, and in fact I would think with the regional operations in particular throughout the province, that the ratio is much lower of staff to support staff.

Could the Minister indicate, given that average ratio, has there been any type of move within his department to equalize some of those ratios so that if we have areas where it is one staff to 10 or 12, one support staff to 10 or 12 individuals, there would be a move to equalize some of that?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, that is currently under review because there are some difficulties, I am told, in terms of the highs and lows to achieve the average ratio of four years, 39 weeks. That is under review.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister tell us, in general, with the EPM system, is there an evaluation mechanism in place for that system?

Mr. Orchard: I am sorry.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate if there is an evaluation mechanism in place for the EPM system?

Mr. Orchard: No, not yet.

Ms. Gray: No? Could the Minister indicate if that is an initiative or a plan of the Human Resource group for this year or for the next fiscal year?

Mr. Orchard: It is not in place yet. It is hoped to be in place next fiscal year.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, under the heading of recruiting 470 employees, could the Minister tell us how many are in the professional category and how many are in the medical and paramedical area?

Mr. Orchard: Maybe up to two per year in the medical area.

* (1630)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairman, my question is that out of 470 there is only two in the medical area; and what are the other numbers in terms of paramedical staff as well as the other paraprofessionals, such as nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists? Do these people come under this category of 470 employees or not?

Mr. Orchard: Out of 470, yes.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate to us, what are the numbers of counsellors for the employees and the professional support group? The number of counsellors for the employees.

Mr. Orchard: That is part of every personnel officer's job. There is no specific per se counsellors. That is part of the job description of the personnel officers.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us then how the program for the counselling is done, if we do not have any person involved in that department itself? Are the persons from the other departments doing counselling service to the Department of Health?

Mr. Orchard: Never having to take any problem to my immediate supervisor to date, I am a little bit unable to—you know, that is a lateral supervisory job. We are equals. I am advised that as an individual comes in with a problem requiring counselling they are referred to the appropriate personnel officer who will undertake to provide that counselling.

Mr. Cheema: Could the Minister tell us, what are the systemic barriers for affirmative action in his department? Could he name them and define their characteristics?

Mr. Orchard: The department has initiated a review of all class specifications in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission. This review was undertaken to identify situations in which the department historically has required credentials that are not job-related or necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the business.

Recommendations for changes have been and continue to be made to the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the section to pass this item?

Ms. Gray: In regard to the Affirmative Action Program, could the Minister indicate for us, is this Government following or using the affirmative action policy as was established by the previous administration?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, I think that would be a fair assumption.

Ms. Gray: The Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission has indicated in this House that the previous administration did not seem to do a good job of affirmative action or implementing the program. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us, is it the feeling that in fact that affirmative action policy, as established and used by the previous Government, is in fact a good one, and will continue to be used by this Government?

Mr. Orchard: I guess there is always the moot point of what is good policy and we can agree on what is reasonable policy, but it is in the follow-through and the initiation of that policy that determines whether a Government is moving in an appropriate fashion. I do

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not wish to be critical of my previous administration under the NDP because—did I say “my”?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Orchard: I apologize profusely. I had nothing to do with it. I tried my best to clean it up. But, Mr. Chairman, I certainly can understand some frustration that may have stemmed from the actual carrying-out of policy under the previous administration and that, of course, is subject to debate. They can say they did a great job. We can say they did not, and somewhere between the two positions is probably the fact. It simply is that we are not concerned about our ability as Government, as a Progressive Conservative Government, to assure equal opportunity hiring.

I have no doubt within the Department of Health that we will follow that direction. The direction that we take within the department I think, is a reasoned one, a successful one, and as I indicated earlier on to my honourable friend, or maybe to her colleague, the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), my Deputy sits on a committee with the Deputy of Community Services and the Deputy Minister—pardon me, not Community Services, Workplace Safety and Health. That is the committee, the two deputies, to provide advice and guidance and policy direction to this Government.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, given that the policy is the same as was used by the previous administration, and I think maybe the Minister alluded to this in his answer, is he indicating that the implementation strategies of his Government are what is different from that of the previous administration?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend can conclude what she wishes. I am simply indicating to you that over a period of time that we are in Government, be it eight years or twelve years, our record will shine for itself.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, are there specific implementation strategies that the Deputy Ministers who are on this Affirmative Action Committee have been working on or are using, so that departments have these implementation strategies and can use them for implementing the Affirmative Action Program?

Mr. Orchard: Certainly those may well be a natural flow from this interdepartmental committee. To date I cannot give you written directives that have gone to any other department. Should those become available, I would be pleased to provide them to my honourable friend.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, then I assume that the Minister, what he is saying, that there may be a natural flow of information that comes from this committee or some implementation strategies, but it would seem from his answer that there is not a lot changed in terms of the implementation of the affirmative action policy. I find these comments quite interesting given that the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Connery) has on many occasions in this House and during the Estimates process stood up and

acclaimed as to how his Government is going to make great changes in affirmative action, and that your Government will ensure that the policy of affirmative action is implemented appropriately and that we do meet targets.

The Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission has gone on at great length to indicate—to use a slang term—what a mess or what a disaster the previous Government's Affirmative Action Program was. So I must assume that as the Minister for the Civil Service Commission, if that is indeed the feeling that the implementation of the program was a disaster or was not working very well, then this caucus and the Minister of Health, they have developed better, or what they perceive as better, or new implementation strategies to ensure that what they perceive is happening with the previous administration does not happen with their administration. Can the Minister indicate to us if there has been any changes at all in regard to affirmative action and how the program is being implemented?

* (1640)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated to my honourable friend, that given the period of time over which she may wish to sit in Opposition and pose these questions over several budget cycles, she will find that this Government has reacted positively to affirmative action hiring. To say anything different as she rolls her eyes and scoffs from her seat is not a statement or a position that she can attach any fact whatsoever to.

This Government will be involved and active in implementing affirmative action. I am more than willing five years from now or six years from now to compare our record to the previous administration's record. I know we will get that opportunity to do that, but for my honourable friend to want today to find out minutely whether we have changed this comma or this dot, or crossed this “t”, or omitted this word, or added that word, or done this slightly different, or that slightly different, does not really impact on the global performance of a Government in terms of affirmative action. I know that will not satisfy my honourable friend. She may want to spend the next four or five days on this line of Estimates talking affirmative action and I welcome that. I think that given the analysis of our Government over a period of time, you will find that our performance in terms of affirmative action hiring is one which will meet the test of Opposition criticism.

Ms. Gray: The Minister is quite correct in that I rolled my eyes when he made the comment about the fact that his Government, that the test of time would indicate that their Government would have accomplished something with affirmative action. The specific reason I rolled my eyes was because I thought certainly a first step to ensuring that a program is properly implemented is education and knowledge by the Ministers. Although we have not asked specific questions of the Minister of Health as yet, I would hope that he would be well-versed, given we have gone through a few Ministers, it was very clear that previous Ministers did not even know or have an inkling of what affirmative action was

and what that translated to in regard to policy or implementation. So, yes, the Minister is correct, I did roll my eyes for that very reason.

The Minister has indicated that I am asking for information and minute details. Certainly we are not asking for that. We would be pleased or even would accept some generalities in regard to this Government's affirmative action policy and implementation.

For the Minister's information, certainly we do not plan on spending four or five days on one particular area, such as affirmative action, and not because it is not important but because there does come a point when you ask questions over and over again and when you feel you do not receive answers that one must move on to at least glean what information you can from other areas of the department. So I can assure the Minister, although I do hope that we do receive answers from this Minister, that we certainly will move on to other areas of department.

I am wondering if the Minister could indicate, other than the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission, what civil servant, who has the ultimate authority within the department or who is accountable to ensure that the objectives of affirmative action are being met throughout the departments and, in particular, the Department of Health.

Mr. Orchard: I appreciate my honourable friend's candour. I would simply want to point out to my honourable friend that in answering questions, it occurs from time to time that Ministers are unable to answer the question in the manner in which the Opposition critic would like them to be answered. If that is the case, I have to apologize to my honourable friend, as the previous Ministers would offer apologies to me when I posed questions because I figured I had just a blockbuster on the hand here and the Minister just would not tell me that I had that kind of a big issue.

A similar circumstance exists in affirmative action hiring for my honourable friend. It is not an issue of which she can find a fault with this administration. It is not an issue at which we are negligent. It is not an issue at which we are not making concerted efforts to hire in an affirmative action manner which is appropriate to recruitment of quality personnel to the Civil Service. That is happening. I know my honourable friend probably will not like to agree that it is happening, but that is the role of Opposition. That is why we are promoting policy that is positive and direct. That is why my honourable friend in Opposition is attempting to say that is not happening.

However, in the case of affirmative action, my honourable friend would not be able to make a substantive case. From that regard, I cannot give her the answers that she wishes that affirmative action under a Progressive Conservative Government is a failed effort. I cannot give her that answer because that is not the case. I know that is the answer she would like to have, so she could make her case to whomever would listen. That certainly is not an answer or a case that my honourable friend can make from Opposition questioning.

In terms of who has the ultimate responsibility within the Department of Health, then it is my Deputy Minister who has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that affirmative action is undertaken in a manner appropriate for the department and appropriately following Government policy.

* (1650)

Ms. Gray: The Minister says the role of the Opposition is to criticize. That is not always true because we are on record in regard to congratulating the Government when we feel that they have done something which we feel is beneficial to the people of Manitoba. This may be something new in the Legislature, but certainly in the last six months we have certainly seen oftentimes where we have provided congratulations where we feel they have been due.

The Minister, for his information, if he cares to read through Hansard, the record will actually show that we have found fault with this administration. I am not referring specifically to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) but certainly with other Ministers and other departments in regard to their knowledge of the Affirmative Action Program.

The Minister has indicated that with the Affirmative Action Program, bulletins go out and there is an indication that an affirmative action candidate should apply or is preferred. Could the Minister indicate to us exactly what the nature of those bulletins are? What exactly do they say? Do we have different types of bulletins in regard to whether it is only for affirmative action candidates, or affirmative action candidates should apply? What exactly is the wording used, and what is the meaning of that to individuals who are applying for jobs?

Mr. Orchard: In terms of where we so advertise, the bulletins as they go out generally all go out in consultation with the Affirmative Action specialist in this division of the department. Affirmative action is a consideration, really, for every competition that we hold in which target groups are underrepresented. Let me give you an example of the wording that is used in terms of the Civil Service job bulletin and the statements contained therein. For example, this is one statement that has been included: Preference will be given to individuals with knowledge of a Native language, for instance.

Ms. Gray: If a bulletin goes out and indicates that affirmative action candidates should apply, what does that mean to the individual applying? Does that mean that they should apply because only affirmative action candidates will be considered? Does that mean that there is a particular weighting that is given to affirmative action candidates? What exactly does that translate to, or how do we explain that to affirmative action candidates when they see that on a bulletin?

Mr. Orchard: Let me give my honourable friend a complete and full answer on this. The decision as to how affirmative action is to be factored into the screening and selection process is made in advance

by the manager in consultation with the human resource specialist and/or the Affirmative Action specialist. This decision will be determined by factors such as the department work force analysis and affirmative action plan.

In general there are four major ways through which affirmative action is a consideration in the recruitment and selection process:

(1) Bulletins are written to indicate affirmative action target group membership will be considered. In certain cases, bulletins will indicate a preference for specific skills necessary to deal with certain target groups such as the ability, as I referenced earlier, to speak a Native language.

(2) During the screening process, in order to give affirmative action target group members the opportunity to be interviewed, certain preferred criteria may be waived if the candidate possesses the required criteria. The selection decision is to be based on preference being given to target group members over similarly qualified non-target group members. No. 4, waivers of competition may be used in cases where a manager has identified: (a) that the job has been redesigned to suit the disability of a particular target group; or (b) that a promotional or career development opportunity is desirable for a particular target group member.

Ms. Gray: The Minister had indicated in his comments that the preferred criteria could be waived. Could he explain that?

Mr. Orchard: That is where a manager has decided that they wish to waive the preferred criteria, i.e., the Native language is not going to be a good example because, if you want someone who is conversant in the Native language, you are not apt to waive that. But it is up to the discretion of managers if they are firm in terms of their desire to hire a given target group that some of the preferred target criterion may be waived in order to accomplish that and facilitate that.

Ms. Gray: Do we actually give points for individuals who apply where it says, affirmative action candidates will be considered. In that screening process, do we automatically send them on for an interview because they are affirmative action? Do we give them certain points in a scoring system because they are affirmative action so that would assist them in moving on to the next step of the competition?

Mr. Orchard: I am told that there is no points assessment, but I think maybe I should read over the third qualification. The selection decision is to be based on preference being given to target group members over similarly qualified non-target group members. In other words, the qualifications for the job still come first and foremost. That was what I was genteely trying to indicate to my honourable friend in his question earlier on. That is not any particular discriminatory statement I made, those are just simple facts.

If you need someone who communicates in a Native language, then you are going to have a target group of interviewees, some of whom will no doubt be Native,

some of them may well be conversant in Native languages and be non-Native individuals. But all of those groups will compete, and the person of equivalent qualifications who meets that affirmative action goal, i.e., conversant in Native languages will be chosen. One would naturally hope that would be a Native candidate. But it does not necessarily flow that it would be if a non-Native individual was very conversant in Native languages and better qualified for the job because, above and beyond all other criterion, you do not hire on the affirmative action guidelines underqualified people, unless the manager so desires. That is a rare event.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated that there is still the criteria where merit is similar and I can appreciate that. I would think that where that merit is evaluated or judged, although some of it may be done on a written application, the majority of the merit would be considered in an interview process. What my question was, was there any special weighting that is considered so that affirmative action candidates who send in written resumes can be given some special consideration, or are they so that they actually get to the interview process?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, there are not points four out of five assigned to candidate A and two out of five to candidate B, and seven out of ten, because basically if you advertise on the basis that—and let us pick an example out of the air. A BN may be one of the educational qualifications as compared to an RN. Then automatically, regardless of the qualifications under affirmation action, if you had every single candidate as an RN fully qualified as an affirmative action target group but BN was the hiring qualification, naturally they would not get two. However, if the manager said that if we cannot find someone with an affirmative action target group who has a BN, we would accept a highly qualified RN with experience, etc., etc. That is open to the manager, but there is no weighting, if you will, which says that this person has achieved a score of 17 out of 35. That is not there, because basically you are having your training qualifications and there may be a requirement for experience, on-the-job experience that is part of the application. Those basic criteria will have to be met by all candidates reaching the final selection process.

Ms. Gray: Then to further the Minister's example, in the initial screening process of applications—and the Minister indicated that experience may be something that is looked at—one of the systemic barriers that has been identified with various groups, and I use women as an example, is in fact in the experience area where oftentimes experience is only considered relevant if it is within a certain time frame such as five years or so. We have many situations where women who are applying for jobs have had the direct experience, let us say, as professionals but then have quit work to stay home and raise families so that their experience is not recent. It may be seven, 10 and 12 years old. Could the Minister indicate, has there been any move to remove some of those systemic barriers such as the one I have indicated in the initial screening process so

that in fact some of these individuals can then move along to the interview process and actually prove their merit at that time?

* (1700)

Mr. Orchard: That is exactly the kind of hiring criterion that are being reviewed, and I think that may well be what caused my honourable friend to indicate that the previous administration did not necessarily follow through as appropriately. That, as what I indicated earlier on, is one of the criteria that individual managers may well use and waive to advance a candidate of their choice, if they believe that individual has the combination of personality, of previous job skill experience and attitude and outlook on it.

I simply want to tell my honourable friend that the kind of systemic discrimination that she has referred to has never prevented me personally or would never prevent any department under my jurisdiction from allowing an individual such as my honourable friend has just mentioned, i.e., a woman who has been out of the labour force, from getting an interview if I believe that individual had the right combination of talents even though the current up-to-date experience may not have been part of her resume. Quite frankly, when I have work to be done, I often retain women to do it because they have in my estimation a tremendous contribution to make not only in the Civil Service—and my honourable friend laughs as she sits over there.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the Honourable Minister. The hour being 5 p.m., I am interrupting proceedings for Private Members' Hour. The Committee of Supply shall return at 8 p.m. tonight.

IN SESSION COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) for the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Burrell for Pankratz.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS RES. NO. 8 ABORIGINAL ECONOMY

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), Resolution No. 8, Aboriginal Economy.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): It is interesting to note that as we stand in the Legislature today to speak to this resolution on trapping and in support of the trapping industry throughout the province, many of my own constituents in northern Manitoba are already out on their traplines with the intent of providing for their families and at the same time carrying on with their traditional activities.

For that reason today, Mr. Speaker, and I know there will be others who will speak to this resolution as well, our voices must be extremely strong, for we are speaking on behalf of those thousands of Manitoban trappers and their families who rely on trapping as a way of life, as a way to provide for themselves, as a way to build strong local economies and probably, most importantly, as a way to carry on traditions and economic activity that are now centuries old.

As well, our voices must be united so that those who are anti-trapping and would seek to destroy the industry through the requirement for the labelling of furs from animals caught in leg hold traps, will hear one voice from the Manitoba Legislature.

We know in fact that there is a movement afoot, particularly in Europe at this point in time, that could result with profoundly negative impacts on our trapping industry here in Manitoba. We know that there are those who are opposed to trapping, who would seek through their suggested labelling requirements to destroy that industry for thousands of Manitobans and their families.

That is why the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) brought forward, and I was honoured to be able to second this resolution which calls upon all of us to speak out on behalf of the trappers in our own communities and our own constituencies, to speak out on behalf of the industry in general and to give a very clear signal to those who would suggest such a requirement that we will not stand idly by while our industry is under attack, that we will speak out in a forceful fashion to ensure that the industry remains healthy in this province.

Let there be no doubt the threat that is imposed by those groups is very real and if they are successful, their efforts will have profound impact on not only individuals who currently seek to provide for their families through trapping, but in entire communities, and in an entire industry. Our collective voice today must extend from the homes of those trappers in communities throughout the province, all the way across our province, across the ocean to Europe where anti-trapping lobbyists are beginning to mount a massive campaign against fur trapping.

I listened carefully to trappers in my own constituency in communities like Split Lake, Shamattawa, Leaf Rapids, Tadoule Lake and Churchill and you know, Mr. Speaker, that I reference not only traditional communities, but I also reference industrial communities because there are trappers in both types of communities spread out throughout northern Manitoba. I have listened when those trappers have told me how important trapping is to them, to their sons, to their daughters, to their families, to their communities, and to the province as a whole because they understand

that they are part of our economic fabric. By listening to them I have learned much. I have learned much from what they have told me over many visits and many long discussions well into the evening. I have witnessed first hand the respect they hold for the role trapping has played in their own cultures and traditions, and in the development of their communities and the North in general.

I mentioned earlier that those discussions with trappers in those communities, and other communities like Brochet, Granville Lake, Lynn Lake, and Pikwitonei, that to them trapping is more than just a way to earn another dollar. To them it is a way of life. It is important to make that distinction because they see trapping as a way to create an economy to provide for themselves and their families, and at the same time to maintain harmony with nature.

Trapping is a product of their unique relationship with their natural surroundings and the animals who share this earth with all of us. They have profound respect for those animals. It is an important and an historical fact that trappers were among our first conservationists. Contrary to what the anti-trapping lobby would want people to believe, the trapper does not slaughter animals. Trapping is wildlife harvesting, not slaughter. The very well-being of the trapper depends on fur being bountiful and available. For that reason alone the trapper must always look to the future and, in doing so, must look to the future of the animals which they trap.

The trapper must protect the environment to ensure that the wildlife that he or she harvests has an environment within which they can survive and flourish. Trappers therefore must also be strong and committed environmentalists. By their proud history, they have shown themselves to be successful environmentalists. It is not trappers who wipe out entire species of animals. I know my friend and colleague, the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), wanted me to make this point because in the limited amount of time we have to speak he did not have enough opportunity to dwell on it to the extent that he would like to have.

The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and I have agreed, we do not know of any species of fur bearing animal which has been trapped out of existence. I know of some species of animals that have been made extinct by the use of DDT and by the use of other pesticides. I know of entire species that have become endangered because their habitat was being gobbled up by cities, pavements, buildings, and asphalt. I know of fish that once fed entire communities having been made inedible because of industrial pollution.

One of the tragic stories, and it is told to me with such sadness that I cannot help but reflect upon it in these comments today, is about the beaver and the other fur bearing animals that are trapped along the lakes and rivers in northern Manitoba that have died needlessly and wastefully because they were trapped themselves, not by trappers but by the rising and falling water levels as many lakes and water bodies are altered daily, and the levels of those lakes are altered daily to provide for hydro-electricity.

I have heard of all this waste. I have seen some of it personally, but I have never heard of any species of

animal being made extinct by trapping itself. If those in the European community really care about the animals they say they are seeking to protect, then I would suggest that they should redirect their attack on the fur industry and focus it on pollution, and focus it on acid rain, and focus it on expanding cities which are gobbling up the wildlife habitat, and focus it on the paving over of farm lands with super highways, particularly in the European community, but we are not immune to that in our country as well. Focus it on the asphaltting over of forests.

An Honourable Member: And on Brigitte Bardot.

* (1710)

Mr. Cowan: I am certain that the anti-trappers are well-intentioned. I am equally certain that they are misguided when they attack trappers instead of pollution. I know if there was one message that those in my own constituency would want me to bring directly to those individuals, that would be the message. They will say, and they are right when they say it, that they are not slaughtering animals. They will say, and they are right when they say it as well, that they are not the ones that are causing species to become extinct. It is in fact those other reasons which I just enunciated. The problem is unbridled industrial growth. Those are the problems. It is not trapping. Indeed, we would be better off as a world today if all our wildlife flourished as well as it does in the trapping areas.

I would suggest that trapping, Mr. Speaker, is a solution, not part of the problem which they say they are seeking to address. If they care for that wildlife, then they can much better focus their energies and their many talents and their skills on some of those more pressing problems which affects many more species much more so than trapping ever will.

That is why this resolution introduced by the New Democratic Party caucus is so extremely important. It is a show of our support for Manitoba's trapping industry. It is a clear demonstration of our support for trappers and communities like York Landing and Ilford and the many more I mentioned earlier.

It is a clear signal of our support for the sons and the daughters and the grandsons and the granddaughters in communities like Gillam and Bird, who look to us to do all that we can, as legislators entrusted with their confidence and their hopes and their aspirations, to protect their right to follow historical footsteps over traplines throughout the North. Theirs is not an easy life at the best of times, Mr. Speaker.

This resolution today and our opposition to the proposal before the European Parliament that will require a warning label on wild animal fur products sold in Europe is their hope that the future can be better than it has been in the past, and that is the task that is before us today. If we fail that task today, we fail not only in our efforts to block this particular campaign, but we fail many, many future generations yet to come.

As I was preparing my notes for this resolution, I thought back to those many hours that I had talked

about earlier that I have spent with trappers in each of the communities in my constituency.

There are two conversations out of the many conversations that I want to share with you today because I think they are illustrative and indicative.-(Interjection)- Well, you know the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) always tries to politicize issues such as this, Mr. Speaker, from his seat. He does so once again. This is not an issue which we should allow to fall prey, as he has suggested it should, to partisan attacks in this House. It is an issue that is much too important for that. So I will disregard his comments from his seat, but I want him to reflect upon them personally, and I want him to reflect upon his own speech when he had the opportunity to speak to this Bill and he rambled on about so many matters not germane to the subject before us in a very partisan attack. I resent that and I think trappers resent that approach.

But going back to my point, I remember in my conversation with a trapper from South Indian Lake, who has spent nearly five decades on his own trapline, he told me, with a great deal of sadness, that his hands could no longer take the cold and that he was trapping less and less every year, and he missed the trapline because it was so very much a part of his own personal life.

There was a sadness in his voice when he spoke those words which goes beyond all the reading and all the study and all the research one could do on this particular subject and strikes right at the heart of the matter. He was extremely sad that he would have to leave that trapline because as he said, he was getting too old to work it. Then the conversation turned to how he was going to turn his trapline over to his children, and where there was sadness in his voice there was once again not only gladness but a pride. There was pride in his voice because he was able, in his own mind, to see the continuation of that tradition with his own family. He could see in his own mind his children undertaking the work that he had undertaken with so much pride and so much productivity and so much hope.

For 50 years he had worked his line and now he could pass it on to his children and grandchildren. That trapline was very much a part of his life and now it will be just as much a part of his children's life because he had protected it because he was a strong conservationist and a strong environmentalist, and there were still animals that could be trapped. I know he now looks to us to protect that tradition and lifestyle through this resolution.

I am also reminded of another conversation I had with the chief of one of the larger reserves in the Churchill constituency. He told me how, when he needed some time with his children and his family, he chose to spend that time on the trapline teaching them about their culture, their heritage and their traditions. Out of all the places that he could take his children to be with, he chose to take them to his trapline because that was the most important place in his mind and in his life. I think that speaks very eloquently to how important the issue that is before us today is to those residents of my constituency.

That is what is at stake here today. That is why the Member for Rupertsland and myself, as seconder of the resolution, and all the Members of my caucus and I hope all the Members of the Legislature are asking for this support to show those who would strike out and seek to destroy the trapping industry that they will not be able to do so, that we will stand united, that we will stand in a collective force, that we will stand and fight strong for that which they hold so very dear.

Mr. Speaker, in my closing comments then, I hope that I have been able to, through my discussion here today, relate to you what many of my constituents feel about this important issue. I hope that all Members will stand in their place not only to speak, but when the vote comes to ensure that this resolution passes unanimously, so that they will hear our voice across the ocean and in any place where the trapping industry is under attack.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think I have spoken on this but I feel so strongly compelled to speak, I would be prepared to speak again if the Member would allow me.

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker: Order please; order please. The Honourable Minister has already spoken.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): This is a topic that is very dear to my heart because the economies of all our people are of a concern to this Government and especially to myself, having lived for so many years so close to a Native community and having worked very closely with a number of the people from that community. It is simply a concern to myself as well as all Members on this side of the House that the economic situation be properly addressed, especially for those who do not have the ability to fend for themselves without some assistance from time to time.

It is also of interest and should be of interest to Members of this Legislative Assembly that the forest fire situation caused problems and some severe economic difficulties for some communities in northern Manitoba as well as other parts of the province. Some of the damage caused by those fires to traplines and equipment are well recognized. The forest industry has always been and will remain a major source of income for northern communities and also the aboriginal economic community and provides the economic base in very many cases for the industry or the people to survive.

It is of some interest that I listened to Members opposite, both Parties opposite, from time to time, when we talk about the forest industry and those people that are dependent on that industry. When we listen to them talk about the free trade and the effects that it will have on some of those industries, it certainly is of interest to note that the forestry industry would substantially be enhanced if we had a free trade situation. Those that depend on employment

opportunities would find it most interesting that the opportunities would be enhanced by the freer movement of wood products, both North, South, East and West. I somewhat concur with a notation that was made in one of the editorials not too long ago when they indicated that the freer movement of goods interprovincially should also be addressed. I think it should be of interest to Members opposite that this Government is very aware of the needs to address the interprovincial movement of goods on a more economical basis.

It always surprises me, when I listen to Members opposite, that they avoid the real issue, the gut issue, that is at stake here. If we, for instance, concur with what has been said about the freer movement of goods, about cooperating with our neighbours, about trading without charge some of our goods, without selling some of the products that we do sell, especially in the forest industry, to our neighbours without any application of tariffs and extra charges, it would appear to me that we could entice those who are interested in expanding and/or building new industries based on the lumber industry and in providing opportunities for employment in those areas that are mainly populated by the aboriginal people.

It would appear to me that there would be support for initiatives to do away with the periodic infusions and restrictions that we have seen during the shakes and shingles affair. It would also appear to me that there would be support for enhancing or supporting an enhancement of the sale of our products to those who would want to buy.

The Americans have not only provided us with a fairly open market for our lumber products but have also provided us with markets for many other things that are produced in northern Manitoba, such as surplus electricity, such as a market for our fish without great subsidies being applied or without tariffs being applied to movement of goods to the United States.

It is also interesting to note that our aboriginal people are very dependent on those markets, those New York and Chicago markets, to market the fish that they catch. It is also of interest to me that the Americans have indicated very clearly that should we not agree to move as a nation on this agreement, they might well impose tariffs of a substantive nature that might prevent us from competing economically in the North American market.

The Americans well respect our quality of fish that we can supply their restaurant market with. It is a delicacy that they highly cherish. We have markets there that are open for development if we would just choose to develop them without tariff and without extra huge charges applied to them. They are the markets in the rough fish area and we have a substantial amount of them which we have simply not even attempted to solicit out on the American side.

I would think that there would be tremendous agitation from our northern Members of this Legislature to push this Government to support the initiative that our federal Government has supported—not only supported but encouraged the support—to enhance

these markets and to ensure these markets on a free basis over the long haul.

The other one is our fur industry. Again, we support the trapping and we support hunting and we support our aboriginal peoples' initiatives that they have shown in trying to fend for themselves. The only resources that they have are basically the mining, the fisheries, the forestries and the fur industry.

Let us look at the fur industry for just a wee minute. It is not more than a year ago when Great Britain indicated that they would impose a fur labelling to our furs simply because they might have been caught in steel jawed leghold traps.

Some of us took exception to that and Mr. Titus Alloo, the Minister from the Northwest Territories, and I discussed the possibility of calling all the Resource Ministers together and we did so last June. We brought them all together and we discussed what actions might be taken to stem the apparent support in Great Britain to label furs in such a manner.

All the Ministers from western Canada and from eastern Canada came to Winnipeg and we met and we discussed what actions or initiatives we could take to encourage the Europeans and Margaret Thatcher not to proceed in this manner. I think all of us appreciated the fact when Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, said that they would not pursue the fur labelling initiative.

* (1730)

However, those that had supported and pushed for the labelling initiative simply moved on to the next step. The animal rights people, the animal protectionist people are intent on not only to label furs but they are intent on making sure that there will be no animals killed for either the fur consumption, the fur market or the food market. I find it very interesting that those same people have now gone to the European Parliament and asked the European Parliament to initiate a similar resolution in their Parliament and pass legislation that would label fur garments as might having been caught in steel leghold traps.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

I would suggest to the Members opposite that they should support us, the Government of Manitoba, to try and influence our European friends and indicate to them the economic chaos that they would create especially in the northern part of our province. It is also, I think, reasonable to at this time indicate that the Free Trade Agreement could also affect, maybe to a much larger degree, the movement of our fur products and our furs into the North American market.

What I simply cannot understand about our Members opposite is their opposition to the freer movement of goods that we produce, and we produce well in this province—we produce more economically and a better quality product than most others do in the world—that they would oppose the free movement of those products into the North American market and what kind of profound economic effect that opposition to this freer

movement of goods has on especially our aboriginal communities.

We can spend all day, I suppose, arguing about the kind of trade initiatives and whether we should trade freely with our friends or we should not, but one thing comes to mind when we discuss this whole matter and we discuss whether some things are or are not part of the deal and it always brings me back to my own community, for had it not been for the friendliness that the Americans had shown to us some 30 years ago, towns such as Gretna and Altona would not have had water. There are those on the opposite side of the House that profess that water can be sold or traded or should not be sold or traded, or there are those that want to accuse the Americans of wanting all our water when, in fact, Manitoba has bought water from North Dakota for the last 30 years.

We asked our American friends whether they would agree to allowing us to use their water down the Souris River this summer, and they agreed not only to the agreed upon amount but they actually gave us more than we asked for.

Down the Red River again the same year, we had a problem with water. At neither time did the Americans say, well, you have to pay us so much for what we are going to give you. They gave it to us for nothing because they were friends, because they saw the need in Manitoba. And it is for that reason that I indicate to this Legislature that it is time we opened our eyes, that it is time that we looked at the profound economic effect of some of the things that are being discussed today in Manitoba and Canada wide. It is with this that I say to our honourable friends opposite that they should pay heed to those that had been forthright in attempting to put in place an economic process that would help all Manitobans earn a respectable living in an economic manner.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski): The Honourable Member's time has expired.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I too take great pleasure actually in being able to rise up and stand to speak to the adoption of this resolution by this Chamber.

I think we have here a very, very timely resolution which has been put before us in order to point out to the difficulty that we face when people, when extended to nations tend to, and I do not wish to use the word lightly but tend to interfere in the internal workings of another country. Sometimes they do this willingly by choice and sometimes they do this unwittingly by having adopted something that interferes with the livelihood or with the economy of another nation.

We have here, in this particular resolution, an attempt to address a deliberate interference, not necessarily only in the activity and livelihood of Native people, aboriginal people in Canada but actually also in the economy and the livelihood of aboriginal people everywhere. Herein we have a single group, a group that has a single aim which attempts to get its will forced upon the livelihood of other people.

If I may just briefly refer to a carving on a tombstone from many, many years ago, "The wonder of the world,

the beauty and the power, the shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades, these I saw. Look ye also while life lasts." That inscription on that tombstone essentially expresses a oneness with the light we see around us. On this planet, as we have evolved to where we are presently, we have had many, many activities by many different groups of people which have influenced life around them, which have effected life around them but all ultimately ending with only one thing in mind and that is the survival of the supreme species on this planet.

No matter which way you cut it, the supreme species always when you define it comes down to the two-legged variety, the species called man. And in this particular end, we have done all kinds of things to ensure our survival. We have domesticated beasts, we have domesticated plants, we have utilized beasts, we have trapped them, we have hunted them, we have harnessed them, we have harvested them, we fish for them, we utilize them in order to guarantee our survival. When it comes down to the ultimate threat, whether it is your life or someone else's, it seems it does not matter where your philosophy comes from. Generally you tend to choose for the survival of your own life, the survival of your own species. In this instance, in this particular resolution, we see once again not just the survival of a species but the survival of a way of life.

* (1740)

It is not a choice here with the anti-trapping lobbyists who wish to actually state that furs which have been imported from, and not just Canada, but any country where you end up having trapping take place, these furs be labelled so that these furs no longer can be purchased. What is this going to do to the economy of the people who are actually trapping? If we take a look at the demand and supply equation, when demand goes down supply goes up, prices come down. The actual effect that the very people want to have which is to reduce the number of pelts being caught, reduce the number of animals being trapped, is negated because now in the world we have today, which is not simply just a trapping for your own needs, not just growing food from your own garden for your own use, what we now see is a case where no matter what we do we are inflicted by the free market economy, by a money economy.

In this trapping situation where we have people trapping animals in order to take their pelts and sell the pelts for the fur industry, we have a fur market economy. The people earn their livelihood by selling these furs on the open market. Ultimately the Catch 22, having said we do not wish to have these furs, having said we do not wish to encourage the use of, in this case, leg hold traps, the price of furs drops and the people who still need to make their livelihood from this particular economy either have to voluntarily decide to give up. They have nothing, and in our situation when you are making your livelihood in the northern areas where there is insufficient other economy, these people must then be supported by society at large. This is not what a proud trapper wishes to do.

If we take for instance the spirituality that is generally implicit in an aboriginal livelihood and in an aboriginal

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traditional lifestyle, the people husband their resources. They actually practise the three goals of the world conservation strategy, the last one which is simply to ensure the sustainable utilization of species or ecosystems. They actually practise this. In the case of families who hunt and trap together you will have a situation where one person's trapping area or hunting area will be allowed to rest so that the fur bearing animals can regenerate themselves so that they can be harvested the year following.

This is exactly the same kind of thing that we are teaching in the utilization of the environment, when we ask that people practise the proper husbanding of land, practise the proper husbanding of the forests so that we do not suffer severe soil degradation and severe environmental degradation.

One of the factors that came to my mind when I took a look at the resolution and I took a look at the objective of the resolution, which was essentially to deny livelihood to trappers, I wondered whether or not these people who were perpetrating this particular kind of action really took into account the effects of what they were doing.

One of the hunting activities or trapping activities that has been severely affected by the animal rights lobbyists was the harvesting of the harp seal off Newfoundland. Granted, many of us who are not trappers, many of us who are not hunters may feel slightly ill at ease when we see what actually happens, when an animal is harvested; it is the taking of life. However, when we take a look at the similar situation, to catch the meat that I eat, I simply have to go to the Safeway store or the SuperValu store. To me what I do not see is the mindless movement of live animals up the chute to the place where they are killed, slaughtered. This does not come into the equation. Yet if we extend this particular argument far enough, we find that even here this life form must not be utilized.

If I reference again the harp seal, we now find that the Atlantic cod fishery is being detrimentally affected by the virtue of the fact that far too many of the seal are now surviving. The harvest of the seal actually was able to keep in balance the utilization of both fur and fish. Now we find that the seals are competing far too much with the fisheries, and the fisheries now are being detrimentally affected.

Another thing that we need to bear in mind also in the utilization of animals for our own survival, whether it be raising mink for fur coats or raising chickens to lay eggs, or simply force-feeding animals so that they grow quickly so we can harvest them for the meats, we essentially here are utilizing a form of—where the end result is our survival. The conditions therein, if we were to attribute feelings to these animals, the conditions even here are hardly what you would call the natural wild state. So if we extend the argument of this anti-trapping lobby, and they are a strong lobby, we must also extend the same argument to the utilization of all animals for our needs, for our use.

We must also consider the utilization of these same animals when we look at medical research. I asked myself the question, also when I read the resolution,

the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVEDs, and the implications thereof, does a person who advocates strongly now on behalf of animals who are caught in traps, or advocate strongly on behalf of animals that are used in research, or advocate strongly on behalf of animals that are raised for slaughter, or advocate strongly on behalf of animals that are simply raised so that they can produce eggs say, do these people voluntarily deny lifesaving medication or procedure which was first tested on animals, because it was the only way they could check whether or not that procedure would also save human life? I think not. I think that when it comes to self-interest it is generally the ultimate right of people to survive that has to be questioned, and that comes right back down to the people who have chosen voluntarily to live close to the land, who have either by virtue of the fact that this is their traditional lifestyle, or this is an expression of their own philosophy of life to return to a simpler relationship with the land and with their Maker.

We have people who are working at being the original environmentalist, as was earlier referenced, people who are actually practising sustainable harvest, people who are actually out there making certain that the genetic diversity that is essential for our survival continues. I hate to see what would happen if the explosion of alternate single-life systems, because as we continue to evolve and as we continue to modify our environment, we actually reduced the genetic diversity. There are fewer species of grass; there are fewer species of animals. What happens is as we end up having only larger and larger groups of one-and-one single species, they become much more susceptible to being wiped out by a foreign bacteria or by a germ or a disease. Hence, it is incumbent upon us to encourage the continued utilization of animals, of plants, in the natural state to continue to encourage the utilization of things in harmony with nature, rather than to end up encouraging the very things that we are now complaining about.

* (1750)

I believe it was the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) who referenced the loss of prime crop land because of urban expansion; the degradation of soils because of the loss of organic material and deforestation and so on; water shortages, again caused by deteriorating water quality caused by amending the environment.

All of these things are caused when we start to interfere too much, when we get involved too much. It is time, I think, that we look instead at how we ourselves, individually relate to the environment and perhaps also ask those people who are encouraging the European Parliament to adopt the resolution to ban, or to label furs caught—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski): The Member's time has expired.

Shall the resolution pass? The Honourable Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Acting Speaker, I am pleased to stand and speak on this resolution

dealing with aboriginal economy. I guess when you talk about the aboriginal economy, trapping is one of the traditional aboriginal economies that I have had the privilege of participating in and, as a youngster and being brought up in a rural community. My father was one who taught us all he knew about trapping and there was a Metis man by the name of Mr. Chartrand who took the time to, once again, teach us some of the values of that traditional way of life that he carried out with his family. It was always a pleasure to sit down and listen to some of the stories that he had and how important it was to him and his family to carry on in that way of life.

I know Mr. Chartrand has passed that tradition on to his children and some of his children and grandchildren are still today carrying on that way of life in the Camperville area. So I am always thankful for having had the opportunity to learn from a learned person of that sort. I guess, when you talk about the traditional way of life and the harmony that exists between the nature of things and the trappers, I know that they are strong environmentalists who manage their wildlife stock as if it were their own. They are always very careful that there is not too heavy trapping done for fear that it may affect trapping in future years.

So I know that there are many of my constituents who carry on this proud tradition in the community of Cormorant which was a community that was a very proud Metis community who their traditional way of trapping has been affected, but even though it has been affected, the community is still a proud community that carries on and looks after their own and still carry on with the trapping and fishing. They would like to have some input when there is some development carried on in the area that is known as the Tom Lamb Wildlife Management Area. I have spoken to, not only the people from Cormorant, but the people from Moose Lake who are deeply concerned about how their traditional trapping areas have been affected and how they would like to participate when there is some program being developed to develop that area, they would like to be a part of it.

So I know that there are other people in other Native communities that I represent, the communities of Easterville, Pelican Rapids, Grand Rapids, Wanless, they are all good communities who are still involved in the traditional way of life.

That is why we must all stand up here and speak very strongly because I know that if the British Parliament has their way that the leg trap holds are banned completely and labelling does take effect that it is going to be affecting their traditional way of life and thousands and thousands of Manitobans will be affected. I think that they have provided for not only themselves but for their families, so we must be a strong, united voice in this Legislature to be sure that we make people aware of how people will be affected.

I know that the community of The Pas, which I represent, has been affected to a great degree as well and they have played a very big part in the development of the Saskeram area. Although that was once a very lucrative trapping area, now it has, with the development that Ducks Unlimited have carried on in the Saskeram

area, it has become much more so. The harvest that has been carried on in the last year is the highest it has ever been. I think that there is cooperation going on there between, not only the Native people in that community, but also with Ducks Unlimited and the Department of Natural Resources.

I was a little disappointed in the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) when he spoke and instead of getting up and condemning us for not supporting free trade—the Free Trade Agreement that is presently being negotiated, the jury is still out, if it is going to be good for us or bad for us and I think that there are some things the Government can do at this time.

How can they support the trappers in their efforts to continue their proud tradition of providing a living for their families? I think there are programs that we carried out when we were Government. There was support for building of trapping sheds for the trappers to spend their nights and there was support for clearing some of the trails so that trappers would not have as much difficulty to get back and forth to their traplines; and also the radios which were a great assistance to the trappers because they were able to contact their families when they were spending time out on their traplines, so they were able to continue to keep, make contact with their families.

I know that right now there is a need for a program to help the trappers change over from the leg hold trap to the humane traps. The trappers themselves recognize that there is a need to make that conversion but they also recognize it is very expensive to be making that conversion, so the Government could be coming up right now and working with the Registered Traplines Association.

I guess that has been one of the disappointments to the Trappers' Association, that they have not been asked to have any input on how they can come forward and make some changes to the way that their trapping is carried out. I think that there are many trappers in my constituency, including Mr. Pronteau and Mr. Sinclair, who were for years the leaders of their association.

Presently there is a fellow by the name of Ken McKay who was an Executive Director with the Manitoba Trappers' Association and he carried out and did a very good job of representing the trappers and working with the trappers, showing them how they can make improvements to the way their traditional occupation is carried out.

I think that we need to work very closely with the trappers of Manitoba. They are the experts in the field and they know what changes can be made to make their traditional trapping more efficient than it is at this time. I think that the leg hold traps is where they do need some assistance and I would hope that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) would come forward with a program to let the trappers know where he can be assisting them.

When we talk about the traditional way of life, I know that there are people in the Grand Rapids area who have been helped, and people throughout the constituency who have been helped by the program

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that was in place previously to assist them with purchasing of equipment. There has been a change. Instead of giving it to the individual trappers, they are now assisting the Trappers' Association and I think that was a decision made by the trappers themselves of how they can make improvements in their industry to make it more viable.

The Trappers' Association are presently looking for some assistance to help them as a lobby group because they have been in much the same situation as the farming community where they need a strong voice. They have come forward to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) and made some recommendations on how they can make improvements to get more dollars into place so they can have an executive director on a full-time basis.

They have agreed to increase their licence fees and they have also agreed to increase their royalties, and I know that they are being very responsible in their approach to the trapping.

So I know that I will have to complete my comments the next time this resolution is brought before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski): When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member (Mr. Harapiak) will have five minutes remaining.

The hour being six o'clock, I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in the Committee of Supply.