

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 28, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** It is my duty to inform the House that Mr. Speaker is unavoidably absent and, therefore, in accordance with the statutes, I would ask the Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski) to take the Chair.

## PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker (William Chornopyski):** I have reviewed the petition and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the Rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned, of the Province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth:

THAT as a result of the hard surfacing of Waverley and the increased traffic flow thereon, a potentially hazardous situation now exists at the intersection of Waverley and the Perimeter Highway.

WHEREFORE your petitioners propose that the following safety measures be considered by the provincial Government for implementation before a serious accident takes place:

- a) the immediate reduction of the speed limit on the Perimeter Highway to 70 km/hour in the interval between the Pembina Highway-Perimeter exchange and a point determined to be a safe distance west of the Waverley-Perimeter intersection; and
- b) also in the immediacy, the installation of flashing warning lights at the approaches to the intersection to clearly demark same to the motoring public; and
- c) in the longer term, locate in the current fiscal year's budget, or alternately budget in the 1990-91 fiscal budget, monies for all necessary steps to install traffic signal lights for use during peak traffic flows.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Mr. Parker Burrell (Swan River):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have two reports to table today, this voluminous report tabled Financial Statements of Boards, Commissions and Government Agencies of the Province of Manitoba for the Year ended 31st March, 1988; and second, the Quarterly Report for the Manitoba Telephone System, this being the Third Quarter.

**Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour):** I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review, 1989-90 Estimates for Manitoba Labour.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Estimate Information for the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Before we go into Oral Questions, I would like to draw all Members' attention to the gallery. We have fifty-four Grade 5 students from James Nisbet Community School under the direction of Rose Novak. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema).

\* (1335)

We welcome you all here today.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Economic Growth Stimulation

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the economic climate in this province continues to deteriorate. Last month we raised the issue of poor unemployment statistics relative to Canada, outmigration from the provinces, the declining housing starts, poor consumer confidence causing a decline in retail sales, poor investor confidence marked by plant closures, layoffs and bankruptcies.

Last month, Mr. Deputy Speaker, personal consumer bankruptcies were up 27 percent over last year. Business bankruptcies were up 75 percent. Economic measures are desperately needed to stimulate the economy, yet our Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) continues to take a very laissez-faire attitude, refusing to show some leadership to curb this downward spiral.

My question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is, when will this Government act on behalf of the consumers and businesses of this province and provide them with economic stimulation?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish that the Leader of the Opposition would be able to read the budget and understand the proposals that are in that budget, instead of in her own crass political interest just blindly voting against the budget that did what? Stimulated the economy by giving a \$61 million reduction in personal taxes to the people of Manitoba. She voted against that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Now that is far more stimulation than any amount of Government spending could ever create in the economy that would do that effect, \$61 million in the pockets of the people who earn that money, now being available to be spent throughout the economy. Second, it reduced the payroll tax so that small businesses could flourish in this climate in Manitoba.

We reduced the payroll tax for the second budget in a row, and 70 percent of those businesses that had been paying the tax when we took office have now been removed from the payroll tax rolls. Fewer than 4 percent of all of our businesses are paying the full rate of payroll tax. That is the kind of stimulus we have given. In addition to that, for the second year in a row we reduced the education taxes on farm land. She voted against that, she voted against that—

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier can give all of the stats he wants. The stats that are important are the bankruptcy statistics in this province. In the first part of 1988, January to October, there were 882 bankruptcies; this year there are 1,185—34.4 percent; business bankruptcies were up 41.2 percent.

My question to the First Minister is, what explanation does he have for this dismal Government's performance in the Province of Manitoba?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the only dismal performance is that every day in this House of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite all of the practice that she is getting, her theatrics do not work because all we get is gloom and doom, negativism, that is all we get out of here. She went to the Union of Manitoba Municipalities last week in Brandon, she tried that gloom and doom - (interjection)-

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

\* (1340)

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, they would not buy it. They did not like her negative attitude, her constant harping, her constant complaining, her constant gloom and doom, because they know the facts are that our economy, according to the Conference Board, is expected to go at 5.9 percent real growth, 5.9 percent this year, the second highest of any province in the country. Our investment to Manitoba is expected to increase at over 14 percent. That is amongst the top three of all of the provinces in the country. Those are the kinds of positive statistics, that is the kind of growth that people want in this province and that is what they are getting from this Government.

## Labour Skills Training Strategy

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, bankruptcies are an example of negative statistics, and it is bankruptcies we are trying to get some explanation from, from this Government today.

When this Government took office we ranked fourth and fifth in this country. We have been consistently this year at the top of the list in the largest numbers of consumer and business bankruptcies. We have been asking when this Government was going to announce a labour strategy. We have the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) saying they do not need one.

Perhaps they will take some advice from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. That is, what is needed in this province is education and labour training programs. When are we going to get them in this province?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** What the Canadian Federation of Independent Business studies said was that the majority of businesses in this province are concerned about the heavy tax load they have to endure. We proposed in our two budgets, two in a row, to reduce taxes this year by \$61 million on a personal level and the payroll tax by an additional \$20-odd million. What did they do, the Liberal Party of this province? They voted against it. The very prescription that the CFIB has for improving the economy, reducing taxes, the Liberal Party in this Legislature voted against, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Liberal Party does not want to have the good news. They do not want to know about the positive things that are happening. They do not want to know about the growth in our economy, in investments in our economy. They do not want to know about any of those things. All they want is to repeat, repeat and repeat the negative doom and gloom things.

The people of this province are very, very upset with that. They know manufacturing capital investment is predicted to increase by over 100 percent in Manitoba this year, the highest of any province in the country.- (interjection)-

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I wish to remind all Honourable Members and Ministers that answers to questions should be kept as short as possible so as to preserve the time for Question Period.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** What this province needs is a labour training strategy. We do not have such a strategy, because the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) does not think we need one.

When will this First Minister begin to listen to labour and business in this community, that is, telling them we need a strategy to create jobs, and we need a training strategy to make sure we have workers who can fulfill those jobs?

**Mr. Filmon:** We have given larger increases to the universities than they have enjoyed in previous years

under the NDP. We have enhanced programs for specialized areas of training in this province in a number of areas to address the concerns and the needs of women. We have put together a comprehensive strategy that is balanced. It includes putting money in, there was an increase in investment in education, which we believe is a very important investment, 7.6 percent in the budget that she voted against, 7.6 percent. More than 50 percent above the CPI level of increase of spending was put into education. She voted against it.

When she talks about the need for education and training we have to discount that, because the real concern she has is to try desperately any way to bring down this Government. She is not concerned about services to people. She is not concerned about investment in training and education. She is not concerned about anything but her own personal interest. That is what we have to be concerned about when we listen to questions like that.- (interjection)-

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

### Program Funding

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** A week ago in this House the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), in response to a question with regard to the strategy of de Grandpre with regard to training, told this House we did not need any training dollars from Manitoba. We do need training dollars, Mr. Premier. I want to know why -(interjection)-

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

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

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** On a point of order, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) just attributed certain words to me which were not true.

\* (1345)

She asked me a question dealing with the question of free trade and labour adjustment measures from the federal Government. I said we did not need any of those dollars yet to be accessed, because of the lost jobs because of free trade, whether she likes to think so or not. Let her not put on the record false information dealing with statements made by myself.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order.

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**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, he has just repeated the whole context of my question. He says we do not need any training dollars from Ottawa. When will the First Minister access training dollars from Ottawa for Manitoba, where we desperately need a labour strategy and a job retraining strategy?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** The Leader of the Opposition is quoting from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business recent report of the various concerns they had with respect to Government's actions effects on small business. The No. 1 concern was the high tax burden. I already indicated that we had several measures to reduce the tax burden in this province and the Liberal Party voted against it.

Another major concern was the Workers Compensation Board. They acknowledged we had frozen the premiums during our term in Government, so that we froze the rates employers pay, and that has been a help. They acknowledged there should be more help, but that has been a help.

Third, he acknowledged with respect to labour and training that recently the Manitoba Minister of Education, Len Derkach, has struck a committee to work with the CFIB on matching education to business needs. He said that is a positive step we are taking. So business knows what we are doing. Employers know what we are doing and they know it is a positive thing. It is only the Liberal Party that tries to make something negative about it.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** The statistics show that we are having more and more bankruptcies. The proof of the tax support will come in the support of Bill No. 86, which we will support in this House.

### Premier's Council Formation Industry and Technology

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Yesterday, at a meeting of the follow-up on the Round Table on the Economy, the chairperson, Ed Martens, recommended the formation of a Premier's Council on Industry and Technology similar to the council in Ontario. This issue was raised earlier with the Ministers of Industry and Education and Training. Why is the Premier reluctant to establish such a council in the Province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** We had that very discussion when most of my Cabinet met last week with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. She may have read about it in the newspaper. They were very, very positive and very encouraging about the good things Manitoba has done. They recognized that we have created a much more positive climate than had been here before. They recognized we were doing a great deal to keep deficits down in this province to the lowest level in a decade and they complimented us for it. They complimented us for reducing the overall debt for the first time in over 20 years. They complimented us on doing many of the positive things that they believed ought to be done. They indicated that we have taken some very, very significant moves.

\* (1350)

They said the appointment of our Round Table on Environment and Economy had some very significant high level decision-makers on it, people from the business community who were recognized for the

stature that they had and the influence they had being married together with people who had concerns for the environment. They said we were doing a very, very positive thing.

They mentioned to us as well that the Premier's Council on Technology and Excellence in Ontario was a good idea and we said we were quite prepared to look at that idea, because it had merit. They are going to get back to us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with information to see whether or not we can blend that together with our Round Table on Environment and Economy, because it has some merit.

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

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) yesterday heard an eloquent plea for the establishment of a Premier's Council. Will the Premier (Mr. Filmon) today commit himself to the establishment of a Premier's Council to develop long-term strategy for improving a provincial economy which is sluggish and getting more sluggish every day?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, private capital investment is expected to increase in Manitoba at the fourth highest level of any provinces in the country. Manufacturing capital investment is expected to increase this year at the highest level of any of the provinces in the country. Our average weekly earnings increase this year over last year is the best of all the provinces in the country at 5.5 percent. Our manufacturing shipment increase this year is the second best of all the provinces in the country. That is not a sluggish economy.

The entire premise behind her question is wrong as it usually is, and I would hope that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) would stop trying to find whatever is negative in anything that she possibly can and get on to the kind of positive attitude that people in Manitoba are looking for. They want a bright future. They know they are going to get it with this Government.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the ghosts of Sterling Lyon live on the front bench of the Tory benches. The only growth we have in the private sector is in the bailiffs, and moving vans that are going out of the province. We will be positive, we will be positive, and speaking of positive announcements, we look forward to future Hydro development in this province which has been indicated -(interjection)- That is right, they are. We will not be electing Brian Mulroney as our Leader, I will tell you. We will have an honest Leader when we are finished with this convention.

### Free Trade Agreement Hydro Legal Opinion

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) -(interjection)-

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

**Mr. Doer:** I have a very serious question to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) and it deals with

our economy. There is predicted and announced future development with Hydro and in particular the Conawapa Agreement is close, I believe, or the Conawapa Development is close with the announcement of the sale to Ontario and other Hydro projects have been announced by this Government pursuant to other energy exchange agreements and other developments in our province.

I would ask the Minister of Energy and Mines, has he received any legal opinion that a Manitoba Preference Clause and contracts dealing with construction of any Manitoba Hydro projects in the future will be legal under the Free Trade Agreement?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Free Trade Agreement deals with the sale of and export of Hydro.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am advised that asking for legal opinion is—will the Honourable Member rephrase his question?

### Hydro Development Manitoba Preference Clause

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Can the Minister provide Manitobans with a legal opinion and if not has he received any legal advice that a Manitoba Preference Clause would be allowed under the Canada-U.S.A. Free Trade Agreement?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Beauchesne's on page 122, No. (13)—questions should not seek a legal opinion or inquire as to what legal advice a Minister has received.

### POINT OF ORDER

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party Caucus in his question very carefully asked the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) to provide us with any legal opinion that he may have with respect to that particular agreement and the effect on Hydro development.

\* (1355)

In the past, the precedent has been in this House, and it has been accepted on many occasions. As a matter of fact the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) will recall as will the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) recall asking on many occasions for legal opinions in this House, which were on numerous occasions provided to them. It is a question with a long-standing history in this House.

It is a question that has always been answered fairly and courageously by Members of our Government when we were in Government. We had the courage to say yes, we would give it or no, we would not give it and that is all we are asking the Minister of Energy and Mines for with this particular question, is for him to provide a copy of a legal opinion if he in fact does have a copy of a legal opinion.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order, please. I thank the Honourable Member for Churchill for his advice. I will take the matter under advisement and bring back a ruling at another time.

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### Free Trade Agreement Manitoba Preference Clause

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question to the Minister is, is it the policy of this Government to have a Manitoba Preference Clause in any future Hydro development, and will that be allowed under the Free Trade Agreement with Canada and United States?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the guidelines are decided upon and the preferences, if any, are decided upon, we will take into account any problems that might be created by the Free Trade Agreement. We will abide by whatever laws are the laws of the country.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, the Minister may well be aware that former Hydro agreements, projects and developments perpetrated 20,000 jobs in Manitoba and Conawapa is predicted to produce even more in terms of the potential employment, employment that this province needs.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question to the Minister is, is he aware or can he advise Manitoba the impact of decisions on Section 15 of the Free Trade Agreement in the Province of Ontario dealing with construction and the allowance of U.S. workers to take jobs of Canadians in terms of Ontario and the implications that will have on thousands and thousands of potential employees and workers in Manitoba for future Hydro development.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is our opinion that the Free Trade Agreement will not interfere with any exports to the United States of electricity. The only way that this could be interfered with, the only way that the Free Trade Agreement could interfere is if we had exported some electricity to the States and those exports are under a contract, under an agreement and will not be affected.

\* (1400)

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, no wonder this province has seven thousand less people working than a year ago with the type of ignorant answers from the Minister responsible. This is a very serious matter. Is the Minister—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) does not know the Rules, at least he should show a little courtesy around here and mind his manners when he is asking questions.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was mad at the answer. I should not have personalized it. I withdraw the word "ignorance" and would ask the question, why does the Minister not know that important decisions under the

Free Trade Agreement are impacting on thousands and thousands of potential workers in the construction industry, a purview—

**An Honourable Member:** Nonsense.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) says nonsense. Perhaps he should read the decision in Ontario dealing with Section 15 and the ability of American workers to come up to Canada and take our jobs and not deal with the ability of Manitoba to have a preference clause. My question to the Minister is, will he intervene on behalf of Manitobans to strike down the rulings in Ontario and will he push for a Manitoba preference clause in contracts so that we can employ Manitobans who need jobs in this province?

**Mr. Neufeld:** As and when the decision to build Conawapa is taken, we will review the decisions of Ontario. We will review the preference clauses and we will abide by the decisions of the laws of the land and we will continue showing the preferences that we have shown in the past.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, already in Ontario we are having decisions that are saying that means job losses and contract losses will be made for construction workers in Ontario and contractors. The same principle of law under the Free Trade Agreement obviously applies to Manitobans. Why is the Minister not monitoring these developments in terms of construction projects, because he is obviously involved in them, and why is he not intervening on behalf of Manitobans so that we will not lose 30,000 jobs in the future as he is now advocating in terms of his responsibility as Minister responsible for Energy and Mines?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Manitoba Hydro people are monitoring all the actions across the country with respect to construction, with respect to the Free Trade Agreement and with the respect to the labour market. We are not left standing in the dark. We know exactly what is happening and the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) can tell us nothing.

### Centre for Disease Control Downtown Site Support

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Tomorrow afternoon city councillors will vote on the movement of the City Works Yards. A new report from the Board of Commissioners has detailed what the cost will be to the city and the federal Minister, Mr. Epp, has indicated that he would consider placing the virology lab at the downtown site if City Council makes the land available.

The only Government without a commitment is the Government of Manitoba. Would the Premier (Mr. Filmon) please indicate what his Government is prepared to do to facilitate the placement of this very important initiative downtown where the Premier and his Ministers believe it belongs?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) knows full well,

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we have indicated very strongly our support for the downtown site for the lab. We have indicated that it makes good sense in terms of removal of an environmental irritant. It makes good sense in terms of the land use being a health care lab, a disease control lab surrounded by health care facilities adjacent to the University of Manitoba. I have met with countless people, including the president of the University of Manitoba and many others, even in the last few weeks, indicating our strong support for that. I spoke with the mayor on the weekend indicating our strong support for that downtown lab site and many others.

So the fact is that we are supportive of it. We have indicated our commitment to work with those people to ensure that if possible the lab is located on that site, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There is no question as to where we stand on the matter.

### Municipal Works Yard Provincial Capital Funding

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier and his Ministers have been offering lip-service to the lab site downtown for a long time now, for many months. We are now at the verge of a decision that is going to be made by City Council and councillors are interested in knowing what the province's position is. Is the province prepared to offer any capital dollars either in this budget or in future budgets to facilitate the movement of the Works Yard?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we had followed the advice of the Member for Fort Rouge we would have dumped \$30 million into the project back two months ago when he made the proposal. He said, whatever it takes right up to and including \$30 million, which was a facetious estimate, an estimate that everybody knew was not factual, was not accurate, but he was prepared to advocate \$30 million being put on the table to bribe the City Council to locate the lab down by the Health Sciences Centre on that Works Yard site.

Because we had a great deal more sense than that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we said no. We are not going to go forward and tell City Council that they have to be bribed in order to make the right decision. We gave all the reasons why that was the preferred lab site and we suggested that city councillors ought to review their position and that new city councillors ought to be encouraged to review that decision. That is happening. I understand that they are going to be taking that decision and that a majority of them will likely choose that site—

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

### Centre for Disease Control Lobby Effort Results

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** We have seen the Government's commitment. The Government's commitment is zero and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during the civic election campaign the Premier pledged to

lobby successful city councillors so that they could be persuaded by argument that it was a good move to have it in the downtown site. Since the vote is tomorrow, can the Premier report to the House how many councillors did he talk to and how persuasive was he able to be?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am told from my discussions that a majority of people on council, the new council, favour that downtown site. I read in today's paper which I am sure is the genesis of the Member for Fort Rouge's questions, that the number is approximately 20 to 10.

The fact of the matter is that we have indicated publicly where we stand and what our preference is. I might indicate to him as well that we have, and the Liberal Party may not be aware of it, that the city has a five-year capital works plan that does include cost-shared programs with the provincial Government. If the city wanted to include in that capital plan the relocation costs of the Works Yards or some aspect of the relocation costs, I think that we would look at that favourably. That is an area in which there is a role for the province to play. We will take a look at that and see if it fits in as a priority of theirs. I see no reason why we would not want to participate in such a priority decision.

### Meech Lake Accord Premier's Position

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a new question to the Premier. We were all delighted that the Premier representing all of us was able to watch that terrific Grey Cup game and we know who he was hoping for, but we also thought that he could do a little nation building while he was there when he was talking to the Premiers of Ontario and Newfoundland, but it looks like, having done a reverse in December of last year, he has now done a double reverse on the whole issue of Meech Lake.

The Premier has said time and time again that he supports the recommendations of the Manitoba task force. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we were concerned and appalled to learn that the Premier's resolve is weakening and he now seems to be prepared to negotiate away the consensus of the task force. What recommendations of the Manitoba Task Force is the Premier prepared to sacrifice in order to get an agreement on the Meech Lake Accord?

\* (1410)

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I might suggest that the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) read perhaps more than one newspaper when he develops his questions for Question Period, because in respect to what I did say after meeting with Premier Wells for an hour and a half yesterday morning, I did say we firmly were committed to attempting to get the changes we have put forward, on the Manitoba position and Premier Wells' position, which was put forward to Ottawa.

I said Meech Lake would not be approved in Manitoba without changes. In fact, the headline in the Toronto

Globe and Mail said, Premiers do not foresee compromise on Meech Lake. I put forward the Manitoba Task Force position. It is our position as a Government and that is as it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Nothing has changed.- (interjection)-

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

**Mr. Carr:** The last paragraph of that report the Premier refers to says that Mr. Filmon also told the press conference that the hold-out provinces might soften their opposition to the accord, that Mr. Peterson and Mr. Bourassa are willing to support their demands for Senate reform.

Well, the people of Manitoba, those who want a distinct national identity for Canada, those who believe in multicultural rights, those who believe in the rights of aboriginal people, those who believe in fairness for northern Canada are not going to be impressed by the words of the Premier.

It is a legitimate question to ask him in the House today. How firm is his resolve? He has flip-flopped once, will he do it again?

**Mr. Filmon:** He will note I am not quoted in that paragraph. Over and over -(interjection)- I wonder if you could ask the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) to quiet down his enthusiasm. I know he has had his knuckles rapped by his Leader for his actions in the past, so he is unable to ask questions. I wonder if he could just quiet down his heckling so he could listen to the answer.- (interjection)-

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

**Mr. Filmon:** Over and over and over again, I have urged the other provinces to consider moving - (interjection)- Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have indicated that we want to see movement on Senate reform as well as all of the other concerns we have put forward on Meech Lake.

Of course the Task Force Report talks about studying Senate reform. That is all well and good, but I want to see commitments on the part of Premiers Peterson, Bourassa and others to a Triple E Senate. I believe that would show good faith on their part. At the same time, we are committed to the Manitoba Report on Meech Lake. That is our position.

**Mr. Carr:** The very first question I asked in this House was to the Premier on the question of Senate reform. His answer to this side of the House at that time was there can be no Senate reform without Meech Lake. Well, he changed his position on the 16th of December, and we think he did the right thing. We encourage that, as he came more and more to the view of many other Manitobans.

I am not interested in debating press reports. I am interested in knowing what the Premier's position is now as he negotiates in this round. Is he prepared to sacrifice any of the recommendations within the Task Force Report in order to make a deal?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, my position at the table is the Manitoba Task Force Report. That is the third time I have said it. I would hope the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) will finally listen to it and accept the answer instead of being given the liberty, I might say, to repeat over and over and over again all of his preambles, which are absolute nonsense.

### Health Care Profession Pay Equity Implementation

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** One thing, in the New Democratic Party, we have been warning for the last year and a half is the fact this Government lacks a clear commitment to pay equity. It is not committed to pay equity in the private sector. It shares that, unfortunately, with the Liberals of this province.

Now, after nearly three years of negotiations, they refuse to implement a pay equity agreement that was agreed to by all the hospitals in Manitoba. In fact, there was a desperate attempt on the part of health care workers to get the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to change his mind at a meeting this morning, and the Minister once again refused to do that.

My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Will he intervene now to prevent this from going to the Labour Board and ensure that the negotiated settlement that was reached between the hospitals and the health care employees proceed as was agreed and overrule the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who completely lacks the commitment to pay equity?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), ought to understand two things. First of all, pay equity has been implemented as legislated throughout Government circles. Second, pay equity will be implemented in the health care sector according to the legislation, as all other groups have done.

The other point I want to make with my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), is that money is set aside retroactively at the Health Services Commission to make the adjustment as required in pay equity in the legislation for last year. Money is budgeted in this year's budget to continue that process as provided for in the legislation.

This Government is not opposed to pay equity. This Government is willing to implement the pay equity. That clearly was the genesis and the impact of the discussion we had this morning.

**Mr. Ashton:** I have a supplementary question. The Pay Equity Act is quite clear and talks about each bargaining agent acting in good faith and making every reasonable effort to reach an agreement in terms of pay equity. That has not been done by this Minister. He once again refused to do that this morning.

Will the Premier intervene on this to ensure there is a continued commitment to pay equity and it is not sabotaged by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who clearly has no commitment to pay equity in the health care sector?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Health, with a short answer.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I regret my honourable friend does not understand the issue as well as he likes to. Within the legislation there is the ability if the employers on the one side, which are the hospitals in this case, and the bargaining agents do not come to an agreement within the legislation. That negotiation process has been going on now for a year and a half that I am aware of and probably before that—they have an issue that they are willing to refer to the Labour Board as provided in the legislation when they have not been able to come to a mutual agreement, that is full provision of The Act.

We are prepared to implement pay equity within the legislation, we have been, we continue to be, and we will be. We have the budget set aside for last year and this year's Estimates, and can do just that—

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

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, would you be so kind as to call the Address for Papers, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch)?

### ADDRESS FOR PAPERS NO. 9

**Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles),

THAT an Address for Papers do issue praying for:

- (a) all documents, quotes or estimates submitted by GEC Plessey Telecommunications to the Manitoba Government in regard to an automated 911 service; and
- (b) feasibility review for the expansion of 911 service to rural areas as requested by the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System to the President of MTS.

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Address for Papers is acceptable to the Government.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### HOUSE BUSINESS

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, before moving to the examination of Estimates this afternoon, I understand that very shortly the Health Estimates may be completed. They would be followed outside the Chamber, by agreement among House Leaders, by the Estimates of the Department of Energy and Mines, outside the Chamber.

\* (1420)

Inside the Chamber I understand also we may be nearing completion of the examination of the Environment Estimates and following those Estimates, by agreement amongst the Parties, would be the Estimates of the Department of Northern Affairs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition, I have had discussions with House Leaders and I understand that there is agreement that the House would not sit this coming Friday in order to accommodate Honourable Members of the New Democratic Party so that they can attend a convention. I understand they are choosing a new Leader or something. Of course we are still waiting to see if the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) will throw his hat in the ring at the final stages. If the Honourable Member should decide to do so, we would wish him every good wish.

In addition, it has been discussed and agreed amongst House Leaders that Thursday we would be observing Friday hours and dealing with Bills that day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would now move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Mr. Deputy Speaker, do now leave the Chair—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader has announced changes in the sequence of the Estimates. Is it unanimous? Is it agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

\* (1430)

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Mr. Deputy 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 Gimli (Mr. Helwer) in the Chair for the Department of Health, and the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) in the Chair for the Department of Energy and Mines; and the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) in the Chair for the Department of Environment.

### CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—HEALTH

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

The last item that we will consider for the Estimates of the Department of Health is item 1. Administration and Finance, (a) Minister's Salary \$20,600—the Member for Kildonan.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** Mr. Acting Chairperson, before I end up with my closing remarks for the whole process, and what we have all achieved here, I want to ask the Minister a few questions, if he



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does not mind. It just does not fall into this category, but I think it is a responsibility overall.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Yes.

**Mr. Cheema:** My first question is—unfortunately today the time in Question Period was so much utilized due to the absence of the Speaker, so I was not able to ask my questions. As my honourable friend for Thompson raised the question of pay equity, I have a question to the Minister of Health.

This morning the Minister reportedly met with the representation from health care workers with respect to pay equity. Did the Minister and the workers finally come to a conclusion in that it is only the Government and not the employers or employees who have prevented the implementation of pay equity?

My very specific question is to the Minister.

**Mr. Orchard:** No.

**Mr. Cheema:** I was about to ask this question but was unable to due to shortage of time. The Government indicated that the \$18 million has been put aside for the implementation, and the final agreement between employers and employees was \$7.9 million. Why has the program, therefore, not been implemented when the Government allocated \$18 million?

**Mr. Orchard:** Well, first of all we have not allocated \$18 million. What is set aside from last year's Estimates—and I cannot give you the specific number because I do not have my staff here—what was set aside was a sum which would be required to comply with the legislation in terms of pay equity for the last fiscal year. That has been set aside. This year a similar amount has been budgeted in this year's Estimates.

We have not budgeted the estimated total amount of \$18 million simply because that is designed to be a cost over a four-year implementation period. We are only budgeting the annualized portion of that.

**Mr. Cheema:** I have a final question on that same issue. The whole question of this Government's commitment to the pay equity has been called into question. I raised a similar question yesterday. Why will this Government not proceed with the implementation of pay equity with health care workers?

The Minister said, in Question Period, in answer that they can go to the Labour Board for arbitration. On No. 24 the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) also said this matter is before the Labour Board and when they make a decision then we will abide by it.

Can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) indicate clearly to the health care professionals that this Government is serious about this very important issue?

**Mr. Orchard:** I have already said that time and time again. We have the money set aside. We are prepared to comply with the legislation. That is not a new commitment. That is a long-standing commitment. That is one of the first issues that was questioned in the first Question Periods that we were Government.

Negotiations have been ongoing to achieve an arrangement with the hospitals, the 23 facilities, and the affected unions to comply with the pay equity legislation. We are fully prepared to do that, and indeed when agreement is reached we have funding set aside currently and retroactively to undertake that. Secondly, we are fully prepared to budget future requirements in the Manitoba Health Services Commission Estimates.

**Mr. Cheema:** I do not have further questions on this issue. If the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) does not have any questions on the same issue then I can proceed with my closing remarks.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** While I did get the opportunity in Question Period to raise two questions, I think it was very unfortunate that today we had probably the smallest number of questions we have had since we have been in Session, and there are important issues such as the pay equity issues that are being dealt with.

I just wanted to indicate, further to what was discussed in Question Period and has just been discussed by the Member for Kildonan, my extreme disappointment in the fact that despite the last ditch attempt of health care workers, today, to persuade the Minister to listen, to come to a negotiated settlement, that we end up with this going to the Labour Board tomorrow.

I am not saying that is not part of the Act. It is part of the Act. It is only there when, to my mind, negotiation is broken down. In this case it has broken down, not because of the nurses and the other health care unions—10 unions agreed to this—it is not broken down because of the position of the hospitals, 23 hospitals have agreed to the formula that was agreed upon—the package—it is the Minister of Health that has said he does not agree with that.

So what the 10 unions and the thousands of employees they represent have agreed to, what the hospitals and their hospital boards that they represent have agreed to, is simply not good enough for the Minister of Health. I think it is very unfortunate. I think this is a bad omen for the future progress of pay equity in this province, which up until now has succeeded because of the co-operative approach that is part of the very essence of The Pay Equity Act—and I realize this was discussed yesterday, it is going to be discussed again in the future—I just want to say in terms of the New Democratic Party having introduced pay equity, and being very proud of that, I would say one of the achievements of the previous Government that I would be most proud of would be pay equity.

We are a leader in this country. We are not going to allow this Government or any particular Minister to put that progress back. We want to see it through in terms of not just the Civil Service, where it is fully underway in terms of implementation, not just in terms of outside funded agencies, but also in the private sector as well, and we will be pushing the Government on that.

I am very concerned about the development today. I know the health care people—I talked to a number

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of them after the meeting, they were very frustrated. They felt the Minister only met with them to be able to say that he met with them, that there was really no discussion or dialogue, no flexibility on the part of the Minister, no real attempt to live up to the spirit of The Pay Equity Act or the spirit of the three years of negotiations that it took.

So with those comments I would just say we are very frustrated, and we are going to be continuing to raise this throughout the remainder of this Session. I will say we will continue to fight for pay equity no matter what the Minister of Health and this Government does.

**Mr. Orchard:** I simply want to correct my honourable friend, because as is often the case with the New Democrats they do not exactly have their facts straight.

\* (1440)

My honourable friend, the NDP Health Critic (Mr. Ashton), says the hospitals are in agreement with the unions in terms of the proposal. That is not factual. The hospitals' position before the Labour Board—and the hospitals are the employers, in case my honourable friend did not know. My honourable friend said the employers, the hospitals, were in favour of the unions' proposal, that the unions and the hospitals were in complete agreement and it was only the Minister and the Government who were stopping this. That is false.

If my honourable friend does not know it is false then maybe he ought to get his facts straight. If he knows it is false then he is trying to mislead the people of Manitoba. Now it is one of the two. It is either ignorant or malicious, one of the two on my honourable friend's part, because the hospitals are before the board with a presentation because they believe the current presentation, as agreed to by the unions, exceeds the legislative mandate of 7(3) in the legislation my honourable friend is so proud of.

My honourable friend says it is just Government that is stopping that. Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, I have always said—and we passed legislation which put pay equity guidelines in legislation saying 1 percent of payroll.

My honourable friend from the New Democrats said, pay what the unions want, it exceeds the legislation. If my honourable friend wanted it to exceed the legislation why did he not pass open-ended legislation? -(interjection)-

Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says that is my opinion. That is not my opinion, that is the professionals at both the hospital administration who are responsible for budget and negotiations, and have done an awful lot more budgeting and negotiating than my honourable friend for Thompson. That is the calculation made by my people in the Manitoba Health Services Commission representing not just the unions but all of Manitobans in this issue.

My honourable friend said, pay them what they want. Well, that would mean my honourable friend would want to have inequity in the implementation of pay equity,

because every other organization who has complied with the pay equity legislation has done so within the guidelines of 1 percent of payroll per year for four years.

My honourable friend, the New Democratic Critic for Health, said that does not matter, the unions have an agreement therefore pay them, even if it does exceed the legislation. The unions, this morning, said their proposal does not exceed the legislation. The administration of the hospitals, who are going to find that sum of money within their budgets, say it does. Calculations made by the Manitoba Health Services Commission indicate it exceeds the 1 percent guideline. So what my honourable friend is suggesting is that we break the legislation that he is so proud of and inequitably implement pay equity. I cannot say that is a logical way to proceed.

We are willing to comply with the legislation, but let my honourable friend not, either through ignorance or deliberation, put improper information on the record. The hospitals and their administration are before the Labour Board indicating that the current proposal by the union consortium exceeds the guidelines of the pay equity legislation, Section 7(3) in particular. So let my honourable friend not try to mislead the people of Manitoba in his information.

Secondly, I just want my honourable friend to know that the non-unionized employees' presentation to the Labour Board concurs with the \$18 million approximation as an implementable target for pay equity which will comply with the legislation. That is the same position as taken by the management of those hospitals. It is not as if all workers are of a common vein of thought. I know my honourable friend might want to know those two important pieces of information so he does not continue to attempt, deliberately or ignorantly, to mislead people with his statements.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, this is just classic with the Minister of Health. Throughout the more than 47 hours we have been in this committee the Minister's caustic tongue, the Minister's selective use of words, have been developed to a fine art, and quite frankly it does not wash any more from this Minister.

His great debating technique is, he likes to say, well the Member is saying this, the Member is saying this. I am just looking at what the Minister himself has said, for example, to the workers this morning. They were not impressed whatsoever by the complete lack of—

**An Honourable Member:** Were you there?

**Mr. Ashton:** I have talked to people who were there. If the Minister wants to invite me to meetings on pay equity, I will be glad to—oh, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am speaking on behalf of the many people in this province, particularly women, who have a stake in pay equity. I am speaking on their behalf and the Minister should know that, and that is a vast majority of Manitobans.

Unlike the Conservative Party which talks through both sides of its mouth on this, on the one hand they -(interjection)- oh, the Minister says for the record that

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they supported The Pay Equity Act. Well, if someone would care to check the record and what they have said about pay equity, perhaps the Minister would like to quote back what the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) said in terms of the pay equity police, as if there was going to be, somehow, some sort of Gestapo that would enforce pay equity in this province. Those were the words of the Member for Brandon West—(interjection)—

The only puppet in this particular community right now is the Minister of Health who seems to be manipulated by those who would like to see pay equity sabotaged, I am sure of that, see it slowed down, see roadblocks thrown in its way. The Minister should be aware of that because I do not believe for one minute that this Minister has an honest and sincere commitment to pay equity. I know deep down in that extreme right-wing soul of his—which he manages to hide now that he is in a minority Government situation—I know he does not support pay equity. I do not even believe the Minister understands pay equity.

He likes to quote from the Act, I will quote from the Act too. We will talk about negotiating in good faith, which is one of the fundamental principles of that Act, we will talk about that. We will talk about the basic principles of pay equity.

Let the Minister not play his little verbal games, as he does, and not ignore the significance of what is happening tomorrow.

We have a pay equity —(interjection)— if the Minister wants to put any comments on the record we can continue this. This is the first time I have seen a Minister intent on filibustering his own Estimates.

I will say this is a very serious development. Tomorrow the issue goes to the Labour Board. Tomorrow we are seeing the co-operative approach that has been the fundamental principle behind pay equity being dismantled. That is what is happening tomorrow, and it is a very bad omen for future developments.

The Minister, in his arrogance, tries to suggest that, oh, well, those who talk about pay equity are puppets. That is a joke. If I am a puppet of anyone, it is the people of Manitoba who want to see pay equity implemented.

The Minister knows that a vast majority of Manitobans, perhaps not people of his own political persuasion, his right-wing ideology, perhaps they do not agree with pay equity. The vast majority of Manitobans do and they are going to be very concerned. I think they are going to see as of tomorrow the concerns that they had, the suspicions they had, about this Government particularly this Minister are going to be brought out in the sense that this Minister has adopted the confrontational approach on the pay equity question.

I believe that just as the comments he made in the committee show that his talk as the Minister of trying to get any co-operative relationship with people in the health care system, with the employees in the health care system, Mr. Acting Chairperson, are fraudulent. They are absolutely fraudulent.

One and a half years that this Minister has been in power and we are now beginning to see the Minister has no interest in a co-operative relationship with the health care workers, the 10 unions that represent thousands of health care workers throughout the province. That is the unfortunate fact. This is not just going to stop with pay equity.

The Minister can get into his personal diatribes. I do not think that is important. I do not think anybody cares. He has spent enough time in committee attempting to get into those little debating techniques that repeat one statement again and again and do nothing to add any facts to the record.

\* (1450)

What is sad, and I do not think he realizes this—and he has asked who did I talk to, whether I was at the meeting? I talked to people at the meeting this morning, and I have met with them. I tell you they are really frustrated with this Minister. It is not me saying this, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I will talk to them, and I talk to the hospital administrators as well. I will talk to everyone in the health care field, unlike the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) who has selective hearing, who will only hear what he wants to hear, who has proven in the one and a half years that he has been in office that he has no concern for getting any real input from the employees and their representatives.

He would not even appoint representatives of the nursing association to the Health Advisory Network. Well, perhaps we should have seen that as an omen. It is interesting. It is classic with the Minister. I asked him that in the Question Period. He said, oh, well, but we appointed someone to the Health Promotion Trust Fund —(interjection)— that is right, yes, you appointed a representative from MONA, only after being hammered for a year continuously for ignoring the nurses union did you ever turn around and do that. You still have not put anybody on the Health Advisory Network, you still have not put anyone.

It is not a question of anything other than the fact that this Minister has a right wing bias against anything that is called a union. Yes, that is right he likes to manipulate, Mr. Acting Chairperson. Deep down, we have seen it, and it is confirmed in these Estimates. Whenever the Minister manages to get off his script, and does not have his departmental officials around to keep him to the straight and narrow to the facts, we start seeing it is the same Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) that we have all over the years, the eight years that I have been in the Legislature—I wish I could say positive words. This is the same Member we have come to know, and we know where he stands on issues, and we know his position, and in this case we are seeing it.

The Minister I believe is essentially baiting the unions in this particular case, baiting the employees, and sabotaging pay equity in the province. Having a former Minister responsible for that here, I hope the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) will be talking to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because I believe that things were on track.

I am disappointed actually in the current Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond). If I was the Member for Portage I would be demanding to know what the current Minister of Labour is doing about this. Perhaps I am wrong, but I would like to think that the current Member for Portage would have at least said something to the Minister of Health that this was unacceptable.

Unfortunately there is nobody speaking up for pay equity. In Friday's Question Period the Minister of Labour was asked to provide legal opinions. She would not even answer it. She said it is before The Labour Board, period.

Why did the Minister of Health not provide the opinions that were requested by the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), and the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer)? That is perhaps something that she can best ask. I believe it is because if you look at the situation, you look at fairness, fairness would have resulted in a negotiated settlement and not the opposite approach of this Government and this Minister, which has ended up sending it to the Labour Board, which is a very unfortunate step for pay equity.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend likes to put information on the record, but my honourable friend has the common decency, as an Honourable Member of this House, at least to deliver something of a truthful message.

My honourable friend from Thompson says, well, we should have negotiated a settlement. That is exactly what we attempted to do, but what my honourable friend from Thompson is saying is that we should negotiate a settlement, which exceeds the legislation that we passed and supports. Now from his seat he says, that is not true. You see my honourable friend does not understand what he is saying and what he is supporting because—and I said it with tongue-in-cheek, as a jest in part, as a little jibe at my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), when I called him puppet man. Maybe I was not far off, because it appears as if the Member for Thompson does not understand the issue.

Here is the issue. Pay equity was passed unanimously in the Legislature four years ago, I guess. It provided a number of steps for employers and employees to achieve in given institutions of Government, inclusive of 23-funded health care facilities, 22 in the hospital system, one is St. Amant Centre, in Family Services funding.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the legislation provided the ability to negotiate a settlement within 1 percent of payroll per year, in the legislation, maximum 1 percent of payroll. It was not 1.2 or 1.4, it was 1 percent of payroll, and my honourable friend the Member for Thompson says that is right.

Every organization who has implemented pay equity has done so within the legislation. A proposal, based on 96 cents per hour on average, that came before this Government at a meeting in November of last year exceeded the legislation; 1.2 percent was what was required. My honourable friend is sitting there shaking his head. Does he not realize that is the case? - (interjection)-

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order.

**Mr. Orchard:** My honourable friend says—he will not say whether that is right or wrong, because I do not know again whether he is ignorant of the facts or whether he wants to hold them. At any rate my honourable friend ought to be aware that 96 cents an hour over a four-year period exceeded the legislation.

Mr. Acting Chairman, we still have 96 cents an hour before the institutions, but now because of a change in implementation formula 96 cents an hour is deemed not to exceed the 1 percent guideline advice that we have been given, not simply by the department and the commission, but by the institutions that say that will exceed the legislative guidelines, 7(3).

Clearly my honourable friend the Member for Thompson has to be willing to do one of two things. He must still be willing to break the legislation that he passed because he is recommending a settlement, which apparently, by any calculation I have seen, may well exceed the legislation. I say, may well, because I am willing to have independent people, as is provided in the legislation, at the Labour Board make that decision.

My honourable friend for Thompson who has said to us on a number of occasions, well, you did not fund this, you did not fund that, we need more here, we need more there, wants us to spend \$24 million over a four-year period where \$18 million is what would comply with the legislation. That extra \$6 million I guess grows on the NDP tax tree -(interjection)- like the NDP tax tree.

My honourable friend says, it does not matter if it exceeds the legislation, spend the money. That is the kind of attitude that caused enormous problems in the Province of Manitoba. I want my honourable friend the Member for Thompson to reflect upon his tenure of eight years in the Legislature.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order. The Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) please refrain.

**Mr. Orchard:** When my honourable friend the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) entered the Legislature, it was in 1981, in a Government headed by Howard Pawley as Premier. At that point in time, after 111 years of Government of Manitoba by parties of all political stripes, the general purpose debt of the Province of Manitoba was \$1 billion. Now my honourable friend admits that is the case.

\* (1500)

After seven years of Howard Pawley and the NDP, which my honourable friend from Thompson was a backbencher the whole time, the general purpose debt in the Province of Manitoba increased from \$1 billion, after 111 years of Government, to \$5.2 billion in seven years of Government by Howard Pawley and the NDP. Subsequently, the interest payments annualized grew by \$450 million a year, from \$90 million in 1981 to \$550 million in 1988, and my honourable friend, the member for Thompson says, "Spend the money."

That is what they did and that is why we do not have money to spend because the first call on the tax dollar of the Province of Manitoba is to pay the interest which is statutory debt. That is why it is called statutory debt. That means you pay it first. That means you pay it before you pay one salary in the health care field. You pay that before you do one surgical procedure in the health care field. The first money is statutory debt and, under Howard Pawley and the NDP with the member for Thompson as a backbencher, we pay \$450 million additionally each and every year until we eliminate that debt given to us by Howard Pawley and the NDP with the Member for Thompson as a backbencher.

Now, I understand my honourable friend says, "Spend, spend, spend." Why would they change? But they have not learned the lesson because that is why they are reduced to 12 members in this Legislature. They had 18 percent of the vote and they are dropping like a stone because Canadians, Manitobans, and people across the world are rejecting the NDP-type philosophy that Government can nationalize everything and spend their way to prosperity. That is being rejected as a failed theory right across the world. Mr. Acting Chairman, does that matter to my honourable friends in the NDP of Canada? No.

Is there one single new thought in that bright light of leadership candidates that are converging like a plague on Winnipeg this weekend? Is there one person with an original thought other than spend, spend, spend, nationalize, more left-wing rhetoric.

My honourable friend talks about ultra right-wing policies. What about the ultra left-wing policies of the NDP that drove this province to the brink of bankruptcy, that regardless of whether my honourable friend, the member for Fort Rouge, sits in the Minister of Health's chair, the Minister of Finance's chair, or even the Premier's chair, my honourable friend from Fort Rouge, as a potential member of a Liberal Government, is going to have to face an interest charge annually of \$450 million more than it was in 1981, from 90 million to \$550 million a year because of Howard Pawley and the NDP and their kind of wasteful policies for the people of Manitoba.

First dollar before health care, before education, before roads, before any service in Government, first dollar to the finance years that my honourable friends flew around the world and were wined and dined and embraced by every financier in the world. They loved Howard Pawley and the NDP because, when they had him coming, they knew they could get out the buckets and pour the money at him and get it back every single year in interest, but they knew the people of Manitoba were going to have to pay whether they had to cut services, do anything but provide interest as first, first call on the taxpayers of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Acting Chairman, I fully appreciate the maturity of my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson's thought process here. It is the maturity of the NDP philosophy that is 20 years old, outdated, outmoded, out of favour with Manitobans. It will not work.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is amazing. We start to talk about pay equity and the next minute we

hear the Minister's personal political philosophy here. It would almost be amusing if it was not such a complete distortion of reality. It is interesting, Mr. Acting Chairperson, because the Minister accused the NDP of spend, spend, spend. What is his proposal for the Province of Manitoba? Cut, cut, cut?

Well, I would say if the Tories had a majority in this province right now, that is exactly what we would see. That is what they did when they were in government last time. Sterling Lyon. The Minister of Health is probably one of the few members of the current Conservative Caucus—maybe the Minister of Northern Affairs might be included—who would even own up to being part of the Conservative Government under Sterling Lyon. Let us remember, we had the same political philosophy, and I believe really that Sterling Lyon was the Minister of Health's mentor. He looked to him for his political philosophy, Mr. Acting Chairperson, and does the Minister—

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

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order, order. Let us try to keep some order here.

**Mr. Ashton:** Does the Minister of Northern Affairs remember what Sterling Lyon did—that Government he was a member of—and the member for Pembina did to the health care system, when they cut back the health care system with one of the most savage budgets in Manitoba history. Perhaps they do not remember those years of 1978, Mr. Acting Chairperson. That is what a Conservative Government does when it has the majority. When it does not get the opportunity that it does when it is in the minority Government situation, to run around the provinces—yes, they are not Tories. I am surprised they have not gone ahead with the Member for Brandon West's suggestion of trying to change the name of their provincial Party, because that is the whole philosophy, the whole approach here, over the last 18 months. They try and pretend they are not Tories. We have just seen here revealed on a question on pay equity that it just does not wash. A Tory is a Tory is a Tory, as is the Minister of Health. He is a Tory through and through.

We have seen today and throughout these Estimates, given the chance, Mr. Acting Chairperson, it would not be spend, spend, spend, it would be cut, cut, cut. He talks about money growing on trees. In the last budget he underspent by \$30 million, close to \$30 million, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**An Honourable Member:** He is a Tory's Tory.

**Mr. Ashton:** He is a Tory's Tory. I think that is a fair statement for the member for Fort Rouge. You know, the interesting thing is he talks about what happened in the province between 1981 to '88. Well, I know what would have happened if we had had a Conservative Government. They would not have been spending on the Jobs Fund. They would not have been spending on Hydro development. If the Minister wants to look where the expenditures, the capital investments were made, I would like to then turn around and say what would he have wanted to cut back?

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Mr. Acting Chairperson, he said general purpose debt. General purpose debt was part of the whole anti-recession policy of the Government, and by the way, if he just thinks this happened in Manitoba, every one of the 10 provincial Governments across the country—oh, and by the way, the Government of Brian Mulroney from 1984 on—would the Minister of Health like to put on the record what has happened in terms of the general purpose debt with the federal government? Would the Minister—perhaps the Minister would pay attention for a change, Mr. Acting Chairperson—would he like to put those figures on the record?

The sad part is the Minister likes to use the same sort of debating technique they used in Germany in the 1930s. He gets one statement—he keeps repeating it—(interjection)-I did not say anything unparliamentary. I could say something that was unparliamentary. It is the debating technique of the big—(interjection)-big repeat. Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), I would have expected better from the Member from Osborne, because one thing I find frustrating, and perhaps the Liberals might want to look at the record of this Member. If he wonders why I am concerned about what this Minister of Health would do, especially if they had a majority, just look at the speeches that have been made by the Member from 1981 to 1988. Look at the statements that were made at that time.—(interjection)-

The Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) says we have changed him a lot now. I would say to the Member for Kildonan that it is only because we are in a minority Government situation. I do not believe that there would be any control over this Minister of Health if the Conservatives had a majority and I would say thank God they do not, Mr. Acting Chairperson, thank God they do not. Let the people of Manitoba read the statements, he went from a debate on pay equity to a rambling dissertation on his philosophy of the world. I could get into that debate quite easily. I think that if the Member was to wake up and look at what is happening in western Europe, he would find that what people are rejecting in western Europe, is they are rejecting the kind of extremism that this Member espouses. Talk to people in Britain, where they are moving—to the Labour Party, or Spain where they have a socialist Government or in France where they have a socialist Government, I could run through that if he wants.

If he wants to look at what is happening in eastern Europe, what is happening there is people are embracing exactly the philosophy that we have espoused which is democratic social, they are rejecting the authoritarianism of the communist system. I can get into that debate but really why is the Minister, at this point in time, after we have spent 47 hours in Estimates wasting the time of the committee starting on a debate on pay equity? I was very specific in my comments. I did not talk about my philosophy of the world, I will do that if the Minister wants.

I mentioned the fact we are very concerned about the situation with pay equity in this province. I wish the Minister would deal with that, put some of his pet political philosophies aside, some of his ideology and

accept his responsibilities as Health Minister. This is the first time in the eight years that I have been here that I have seen a Minister filibuster his own Estimates.

Every chance this Minister gets he takes a two minute question and gives a 20-minute dissertation on his philosophy of the world. I do not know if this is the Conservative strategy. I will say that I know one of my recommendations to our caucus is that we might want to look at making up some of the lost time when we get to the concurrence debate as is part of the rules, because this Minister has filibustered his own Estimates. He has wasted the time of this committee.

I believe there are a number of other Members who have important points to raise. I know the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) and the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) have questions they wish to put on the record before we get to final closing statements. I really apologize to committee for taking the time and responding to what the Minister said. It is very frustrating because the Minister seems to know no bounds in his ability to get into rhetoric, as I say, especially when his staff is not around to keep him in line and keep him to the straight and narrow. We could have probably spent a lot more of the time of this 47 hours getting answers on needed health care questions and issues if the Minister put aside his political philosophy and started dealing with the reality of the health care system of Manitoba.

\* (1510)

**Mr. Orchard:** I have a great deal of sympathy for my honourable friend, the Member for Thompson. I also now have achieved a greater degree of understanding as to why he was always on the backbench in Howard Pawley's Government. He demonstrated that right now.

Whilst my honourable friend is leaving the room, any question that he cares to pose will be answered but he has not posed any. The Member for Thompson, as he leaves the room, leaves so without posing questions in health care and that will be the record that is demonstrated by anyone who reads Hansard and cares to examine the issues.

**Mr. Alcock:** I still have a few questions. I could not let this opportunity go by without asking the Minister about the Municipal Hospitals. I do want to comment though on the liberalizing effect his increased contact with the Member for Kildonan has had and I do compliment him on his announcement today.

I have watched the discussions that have gone on with considerable interest, the Minister knows of my interest in Municipal Hospitals. I understand the response that he has given that the committee has not yet reported, but I am concerned about the length of time it is taking. I wonder if the Minister could, for my benefit, just update me on the process of that examination.

**Mr. Orchard:** The task force on extended treatment beds was the first up and running task force. We give them a very, very short mandate to deal with the issue of capital construction proposals at three institutions:

Municipal, Concordia and Grace, plus to guide us in what—at the time the subcommittee was struck we knew that probably shortly after the report or shortly before the report, in that time frame, that we would have a number of beds available for service at Deer Lodge, not in the acute care field but available in the extended care “the general parameters of extended care treatment.”

There were two sets of advice sought, first of all some guidance after an examination of the system requirements on extended treatment beds as proposed in three construction projects, and secondly, guidance on the immediate use of the Deer Lodge beds which are available right now as my honourable friend knows.

There are other issues that we have before the extended treatment subcommittee that they will proceed to once they report, such as the complexities of the head injured because we simply do not have a program. They are not home care capable in all cases, facilities and hospitals cannot handle—I mean, my honourable friend probably has enough background on that to know that is a new and emerging complex requirement in terms of “extended treatment.”

What we asked for was a fast-track answer on the extended treatment in terms of Deer Lodge available beds in the three construction projects. The subcommittee has been very, very active. They have met 17 times to try to come to grips and they have used a substantial amount of internal resource of Government for statistics, et cetera, et cetera. They are very close to presenting Government with their report and I expect that report.

The best advice that I can give, that I have most recently received, is not this month but next month. We will have the report in December.

My honourable friend, the Member for Kildonan, has shown some frustration because I have said—I have probably given four different dates, but each time I have given those, that was the best estimate that the subcommittee could give us on having the report ready, no more, no less.

We expect that to be in Government's hands this month and following that we have made a commitment to make an announcement very, very shortly on particularly the Deer Lodge, but more importantly the issues before of the construction. In the capital budget we did make specific provision that in Municipal, Concordia and Grace's circumstance we could move to construction should that be a recommendation made that was attainable out of the Health Advisory Network.

We do not intend to waste a whole lot of time studying the issue. I think the work that has been done, the depths of the investigation I think ought to provide us with reasoned advice on how to approach all those, and Municipals has been an issue that has been before Government for many, many years. I do not want them to be asking every single year in capital budget, what happened? I want to make a decision.

**Mr. Alcock:** The Minister could help me then. The capital monies that are required to begin the

construction of the Municipals would be available, should the committee so recommend?

**Mr. Orchard:** You see, that is the difference in terms of the capital budget that we pass. We never vote on the capital budget because it is not part of Government's borrowing. We simply give the authority to the various institutions for them to arrange their financing wherever they find the most economic or appropriate place to be. Government's guarantee, including it in the capital reconstruction, is that we will pay the increased operating costs through the Manitoba Health Services Commission Annualized Budget in either Personal Care Homes or the Hospital line. That recovers over generally a 20-year period the interest principle of borrowed funds to undertake a capital redevelopment. What we have set aside is the authority to allow the institutions to commit construction and when completed fund the additional costs as taxpayers through the commission.

**Mr. Alcock:** The need to replace the Municipals has been identified for a very long time as the Minister has mentioned and the Minister himself is aware. He has been out to the site and seen the condition of the physical plant, the need to provide care for our increasingly elderly population. I just spent some time with an Economic Council of Canada Report that suggests that shortly after the turn of the century we could be up to 50 percent of our working age population could be over 65. The need for facilities such as the Municipal seems to be well established.

However, the Minister had some concerns, or the system had some concerns, that led to his putting the Municipal into this study, despite the fact that the new powerhouse had been built and the front-end of the hospital had been built. There was considerable destruction on the site, and I am wondering if he could outline the concerns that he had. What were the issues that caused him to move in this manner, as opposed to proceeding with meeting what had already been a well-established need?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Chairman, basically we are talking a couple of issues here, and I think my honourable friend understands that. There is the personal care home bed issue per se, and let me share with my honourable friend as I did earlier—and I will just do this briefly because I shared this with his colleague when we were into discussions earlier on. In Manitoba we have a fairly generous by national standards ratio of personal care home beds to population over age 75, so that we do not have as far to go, I guess it is fair to say, as some provinces on the personal care home side.

I am going by memory, but I believe the last two capital budgets when completed will add I believe the number is 285 new personal care home beds to the system. Some of those are coming on shortly as a result of last year's capital budget, and 185 are coming on as a result of this year's commitment, and that could be within a year and a half to two years depending on scheduling and construction.

I am telling my honourable friend that on the personal care home side it appears as if we are—and I say this

with full knowledge that there are going to be those that criticize that we never have enough. Basically according to guidelines that are established, and seem to be reasonable, we are approaching sufficient numbers of personal care home beds.

\* (1520)

There are those on the other side of the issue and there are some very knowledgeable people in geriatrics working both within and without Government circles that say we have probably got enough institutional beds if we go the route of support for seniors in home care.

I tell my honourable friend some of the encouraging things appear in the five-year trend line down of reduction in panelled patients. We have gone from over 600 a year to just over 1,200 if I can recall the figures, a slight increase this year, but I mean the trend line is definitely down.

In the last two years, one of them our Government, one of them the previous Government, the applications for assessment to entry to home care have been going down. Discharges have exceeded admissions to the home care program, which may indicate that we are getting a healthier population of seniors here. If that is the case, that is super.

On the personal care home side, we appear to be moving in the right direction but the Grace, Concordia, Municipals proposal was in that area of extended treatment beds, which are not the personal care home staffed, organized or run beds. As such they are staffed differently. They are somewhat more expensive, in terms of their staffing patterns, because some of them in extended care try rehabilitative treatment or chronic care for someone who is permanently disabled, but yet not senior by any means.

We are faced with a commitment by the province to reconstruct close to 500 beds. At the same time we had 110 new beds coming out of Deer Lodge in the same framework, because the Deer Lodge Hospital is built upon an infrastructure that can provide excellent service. If you have toured the place I would venture to say that it is one of the finest geriatric facilities in Canada. Certainly they have got the ability for speech pathology, for physio-occupational therapy, it is a very, very complete facility.

Now the first and obvious question is: if Municipals, Concordia and Grace are committed by previous Governments, why did they not go ahead with them? They would have been very popular doing the reconstruction, et cetera. I started asking the basic questions: why have they not been committed to construction, because we walk in, and within three months we are to commit them to construction when the previous administration had been there over seven years and did not?

The answer came back that we are not certain as to what the system need is going to be, in terms of the extended treatment, and where extended treatment is taking us.

Head injured is a new phenomenon that may well require a very specialized portion of a facility or a facility.

I charged the answer of that question, to give us the best advice, over to the Health Advisory Network, because I simply tell my honourable friend, I do not want and I do not think any Minister of Health wants to commit construction to over capacity or to beds that are not needed within the system, because you know I think it is fair to say once you rebuild a facility you are going to operate it.

I mean, you are never going to close one of those facilities. So you make the decision right because your commitment to cost, and I am guesstimating, is probably going to be \$150 per bed per day, 1989 dollars, doing nothing but increasing on any extended treatment category bed you put in. That is the genesis behind it, nothing magical, just wanting to have the system analysis of needs made instead of need by individual facility.

Grace could make a very concrete case. Concordia can make an even better case, because their hospital is the smallest community hospital. They have been running for three-consecutive years at probably 99 percent-plus occupancy, so that everybody makes a good case. Municipals bases their case on long-standing commitment to the facility and service over many, many decades. All of them have a very valid consideration, and all of them do a very good job in terms of caring for the patients under their guidance and care.

I want to make a sound decision, because if I do not, flexibility to reform the health care system will be removed from future Ministers of Health and future Governments if we make improper capital commitments to facilities in our short tenures in Government. That is a long answer, and I apologize for the length of the answer, but I know my honourable friend wants to appreciate the background.

**Mr. Alcock:** Well, I do appreciate the answer, long though it was. I found it interesting, and I am sure the Minister is concerned.

I worked in the residential care field often enough to know that if you build an edifice it does tend to fill to the rim. At the same time, I am concerned. We have a facility on the site that is half built. The previous Government did commit funds to that site. There is a new powerhouse. There is a day hospital that is constructed as the front portion of the new building. I mean it is all—we are halfway there.

Also in terms of the identification of the need, we do have an extremely inadequate physical facility that I think is causing undue hardship for the people who currently live within it, and placing intolerable amounts of stress on the patients and the staff there. While I appreciate the need for study, I also wonder given that all of the demographic studies that I read, and it is something I do spend a fair bit of time in, suggest that the fastest aging portion of our population, the fastest growing, are people 85 and over. The facility has developed a considerable expertise in providing supportive care to outpatients through the day hospital and considerable expertise in maintaining frail elderly patients.

I am wondering, when we look at the Concordia, that yes, there is certainly a demand given space limitations,



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but it is a new facility or a relatively new facility. Certainly compared to the King Edward and the King George, which are pre-First War, the Grace and Concordia are youthful, and I am concerned that the decision be made on some relatively clear criteria having to do with the needs of the population who use those facilities.

**Mr. Orchard:** I would just tell my honourable friend that those criteria were there to make that decision based on a system need, recognizing a number of the factors my honourable friend has just mentioned, as well as some of the background that I have shared with him this afternoon.

I have had some discussion at the kickoff of the task force and the methodology that was put together. Proof will be in the pudding, I guess. I was impressed with the methodology for analysis put together by the chairman and how he was moving with the analysis of the issues put before him. As I say, the proof will be in the pudding.

One cannot presuppose what is going to be recommended, but I think the recommendation will certainly be one based on probably the most thorough and complete analysis of the issues from a system standpoint that has ever been done. It certainly will not run the accusation of narrowly focusing on Municipals as an individual facility, Deer Lodge as an individual, Concordia and Grace, as tended to be the reaction in the past. This I believe will genuinely be a health care system analysis.

**Mr. Alcock:** Just with a final question, the rhetoric that goes on in the House at times gets a little wild and there are concerns raised about the criteria used to assess projects, particularly capital projects, and the reasoning behind certain capital projects, but I believe that Ministers attempt to make decisions in the best interests of their departments and the people who are served by their departments. I think that ultimately when the dust settles that people who are in the positions of having to make these decisions do make an objective a decision as possible, and I appreciate that the Minister is saying that relative to this decision.

I am wondering if the Minister would be prepared to, once these decisions are made, table the criteria for all of the capital decisions that have been made in these last two budgets, to remove any suggestion that there is some undue influence in the allocation of capital resources.

**Mr. Orchard:** I do not know whether there is a set of criteria that we can table on individual projects. Some of the decisions are based on a simple ability to proceed, i.e., the architectural drawings are completed and incorporate the necessary improvements. For instance, the question that came up in the capital budget this year: why Grace and not Health Sciences Centre? Surely the Health Sciences Centre, the premier teaching hospital in western Canada, ought to have gone ahead before Grace, and that is a logical argument. The difficulty with the argument was that the plans at Health Sciences Centre were simply not available for commitment to construction, whereas Grace was and

had been developed over, I do not know, maybe a three- to four-year period of time.

\* (1530)

There is no magic involved in making the decision. You attempt to meet system needs in as balanced a fashion as you can throughout the province and you attempt to meet the acute care, the reform of the system needs. Hence, the commitment to the ambulatory care project at the Health Sciences Centre, growing epidemiological needs as we did with the cancer treatment commitment at St. Boniface because unfortunately cancer is growing in Manitoba at roughly 3 percent to 3.5 percent a year incidence.

In terms of some of the rural facilities, they are based on personal care homes falling within the ratio of beds per population over age 75 in the region, the same thing in Winnipeg. It is a combination of criteria, identified need, such things as workplace, health and safety, fire inspector reports, et cetera, et cetera, and ability to complete construction, i.e., plans being ready. Then of course the bottom line, which limits commitment to construction, is the amount of money you want to commit in any given year that clearly eliminates because there are projects that are sitting there, drawings completed, ready to go, but we could not accede to them. Other needs in the system took precedence and that has been happening for years.

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** I apologize to the Minister for not having asked these questions when his staff was present, but I had other commitments at that moment and I do not intend to take a great deal of time. I just want to see if I cannot work with the Minister to establish whether or not there may not be an opportunity for substantial savings for the Government in the whole issue of drugs and drug prices.

I do not know if the Minister has a number that he can just take out of the air or of his fertile brain. The number I am looking for is the total amount of monies spent by the Government in each year on pharmaceuticals, either through the Pharmacare Program, through social assistance, and through hospitals and personal care homes. Then to use that figure as a base to try to see if those costs could not be whittled away a little bit through an analysis of the formulary, and how the formulary establishes which drugs can be substituted for brand name drugs. The possibility of quite dramatic savings, not only to the province but by the consumers of pharmaceuticals, if the formulary in Manitoba was not quite as narrow and as limited particularly in comparison to other formularies that exist in provinces such as Ontario.

The federal Government, the drug standards branch, I believe it is called, has to approve the use of any drug that is used in Manitoba regardless of brand name or generic. The use of that drug or the ability for any physician to prescribe it is done at the federal level, but whether or not a drug can be substituted by a physician for a brand name is something which is determined by the formulary and as a result, I just have an instinct here, that there may be a potential for a fair bit of saving, both for the Government and for

consumers of pharmaceuticals. I am wondering if the Minister could shed some light on the potential of that idea.

**Mr. Orchard:** I genuinely cannot, and not that I am not intrigued by it. I am going to have a chat with my honourable friend because my understanding is that our formulary is one of the better ones in Canada. I certainly know that it is often discussed by the brand name pharmaceutical companies in less than positive terms, shall we put it, and that to me is one indicator that it is a pretty effective formulary for replacing, and the cost containment.

The second issue—and my honourable friend makes the comparison to the Province of Ontario. I have never heard that our formulary is not at least equivalent if not maybe better than what Ontario uses. I say that without knowledge, but certainly I have never had any indication that we are behind the Ontario formulary. I will make that inquiry because I am interested in achieving that kind of knowledge because the question my honourable friend posed is a very important one: what does the system cost of pharmaceuticals?

By the time you add in the Estimates we are going to pass this afternoon, presumably, we have the \$50 million budgeted on Pharmacare, we have a Life Support Program, we have the Lifesaving Drug Program, we have all of the personal care home pharmaceuticals, and then in other departments we have social assistance so that my colleague, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), also has a pharmaceutical budget.

I attempted to get that number in debating one of the resolutions, particularly as to its impact on the seniors population, and it may well be the total figure could exceed certainly \$100 million dollars. It was a difficult one to pull together because you have to pull a portion of each. We had to do computer runs on different facilities and different institutions, so that it was not an easily achievable one and there were other priorities, but it is a big number.

I am curious. My honourable friend is approaching this issue with what I would strike as some discussions he has had with professionals. If that is the case, I would like to pursue those discussions with those same professionals to see whether, because unless I know the questions, I do not know whether the answers are the proper ones. So I am not at all adverse to pursuing the issue that my honourable friend is putting before the committee this afternoon.

**Mr. Ashton:** I have not necessarily further questions. I think we are going to need final comments. I know we did not get the chance to always talk to the Minister but our intention was to go no longer than about 10 minutes each to allow it, because I do believe we would want to give Energy and Mines a bit of a chance to start.

In terms of final comments, I would point to the fact that in this committee we have spent close to 49 hours discussing the Department of Health, and I think that is for good reason. This is a very important department

of Government. It is important in terms of the level of expenditure, it is more than \$1.5 billion. It is an important department I think in another reason too, because it is one of those departments where you do get perhaps the clearest indications of health care policy in the distinction between the various Parties.

I think we are beginning to see a pattern in terms of the current Government. I said at the beginning of Estimates, and I will say it again. Where the Government does something that is positive, we will indicate that, we will pass that on in terms of urging the Government to continue in that area.

I am not saying that positive things have not been done; they have been done. I noticed today for example there was an announcement in terms of AIDS programming, which is consistent I know with what we discussed in this committee only a few weeks ago in terms of greater outreach. Whether there is enough funding to meet the need is a question that remains to be answered, but it is certainly a relatively positive development.

There have been other positive announcements by the Minister. I think it has been because of perhaps the minority Government situation to a very large extent, I believe though that that should be indicated. As critic for the New Democratic Party, I do have some major concerns and during this particular Health care Estimates procedure, I have outlined those concerns.

I want to indicate that in some cases, I do hold the Minister and the Government to account for their actions. I believe some of the problems have been created by the Minister. In other cases we are dealing with long-standing problems that we are facing across the country, and it is an area that we are looking very closely to see what action is taken.

\* (1540)

For example, in terms of one of the first issues that we dealt with, the shortage of physicians. It is a national problem. I think though we have to recognize this as an increasing problem in Manitoba. It is becoming a major problem in rural and northern communities where the doctor-patient ratio is grossly out of line in comparison with the City of Winnipeg, where it is far more the level that is required. That is an issue that we have raised; we will be continuing to raise it.

We have raised concern about other areas, Mr. Acting Chairperson, concern about what has been happening in terms of major health decisions because of the delay in the implementation of the Health Advisory Network. It was in this committee that we learned that last year only \$58 out of \$500,000 of the amount budgeted for the Health Advisory Network was expended.

We are seeing major decisions in the health care system depending on the functioning of that company. We are seeing major decisions in the Capital Program, a number of hospitals, Concordia and Municipal in particular, that are pending results of this particular Health Advisory Network. We are critical of the Government for the delays that took place in its implementation.

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We are looking for action and action soon because we cannot continue with a situation where you have empty beds at one hospital in the City of Winnipeg and people lined up in the hallways in another. You cannot continue with a situation where emergency facilities are being shut down because of this problem in terms of overflow of patients. The Minister I believe has to move very quickly in making some very important decisions in that area.

We have been very critical of the delays in the implementation of the Health Promotion Trust Fund. This fund is a fund that was very similar to one that was announced by the previous NDP Government. While I think anyone would be reasonable enough to give the Minister some time to implement the trust fund, I think what has been most disturbing is that the Minister seems to have spent more time reannouncing the same fund rather than working on its implementation. We need reform in the health care system. We need the kind of expenditures that can be brought through this fund, and I think that is an area that we are expecting to see action from in this Minister.

It has been a similar theme in other areas. We raised in the area of AFM the fact that the Youth, Alcohol and Drug Program has not been implemented. In fact criteria have not been set even though it was announced in July of 1988 as part of the throne speech. It is another important area where the Minister I believe and this Government has to provide action and provide it soon.

We have questioned the Government's priorities in a number of areas, a number of very important areas in terms of for example its relationship with employees in the health care field. I mentioned it just yesterday in terms of the Government's change to allow for contracting out and the Government's change to eliminate the previous no-layoff policy and allow for layoffs in a number of circumstances. We think that is not a positive development. We just debated again today the developments in terms of pay equity, and we are very concerned about the fact that this has not been resolved in the health care field and is going to the Labour Board.

We have raised concerns I know about a number of other issues. Whether it be in terms of continuing care, be it in terms of health care promotion, there are a number of important areas that we are concerned of in terms of what has been happening to the system in Manitoba. We will be continuing to raise that throughout Estimates.

We spent a considerable amount of time in a number of areas this year, and I think it is indicative of the importance of those areas, Mental Health being a good example. I want to indicate that the move to a more community based program is fully supported by the New Democratic Party. In fact many initiatives were taken in terms of New Democratic Party administration and there are a number of positive initiatives that have been taken by the current Minister. We will not only support the positive initiatives, but where initiatives have been made we will be looking for the follow-up to make sure the appropriate resources are put in place, to make sure that there is a follow-through.

We spent a fair amount of time in terms of Community Health Services. That is an important area. We want

to make sure that rural and northern Manitobans particularly are getting a full range of medical services and we will be continuing to raise those issues.

We also spent a significant amount of time this year on the Manitoba Health Services Commission. I am sure we could have spent even more time, if we had that time available as a committee. There are a number of important issues, a number of which I mentioned just briefly being with in terms of capital decisions.

We were disappointed that the Capital Program did not include action on a number of major facilities. I mentioned a number of them, which are listed as being part of the capital budget that is waiting for the decision of the Health Advisory Network and the Minister.

We also raised a number of concerns in terms of the operations of our hospitals and we will be continuing to raise those concerns as well.

The bottom line I think, Mr. Acting Chairperson, is that we are concerned about the delays that have taken place in the health care system in dealing with major issues. We are concerned about a number of the specific decisions of the Minister. We do believe that there has been some positive developments in health care because I believe we have a minority Government, where the Conservative Government cannot implement what I believe would be its type of agenda if it had a majority and was able to move without any role whatsoever in terms of the Opposition Parties.

We will be continuing to point to that because we believe there is a fundamental difference in philosophy between the Parties and particularly between our caucus and the Conservative Caucus on health care issues. We believe that if there is one thing that has been demonstrated by the last year and a half, it is that this Government really does not have a long-term vision in terms of the health care system. We have seen decisions that have been delayed, we have seen a so-called action plan for the 1990 nowhere near in sight, we have seen the Government spend much of the year and a half trying to decide what its long-term priorities—and I am not saying initiatives have not been made. That is something we have acknowledged where initiative has been made.

I mentioned the AIDS announcement today. I told the press and I will tell this committee exactly what I said and I said, well, we will see if it meets the needs, but it is certainly a move in the right direction. This incidentally is what we have been calling for, I know from the Opposition in committee, for well over a year in terms of increased initiatives.

The bottom line though is I do not believe that the Government has a real vision because I believe that it is in a transition period. I believe we are in a situation where the Minister of Health is in a minority situation. He is making decisions where decisions are made for political reasons rather than because of the actual real reason of the Conservative political philosophy. Unfortunately that philosophy does creep in all too often.

I think some very real questions have to be raised about the direction of this Minister and this Government in terms of health care issues. I want to say, throughout

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the upcoming year we will be raising those issues in the Question Period and once again of course in Estimates. We spent nearly 50 hours in this committee for a reason. This is an important department, and we will be asking very many questions in the upcoming year.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do not want to go into some of the negative things. When we had the opening statement, my remarks were in terms of how the perception is of the universal medicare system and whether it is readily accessible to all Manitobans, it does not matter where they live.

I think during our 48 or 49 hours of discussion we have discussed almost every area and we have put, not only in the Opposition just be on the negative side and bring the questions, I have put a number of suggestions on the record, very positive ones. All of them are very much financially responsible, and anyone looking not at a political point of view but from a realistic point of view will really appreciate that.

I know the risk involved when the Opposition is supporting the Government in certain areas, but I think my moral responsibility is to the taxpayers of Manitoba, and I think that for the last 19 months a number of improvements have been made.

There are a number of areas that I want to address. One of them, which was of major concern to us, has been shown consistently. It is a major concern to the Government also. That was the concern about the Mental Health Services in Manitoba. I think this administration is leading in Canada right now in the performance of the mental health care system, and certainly I have no hesitation of giving the Minister a congratulatory note and encouraging him to continue to do that. We will continue to help him develop the policy even though we are in the Opposition, and we do not have the money to spend, but I think constructive arguments are always appreciated.

The second aspect we have always raised with the Minister is how to deal with the multicultural aspects of health, and the Minister is showing a positive response in that area. We have raised the issues about how to balance these services in the acute care situation versus the community based services. That is a long process. I have indicated to the Minister that whatever steps are being taken now, the fruit of those steps, we do not know which administration will have it, but that is a difficult task, and certainly I think we should continue to move in that direction.

There has been improvement in the delivery of even the primary health care services in rural Manitoba, but still a lot needs to be done. I am quite pleased with the co-operation of the various professional organizations and the co-operation from this ministry in terms of developing policies. I think that is a move again in the right direction.

I disagree with the Minister in one aspect. That is the policy of the College, along with the Minister has supported that policy, which still has the perception and still discriminates against a certain section of physicians, and I think that is not right.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, the issue of capital expenditure has been developed by this administration and does have a positive approach to deal with the present needs and needs for the future. We will wait for the report on the Manitoba Advisory Network Board on the extended care facilities. I am sure that the Minister will bring forward those recommendations as soon as possible so that at least the satisfaction is there. This is not an election time and waiting for the real issue and then pass the time, and when the tougher decision has to be made that could be made after the election. I will caution the Minister on that, and certainly I will keep a watchful eye on him.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, Health is the one area where we could bring issues almost every day. Each and every Manitoban is involved one way or the other. The role of the Opposition has to be very responsible in terms of not raising the hopes of people, which you cannot meet. I have tried this year to change the tone of the whole Estimates process that has to be a very careful evaluation of each and every issue, which is brought on the floor of the House and in the committee, so that realistic views and realistic spending can be made available to meet all those needs.

Because we have seen the rise of the health care costs by 178 per cent and 46 per cent, Manitobans are saying now that they want to be very careful how the tax dollars are spent. I think to deliver all the health care system, the economy of Manitoba has to be in the best shape, and I think that is the one the collective efforts have to be from the whole Cabinet, how the funds are handled and how the economy is for now and for the future, because the Minister of Health could be a most popular Minister and could be in trouble if the economy is not doing very well. I think that is the responsibility that has to be on the whole Cabinet and how they address the issue.

The other problem that we have right now in the public perception is that our health care is free, and I have repeated it, this is not free, people pay for it. It is the medicare paid by the people, for the people. It is not a socialized medicine, it is a modified socialized medicine, because taxpayers are paying from one side and the health care provider who works for either fee-for-service or they are private people and there is always bias for the profit making policies from those individuals.

I think that is a very difficult problem for any administration and most of the time, it does not matter which Government will come, they are always stuck in the middle, how to satisfy the needs of the tax dollars as well as how do you satisfy the very local groups who are fighting for their self-interest in certain circumstances. Certainly, I think that is a difficult task, and we will continue to support the Minister on any of the initiatives this administration will take.

Without taking further time, and because most of the deficiencies we have pointed in each and every section of the Estimates process, and I do not want to take the committee's time and go through that again, but one aspect of the whole process of which I am rather very skeptical is that attention which is paid to the Estimate process, where we really discuss the issues, where we spend the money and that is not going to the public to a great extent.

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I think attention should be paid probably—media sometimes ignore this aspect of the committee, which is extremely important. I think you cannot expect us to give everything in ten second clips because these are the major issues, which we are dealing for now and for the future of Manitoba and people who are paying. I think people are concerned when they go home, they want to know how much they are taking home and the economy and health and everything goes side by side.

I think it is a responsibility of all Members of this House to make sure that the health care is not taken as a political football and so that we do not end up in a situation where we are now, so that rather than keep on throwing money at each and everything make actual decisions, make a positive decision and let the public know that these are the pros and cons. I am very confident that the people of Manitoba would appreciate to preserve their modified socialized Medicare system. I have no hesitation in saying that the Minister is doing a reasonably good job. Here I wanted to express thanks to my caucus Members who have let me deal with one of the major portfolios in the Government, and certainly I think that will satisfy many Manitobans when they ask me why I am doing this. The second question they ask me is where are you really from and I think that will satisfy them.

I am from Manitoba and I want to contribute to this society. I find no other better way than the political process to continue what I am doing and make a positive contribution. Certainly I would like to thank the Acting Chairperson of the committee and all the staff of the health administration because without their excellent work no Minister, no administration would be able to achieve what has been happening. In the future we do not know which political Party will come but the issues always stay. How the issues are handled in a day to day situation, these are the most important things rather than go to score political points and with that note I will end my remarks. Thank you.

**Mr. Orchard:** I want to tell my honourable friend from Kildonan that I sincerely appreciate his closing remarks and the contribution that he has made. I say the same thing to my honourable friend the Member for Thompson even though we may from time to time decide to spit at each other, that is based on eight years of amorous involvement in the House—well, animosity in the House from time to time.

I want to tell my honourable friend the Member for Kildonan that he really hit the nail on the head when he indicated that the role of an Opposition Party has to be one of responsibility. I genuinely believe that to be a fact, particularly for the role in Opposition of Health Critic, because I did occupy that position and it is a position of substantial responsibility. You do a lot of work as Health Critic, you have to talk to a lot of people, you have to become familiar with a very wide range of issues. My honourable friend continues to have a leg up on me in many regards in that he is directly involved in the health care system as a practising physician. I cannot overemphasize what he said about the role of the Opposition is to be responsible and to bring issues to the House in a responsible fashion.

I say that for two reasons. First, my honourable friend might recall that from time to time I offered this advice

and it was cautionary advice that when I was the Health Critic in Opposition I attempted, and I will admit I was not always perfect in the attempt, but I attempted to bring to the House, to the floor of the Legislature, issues that I believed once in Government I had a reasonable chance to resolve. I did not, as I could have done and as my honourable friend could do today for instance, take television cameras with me and go to an emergency ward, which in hospitals from time to time have people in the hallways, to show as an indicator that the health care system is in decline. I could have done that as Health Critic and I elected not to do that because I knew that as Minister I would not, over a short run and even over a longer period of time, be able to prevent those circumstances from happening from time to time.

I shared with my honourable friends last night, when we discussed some of the panelled placements in Winnipeg hospitals, they are currently around the 370. Three and four years ago they were upwards of 450. That was the time when I was the Opposition Critic, and if one believed there were people in the emergency hallways now, when there were 80 more panelled patients in a Winnipeg hospital the situation was worse. I knew there was no easy solution to that. That is why I appreciate my honourable friend's indication that Opposition has to be responsible and that does not preclude bringing issues to the floor of the House. I mean that is the nature of the parliamentary system. You attempt to point out where Government is not acting or not acting fast enough and that is absolutely legitimate.

\* (1600)

I appreciate my honourable friend from Kildonan's understanding that it has to be with some semblance of understanding of the issue and ability to resolve it should you be Government. My honourable friend has also talked about the role of the media. I concur, because we have spent some 40-plus hours or 45-plus hours here and there has not been a great deal of attention via the media. They tend to do the, as my honourable friend says, the 10-second clips from interviews in the hall after Question Period or during Question Period, generally in terms of what is wrong rather than what is right in the system.

It is acknowledged by both sides of the House and I appreciate that, but there are some things that we have been able to achieve in the last 18 months that are positive for the system. I want to tell my honourable friend that the one thing that I have enjoyed the most of being Minister of Health, and I tell you right off the top, it is an onerous responsibility, it is a powder keg, it is filled with emotion and it touches almost every Manitoban.

I have enjoyed my 18 months as Health Minister because of the people I have met and have dealt with in the health care system. I can say without equivocation that the professionals from the medical side, whether they be doctors or nurses or RPNs or LPNs or service workers, or whether they be administrators in the health care system, we are blessed in Manitoba with some very, very competent knowledgeable and caring professionals that want to make health care work in

Manitoba. Some of them that I have enjoyed talking to and receiving advice from in particular are dismayed from time to time that how that all that ever comes out is what is wrong with the system, which is a narrow less than 5 percent of the activities in the system and seldom is the 95 percent of the system that works and works very effectively ever mentioned.

That is frustrating to the professionals that are in there not working nine till five, five days a week, but delivering services, be they nurses, be they doctors, be they administrators, delivering services well beyond the nine to five hours, well beyond the expected duties. They find it frustrating that from time to time their efforts are portrayed only in the negative. We are not going to get around that because the old saying that bad news sells better than good news is absolutely correct and my honourable friend the Member for Flin Flon appreciated that because he has been on the receiving side of bad news as a Cabinet Minister. That is the name of the game.

It can lead us to an attitude where things are not as good as they are and I am not saying in any way, shape or form that the health care system is in perfect shape in the Province of Manitoba. There are many challenges yet to be met, but we do not meet them by creating a negative attitude to discourage professionals that are working, literally working their hearts out in the health care system to provide better service.

I appreciate my honourable friends contribution, both of my critics contributions and others who have taken the opportunity to participate in Estimates. I would like to share with my honourable friends that they recognize as positive in terms of the last 18 months' developments in health care. We have taken some progressive moves I think in AIDS, not without the encouragement of both Opposition Parties, because it is the right thing to do, and I think above and beyond that is what we want to do whenever it is possible, to do the right thing. Today's announcement is yet another step I believe in doing the right thing in terms of our non-partisan war on AIDS in the Province of Manitoba.

We have attempted to build in terms of the profession of medicine in Manitoba by enhancing the research funding. I say that because my colleague, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) is here, who provided through a reallocation of Lotteries monies an extra million dollars annually to health research in the Province of Manitoba, very much appreciated by the research community. It will reap future benefits to Manitobans.

The Health Services Development Fund again, funds provided through Lotteries and through the casino will provide us with our reform window of \$10 million a year on health care. We have been able to address in a substantive way with the co-operation of Members from the Opposition a reinvigorated, revamped ambulance funding program. We have been able to tackle in a small way and a progressive way and a meaningful way some of the issues facing us in the therapies of Manitoba—speech, occupational, and physiotherapy. We have added additional surgery funding to Health Sciences Centre to hopefully alleviate some of the surgical difficulties there that have surfaced

from time to time particularly in the heart surgery program. We have doubled the funding to the Standing Committee on Medical Manpower to give us an effort to enhance recruitment to rural and northern Manitoba, supported, and I appreciate the support, by all Members of the House, many of them representing urban ridings, because that is a non-partisan issue.

We have provided over the two budgets increased resources to health care. The capital budget has attempted to meet some critical needs in the system. It has added personal care home beds throughout the system in the last two years and has offered renewed hospital facilities, acute care facilities, at a number of institutions in Winnipeg—Grace, St. Boniface, Health Sciences Centre, Misericordia, Concordia to name five. Certainly in rural Manitoba it has given new life and breath to a number of communities through the renewal of their hospitals.

We have attempted to build upon a very excellent international reputation in cancer treatment and research by the ribbon-cutting at the Health Sciences Centre with the new radiotherapy treatment that is available there as of last month and certainly with the proposal to parallel that at St. Boniface for those suffering the affliction of cancer. We have brought home the bone marrow transplant. The first bone marrow transplant will be performed in Manitoba next year, much to the benefit and advantage of Manitobans needing that life-saving procedure. We have initiated a program of oxygen concentrators, a small program, but it represents an industrial initiative in the Province of Manitoba, and the manufacture of those oxygen concentrators will be done in Manitoba. Through the co-operation of the Department of Labour and the commission, we established in the Canadian Standards Association a regulation that would not prevent their use. Their use is important because for instance in Churchill where we fly or take by train oxygen into Churchill, the savings on that machine, that machine will pay for its capital cost in eight months and thereafter provide substantial savings to the health care system. It is a very progressive initiative where 18 hospitals now in Manitoba are participating in oxygen concentration and it is an economic development initiative for the province as well.

In terms of the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, certainly we want to initiate the youth program but let us not fail to recognize the kind of progress in River House, Christie House in Winnipeg for the treatment of women with addictive problems, and the renewal of Sun Centre in Brandon to provide services for the Westman region.

I genuinely thank my honourable friends for their contribution toward the reform of Mental Health in the Province of Manitoba that started 18 months ago. We have a long way to go, but we have made as my honourable friends have recognized some significant steps in the right direction, long overdue steps, not steps that I am particularly able to take credit for original thought on. Those initiatives we have commenced have been proposed to Government by many people in the field over a number of years. With the support of my colleagues we have begun that long process of reform

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in Mental Health and I think it will be a very positive initiative and I appreciate support on both sides of the House for that.

Above and beyond I want to say two things before I close, Mr. Acting Chairman. First of all I have enjoyed tremendous co-operation from staff and the Ministry of Health, both in the department and the Manitoba Health Services Commission and our funded agencies. That co-operation extended beyond the walls of Government because we have pro-actively and I have pro-actively as Minister sought out advice from a wide variety of disciplines and individuals involved in health care. We have tried to make Manitobans across the length and breadth of this province, both in and out of the health care field, to become partners in reforming and delivering a higher quality health care system to the people of Manitoba. That invitation has been taken up by many professionals in and out of the health care field.

I want to tell you if there are days when I ask myself what am I doing here, why am I Minister of Health and taking on a number of very onerous responsibilities, I have to say I do it with more joy than maybe I ought to, given some of the circumstances in Question Period from time to time. I do it because of the kind of people that are out there dedicating their lives and their careers to the enhancement of health in Manitoba. I thank them for their co-operation and their advice and the support they have given to me over the last 18 months and I thank the professionals within the department and the Ministry of Health for likewise providing that kind of support and initiative for change.

I thank my two honourable friends, the critics respectively for their contribution during these Estimates.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Item 1.(a)—the Member for Kildonan?

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I forgot to mention the Member for Thompson's valuable contribution. He was a new Member additional to the committee and certainly his political skills are excellent and we will welcome further discussion in the future.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Item 1.(a) shall the item pass—pass.

Resolution No. 65: Resolved that there be granted to her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,600,000 for Health, Administration and Finance, \$3,600,000 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1990—pass.

This concludes the Estimates for the Department of Health. The next set of item Estimates to be considered in this section of the Committee of Supply is the Estimates of the Department of Energy and Mines.

Shall we briefly recess to allow the Minister and committee Members a few minutes to prepare for the commencement of this set of Estimates. Recess.

## RECESS

\* (1640)

## SUPPLY—ENERGY AND MINES

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Darren Praznik):** I would bring this committee back to order following our recess.

Is it the will of the committee to begin consideration of the next matter? (Agreed)

We shall now commence consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Energy and Mines. It is my understanding that the opening statements have been concluded, and the Committee of Supply left off with consideration on item 1.(b)(1), Salaries. Shall this item pass—the Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** Your reference, in the detailed Estimates here, it is 1.(b)(1)?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik):** Yes, 1.(b)(1), Executive Support: Salaries, \$335,550—the Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Acting Chairman, the managerial salaries for the year '88-89 to 1990 increased significantly. Can the Minister provide an explanation for that additional cost given there is no additional increase in staff years?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):** As explained last week, it was a severance package for the former Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines.

**Mr. Storie:** If we were to subtract the difference between what it cost in the fiscal year '89-90 from '88-89, we could get a general impression of what it cost the Government to undertake its new direction at taxpayers' expense. Mr. Acting Chairman, I am prepared to let 1.(b) pass.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik):** Does the Honourable Minister have an -(interjection)- answer to the comments?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I will let it pass.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik):** Shall the items pass—pass.

Next item, 1.(b)(2), Other Expenditures, \$83,300—the Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Storie:** The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says let us not be picky and I certainly do not want to. I did want to put back on the record, however, that the Minister has chosen to let an untendered contract in the amount of some \$15,000 for information he is not going to be able to use because there is very little activity in the department, and he has cut the number of staff that are dealing with issues like energy management and energy policy.

It is a disappointment I think to many to see the communications and community relations staff have

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remained relatively high as the activity of the Department is in effect being wound down under this Minister. We will certainly be watching to see what new initiatives these staff undertake in terms of communications given the relative inactivity in the department, but I am prepared to let that pass at this point.

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

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Item 1.(b)(2), Other Expenditures—pass.

Item 1.(c), Communications and Community Relations -(interjection)- no, you are one up, you are on Executive Support there. That is all right. Communications and Community Relations, 1.(c) Salaries: \$373,000—pass.

Other Expenditures, 2.(c)(2), \$175,400—the Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Storie:** There is a reduction in staff of one. Can the Minister indicate where that occurs?

**Mr. Neufeld:** In (c) there is no reduction—

**Mr. Storie:** No, we are in (d) now.

**Mr. Neufeld:** We have passed (c)?

**Mr. Storie:** Yes.

**An Honourable Member:** We are in (c)(2), sorry.

**Mr. Storie:** We are in what? We are in 1.(d).

**Mr. Neufeld:** 1.(c) has not passed.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** We have not passed item 1.(c) and we are now at 1.(d). We have not passed \$175,400.00.

**An Honourable Member:** That is what we are talking about. He said why is it down here to there—

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Acting Chairman, may we put the recommendation to the departments next year that the main Estimates be in sync with the detailed Estimates so that we could actually follow this. It would be quite interesting.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Yes, the Member for Flin Flon, yes, thank you. The Honourable Minister—

**Mr. Storie:** We are on 1.(c)?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** We are on 1.(c)(2), yes. Other Expenditures, \$175,400.00. The Honourable Minister, did you want to answer the question?

**Mr. Neufeld:** There has been no decrease in personnel in this department, or on this line. The decrease is in 1.(d).

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would strongly urge that we make sure next year when these detailed

Estimates or the Supplementary Information is provided that it coincide with the detailed Estimates, because on pages 18-19, subappropriation 1.(c), in the Supplementary Information we are dealing with 1.(c) and there is no 1.(c)(1), 1.(c)(2). Now it would be useful if that information was provided, but the Minister seems to be at odds with page 10 in the Supplementary Information, where it says 1.(d), Administrative Services, it was 16 staff in the adjusted vote '88-89, and it is now 15, year ending March 31, 1990. Do we have a reduction or do we not or -(interjection)-

**Mr. Neufeld:** We have a reduction in Administrative Services, yes, I just thought we would zip past 1.(c) before we get to 1.(d). No, we did not. Not all of it.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** That is what the Member is asking you though. Why is there a reduction?

**Mr. Neufeld:** It is on another line, the reduction is on another line. 1.(d) Administrative Services: a reduction of one is a word processing operator.

**An Honourable Member:** Just a minute, we are not there yet.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Did you not ask for a staff reduction, Jerry?

**Mr. Storie:** Yes, I did. I am on 1.(d)(1). Where are you?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I am with the Acting Chairman.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** We are on 1.(c)(2).

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, no. We passed that a long time ago.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Other Expenditures \$175,400—pass.

Item 1.(d) Administrative Services: Salaries \$518,400—shall the item pass?

**An Honourable Member:** No, that is the question about the data processing—

**Mr. Neufeld:** Now we are at the question that the—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Shall the item pass—the Member for St. Norbert.

**Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert):** I believe the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) had asked a question and it is a legitimate question as to what the staff reduction indication is. The Minister was in the process of trying to answer that.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Okay. The Honourable Minister.

**Mr. Neufeld:** The reduction of staff of one is a word processing operator who was redeployed, and the \$19,400 difference is a general pay increase and also for pay equity.



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**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Shall the item pass—pass.

**Mr. Storie:** Mr. Acting Chairman, the Minister has me intrigued in that he references a \$19,000 increase, there is no increase, 1.(d) Salaries, sees a reduction of approximately \$9,000, 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures, shows a reduction of approximately \$10,000.00. The Minister is referencing an increase and I am wondering where that is.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Yes, I was answering the Member's next question because he would have asked me, in any event.

**An Honourable Member:** I do not even know what my next question is, that is impossible, sir.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Well, yes, you do.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order here.

**Mr. Neufeld:** The reduction in staff accounted for a decrease in salary of \$28,300 and the pay increase for the year resulted in a \$19,400 increase. So the net of \$9,000 was the—

**Mr. Storie:** I am a little concerned because that makes sense.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Member for Flin Flon, would you please hold your hand up if you have a question?

**Mr. Storie:** That makes sense, I do not know what is wrong. Pass, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Member for Flin Flon.

**Mr. Storie:** Pass, Mr. Acting Chairman. My colleague has a question.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Other Expenditures, \$86,800—the Member for St. Norbert.

**Mr. Angus:** Perhaps, Mr. Minister, you could just tell us a little bit about recruitment and selection of personnel. It would have seemed to me there would have been some sort of central services and unless there were professional and technical requirements for hiring, it would seem to me getting somebody from word processing would be simply a matter of getting somebody through the Civil Service. Could you just go over how much money is spent on this and that sort of thing?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I am not sure I understand the question. Are you referring to the recruiting of personnel to this department?

**Mr. Angus:** Yes. On page 20 in the yellow book, the Activity Identification, Administrative Services indicates that you provide personnel services including recruitment and selection, job evaluation and that sort

of thing. I just wanted a bit of an explanation of it, that is all.

**Mr. Neufeld:** Yes, the cost of this department is \$518,400 in wages, and that is to conduct the activity that is mentioned on the left-hand side on page 10. The Other Expenditures of this particular department are \$86,800.00. Those are the total expenses for this particular activity.

**Mr. Angus:** Do you do much recruitment and selection of personnel?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The Civil Service Commission is involved in the recruitment, in the interview area, so the department goes through all the rules you might say of any other department. The Civil Service Commission must approve the appointments.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Item 1.(d)(2) \$86,800—pass. Energy: 2.(a) Energy Administration: (1) Salaries \$90,800—pass; 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$10,000—pass.

Item 2.(b) Energy Policy: Salaries \$377,400—the Member for St. Norbert.

**Mr. Angus:** I would just like to explore a little bit, if I could, the energy policies, particularly as the details of the appropriation are indicated on one of the pages—page 23 in this yellow book—providing on-site energy audits to business and community institutes and providing on-site audits and offering financial assistance to homeowners. Could I just get a bit of an overview from the Minister on these activities and the amount of money? What progress are you making? How do you measure whether you are making progress or not making progress? Have you established any desirable end results, and have you targeted to do specific things?

**Mr. Neufeld:** These are the programs related to the energy conservation strategy for the department. In the homeowner instance, a CHEC Program, in which the department will do energy audits, will recommend to homeowners the kind of changes that might result in energy conservation and in fact, energy savings, energy cost savings. This department also includes the CHEC loan program in which the department will advance up to \$2,500 to anyone needing renovations to their homes to do with energy conservation. The program also includes CHEC-UP Programs, CHEC audits in industry and institutions in which the department carries out audits and advises institutions or industries what might be done in order to effect savings in energy.

**Mr. Angus:** They are admirable goals and I applaud the initiative. Education and counselling of people who are wasting energy is worthy. Can we just get some statistical information, the amount of dollar appropriation to run these programs, the number of people who are actively involved in the programs, the number of industries, for instance, that they did check, the number of homes that they did check, the number of loans that they have put out, things of that nature?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We check out about 4,500 pounds annually. We estimate that some 19,500 analysis have

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been completed and the cumulative energy saving is in excess of \$5 million.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Angus:** Not of course reflected in your budget. We should make this a return on investment, Mr. Acting Chairman and Mr. Minister, and then you could really—

**Mr. Neufeld:** That is part of Treasury Board.

**Mr. Angus:** Well, show us some positive end results. You mentioned figures and I would like some clarification, 19,500 audits on homes I suspect. Over what period of time?

**Mr. Neufeld:** Since the inception of the program in February of 1984 to March 31, 1989, so it is five years.

**Mr. Angus:** And you mentioned that you did 4,500 homes this last year which is disproportionate to the length of time the program has been in, so are you in fact escalating this program?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The actual numbers for this last year increased somewhat, but the program started slower at the start. So the 4,500 is not an average, it is a number for last year.

**Mr. Angus:** Just to see if I am clear on this, you did 4,500 home audits last year, is that accurate? How many did you do the year before for example?

**Mr. Neufeld:** I will have to get you that information, we do not have that here.

**Mr. Angus:** Reasonable. My question, I guess, is leading to—obviously there is a drastic reduction in the budget in the Energy and Mines area. How do you escalate this program and provide this return on benefits? Although it is admirable, I do not want anybody to perceive that I am not suggesting that you should not be applauded if indeed you are working more efficiently in your department, but there is something that just does not balance, at least in my mind. I am sure it can be cleared up fairly easily.

**Mr. Neufeld:** The problems are, we have been answering questions on the Energy management side. Half the questions have been asked from the Energy management side and not the Energy policy side. We could carry on—that is on page 29.

**Mr. Angus:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, they are unfortunately or fortunately linked together. As you establish the policy to provide a program, you have to administer the money to direct that program. So please allow me the privilege of overlapping. When we pass, we will pass the whole thing and if I encroach or infringe upon the policy, I apologize in some of the specifics.

**Mr. Neufeld:** On September 1, 1988, we reorganized the department and cut five staff years from the department. Those staff years, wherein four in professional and technical and one in managerial on

the Energy policy side of the department, these were felt to be in excess of the needs of the department at that time.

**Mr. Angus:** The drastic reduction seems to fly in the face of the congratulatory-self-messages the Minister is giving in relation to the amount of money saved in Energy. Can you tell me today how many people you actually have in the CHEC Program Energy Conservation area? I realize some of these people may overlap and do businesses as well as homes, but how many people are we talking about?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The Manitoba Hydro staff helped as well in the delivery of this program. In the Home CHEC Program itself, there are two people employed in the department.

**Mr. Angus:** Very busy people, Mr. Acting Chairman. If you are anticipating doing 4,500 homes again this year and you have only got two people doing them—

**Mr. Neufeld:** 17 at Manitoba Hydro.

**Mr. Angus:** Well, okay, then perhaps there is information that I do not know about. If there are 17 people and the Minister has indicated 17 people at Manitoba Hydro that are helping, so they are covering that part of the inspection. Is that the understanding I have got?

**Mr. Neufeld:** The Manitoba Hydro people do the inspection work.

**Mr. Angus:** Let me just ask how people become aware of this, how do they find out about the CHEC Program, and how do they make contact with the Government?

**Mr. Neufeld:** We advertise it at the information centre at Eaton Place and we also advertise it through bill stuffers at Manitoba Hydro.

**Mr. Angus:** Any fee associated with this?

**Mr. Neufeld:** There would be some cost attached but that would be included in the communication budget.

**Mr. Angus:** I phone up and I say, "Look, I would like to have my house checked," what happens? Do they send somebody out, do they charge me anything to do that?

**Mr. Neufeld:** There is no charge for the inspection to your house.

**Mr. Angus:** They write a report, these two men in your department actually process the applications for loans and things of that nature? Is that how it works?

**Mr. Neufeld:** There are two programs. One is the Home CHEC Program in which the homeowner will be advised of what he might do to his home in order to effect efficiencies, and then there is a second program which is a loan program, which he must apply for in addition to having his home checked.

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**Mr. Angus:** To your department or to the Hydro?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The hour being 5 p.m.—

**Mr. Neufeld:** I will answer his question. The application is to Manitoba Hydro, but the Manitoba Government through the Department of Energy and Mines guarantees that loan. Hydro is expected to do a credit search on it.

\* (1700)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The hour being 5 p.m., it is now time for Private Members' Hour. Committee rise.

### **SUPPLY—ENVIRONMENT**

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Allan Patterson):** The Committee of Supply will come to order. We are considering the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty for the Department of the Environment.

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

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have a question to the Minister. Last night in our discussions on sustainable development, reference was made by the Minister about the role of employees in various industries and the fact that there was special training being given. An example, I believe that was used, was staff members in the health industry and in which they would play a role in effect as in-house environment officers. I think that is the sort of phraseology the Minister used.

I did not mean they were part of the Environment Department, but there was special environmental training being given. I wonder if the Minister could expound upon that a little bit and tell us whether there has been any form of certification for this type of work so that there is, if you will, a recognition of the capability and the role play that is going on.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** I am not sure if I have fully understood the question. If he is referring to joint use of health inspectors in the Department of Environment or if he is referring to how would environmental concerns be dealt with in conjunction with the health industry?

Before we get further into that I would like to put one answer on the record that I did not fully respond to yesterday. The Member asked: what would be the proper way for him to deal with the sustainable development unit, seeing as how there were not many more questions that I was prepared to answer? I indicated that they report to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). They will be dealt with through the Executive Council Estimates process and the further detailed questioning that the Members may want to put in relationship to the sustainable development can be done at that time.

The question that the Member just led off with, I would ask him to clarify a little bit. I am not sure I understood what he was getting at.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess what I am looking for is a bit of a clarification, which was said last evening. I did not do a follow-on question at the time, because there were a number of things that came out. What I am trying to do is to get a clearer picture in my own mind of what it is the department is able to do with people outside of the department vis-a-vis encouraging an environmental orientation and playing a role somewhat, I gathered, of an environment officer, as I am trying to recall.

It was somewhere I guess in about the third quarter of the evening, and possibly the officials with the Ministers might be able to help out on that. I was trying to understand what training was given and what exact roles these other people were playing, if there is a training thing and can be confirmed. Is the nature of the training sufficiently, first of all, important and technically oriented to justify a recognition of that training having been achieved, and that training being required to carry out this supportive, co-operative role? That is why I asked this question, the second part of my question, which was on certification.

**Mr. Cummings:** We touched on this somewhat last night. An example would be the Highways Department. They are trained and instructed at a technical level on The Dangerous Goods Handling Transportation Act. Natural Resources officers are trained on the application of The Environment Act. Those who are licensed receive detailed technical training on what they are administering and what they are responsible for.

**Mr. Taylor:** That starts to clarify it for me. The other part then: was it specifically health inspectors, as opposed to others in the health realm, that were being used as the example last night? Do they receive similar training, and is there some sort of a recognized official certification of that additional training, additional role, which would I guess if you will recognize and legitimize that extra contribution?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, there are a large number of, what are probably known in the community as, health inspectors who are also environment officers and double up for example in rural communities on sewage and lagoon inspection; that sort of thing. What is probably known in the community as a health inspector is also an environment officer, and a large number of them are in fact employed in the Environment Department and do health inspections. It is a related responsibility. They receive technical training at the fire college, I understand that is where they go to get their upgrading, and are officially certified as environment officers.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne):** Mr. Acting Chairman, I just have a few questions. I wonder if the Minister could just update us and maybe clarify some of the remarks he made relative to the licensing of snow dumping sites in the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Cummings:** I am sorry, could you repeat the question?

**Mr. Alcock:** I just wanted you to tell us what the situation is right now pursuant to your release on the

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question of the City of Winnipeg dumping refuse snow on the banks of the river?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, we have directed that it is a province-wide directive. We have not singled out the City of Winnipeg, but obviously the largest impact is in the City of Winnipeg. We had head-to-head discussions with them over the last number of months regarding this and a number of other items because they were the ones who obviously would be the most significantly impacted.

They will be monitoring their sites this winter. We will be moving to using that information to develop regulations for future snow dumping sites. Ultimately my indication to them was that I intended to see the snow dumping on the river eliminated, but as of this point we have not eliminated any sites. We expect, however, that to curb within two years.

**Mr. Alcock:** So there is a commitment on the part of the department that by the year '91-92 there will be no snow dumping on the banks of the river?

**Mr. Cummings:** That is correct. The only proviso I would add to that is that it is my approach to administration that we try to work in a compliance mode. The city has indicated difficulties in finding landlocked sites. I am prepared to be patient and to be reasonable, but we do intend to eliminate snow dump sites on the river.

If for some reason there is inability to meet a precise deadline, we are willing to work with the municipalities, whether it is Winnipeg, or Dauphin, or Brandon, or whoever. We have stated our goal. The monitoring that we receive will provide some modification, but at the same time we have an impetus now to work to find landlocked sites and get on with achieving the goal that we have set. We have quite clearly stated that within two years we expect to have them eliminated.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Acting Chairman, well, I commend the Minister for that. I think it is an important step, and I look forward to seeing it implemented. I would hope that the monitoring is simply going to confirm some of the things the Minister stated in the release that he made—stated some of the problems that exist and I would hope that action could be undertaken to see the reduction in the current use of those sites during the two years it is proposed that they continue to be used, and potentially the elimination of the use of those sites prior to his deadline.

I have a second question to the Minister and that is relative to the transportation of dangerous goods. There is a rail yard, the Fort Rouge Yards, that sits just south of here where there have been a number of concerns raised in the past and more recently about the practice of leaving carloads of dangerous goods, tanker cars being one example of that, for periods of up to 48 hours while those cars are transferred from the CP to the CN.

My understanding in reading the federal Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act is that while they are not allowed to store dangerous goods in those

yards, anything that is left sitting for under 48 hours is not considered to be storage.

My question is: what relationship is there between your department and the CN that operates that yard relative to the monitoring of dangerous commodities that are held in that yard?

**Mr. Cummings:** We work in conjunction with Transport Canada and Environment Canada on the regulation. They are responsible for the regulation.

\* (1440)

**Mr. Alcock:** Does your department have any responsibility for monitoring what is maintained in the yard?

**Mr. Cummings:** The two departments that I mentioned are responsible and we use the information that they provide.

**Mr. Alcock:** Are lists of dangerous goods that are held in the yards or brought through the yards maintained and available to the public through your department?

**Mr. Cummings:** We do not have the person who would know exactly whether or not we do with us today, but it is our understanding that probably we do not.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Acting Chairman, am I to understand that at some point later in the examination of the Estimates those staff will be available and if so—

**Mr. Cummings:** We can get you that answer. Is there a series of questions in that area?

**Mr. Alcock:** I do have a series of questions that I could ask or would like to ask if the people were available. I would be prepared to—

**Mr. Cummings:** Try the next question and we will see if we can answer it. If we cannot we will get the right staff.

**Mr. Alcock:** Okay. Mr. Acting Chairman, I was asking the Minister about the transportation of dangerous goods and the identification of those dangerous goods. One of the concerns that has been raised, there was an incident a year ago in May where there was a propane tanker car that was left sitting in the yards that sprang a leak and these yards are situated—the city has allowed the building of houses closer and closer to the yards and so that the tanker car in question in this case was just some 200, 300 feet away from a children's playground and some housing.

There has been a debate about building a barrier between the residences and the yard as the yard is continuing to be used for the holding of dangerous goods. What we are concerned about is we would like to know where we can get the information on what goods are held in the yards, when they are held there, and we would like to get some idea of the provincial Government's responsibility for the monitoring of dangerous goods as they move through the city.

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**Mr. Cummings:** That information would all be available through Transport Canada.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Acting Chairman, what responsibility or role does your department play in that process?

**Mr. Cummings:** First of all if there was an emergency, our department would respond and work in conjunction with the Environment Canada people to deal with that emergency. I am not sure what the other part of the question was. What role do we have in controlling what is in there? That is controlled through Transport Canada, as I understand.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Acting Chairman, the concern I have is that—yes, I understand that if and when an incident occurs that you respond to that and are part of the response to it, but what activity goes on between a provincial department and the federal department that would keep you aware of things that are being stored in the yards? We recognize that increasingly more complex goods are being transported across this country and it is difficult to take a position that nothing should flow from sea to sea.

At the same time, we are quite concerned about the fact that identified dangerous commodities sit in that yard for up to 24 hours within a few hundred feet of people's homes and we would like to know where we can get some assurance that practice will cease, and what goods currently are being kept in that yard? Now if you are saying that—I am not sure what you are saying. Are you saying that the provincial environmental department has no responsibility other than to come in once an incident should occur, or is there some kind of relationship between the two departments that allows you to be aware of and to voice an opinion or take some action relative to dangerous goods that are kept in that yard?

**Mr. Cummings:** First of all the question regarding the exchange of information or working arrangements between Environment Canada and the Manitoba Department of Environment—and there is a regular and ongoing relationship between the two departments to make sure that matters of this nature would not as it were fall between the cracks. I think that is where the Member is leading. Is there something being stored there that we might not be aware of, for example?

If he is asking for a rolling list, a daily update of what is going through the yards, then I would think he might be asking for the impossible because that is controlled by Environment Canada and regulated under their restrictions.

If he is asking if Manitoba knows on a fairly—or knows what is allowed to go through there and what would be allowed under Transport Canada regulations, yes we know that because of the relationship between the two departments. If he is asking should a problem arise and would we be able to access, as part of emergency response, information as to what is there on a given day or given hour, yes, we would. It would be through Environment Canada's information storing capability and their emergency response.

An example I think of where we do have to be careful that things do not fall between the cracks—but when you look at what is happening in trucking, for example, and regulation across the country there does have to be federal uniformity across the country in order to make sure we do not have problems as vehicles go from province to province, as in this case trains go from province to province. So I do not have a lot of problem with it being federally controlled. As long as the linkage between their department and ours is clear, and I am assured that relationship is sound and that we have access to their information when we need it or if we request it.

**Mr. Alcock:** Just perhaps to clarify for me, does your department have the power to set regulations for the handling of dangerous goods on a rail site such as the Fort Rouge Yards?

**Mr. Cummings:** No, I do not know if there would be any exceptional circumstances when we could, but my answer would have to be probably not. The other thing that I did not mention in terms of reciprocal work between two departments is that we have access to the federal inspection and monitoring reports that are related to the rail yards. That helps keep the communication open with our department as to what is happening under the federal jurisdiction within the province.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I will not belabour this at this point. It is a concern to me that we have a site that is located so close to people's homes where, as a regular practice, tanker cars or boxcars full of dangerous goods are left sitting for up to 48 hours, or at least not beyond 48 hours. They assure me that it does not go on beyond 48 hours.

I would ask the Minister to have a discussion with the federal department to see if that practice could not cease. There are other locations outside of the city, or further away from people's residences, where these exchanges could take place or where these goods could be maintained while they are exchanged from one yard to another. I think our experience with goods of this nature particularly—we have had the Elma experience just recently—always brings to mind Mississauga. We are talking about those same kinds of goods being maintained within a couple of hundred feet of people's homes without any barrier, without any suitable protection. I would simply ask that the Minister look into it, and I would be interested in hearing if there is some way we could come to an agreement with CN and the federal environment department to see that this practice ceases within the city?

\* (1450)

**Mr. Cummings:** I think it is a reasonable request that we provide a more clear picture and follow-up on what is going on in relationship to leaving that type of material stored in those yards. On the same subject, in terms of dangerous goods handling and transportation, the establishment of truck routes, truck routes and cradle-grave management or manifest systems, for handling dangerous goods is part of the initiative that the

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department has presently embarked upon with the declaration of the balance of that Act.

The problem that presents interestingly enough is that probably a lot of this material is travelling on the streets today that we would want designated in the future. Designating it may very well cause the same problem that we saw in Transcona-Springfield. When the sign was larger on the building, all of a sudden there were concerns raised about what was really in the building. We do not anticipate problems. That is one area where there could be some reaction to the ultimate implementation of that Act.

**Mr. Alcock:** In fairness to this story, I recognize that it is a difficult issue. I would like to distinguish between the two parts of it. There is the question of how do you recognize the need to move these goods to and from different sites and across the country? If we are talking about collecting toxic materials into certain sites, that is going to require their movement and that has been moved to identify and designate routes as a positive initiative.

The second issue here, with respect to this specific yard, is that these same goods sit there. They do not move through it, which is an issue that is of concern to people. They recognize that you cannot shut the system down, that they do not just move through, they sit there and they are maintained there for a period of time. We feel that practice could cease.

I intend to be active in the discussions on the Bill. This is one of the areas that I will be pursuing. I am sorry to hear that your feeling right now is that you do not have the power to regulate what occurs in those yards. That is a discussion we will revisit when the Bill comes before the House.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister some questions about the Assiniboine delta aquifer and the issue surrounding the request for water from the communities of Glenella, Plumas, Gladstone, and 700 farmsteads in the area. People are desperately in need of water there, good quality water and that is the sustenance of life, of course, everyone realizes that good quality water is absolutely necessary in order to continue to operate to live, to raise a family, to operate farms and continue to operate communities. These people are in desperate straits and yet the Minister I understand withdrew a licence. We had some discussion of this during the Estimates of the Department of Rural Development.

I think it is important enough to revisit it at this time with the Minister because I believe he made a very bad decision that he overruled and politically interfered with the decision that was made by the Clean Environment Commission after environmental hearings were held.

What he did was very serious in reacting to political pressure, not based on scientific information and strong arguments, that there was a problem with the aquifer's ability to provide that kind of water for this particular project.

He responded in a way that was not becoming of a Minister and certainly not proper in my mind in

exercising his responsibilities. I do not say that about him in all respects. I think that he has been reasonably fair in exercising his duties, but in this particular case I think he erred seriously. I think that is very unfortunate because I think that what he tends to do when he does this kind of thing is to undermine the respect that people have for his office and for his position.

When you look at it, the people of that area of Plumas, Glenella, and Gladstone and the farmsteads around, were looking for water supply for human consumption primarily that would only take about 2 percent of that aquifer. Two percent of its sustainable flow. Sustainable that can be replaced, it can be maintained at its same level without draw down.

Two percent sustainable, that is my understanding. If that is wrong, what sustainable means, then the Minister can correct me as to what sustainable flow and level is in terms of the draw down. It is only 18 percent allocated at the present time, that aquifer. Only 18 percent. Recent additions by new users, the Carnation Plant at Carberry, and new irrigators in that area combined would take as much as this project. They of course were added to the system, but the total allocation now is 18 percent of its sustainable yield.

This would have been an additional 2 percent to put it at 20 percent, and I know that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has qualified people in his department who have done a complete mapping. As a matter of fact, I would love to bring the maps in here because I know they exist on all the aquifers. This is an extensive aquifer. I may indeed go to that extent at some point, not in the House but at some other form, to show the public what we are dealing with here. Two percent of a huge aquifer.

Now it is nice that the Minister is suddenly taking his responsibilities on this issue of ground water seriously. To say now and to use the arguments, to fall back on the arguments, of protecting the long-term supply when he is dealing with human consumption, which is the primary need, the priority use of water as defined in The Environment Act, when he is dealing with people in desperate needs, he only has 18 percent of an aquifer allocated, his argument is, well, we have to set criteria, how are we going to allocate this in the future if we give some to them then who else is going to be next?

Of course there are long-term issues that have to be dealt with, but 18 percent has already been allocated without that system. We are only dealing with another 2 percent. This is human consumption that we are dealing with and I suggest to the Minister that it is simply an issue of petty politics that interfered in this issue, as opposed to the experts' opinion on this issue.

I ask the Minister how he can justify withdrawing the licence that was issued after hearings were held by the Clean Environment Commission; after extensive studies were undertaken; after various options were tested and reviewed over the years; after it was determined that the aquifer supply was the best quality water and the most efficient and economical project to supply that water, some \$8 million as opposed to the worst quality water, which is the option that the Minister seems to

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want to review from Lake Manitoba, the worst quality and the highest cost project. How can he justify stalling on an important project like this that is absolutely necessary to the livelihood of the people that live in this area and their families?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I regret that the Member thinks this was a political decision, as he knows full well, as elected Members become Ministers they have to take responsibility for the direction of developments and policy objectives for the Government of the Day. Quite simply, I think we could go back to the original scoping of the hearings for the commission regarding this well site.

There has been a long-standing and long-festering problem on the Assiniboine River delta that under his tenure and under the tenure of his colleagues as Ministers, they failed to deal with the long-term policy issue of development of that aquifer. These are the first Clean Environment Commission hearings that have been held on a water services project of this type, and it acted as a weather vane for all sorts of issues that were outside of the scoping of their hearings. They were looking specifically at a well site and looking at some very broad figures, none of which were not totally worked out on alternative costs and even on the actual costs of delivery or the comparison between the two.

\* (1500)

This project was originally conceived by many people to be the supply for an agricultural pipeline into an area that desperately needs water. I do not for one minute disagree with that. All of a sudden, however, we got into a discussion about whether or not this pipeline would also include the Town of Gladstone, which sits on the same river that the Town of Neepawa draws its water from. The quality of water that was coming down the river was very poor, as it was in every other river in this province this summer. That is the reality of drawing from some of these rivers, under very poor rainfall conditions.

There are I think responsibilities that we have to take to make sure that the long-term policy development and the use of this aquifer and other aquifers in this province are correctly dealt with. He said that I had withdrawn the licence. There is a technical difference between what I did and what he says. The licence was not withdrawn. The appeal to the licence was suspended and what that simply comes down to is that the licence is still there, but nothing can happen until a decision is made on the appeal. I along with the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) pledged ourselves to an answer in early spring on a decision on getting on with this pipeline.

In the interim we are gathering further information to make sure that we make a decision that is correct for the area and correct for the long-term plans for aquifer management in this province. We have examples in other parts of the province where we have major aquifers that are being overpressured.

The Member knows as well as I do that there are long-term plans on paper for the Assiniboine River delta

aquifer that make it the hub of supply for all of central Manitoba. The demands for this aquifer, when fully appreciated, would be enormous. We want to make sure that we do not close all of the doors of opportunity that need to be there for the long-term development of the province.

The options for supplying water into the West Lake area need to be fully examined in terms of available resources. The commission, when looking at the well site, as I said earlier attracted all sorts of other issues that had not been dealt with, which we as a Government will attempt to deal with at the same time between now and spring. Ultimately we will get water into that area.

We are looking at a joint Manitoba PFRA water services department project, and I think that given the lateness of the report that came in from the Clean Environment Commission—and that is not to blame them. What started off to be a very simple hearing turned out to be quite complicated and opened up a lot of issues that they had not necessarily anticipated, nor had I anticipated.

That project would not have got water into the Plumas area this year if it had have been expedited immediately upon their recommendation for a licence. The reality is that we will get on with pipeline construction in reasonable time, in comparison to the previous time schedule.

The choosing of the well site, in and of itself, raised some interesting questions that were brought before the commission. I think as Minister I had a responsibility to make sure that all of the options were properly considered before we made a firm decision. If I am going to be criticized for making a decision to examine, in a reasonable way, all the opportunities that were available to us, I will willingly accept that criticism. When we put that pipeline in, we will be serving an area that has needed water for a long time.

It is ironic that the Member is now pushing to get on with this project when there was ample opportunity to have dealt with it previously. It is not any surprise that this area has been short of water. Just about the time that this decision was being made of course the information came forward that potentially the Ogilvie well site was starting to pump salt, which would indicate that another pumping station that the community was using was about to dry up. I have not recently had a report that this is the case, but this certainly was not an easy decision given that additional pressure.

The simple fact is that there is a vast difference in priority when you are talking the difference between agricultural water and agricultural service such as we see in many parts of southern Manitoba south of Winnipeg and potable water supply for towns. The two can be quite independently sourced with different cost structures.

In my opinion, that information was not fully laid out for me. You can say I am a slow learner if you like, but until I am clear in my own mind as to the precise costs and intent that should go into the construction of this line, it was my feeling that this was the correct decision.

If the Member somehow wants to talk about a political decision, he should remember that there is a mere

handful of people who are opposed to this project who live in my constituency. In fact the Plumas area will be part of my new constituency. If he wants to say that somehow for some political reason I chose this way to introduce myself to them, then he thinks I am a lot less intelligent politician than I give myself credit for being. This was a decision made on long-term planning and environmental reasons, not on political reasons. I am sure that if he wants to think about it, in the manner in which I just explained, that he will have no choice but to agree with me.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Chairman, quite the opposite. I would have exactly the opposite conclusions that I would draw from. After all these statements the Minister has made, if he did not politically interfere for his own political head it was his colleague, the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson), who interfered on this issue.

I believe his colleague was probably behind applying pressure on this Minister and she flexed her political muscle to the extent that the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) had no choice. He could not resist it and he had no choice but to succumb to her political pressure. I believe that is what happened.

The Minister might want to tell us the facts about this and not try to justify the decision on behalf of his colleague on environmental grounds when the facts are it was the Minister of Family Services, the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) that was responsible for this. I think I hit a raw nerve on the Minister because now he is between a rock and a hard place. He does not know how to get out of this. He tries to explain it on environmental grounds and he knows very well it is the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) who is responsible for this.

Why does he not just say that she was getting political pressure from these people who were appealing this decision, not on reasonable grounds based on facts, but on the basis that they had some kind of a fictitious feeling they were going to be out of water some time? Why would this Minister not take it upon himself to provide the people with the facts, to provide an education which is a part of his function as well so that these people would know in fact that only 18 percent of that aquifer has been utilized and that test holes have shown even in the worst drought years that the water has only decreased by about one-tenth of a metre?

\* (1510)

Let the Minister not talk about how this was going to endanger the future development. He says we do not want to close all the doors in future development of this province; he uses terms like that.

The Commission attracted all kinds of other issues. The Minister is admitting that they were irrelevant to the issue at hand. Yet he has used those as an excuse now because he was put in a corner by the Minister of Family Services, the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson), because of political pressure. He says ultimately we will get water to those people, to the Westlake area. Now how would the Member for

Gladstone like it if she did not have any water and she had to truck water, and she was dry, and crawling across the Carberry Desert without any water? Water, water! How would she feel? She—

**An Honourable Member:** John, you are talking to an old water trucker here, you know.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, maybe it is a good business. I understand that a quarter of a million dollars has been allocated by the Government to haul water on a decision, that is not a permanent decision. It is not a solution to the problem. It is not a solution. Certainly that is a temporary thing but the Government should be moving quickly to provide water when the water is there and there are experts in the department of water resources and Natural Resources, they know how much water is there and, yes, in the past aquifers have been over-allocated.

The Winkler aquifer comes to mind as one example, but that is not the situation the Assiniboine delta aquifer is in. How can the Minister stand up in this House with a straight face and say it is under environmental reasons and it is for good planning reasons that he is doing this, when in fact we are only talking about 2 percent. These people desperately need water and it is because of political pressure by the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) that this happened in the first place.

**Mr. Cummings:** Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, I suppose after you have squandered between \$20 and \$30 million on a bridge to nowhere you have to find ways to demonstrate to people in the agricultural communities of this province why you forgot to spend at least \$2 or \$3 million just to get some water into the area that has been identified for years as the hardest part of this province to get potable water into. All of a sudden when he is sitting looking back over his past sins, he is looking for somebody to blame it on and I will stack my record against his, and mine is only 18 months long.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Chairman, this Minister is now responsible. It is not sufficient to reply to these very serious issues by simply saying, oh, they should have done something or somebody else should have done something. The fact is, he is now responsible. He has for a very short time in the history of this province, like he says 18 months perhaps it will be a few months longer—a very short period, a chance to make a real difference. A chance to do something significant for the people of this province and he is choosing to sit on it instead of do something. He will look back in six months and say I should have done it because now I cannot do it anymore.

That Minister should realize he is very temporary. The former Premier of this province, Sterling Lyon—I did not agree with him too much on a great deal of issues—but he said you are the temporary custodians of the public purse in the positions you occupy right now. The Minister should realize it can be very temporary. Just ask some of us when we had some of the votes in this House, and I say that with a sense of humour, but I want to tell this Minister that this is a serious issue and it can be very temporary. He has an



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opportunity, and he has a report, and he has studies that have been done—PFRA and Water Services, and he has advice from experts who have given him the facts as to the capability and capacity of this aquifer to provide this good quality water for these people and he says, well, it could not have been done before Christmas or before the winter, or whatever, or before spring.

The fact is the sooner you get to work on it the sooner the people there have some hope that there is a solution in hand and there is some action being taken.

Now, I ask this Minister what is the status of the proposal call that he has used to delay this whole mechanism, by some six months or maybe a year, to try and get him past an election and then he can deal with this issue. What is the status of those proposals now that he is responsible?

**Mr. Cummings:** The Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) has had proposal calls. I am not sure whether the final selection has been made at this particular day or not, but that is proceeding - (interjection)- Well, we have set ourselves a deadline which is more than a lot of the people would give the previous administration credit for.

I think the one thing that we need to remind ourselves of is the criticism I received the first weekend that I was Environment Minister and attended the Manitoba Environment Council, the people kept jumping up and saying The Environment Act is all wrong. The Minister should not be able to make those kinds of decision. I really wondered what in the world it was that they were talking about and then as I began to study the process a little bit more the fact is the Minister is the appeal to departmental licences and I, quite correctly, within the parameters of the Act, have exercised my authority to suspend, or to uphold, or to modify.

I can tell you as a person who once held land on the Assiniboine delta aquifer that when I wanted to irrigate that land I was told I could not irrigate it because there was not enough water there. Then I decided that as the community was growing maybe that would be a nice place for a rural residential subdivision, but I was opposed again by the same experts who said oh, no, no, you can irrigate that land. That was my first brush with Government and how different departments do not necessarily operate with the same set of figures.- (interjection)-

(Mr. William Chornopyski, Chairman, in the Chair)

**Mr. Cummings:** It has been my goal ever since to figure out what the hell is going on. But quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, the fact is we now have an opportunity to deal rationally with different sets of opinions as to how this part of rural Manitoba can develop. Quite frankly, I am exercising my judgment on behalf of the Government and I intend to stand by that judgment.

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Plohman:** I wonder what kind of development we are going to see as a result of holding back on this

particular project that is so necessary for these people in that area that do not have water. What kind of development is going to be prevented? I bet you the Minister at this point—a cup of coffee I could bet, or maybe a cup of clean water—that he cannot name one project that is going to go ahead there, that is going to take that 2 percent of that water, that aquifer, that would be used by these people under this project, the most efficient, I remind him, project, the most efficient way to supply clean water to the people in that area, and he is sitting on it.- (interjection)-

The Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) whispers to her colleague, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that I have all the answers. The fact is, it is quite clear what happened here. You do not have to look too deep to see what went on here, and I think it is most unfortunate, because we are playing with the lives of those people insofar as their water is concerned.

\* (1520)

This has become very desperate because of the droughts in the last couple of years. That is why this is now a major issue. It was known there was a problem there for some years, and that is why the studies were undertaken. Once the results were made public and the results were available why did the Minister continue to sit on it? It is obvious, because of the political pressure from those people appealing it and from his colleague, the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson)?

I would like to get some specific answers from him as to -(interjection)- I asked him about the status of the proposals that were made for this study. Who is the expert that knows so much more than the experts in the Clean Environment Commission and the people in Water Resources who give the advice on the amount of water available there? Who are these experts the Government is going to engage that are going to give them the truth on this issue and provide them with the wisdom they are going to need to make these decisions? Who is that person? Who are those people?

**Mr. Cummings:** I told the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) I am not, at this moment, aware of who has the contract in hand or if it has in fact been signed. What we are doing is asking for independent advice and analysis of the project and of alternate sources of supply.

I do not think the departments—some of the people within the departments may be taking offence at the fact an elected official has somehow brought into question their reading of the capacities or their plans on how this project could proceed.

I take, very much, the same view as I do with MPIC or Hazardous Waste Corporation. Ultimately, I will live or die by their recommendations. On this particular one I am not quite ready to fall on my sword until I have seen some of the other options available and have assurance that we have correctly identified all of the associated concerns that go with this.

The Member for Dauphin wants to continually avoid answering the question of whether or not the long-term policy development for drought proofing this province

needs to be clearly identified before we embark on precedent-setting projects.

I will give you an example of the type of problem that arises. There is a school of thought that says if you see a stream running through somebody's pasture watering the grass and watering the trees, that water is being wasted. Somehow you should cut-off that stream before it starts to run through that guy's pasture and pump it to a town somewhere. That would be a logical thing to do, because that water would be wasted running across the ground and soaking into the ground. That is wasted water in the eyes of some developers.

There are those who would say, however, that is a natural asset and that makes the land worth more, because it has that stream running through it providing the natural source of water, watering the trees and the grass of that particular flat land. We have had far too many examples in this province of where drainage has been the only way we know how to deal with water. Now that we have some of the best drainage in the country we are prepared to start putting in some of the best pipelines in the country.

I want to make particularly sure the policy we are embarked upon is the right one, because there have been serious errors made in the past. I do not want to go down in history as the fool from Environment who agreed to do something he was not absolutely satisfied, in his own mind, was the right thing to do. I am prepared, as I have said before, to set a deadline on this process, but I am not prepared to jump in the water when I am not sure of how deep it is.

**Mr. Plohman:** I am amazed to hear the Minister talk about the school of thought, which says it should be diverted and piped or drained somewhere else. When he did not put up the fight that he could have put up on the Rafferty-Alameda dam, for example, which is diverting water and holding water back that we desperately need, that stream in Manitoba—there is no information and documentation at this time on the Rafferty-Alameda as to the exact effects on the quality and quantity of water, and yet the Minister refused to go on further with this case to press the federal Government to undertake a major environmental study there.

He should know The Water Rights Act was put in place for precisely that reason, too much drainage in the past. If people want to divert water in the future they have to get a licence to do it. That was the purpose for it, and it was put in place by our Government because we recognized that. We are not talking about surface water here. There are precedents where aquifers have been drained, dried up. In the United States, for example, it is an important issue, an important question, but it is all relative.

What we are talking about here is 2 percent of a major aquifer for human consumption for these people in an area that desperately needs good quality water. The Minister has ignored that. He prides himself on somehow questioning the officials and saying, well they may not like it but I am ultimately responsible and I am not ready to fall on my sword yet. Meanwhile, he

is making all those people fall on their swords, because they do not have water, while he is delaying because he does not want to commit hari-kari.

The fact is, he has to have good information, good questions and good reasons why he should question what the officials are saying. I mean, you have to have some facts, say, well, I dispute your facts. You say that, but I have this information here.

I guess that is what he wants now, to get some information from some outside experts that he has not identified yet, that are somehow going to give him the questions to the reason why he was legitimately delaying this project. I hope he ends up with some good information. I believe he will probably get the opposite, and he will say precisely what the Environment Commission said in the first place. You are talking about a very small amount of the water here, so what you are doing is delaying something that is so important to people affected there.

I ask the Minister, can he table the terms of reference for this outside expert that he has not yet identified? Could he give a commitment to table the terms of reference for that study? Can he clearly outline, to this House, how those terms of reference will differ from the terms of reference that the Clean Environment Commission studies undertook? What new information will he find? Can he provide that to this House—new areas that were not dealt with?

**Mr. Cummings:** The Member wants to get into a discussion of specifics. I suppose I could give him an example of why the public has some concerns about some of the statements made regarding alternate sources, for example, how far out into the lake you have to go and how expensive it is to establish an inlet out of the lake.

That is deemed to be an extremely expensive part of that alternative. We have other operations that are in fact drawing from the lake for over a period of five years now from a much shorter pipeline, a much less expensive cost to establish. I think it is only reasonable that I get some corroborating evidence so the originally estimated cost of installing that inlet could be justified.

The fact there are questions raised about whether or not this is an agricultural pipeline or whether or not this is for domestic quality consumption—I have to ask the question about how far the province should go in establishment of a pipeline to provide domestic quality water, or potable water, for consumption to agricultural homes in one area, knowing full well that there are literally hundreds of other areas in this province who feel that they should be entitled to that service as well. I have drawn every drop of drinking water to my farm since 1939, when my father moved to that particular farm. The previous farm that he was in, a mile away from where I lived, had salt in the water so it was unsuitable for human consumption.

I do not intend to take any lectures about not knowing the problems of having potable water on the farm. We went to dugouts and to shallow wells to finally get some better water, but the dugouts in our area fortunately could hold water because there were clay bottoms. The

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fact is that there are vast areas of the province on both sides of that aquifer that have exactly the same problem that Plumas and Gladstone have. They do not have good quality water, and they are going to demand the same pipelines that we are putting in under this proposal.

\* (1530)

You can put in agricultural water which is done in many of the pipelines in southern Manitoba, quite suitable for livestock use but not necessarily up to household standards. That water could go in, and need not have all of the expenses that would be associated with treatment and filtration going into household situations. This pipeline was sold to the people in the Plumas area as having water delivered to the farmstead at 2 cents a gallon. I do not know whether the department actually told them that or not, but that is the impression that they have. For 2 cents a gallon they can have potable water delivered to their houses. For a \$5,000 or \$6,000 a household hook-up, they will get that quality of water at that price. Frankly, I do not believe that comes anywhere near that. Unless the Government is going to pay all of the cost, we will end up making it so the municipality will not be able to afford its costs.

Those are the kind of questions that I believe I deserve a little bit better answer to as a responsible administrator of this Government. I can tell you that they are lined up at my door wanting pipelines in every other direction around that aquifer. I am not going to put on record the names of the people who have approached me because they would be offended that I would put that into the public debate, but I can tell you that goes into my thought process when I deal with this problem.

I think that the Member is being somewhat mischievous in approaching this in the manner that he is. He did not have the intestinal fortitude to deal with the problems of Lake Dauphin in his own backyard, and if he just stays where he is long enough this Government will deal with it. Then we will see whether it is Plumas or Dauphin that is worried about the type of leadership it is getting from this Government; it will be neither. His seat will be every bit as much risk as any other seat in this province. He will no longer be able to sit there and say that Dauphin is his strength, because the people of Dauphin are sick and tired of the inaction they have seen from the previous administration, particularly those around Lake Dauphin who have waited for years for some kind of leadership from Government. I would suggest that he stay tuned and keep his seat belt fastened.

**Mr. Plohman:** The Minister has obviously raised a number of issues that beg debate here, most of them irrelevant to the issue that we are discussing basically, and that is the need for this water supply. The Minister was talking about his own farm and his isolated situation where he had a well that he could get water from and the next door neighbour did not because they had salt in it or whatever the case was.

Here we are talking about a whole area. They all agree there is no water there. It is not like they have

not tried drilling all over the place and tried to get water. I mean, they have exhausted their efforts in that regard. So we are talking about a whole area. It is not an isolated situation. So the Minister's example is not a good example. We are talking about a serious problem that is widespread in that area and the Minister agrees with that.

Now if it is just the price that he is worried about, well, then if the actual cost is going to be slightly less or slightly more, put forward a proposal to the people there that it is going to cost them 3 cents a gallon or four or whatever it is. I am sure many of those people would be glad to pay for it; they would like to have the water.- (interjection)- It is not the 2 cents. The Minister says 2 cents, whatever it is.- (interjection)- Well, you might come forward and say, the Minister could come forward to the people there and say, this is what the actual cost is, we are prepared to subsidize it to this extent. But to ensure that the people do not come forward all over the province asking for aqueducts and pipelines, there is a basic cost that is going to have to be borne by the users of the system. Therefore, that will dampen the demand there.

If the Minister does not agree with the costs at the present time, is he saying now that the study is going to determine what the actual costs are per gallon over how long is the period of time? What terms of reference has he given these consultants, or is he not getting that information at all from the study? He is only going to find out how far the aqueduct or the source has to be into the lake. Is that the extent, and is he going to have these experts tell him whether agriculture uses should be paid for by the Government but household use should not. I do not believe that is the kind of thing that those people can tell him, yet he raised that as potable water versus agriculture uses as to whether they should be supplied free of charge to communities.

I do not think that is what the consultants are going to determine for him, are they? That does not seem within the mandate, or is he now getting these consultants to determine that kind of a policy question for this Minister? I think the Minister is being mischievous in trying to provide the kind of irrelevant responses that do not deal with this specific issue.

When I asked him specifics, what are the terms of reference for this fictional consultant? -(interjection)- Well, okay, the consultant is real, then tell us. The Minister has a responsibility to tell this House who the consultant is, who are these experts who are going to override all these other experts that the Minister has providing him advice? Who are these people? The Minister is not able to, or else he is unwilling to in this House. Secondly, he has not told us what the terms of reference are going to be, and I ask the Minister to give a commitment to table it.

In response to his question about Lake Dauphin, the fact is that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is now moving forward on the Lake Dauphin Advisory Committee, the appointment of that board. It will be done, I understand, on December 5 in Dauphin, I hope I can be at that meeting. I give the Minister credit for moving forward on the proposal that we had already developed but not finalized at the time that Jim Walding

stood up in this House, and that was to vote with the Tories at that time.

Now we do not know where Jim Walding is at the present time, but when he stood up in this House and took that decision to vote against the Government he stopped a lot of things. He stopped a lot of things cold right at that point, did he not? The Minister knows very well, and the people of Dauphin, it is not enough for this Minister who happens to be from the neighbouring constituency of Ste. Rose to bring in the very close politics of this situation to say that somehow there was inaction by the former Government. We were moving forward with that proposal. We had it all ready for naming of that committee. Where the Minister is at right now, he has had the intestinal fortitude to move forward more than his colleague who was the Minister in the previous number of months of this Government where he refused to move forward with an initiative that was on his desk when he came in.

This Minister is willing to move forward and I give him credit for that. I can tell this Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings)—and I am saying the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), the one who has the intestinal fortitude to move forward—does not know the facts if he thinks that people in Dauphin are going to believe the fiction that he is coming forward with that there was no action. They were kept informed as to the status of that advisory board and the committee and the action we were taking. They will not swallow any garbage that this Minister wants to put out now about inaction on this issue. I feel quite confident that they know what the status was, and they know where the Government was heading with the action that we were proposing at that particular time.

I am pleased to see the Government moving forward now and the stewardship of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) on this issue. Let me conclude on this issue. It is worth hours of debate because it is that serious. I know that other Members have questions to ask the Minister of the Environment. Let me conclude by once again reiterating my request from the Minister for the terms of reference for this study that is being undertaken by these experts, so that we have an understanding of the kinds of things the Government wants answered by these experts. We can get a better understanding if we want to have any confidence in this Minister insofar as where he is heading on this issue and whether he is seriously looking at the other concerns of this issue. We want to have that proof in the terms of reference of that study, even if the report is not ready yet, the terms of reference and the people who are doing that study. Can the Minister not provide that to the House? Does he not think that is his responsibility to provide that information?

\* (1540)

There is no reason why that has to be confidential. Those people will have to be out there working. What is it that he wants to find out from them? Where is the printed proposal so we can see exactly what the Minister is looking for?

**Mr. Cummings:** I do not have it so I cannot table it. He is asking the wrong department.

I think he needs to take a little bit more caution in how he has, all of a sudden, leapt onto one side of this issue, if it is anything other than political opportunism on his part.

Little does he understand that we are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, for example, in one of the local communities, I can identify it, in the Town of Neepawa.

Their cost for treating water is quite high, and the water was quite undrinkable this summer. They sit within a very short distance of the edge of the aquifer. When other people enquired on my behalf about what would happen if Neepawa chose to put a well field in above Lake Irwin so they could get water they would not need to treat, and they would not need to filter, they said, oh, that would be a great idea, but we would have to lower the level of Lake Irwin.

Think about that for a couple of minutes, a recreational facility with cottaging there, ostensibly with a dam built to provide agricultural supply, but we would cut off the water before it got into the lake, and we would ultimately lower the level of the lake. It is the same principle that applies to those who live west of the aquifer and have never had water that they could supply on an ongoing basis to their farmsteads.

What reason do they have not to also access the aquifer for potable water above the lake? Those are the kind of questions that are just a little bit troubling to this Minister, and I can tell you that a decision will be made. The decision will be one that we will all have to live with.

I think that in terms of Lake Dauphin—obviously one of the long-term problems of Lake Dauphin has been control of the levels. It is something that is ultimately going to have to be dealt with. I feel for the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) in this issue, but because it has bordered on part of my constituency for the last three years and still will continue in some respect to impact on my constituents, the fact is that there is land and the delta around the lake that should have been utilized years ago to stop the silting problem. That Government chose not to deal with it, and it is a difficult issue.

Now, if we get a board in place perhaps they can start dealing with these concerns and get on with the reality that if we are going to attempt to manage these assets, these natural assets, we have already interfered with the establishment of channels and dams, we had better now make sure that our management adjacent to that and the operating regimes that we use, are also correct.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Chairman, the issue of Lake Dauphin is one that has troubled Governments over the years and certainly is one that we had made a great deal of progress toward finding the mechanisms to find the solutions. It is not an easy task and we recognize that.

It does not necessarily come cheaply, but there has to be changes in practices in the way we have operated in the past, with more and more drainage rushing down through the construction of roads and ditches and so

on, rushing down the water very quickly in a very short period of time, building up silt and causing problems in the lake, as one of the problems that the Minister has mentioned. There are ways to get around that, and they have been identified through some studies that have been done with the PFRA, jointly with the Agri-Food Agreement that was in place.

There have been some major pilot projects undertaken to determine the effectiveness of combating that issue. That is something that was accomplished during the time that we were in Government, and the major studies that were done as well and, as I said, the threshold of having the board put in place to undertake what we felt would be significant action to oversee the overall program for the lake.

I want to, as I said, conclude this matter dealing with the issue of the West Lake proposal, because that is the one I raised here. I would like to discuss the whole issue of Lake Dauphin more extensively with the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) when his Estimates come forward, and we will discuss it extensively, hopefully, at that particular time if there is time in the Estimates process to do so.

I think what the Minister said is he has to determine the priorities for this water, and it is troubling him as to what the situation might be. He mentions Neepawa and whether they should go into a well that would provide this kind of water that would ultimately lower the lake level—Lake Irwin did he say?

Now that is an issue that is quite aside from the terms of reference of this consultant, I would think, or is he getting this consultant to determine this?

So what the Minister has inadvertently raised in this House is that he has the consultant doing some specific things from the Department of Rural Development. We do not know what they are, and the Minister said he does not have the terms of reference so he cannot table them, and I am asking the wrong Minister. So I will get back to that by saying simply, can he get that terms of reference and table it, make a commitment to table it in this House, so we know how extensive that area is going to be covered?

Can the Minister then tell us what else is going on within Government? Is he saying then that the water policies that the Governments are now undertaking that began in our Government and has been followed up as an initiative by this Government in determining water policy in this province under Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environment all working together, and Rural Development I would assume, are those officials and that process determining some of these things that this Minister is having trouble with under this proposal?

If that is the case, clearly the consultant's report is not going to provide the answers that are needed, and we have ourselves a lot longer process and delay than he admitted in the first place. I think what we are really waiting for ultimately is for the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) to come forward and give her okay on this if she is still the MLA at that particular time. Is that not the real issue? Is that not really what the Minister has to deal with here? What are the answers

that he is seeking, and what process does he have in place to get those answers? Is there any hope at the end of the pipeline for these people?

**An Honourable Member:** There is always hope, John, always hope.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, I think you are going to be hoping a long time. As long as this Member for Gladstone has anything to say about it, it does not matter how many studies the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) does. I do not know when he is going to be satisfied, because I believe he has not asked the consultants the right questions. He has raised a bunch of other things but the consultants are not answering them.—(interjection)—

The Minister is shaking his head saying, no, those consultants are not going to deal with all these policy questions. Who is dealing with them, and when will he have those answers?

**Mr. Cummings:** Well, obviously policy matters will be decided by the elected officials of Government, not by consultants.

I indicated the area in which the consultants would be working, and I think the Member is now starting to bluster, because he probably now understands the complexity of dealing with the massive concerns related to long-term drought proofing of this province. It is not quite as simple as it sounds.

The decision to get water into the Plumas-Gladstone area is additionally complicated by the fact that apparently the Member is unaware of the fact that there is apparently a sizable aquifer in the Ogilvie area which supplies a tank loading station to the Plumas area, long ago predicted that it was going to go dry. Apparently there was another well sunk not very long ago, and it is still within three feet of what its normal height would be.

\* (1550)

Now we are so well informed about the aquifers in this province, how come no one knows the capacity of that one and its ability to supply? How come if we knew that one was about to go dry that we were wrong in our predictions?

There are a lot of unanswered questions out there, and the consultant will not supply all of the answers. There are some specifics that we are interested in getting a more detailed answer to, and those are the instructions that the consultant will be following. I do not want the consultant to simply redo what the departments have done. If the Member is implying that is my objective, it is not.

I have stated clearly that we need to make sure that we are comfortable with the figures related to alternatives and that we are comfortable with the ultimate long-term policy decisions that will flow from long distance exports out of aquifers. That is not necessarily anything that has been clearly dealt with in the past in this province and the ramifications of that need to be fully understood. That is not, I would

repeat, a mandate of the consultant. That is the mandate of Government to decide that.

**Mr. Plohman:** I just get more confusing answers to every question I ask instead of getting clarification. I do not know how the Minister is going to make decisions on this by spring if he has all of these other issues he is going to have answered before he takes a decision on this specific project.- (interjection)- He has blind faith, the Member for Steinbach wants me to have. In fact the Minister has just proven by his answers in bringing in all of these other points that it is simply a delaying tactic. He knows very well he will not have all of these policies developed and all of these answers before the spring in the first place.

Why is he delaying on this whole process? Why does he not tell the Member for Gladstone that he has a job to do, he has a responsibility as Minister and he wants to get on with that job and he is not going to be a part of the petty politics that she wants him to be a part of?

In fact when he brings in a red herring about another aquifer somewhere else, there are many different kinds of things where people know a lot about, say, soils in a particular area, because the Department of Agriculture has mapped in detailed surveys in some more agriculture intensive areas of this province. They have undertaken detailed surveys. In other areas that are not so agriculturally intensive they have not done as much survey work and they do not know as much about the soils there.

It is the same with the aquifers. They know about this particular aquifer; there may be some other aquifers in this province they do not know about to the same extent and the same detail. There has not been as much testing and ground wells drilled over the years so they do not have the kind of data.

The Minister is throwing in a red herring when he brings up another aquifer near Plumas. The fact is, there is clear information on the Assiniboine delta aquifer and that is the one we are dealing with here that the Minister should be following up.

I conclude that the Minister has not given satisfactory answers here. It is woefully inadequate. He seems to be skirting around and I guess obviously since he is in, like I said at the beginning, between a rock and a hard place on this issue and the political pressures that are being applied to him, he really has no reasonable answers. That is why he is skating all over the place. He would be a good hockey player or a figure skater I would think. Maybe that is another occupation for him when he leaves this temporary position that he has at this particular time.

Will he table the information, the terms of reference for these consultants and the name of those consultants?

**Mr. Cummings:** I already answered that, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister did not answer that question. He has skirted around it and he did not say he would table it. He said he did not have it here today. I ask him whether he will provide that.

The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) provided all kinds of information, we asked questions from him, he brought forward this information a week later or a couple of days later or a couple of weeks later, he provided that information. There are many ways. The Minister can just see me in the hallway and give me a copy of it. He does not have to say, I do not have it here. What an evasive response to a question. I simply ask him if he will provide me with a copy of the terms of reference and soon.

**Mr. Cummings:** I said before, he is asking the wrong Minister.

**Mr. Chairman:** Shall 1.(b)(1) pass?—pass. The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

**Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa):** Mr. Chairman, I have just some general questions that I would like to ask of the Minister of Environment.

Following along one of the comments that the Minister made in his answer to the previous questioner where the Minister was referring to unanswered questions, which actually focused on the fact that there are many, many aspects of the environmental process and of environmental impacts which we do not know the answers to and that is what he was referring to.

Also, considering the fact that the consultant's report that he was referring to might have had terms of reference that might not actually address some of the broader issues, the questions that I have to ask of the Minister deal more in general with northern Manitoba as a whole.

We are, and I am sure the Minister is also aware that there are environmental monitoring stations that are put into place that attempt to acquire a base line of data. I would like to ask the Minister if there is in his department a plan at this moment or perhaps it has been implemented already whereby a general base line for the province is being acquired?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, the Member is correct. There are monitoring operations going on across the province which include the northern sections of the province for air and water monitoring. As well the department is working with numerous other departments and have started work putting together the information for a state of environment report which will in fact provide the base-line data from which we will deal with our environment from the fall of 1991 on when the State of Environment report is finally produced.

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

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** The Minister references the base-line data for the state of the environment report and in his answer also referred to air quality and water quality. Are those the only sectors that are being monitored, or is it a broader range of monitoring?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, there is also some land-based monitoring, but I guess we have recently signed a federal agreement on monitoring which has allowed us to expand some of our stations. The land-based

monitoring would be more closely associated with where there are smelting operations going on. There is also one other type of monitoring going on which is right within the Town of Flin Flon, associated with Hudson Bay, but that is very specifically related to emissions from their stack.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** If as you say you have recently signed an agreement with the federal Government on monitoring, does this agreement go to the stage of joint funding or is this a case of specific stations set up to do the monitoring? Who actually is acquiring the data? Is it a provincial agency that is acquiring the data that is then being fed into the Department of the Environment, or is it the federal Government that is doing the monitoring and then sharing this data with the provincial Government?

**Mr. Cummings:** Monitoring is done by the province but it is shared nationally.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** In response to some of the questions in Question Period on the Island Falls Dam many months ago, one of the comments the Minister made which I happened to agree with emphatically is the fact that Manitoba is downstream of almost all the drainage basins. We tend to be the focal point at the receiving end. I am wondering if in the selection of the monitoring for water quality and quantity, all of the incoming streams crossing the Ontario border, crossing the North Dakota border, and crossing the Saskatchewan border are being monitored.

**Mr. Cummings:** All of the major ones are.

\* (1600)

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** How are they being monitored and in what fashion?

**Mr. Cummings:** The monitoring of the quality and quantity is done on a regular basis.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I guess I was not too clear on my question. The regular, yes, I assumed it was regular. Did he say monthly, daily, or is there a kind of periodicity that we are actually referring to?

**Mr. Cummings:** I am informed by the department that it can vary from station to station. I presume that would depend on the perceived urgency of the information that was needed, but it varies from station to station. I should point out that this is one of the areas where we do I believe jointly share with other departments some of the responsibility in having the information gathered, particularly in the North.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Do these monitorings of these rivers also include turbidity?

**Mr. Cummings:** Turbidity would be monitored as well. Obviously the manner in which the samples are taken I suppose would give some reading in that respect, but yes, that is one of the things that is monitored.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Are any of these major river systems or major streams also monitored at selected

stations within the confines of Manitoba, not just necessarily at the borders where the waters cross into the province, but also throughout?

For example let us take say at Grand Rapids the kind of water quality running into Lake Winnipeg and the kind of water that comes out of Lake Winnipeg and as this changes either the kind of water quality that was historic in the Nelson or that may have changed significantly since the Nelson has been shall we say domesticated. I was just wondering if either particular stations that are selected here, or are these stations that if the monitoring does take place, are they done more like Manitoba Hydro and then shared.

I realize when I ask a specific question, I just want to know where the water quality, where the monitoring does take place, and who is basically in charge of it.

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, specifically to the North, and I presume that is what you might be the most interested in. Natural Resources does the monitoring and we do the monitoring collection. We do the testing and analysis of the samples. I have seen a map with the sites marked on it, but obviously I would have to show you a map to show you the number of sites.

I would have to be fair and say that it is not a huge number of sites. On the other hand, it is fairly costly to maintain an ongoing and detailed testing, but there are a significant number from the map that I saw. The department has a water quality section with some quite highly qualified people working within there and they are responsible for the interpretation and results.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I realize that sometimes, because we tend to have different critic areas, we tend to walk over the same ground from time to time.

Would it be possible for the Minister to either, because he says it is sharing with responsibility with other departments, if I or the critics could be supplied with a list of the stations, the maps and the data that is essentially flowing out of there? Not the raw data, because I think that is just too much, but for the interpretation that flows from this, and just basically we can sort of take a look at these ourselves and evaluate ourselves what some of the long-term effects might be.

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, that can be done.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Thank you very much.

With a new line of questioning, because I do not wish to take up too much time, when I started earlier I also referenced the fact that part of the line of questioning came out of the question asked in the House regarding Island Falls Dam. I know we have asked in the House whether we, with respect to the downstream impact of this one particular project on the part of Saskatchewan Power, which has according to the traditional history and the oral history of the people of Pukatawagan had considerable negative impacts with respect to water quantity.

I am not going to comment on water quality, because I think the monitoring that is being done at the Churchill

River site near the boundary for water quality only started in 1960, but the water quantity monitoring apparently goes back as far as 1928, which is now being done by the Department of the Environment in Canada as opposed to in the province.

One of the things that the, I believe it is the Cumberland House Band in Saskatchewan, one of the things that they did with their power company was to actually file an injunction which, although it was not within the courts, but although the thing did not actually go into the courts for a full-scale hearing, a negotiated settlement was reached between Saskatchewan Power and Cumberland House regarding downstream impacts. It is this of course which has led to some of the actions of the Mathias Colomb Band at Pukatawagan with respect to Saskatchewan Power again.

I know that in the answers in the House the Minister referenced the fact that there are some kind of developments occurring now or agreements between the Departments of the Environment across the country. Some sort of either shared data or some sort of shared methodologies are going to be implemented which should in the future preclude any such shall we say subsequent impacts. I would think that we realize now that nothing that we do anymore, particularly with respect to Hydro developments, can be classified as environmentally benign. They all have damage of one sort or another.

What we have now seen in the last number of years, we have seen a lot of compensation cases come forward where the entire redress is in retrospect to the fact that something was not taken into consideration, something was not taken into account before the project was allowed to continue and it is now that with the actual experiences that these people now have, we find that compensation is the order. That is precisely what also was the issue with the Cumberland House Band and Saskatchewan Power, compensation for downstream impacts.

I am wondering if the Minister could perhaps give me a little bit more information as to the status of what is happening with the Mathias Colomb situation and Saskatchewan Power? What is the status of that thing at this moment?

**Mr. Cummings:** To try to sum it up as briefly as I can, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) and myself met about a week and a half ago with all of the people in that area, including Pukatawagan, Lac Brochet, and the communities. The message that we received was that they are anxious to talk about, not only the dam on the Churchill River, but also the one—Whitesands is it, that dams up Reindeer Lake which has the problems for Lac Brochet.

I have had a number of meetings with the Environment Minister from Saskatchewan, the new Environment Minister. I flew to Regina one morning shortly after he assumed responsibilities to meet with him to express our concerns on this issue. I met with him again in Ottawa at the First Ministers' Conference and he agreed at that point to accede to meet with the representatives of that area to discuss the impacts of that dam. I do not put that forward as a solution.

\* (1610)

As I told the people of the communities and the bands when we met with them, we are not predicting what will come from that meeting, but at least we have the Saskatchewan Minister of Environment to come to a meeting with the affected peoples and he can either give them some answers or at the very least he will certainly hear their concerns first-hand. From that we will then work actively to try and achieve a solution to the concerns that they have.

They make a very strong case, a case that we have put forward to Saskatchewan, that they have not looked at all of the licensing that they need for this dam, that they have probably put themselves in a potentially embarrassing situation by not calling for public hearings on this.

We were asked and agreed to provide support to the communities in developing an agenda for this meeting with the Minister of Environment, Mr. Hodgins. We are not doing that in the form of putting forward grants to hire consultants, we are providing departmental support out of the Department of Justice and Environment to allow them to create the type of agenda that they want for this meeting with Mr. Hodgins. I am not sure whether they have accessed that yet. The date has not been set, although the Minister assured me it would be within two to three weeks. In fact he told me two weeks. I have suggested that three weeks would be a more appropriate time frame, but I have not heard that has been officially set up. I will be making sure that it is. We will develop our strategy after that meeting.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Just to follow-up, in the discussions with Saskatchewan, what the Minister is referring to is essentially a bilateral kind of approach, that he is talking to his counterpart in Saskatchewan and either through moral suasion or just basically a gentleman's agreement, they are coming to a meeting of the minds. Is this method of dealing with problems in other jurisdictions the rule or is the Minister attempting through his counterparts in the country to develop a method whereby all transborder disputes or all transborder impacts or all transborder difficulties can be aired out in a manner that is satisfactory to the public on both sides of the border?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, there are two aspects to the question that I want to answer. First of all, specifically with this issue and with the Shoal Lake, with Rafferty and with the issues affecting us from the South, each issue has been dealt with independently and bilaterally as you refer to it.

In the case of Churchill River, it is our indication that the communities agree that a bilateral approach is the correct first step. Obviously the Native bands, who have official status with the federal department of their own, have an impressive amount of information that they have put together themselves through federal departments on what their rights might be in relationship to federal statutes. Ultimately I suppose the federal Government may be drawn into this.

I chose to get the Government of Saskatchewan involved because of the fact that there was a new



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Minister appointed. I felt that he needed at least a reasonable opportunity to realize what he had walked into with this particular situation. I must admit that I think his department is giving him bad advice, and I told him so. He has at least conceded to meet and it was his offer to meet. I do attach some importance to that, the fact that he would agree to meet with Manitoba communities and bands in order to discuss this.

The other aspect of the question is the fact that Manitoba has been taking a lead role in developing principles of interjurisdictional co-operation for environmental matters across this country.

At the Deputy Minister's level, Deputy Elton has led a committee of deputies, and as a result of that Manitoba presented at the Committee of Environment Ministers their proposals on principles of interjurisdictional co-operation that were put together by our deputies. We were able to get all jurisdictions, including the federal Government, to agree. Those were then taken forward to the First Ministers' Conference where they were accepted in spirit and direction and sent back to us as Environment Ministers to continue to develop in a fairly short time frame before the 1st of April for eventual acceptance, we hope, at a further First Ministers' Conference or at least by all jurisdictions across the province.

That is only a first step, but it is a recognition of the interjurisdictional problems that we have in relationship to environment. It is not just transboundary waters. That one may ultimately be one of the toughest ones to conclude because of federal responsibility, navigable waterways and so on. Environmental concerns do not stop with boundaries and we need to be assured that between the various jurisdictions we deal with them on a basis of environmental problems and not on some jurisdictional squabble or disagreement on technicality. Obviously the transboundary water issue is different and in some ways more difficult to deal with than, for example, emissions into the air or water. They can be identified and traced, whereas we talk about development of dams, we talk about hydro development and you reference the fact that is no longer benign.

\* (1620)

Certainly we get into all sorts of difficulties with the siting of dams today that were not even appreciated 20 years ago. Yet very certainly, the way our society is developing, we are going to need more and more energy. How we are going to get it is very much part of all of the environmental issues that we have to deal with and transboundary is only part of it. Interjurisdictional is very much a part of it and Manitoba has taken, I believe, quite a pro-active role in the last short while. I am very pleased to say that we are starting to get some results.

As our Canadian association grows and the board clearly defined federal and provincial responsibilities in this area, there will be a lot more ability to deal with environmental problems in a more expeditious manner if we do not have to have jurisdictional concerns. That may very well have nothing to do with boundaries because it could have similar responsibilities, as we

were talking about in transportation earlier with your colleague, where the feds clearly have responsibility and in that issue that he raised I think it is fairly clearly delineated.

There are other areas where if the federal authority comes in and superimposes or second guesses a provincial process, we have an immediate breakdown that causes all sorts of problems for business, because they do not know who to go to for their regulator. I know it is a long way away from the Reindeer Lake issue, but it demonstrates how all of these things have much more than just a very local impact.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I will probably conclude with this question.

The Minister referenced to the fact that Manitoba tends to be in the lead and I think that this is a very healthy situation for us to be considering where we are, particularly with respect to downstream flows and also with the fact that much of what we get comes from, say, the West, either climatically or we do not end up having some of the acid rain problems that we have in the East, but still there are aspects of transborder problems that we may have to contend with at one point in time and environmental impacts do not respect borders.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

I know that even three or four years ago I played a very small role in a conference regarding the problem of the environment and the law where the problem of jurisdiction actually was explored with some specificity. Just following on what the Minister was saying, and recognizing that his answer, yes, was a goodly distance away from Reindeer Lake, if we may make the next comment just a little bit further away yet.

Because of the fact that the transborder issue which tends to affect provincial jurisdictions primarily, and yet you do tend to have some requirement by the federal Government to sort of either develop a set of criteria which can be applied across the country, or perhaps set either some funding guidelines or whatever where we find that the delineation between jurisdiction is rather grey rather than black and white, does the Minister see the co-operation for transborder disputes to be more in the case of something done at the federal level with all provinces co-operating and developing one standard for the country, or does he think that for the next little while we are still going to have to be looking at province versus province or province versus state?

**Mr. Cummings:** I would anticipate that the quickest way to end any immediate problems is to have bilateral agreement on how they are concluded. While the problems we have—it is very evident right in this Legislature regarding Shoal Lake, many people recommended that we go immediately to the federal authorities because it would seem to have levers that the provinces did not have, one to the other. While that has some merit, obviously there are limitations to that as well.

Underwater quality, for example, federal regulation would relate more to fish than it would to drinking and

would not necessarily answer the questions that we would have had in that area. It might have been under transportation which again would not have recognized the quality problems that we were concerned about. In the near future, co-operation provides the quickest solution. If it cannot be achieved, obviously then there have to be broader sources of legislative ability to deal with these.

I do not like the idea of having consistently to refer to the federal authority where there is a disagreement between two provinces. Obviously when you are dealing with a state, we cannot deal other than by Memorandum of Understanding with jurisdictions outside of Canada and that creates an even larger problem, but by working co-operatively to meet reasonable goals you can acquire the end that you hoped to. When co-operation breaks down, the only other course that we have is to appeal to the federal authorities. That is why this interjurisdictional statement of principles I hope will lead to a clear delineation of responsibility for environmental matters and get away from this kind of a murky relationship that there is between two jurisdictions. Whether or not, when one jurisdiction has waived its responsibility, i.e., if Saskatchewan has waived its responsibility in relationship to Churchill River, if we have any recourse to force them other than to using the federal authority, it is not the first choice.

**Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas):** Mr. Chairman, there has been quite a few questions asked today about water. I guess maybe I should continue on that theme, because as was stated by previous questioners, that is a very precious commodity and I want to ask some questions in the same area.

The Government has put out a booklet on Land and Water Strategy which I thought was an excellent public relations effort. I think that the public responded well to the public meetings that were being held, and I am wondering did the Minister receive much of a feedback from the people who did come out to those meetings? Did you receive much of a feedback on the booklets that were handed out at those meetings?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, there is now a compendium of all of the information that we received which have been assembled into a format similar to what the Member has in his hands there and we will take the form in response to the public input and take the form as to say what you said and how the policies will now be structured as a result of that and further consultation.

**Mr. Harapiak:** When will this new format, this new booklet, or the process, when will it become public again? At what time frame do you see it coming out and having public participation?

**Mr. Cummings:** It is very close.

\* (1630)

**Mr. Harapiak:** When we had our New Democrat environment meetings across the province the land strategy was one of the subjects that was quite often raised. People were extremely upset, not only from

people in surrounding areas of rural Manitoba but also some of the people who are actually employed or participate in the agricultural sector. They were concerned at the amount of erosion that was happening, because the farmers seemed to have to clear every bit of bush off their land and any bit of low land that was there which retained moisture, they had to drain it and make sure that they could be working almost every acre that was available, and I think that now they are starting to realize the mistakes that were made in the past.

There were many recommendations made on how we should be encouraging the building or the planting of shelter belts and also possibly giving some tax breaks to farmers who would let their low-lying land go back into water retention holes. I am wondering, has the Minister given any consideration to giving farmers some tax breaks in order that they would be retaining some water holes on their land.

**Mr. Cummings:** The Member probably knows there was a considerable amount of time, including mine, that went into the development of the Assessment Reform package, and certainly there was a great deal of discussion about how you leverage the required or the desired responses using taxation. But in fact a better way to approach it is to have a fair and reasonable assessment program and then deal with these other issues as issues in and of themselves.

There is a recognition within the tax system today, and will be under the new assessment program as well, that land that is not usable, land that is wetland or wasteland attracts little or no assessment value, but when you receive an assessment notice for a quarter section of land and it says that your assessment is based on your recent purchase, and that purchase is \$60,000 for a quarter section, all of a sudden there are a lot of other factors that enter into that, one of which may well be the fact that it is adjacent to property that the landowner already has and is willing to pay extra to get it.

So there has to be other mechanisms by which we could recognize the retention of wetlands and wastelands, and the one program which has been going along very well right now in relationship to that type of initiative is HELP where there are lands being set aside in a designated area of the province right now, around Shoal Lake, there is a lot of work being done there and a lot of land has been set aside there. The Member is nodding knowingly because I am sure he understands the background of that program.

But that is an example of how this could be approached, other than through using the pure taxation system. As we go to a value-driven assessment system, or sales-driven assessment system, the environmental aspects of what we are doing will have to be recognized in a slightly different manner.

**Mr. Harapiak:** The Minister talks about HELP which I think is an excellent program and we were the Government when it was first set up and I think there have been some good results and excellent co-operation among the municipal levels of Government,

the farmers and the Government. I am wondering if the conservation districts, are any new conservation districts being brought on stream, or are any more being contemplated?

**Mr. Cummings:** I would defer those types of questions to the other Ministers who are responsible, including Natural Resources and Rural Development, but I will attempt to answer on the broad base that there are additional districts being contemplated. I would want to make one statement, however, about additional conservation districts, or conservation districts as a whole, and that is that I believe they have started to re-examine their mandate. I have sat in on meetings where this has been discussed, and from an environmental point of view they are now becoming very much aware of their responsibility, whereas before they were seen to be pro-active and they were dealing with an issue that was relative to the opening up of the communities in which they were located because there were problems in relationship to drainage, for example. They have now taken a much more pro-active role from the conservation end and environmental point of view.

To that extent, even in my own area I would be pleased to report for the record that I have started planting trees in conjunction with the conservation district in my home area and I would expect that as the agricultural community continues to develop that we are going to see more and more demand for that type of assistance from our conservations districts.

**Mr. Harapiak:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister makes a very interesting point. He is, on his own, planting trees on his farm and I have a very great love for the forest myself and I have been planting trees on my farm land. But I had some leased land for about a 25-year period and unfortunately the forest took over because I was not using it quite extensively enough and the forest gained control. I attempted to purchase the land for use as forest land and the department at that time discouraged me because they thought that, seeing my brother was the Minister of Agriculture at that time it would not be appropriate, myself being in Government, it would not be appropriate for me to purchase it and use it for a new use, rather than for grazing.

Would the Minister—I notice that does not come under his responsibility directly—but would the Minister be supportive of selling Crown lands for the use of forests?

**Mr. Cummings:** I presume I am going to have to take responsibility for this answer as well, inasmuch as I am part of the Provincial Land Use Committee and Sustainable Development Committee, and I would phrase my answer this way, that without total concurrence or agreement from those committees I would not want to purport to speak on behalf of the Government without making a decision. But I will give him an answer in this respect, that I know that there are at least a number of us who believe that it is about time that the opportunity for private forestry was given in this province and that we should be in fact looking at that as an option for the use of some private and public lands.

I would be more than interested to know what type of problems this would present and what it would mean in the long range in terms of sustainable development because I think it has some real possibilities.

**Mr. Harapiak:** That is very encouraging. I think that with the new initiatives being taken by Repap and the need for hardwoods, I think that there are many people who previously utilized marginal land for pasture and I think those people are now recognizing that there is some opportunity. Of course it is going to have to be on a long term, you are not going to be realizing any immediate paybacks, but I think that we all have a responsibility to make an investment in our children's or grandchildren's future and I am pleased that the Minister is at least open to having discussions about a process of that sort and I will be pursuing that further on a personal basis.

\* (1640)

One of the shortcomings of your first booklet that came out, and I recognize it was not under the Minister of Environment's signature, it was under the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) at that time and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), there was no mention of northern Manitoba and there was later a supplement to the first book that came out on water. I know the Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger) raised the question earlier on where the Reindeer Lake project stood, and I know you met with the Minister of Environment from Saskatchewan, but would you be willing to hold environmental hearings with the Clean Environment Commission on that water project that is there at this time?

**Mr. Cummings:** It would be difficult for Manitoba to have environmental impact studies on a project in another jurisdiction. That is the same problem we had with Shoal Lake and development there. You might argue that the impacts can be recognized on our side of the boundary, but the site itself falls under the regulation of the Saskatchewan Government. Therefore, to ultimately have any impact it should be their authority that would hold hearings. I am not sure if I understood the question totally.

**Mr. Harapiak:** Mr. Chairman, I think it is the same type of a problem that we are faced with on the Shoal Lake area. It is out of our jurisdiction and the Ontario Government is holding hearings. They are going to be holding hearings here in Winnipeg. The Minister shared that with us yesterday.

I think it would be appropriate for us as a province to be advocates for those people who are being affected by that project in Manitoba and encourage the Saskatchewan Government to hold environmental hearings and hold them in Manitoba, much the same as they are going to be holding the hearings on Shoal Lake in Manitoba. I think that the Minister should become an advocate for the people in Lac Brochet who are being affected by that project and have hearings held here.

**Mr. Cummings:** I could not agree more with the Member for The Pas that in fact what should happen

is that Saskatchewan will hold environmental hearings and that they would come to Manitoba with some portion of those hearings or make them readily available to people impacted on the Manitoba side of the border. How we achieve that, how we lever Saskatchewan to do that, remains to be seen.

The other problem of course that is associated with that is after that process is done there are people who will say, well, you did not have any input into the structuring of the process. The fact that you agreed to go ahead with that process, does that then mean that you are going to have accept the results of it? Obviously one cannot wave the right to be dissatisfied with conclusions, but I have very quickly learned in environmental problems that there is no way that under the majority of situations that everyone will be satisfied with the process.

We have a first step if we can get Saskatchewan to have hearings on this dam site. How they scope them on the width and breadth of assessment that they are prepared to deal with I think is certainly up for discussion and ultimately whether those hearings would be able satisfy the people of the communities or some of the provincial concerns or some of the federal concerns I would be reluctant to predict right now.

**Mr. Harapiak:** If and when the hearings are held would the Minister be prepared to give some assistance to those people in order to make a good presentation to the Clean Environment Commission when those hearings are held?

**Mr. Cummings:** Could you repeat the question, please?

**Mr. Harapiak:** If and when the hearings are held would the Minister be willing to give some assistance to these communities because you have to recognize they are northern people who have limited resources because of the way they have been affected by the flooding in that area. They have limited resources. Would the Minister be willing to get some support for these people so they can make a presentation to the hearings or assist them in some other way?

**Mr. Cummings:** We have indicated that we would assist them with technical assistance. We have indicated that in preparing for the meeting with Saskatchewan that we are prepared to assist them with departmental information and personnel. I am not going to at this time commit to hiring of assistants. There may be, however, a large number of ways which we can assist through departmental resources to achieve the same goal.

**Mr. Harapiak:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister said earlier that he was dealing with some water problems in his constituency and the constituency of Swan River. The conservation district of Cowan had a proposal before the Department of Natural Resources to deal with the flooding of the Duck River, which floods practically on an annual basis. When the information came forward from the Department of Natural Resources they said that this was one of the highest-cost recovery proposals that they had seen in many years. I know the Clean

Environment Commission has had a hearing in Cowan and I believe that the results have been tabled or the results of that hearing have been given to the Minister of Environment. Where is that report at this time dealing with the Duck Mountain Water Retention?

**Mr. Cummings:** I cannot give a complete answer to the question. I believe I recall receiving the report. I cannot recall what was in it, but I believe the hearings are done and ultimately it will be dealt with within the normal time frame. I have no reason to have it flagged for taking an extraordinary amount of time to be dealt with.

**Mr. Harapiak:** Mr. Chairman, I was told that the report was in. I can understand with all the activity the Clean Environment Commission has had this year that the Minister may not be aware of all of the reports. I would hope when the report does come to the Minister and it comes to Cabinet discussions and dealing with next year's Estimates process that the Minister would, I would strongly encourage him to support that project. It is one that would help that small community with their limited agricultural land base.

They are flooded on practically an annual basis so I think it would be one that would be both supported by the Department of Natural Resources and I think it would have a pay back in a very short period of time. I hope he remembers that when it comes forward and supports it. I know that his colleague for Swan River has been asking questions of this proposal as well so I would hope that he would take the opportunity to speak to the Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell) and support that.

I was going to ask a number of questions dealing with forestry but I think that the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) wants to ask a few questions, so maybe I will not start on the forestry until another day.

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, I am informed that the Duck River Project is presently in the department where they are dealing with the issuance of a licence. This would be a departmental licence, not a ministerial licence.

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** Mr. Chairperson, I have a question for the Minister of Environment. It was last year that we all remember that there was a major explosion in the Maples area. I raised the issue with the then Minister of Environment and later on I did receive a reply from the Minister. This person, who is a 77-year-old person, was severely injured during the accident. She has several burns and I guess her both hands also suffered injury. At that time the answer was given to me it was not a provincial responsibility, they should go to the City of Winnipeg. This person did go to the City of Winnipeg and she was not given any positive response.

To date nothing has been solved and to the best my knowledge now I think they have filed suit against either the city or the provincial Government. In circumstances such like this when nobody knows who has the clear responsibility, what is the Government's policy, so that in future if there are such accidents, then the issues

can be addressed so that people do not have to go through red tape, especially for this person who is 77 years old and does not have enough money to go around. At that time even a significant amount of financial loss was there because her belongings were all over the place, and she was compromised already with her health.

If the Minister does not have information today, can he can provide me with it at a later date so that I can communicate with my constituents and let them know that the Government is doing everything possible to make sure that her case is addressed properly?

\* (1650)

**Mr. Cummings:** I do not have at hand any additional information regarding that particular incident, but I think it follows fairly logically that the city being responsible for the sewer system, the legally responsible body in this case. I am not a lawyer but free advice is worth what you pay for it. My advice to this person would have been from Day One, if I had been asked, that if they did not get a response fairly quickly from the city that they proceed to make it a civil matter. That would be the only recourse they would have through legal proceedings to try to obtain some reimbursement for injury and suffering.

Obviously, you do not advocate everything should be settled in the courts but it seems to me that would be the logical course. I have no reason to think that the province would have much more that we could do other than be sympathetic and encourage the person to deal with it in that manner.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, I certainly thank the Minister for the answer but if they have any communication from this individual, is it a possibility to share it with me so that I can communicate with the person's family that everything has been done?

My next question is in terms of the main responsibility of the Environmental Health. We have raised the issues in different ways but there is a perception out there of who is really in charge of the environmental health, is it the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), or the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), who ultimately takes the responsibility? What is this Government's policy for such an important aspect of the environment as the Minister has taken the new responsibility? Can he share with us any new initiatives they have started after he took over the office? What are the major initiatives?

**Mr. Cummings:** It is a three-way shared responsibility.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister of Environment tell us what specific initiatives they have put in place this year to make sure that the environmental, the health point of view, all the issues are addressed at the workplace safety? Number two, any environmental impact in all the aspects of the issues of the day, can the Minister of Health tell us what initiatives they have put in place?

**Mr. Cummings:** First of all, in terms of it being a shared responsibility, that is not as bad as it sounds because

there are specific responsibilities that our department assumes so that we do not have an overlap, but in fact we have areas of responsibility.

Environmental Health, we would deal with in the point of view of potable water supplies. Our health officers are also environment officers, who deal with inspection and control in that area. In doing assessment work, we make sure that environmental health or health aspects are considered, our water quality, air quality standards, dangerous goods handling and transportation. In dangerous goods handling and transportation, we take into consideration health aspects there as well. I believe there is another one which concerns air, soil and water contamination where we have to deal with emissions. Health matters would be addressed under our responsibility in those areas as well.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Chairperson, as the environmental health is one of the most important aspects now, can the Minister of Health tell us what is this Minister's relationship with the Health Advisory Network who is advising the Minister of Health on the major issues, and what kind of communication does the Minister of Environment have with the Minister of Health in terms of advising him of some of the important issues of environmental health?

**Mr. Cummings:** Interdepartmental working committee, a health environmental review committee, meets on a regular basis. Obviously as Minister, I am not part of those regular meetings but it is department to department to deal with these issues. I am informed that they meet quite regularly.

**Mr. Cheema:** I do not want to be unreasonable with this Minister, but I am asking a very specific question, the Health Advisory Network which has been formed by the Minister of Health dealing with a lot of issues. I do not think that there is even one issue the environment should not be involved in. We do not have any representation from the Ministry of Environment on that Health Advisory Network. Will he talk to the Minister of Health and discuss this issue so that the issues of the day, which are a major concern to Manitobans, can be addressed?

The second part of my question is, the Minister has said that the environmental committee meets regularly. What are their major issues they are discussing at present, and what are their plans for the future?

**Mr. Cummings:** First of all, I would not necessarily concur with the concerns of the Member about why environment was not on the Health Advisory Network. Health has the lead in this area, we have more of a regulatory responsibility in making sure that standards are kept up as they relate to environmental matters.

The Member asked a good question about what initiatives are the Department of Environment working on in connection with the Department of Health. One that is kind of a moving target and may sound like it could easily be an answer that one could give at any time but, because environmental legislation is changing

and we are introducing new regulations, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act is being enforced to a greater degree and additional parts of it are being proclaimed. That is in fact the area where we are working with Health to make sure that enforcement of that legislation is compatible with the goals of both departments.

As referencing the advisory network, I would not assume that there is a blank that is not being properly filled because there is a fairly clear delineation between the type of work that they are doing on the enforcement side that environment might very well be involved in.

**Mr. Cheema:** I do not have any difficulty with the Health Advisory Network as such. My question was very specific that since the Health Advisory Network will be advising this Minister of Health and the rest of the Cabinet on major issues, it will be a good idea to have one person from the Department of Environment to be on one of those committees because ultimately the decision which you are going to make is going to depend upon all the advice you are getting. If you can have one person there and have first hand communication, I think that will go a long way to help the Minister of Environment. I am just trying to help him on this issue.

My next question deals with the whole disposable matters in terms of the hospitals. How are the hospitals disposing of their waste products in terms of the blood products, some of the needles, and some of the bottles? How are they handling the whole disposal of discarded medication, and who is in charge of this program? I understand the questions were earlier raised by the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). Can the Minister clarify who is ultimately in charge of this program?

\* (1700)

**Mr. Chairman:** The hour being 5 p.m. and time for Private Members' Hour.

The Honourable Minister.

**Mr. Cummings:** Very quickly on that issue, the Department of Health is the regulating body on the disposal of specific waste from the hospitals.

**Mr. Chairman:** The hour being 5 p.m. and time for Private Members' Hour. Committee rise. Call in the Deputy Speaker.

## IN SESSION

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

### COMMITTEE REPORT

**Mr. Ed Helwer (Acting Chairman of Committees):** The Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again. I move, seconded by the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

## DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

### PUBLIC BILLS

### BILL NO. 2—THE LANDLORD AND TENANT AMENDMENT ACT

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion by the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Bill No. 2, The Landlord and Tenant Amendment Act; (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le louage d'immeubles), standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), who has two minutes remaining. Stand?

Is there leave for the Bill to remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources? (Agreed)

### BILL NO. 4—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (2)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 4, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route).

Is there leave to have the Bill remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)? Agreed?

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**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** Virtually every one of these Private Members' Bills is standing in the name of Government Members. In all honesty, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we are really interested in seeing the business of the House proceed, if we are not going to be seeing him stonewalling on the part of the Government, some of these Bills surely deserve to be spoken to. We are flabbergasted, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this side of the House, at the way in which these very important Bills are being stood by Government Members. I think it is a very serious point of order, and I would like you to take it under advisement and report back to the House on the appropriateness of the behaviour of the Government on these matters.

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** On the point raised by the Honourable Member for Flin Flon, this Bill has been brought forward by the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) and has been touted by the Honourable Member as an extremely important Bill. With that in mind, a number of the Members of the Government Caucus have indeed taken part in the debate. Indeed I know there are Members who felt constrained or confined when they knew they had only 15 minutes to speak about this issue. If the Honourable Members of the House would grant leave to Members of the Government Caucus to speak again on this Bill, then I would be prepared to begin today to debate this matter again.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the New Democratic Party Opposition would in fact be prepared to grant leave to the Minister

of Finance (Mr. Manness) or to the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) to carry on with the remarks on Bill No. 4. We think that if they feel they had more to say, and did not have adequate time to address this issue during the customary time that is allotted to them, we feel that they should have additional time to do so.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** We wish in the official Opposition that the Government would be just as enthused to speak not only on Bill No. 4, but in fact on all Bills, and instead of providing leave so that Members can once again stand up to speak on the Member for Assiniboia's Bill, I would encourage the Government Members that want to speak, to speak on other pieces of Private Member material.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened carefully both to the comments of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and I do appreciate the magnanimous attitude being displayed in this House today by the Honourable Member for Churchill, who understands the importance of issues associated with Bill 4. I also hear from the Honourable Member for Inkster, who is concerned that other Bills standing in the name of Members of perhaps his caucus, perhaps other caucuses, should also be the subject of debate. We have asked that Bill 4 be allowed to stand so that indeed we could get on to other Bills that are on the Order Paper.

We do make the point that we see Bill 4 as the kind of Bill that requires a fair amount of debate before it should be passed on to Committee, because it deals with such important matters of principle as much as matters of the substance of the Bill itself, matters of principle relating to the relationship between Manitobans who live in Winnipeg, Manitobans who live in other areas, the relationship between the Liberal Party and people who live outside the City of Winnipeg, for example. In that regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am quite happy to stand in the House—

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

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**Mr. Storie:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The same point of order?

**Mr. Storie:** No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a new point of order. The fact of the matter is apparently very important to the Government—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order, please. We perhaps should clear up the first point of order before we proceed to another one. I would thank all Honourable Members for their advice—(interjection)— Same point of order? The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**Mr. Cowan:** I find it passing strange that the Liberal Whip would want to stifle debate on Bill No. 4—

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

**Mr. Cowan:** However, I do appreciate the dilemma that continued debate would pose for the Liberal Caucus with respect to Bill No. 4, and it seems—(interjection)— well, we could vote on Bill No. 4 today which might be an interesting experience as well. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order to try to expedite the business of Private Members' Hours, perhaps the Government House Leader could indicate to us which of the Bills following Bill No. 4 that his caucus, who has most of the adjournments, is prepared to speak to at the present time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I thank all Honourable Members for their advice. Is there leave to have the Bill remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health? The Honourable Minister of Justice.

**Mr. McCrae:** Perhaps before the question respecting leave is put to the House, because the Honourable Member for Churchill asked the question, it would be my pleasure to respond to it.

I must say it is hard for me to understand the position taken by the Acting House Leader for the Liberal Party, when on the one hand they tend to tell us that Bill 4 is important to them, but on the other hand they want us to skip over it quickly and get on to some other Bill, because I really cannot quite figure out what it is. Maybe it is because they are sensitive about positions they have been taking recently with regard to the people of Manitoba and where they happen to live and how they should be treated, where some people should be treated with less attention and less respect and dignity than other people in this province. Perhaps that is what is bothering them, but I do say for the Honourable Member for Churchill that the Honourable Minister of Finance is here and prepared to speak on Bill No. 10; the Honourable Minister of Highways is here and prepared to speak on Bill No. 20. We do have speakers here and ready to go, but as I say to the Honourable Members of the Liberal Party, we are also prepared to redebate, some of us, or to carry on and finish where we left off after our 15 minutes on Bill 4—whatever the pleasure of the House.

\* (1710)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave for the Bill to remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health?—(interjection)— The Honourable Member for Inkster.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** On the same point of order, I believe the Minister or the Attorney General has—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. There are people who are standing two and three times on the same point of order. Is the Honourable Member standing on a new point of order? The Honourable Member for Inkster.

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**Mr. Lamoureux:** I believe I should clarify for the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae). I understand he has had a very long and hard day by the sounds of it. What I had said was that there should not be leave to have Members that have already spoken on this particular Bill respeak on that Bill. If this is the type of precedent that the Attorney General—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** What is the Honourable Member's point of order?

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I am trying to raise is that I am sure we would be receptive to that type of leave if the Opposition was granted that type of leave when we are speaking on Government Bills. Is he trying to say that Members in this Chamber should now be allowed to speak more than once to every Bill? If that is what he is trying to say, I am sure that we would be somewhat receptive to those types of talks, but I would say that we go on. If there is a Government Member that wants to address this Bill, by all means, stand up and speak to the Bill.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

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**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave to have the Bill remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health? (Agreed)

### BILL NO. 10—THE BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On a proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act (Loi sur les contenants de boissons), the Honourable Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, what you have seen over the last 15 minutes is a classic example of why the Opposition could never govern this province. Here is a case in point—(interjection)—

**An Honourable Member:** Which Opposition?

**Mr. Manness:** The Opposition Liberals. I should be—(interjection)—because it is well-known the Opposition NDP never could. They showed that in spades over five or six years.

What we have had a case of is Bill No. 4, where the Members Opposite, first they did not know whether they wanted it debated or not. Secondly, they did not know whether they wanted Members here to speak on it a second time or not, and thirdly, they did not know whether they wanted it to continue standing or not.

What I am saying about my comments on Bill No. 4 could also be directed to Bill No. 10, because here is another classic example where a Member of the

Opposition brings forward a Bill, which in name seems to have some intrigue, a Bill which seems to have some import.

It is called The Beverage Container Act and it was introduced by the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) who I suppose was trying to introduce an element of environmental responsibility on all of us, and for that I find no fault. Here is a case where part of this Bill, indeed some of the essence of this Bill, is reflected not only in the budget that I brought down earlier, but indeed in some of the legislation put forward by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), and a situation where many aspects of this Bill will be redundant given the passage of the taxation Bill that is before the people of this province or indeed the Members of this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is incumbent upon all Members of this House when they bring forward legislation to try and make sure that there is not redundancy. Redundancy in all of the time and the effort that goes into ordering the affairs of the House, No. 1. Redundancy associated with speaking on a number of issues. I have firm legal opinion which says that, if this Bill were to pass before the taxation Bill that indeed all of the taxation measures would then in essence be ruled out of order. I am saying there is a hidden motive to Bill No. 10.

Now where do the Members stand on the budget? Where do they stand on providing \$61 million of tax reliefs to individual Manitobans, an extra \$24 million in payroll tax? Where do they stand on that issue? Well, as was demonstrated today by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and indeed, as many of us have spoken on many occasions—the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), the whole Liberal Party, is against tax breaks to Manitobans. Under the guise of Bill No. 10, what the Liberals have attempted to do is to slowly but surely move Bill No. 10 through in essence to do away with the taxation Bill, to give it precedence over the taxation Bill, which is to be considered, because the Members opposite say they are going to support the taxation Bill—that they are for.

I stand today and make the claim that if Bill No. 10 were to pass before the taxation Bill, it would have some legislative precedent over the passing of the taxation Bill. It would take some order and it would cause probably a major reconstruction of the taxation Bill. So it begs the question, what was the motive behind Bill No. 10?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I reflect on the Opposition it is apparent that they have a deeper insight into the understanding of the legislative process than I for one gave them credit. They know how to frustrate legitimate Government legislation. The Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) says, we are very tricky guys.—(interjection)—I do not know whether he is talking about all the Members opposite, but this may be the case because within Bill No. 10, I sense there is another hidden motive.

Let me say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in standing to address this Bill that many of the considerations that are spelled out, indeed some of the safeguards that have been provided, in an attempt to reduce the amount



of waste that litters our countryside, indeed litters our streets and our alleys, is meritorious in itself. That is why we talked about this in our budget.

That is why we talked about it in the legislation. It has been tabled by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) asking for acceptance by the Members of this House, but there is one aspect of this Bill that causes me and would prevent me from supporting it and that is the taxation measures contained within are indeed already contained within the taxation Bill that I am going to ask Members to consider.

I would say upon the passage of the Government taxation Bill, plus passage of Bill No. 84 brought forward by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill No. 10 is completely redundant. I would ask the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) to take that into account and consider the wisdom of withdrawing Bill No. 10. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave to have the Bill remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health? (Agreed)

### BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL AMENDMENT ACT

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba), and the motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that the question be now put.

Standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) who has two minutes remaining. Bill No. 13 stands in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Is there leave to have the Bill remain standing in the Honourable Minister of Health's name? (Agreed) The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

**Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa):** I am speaking on here, please, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On Bill No. 13?

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Yes, 13.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** I am taking this opportunity to rise and speak on Bill No. 13 for several reasons.

**An Honourable Member:** List them.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) asks me to list them. If he listens he will hear these reasons listed throughout the address.

We have had in this House, from time to time, the Government Members decide that they are going to

take the opportunity to speak on Private Members' Business and decide to tongue-in-cheek, or sometimes not so tongue-in-cheek, poke fun at some of the Bills on the Order Paper. Notably just lately the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) on Bill No. 10 saying that there must be some sort of motive, some sort of hidden agenda in this, some sort of attempt, by the Opposition to steamroller some unwitting public relations exercise over the Government and over the people of Manitoba. Nothing could be further from the truth, because I do not see how anybody can apply that kind of logic when the kind of reasoning necessary to get to that point requires convolution of the first magnitude.

We have here, just referenced and put on the record by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the comments that the ability of the Liberal Opposition to be able to do some sort of manipulation of the Legislature, because that would cause legislative precedent with respect to the taxation Bill. I find that even by taking simple arithmetic, which every single child learns in Grades 1, or 2, or 3, that 10 precedes 86 no matter which way you count it in anybody's language, and the taxation Bill introduced so much later in the legislative Session somehow to use that logic to state that there is a hidden motive in No. 10 seems to me rather odd, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Rather, I think what we need to focus on here is the actual motive of what is happening with respect not only to other Bills but also to the Bill that I am addressing, Bill No. 13. On the 23rd of November, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), when he was speaking on the ozone Bill, stated and I will paraphrase that the Mover should take heart that Members have taken issue with such an important initiative and debated the Bill in seriousness. I think if we focus on those comments and actually ask ourselves what is happening in this Chamber, in Private Members' Hour? It becomes rather suspect as to what the Government is actually doing.

For instance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I just simply take a look at what happened with Bill No. 13 and take it in some sort of historical perspective the—where is 13—

**An Honourable Member:** You are speaking from the wrong notes again, Herold.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Well, I will ask you to bring the piece of paper over then, the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey), because I am now going to end up indicating what was referred.

Bill No. 13 was introduced back on June 15 and we had obviously no interest on the part of the Government benches to comment on that Bill. They were not concerned, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not at all. Then one day, on June 27, when the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) felt that since the Government had nothing to say on this issue, and I feel that in this one instance there was a clear difference of opinion between what the intent of Bill No. 13 was and previous Government action, you would think that there would be, on so clearly identifiable a difference, there would be interest on the part of Government, because there was not,

the Member for Thompson asked that the question be put.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, suddenly we had interest on the part of the Government benches. Suddenly seven speakers on that day stood up in their place and spoke against the motion that the question be put, not on the Bill of The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act, but rather on the motion that the question be put.

I wondered, where is their interest, where is their sense of the importance, where is their desire to do something with seriousness. It seems to me that they speak out of both sides of their mouth, because I feel that we have here the intent that the whole thing that we should be examining is the very comment that the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), the Minister of Natural Resources, put on the record, which was that we must take Bills and debate them in seriousness, rather than taking something out of context, taking something that is intended to do something different, and actually focusing on the intent, rather than on what is here perceived to be something that can be taken tongue-in-cheek. Suddenly all the gates are opened and we have a floodgate of speakers, as we saw on Bill No. 4.

\* (1730)

Now something else I wish to put onto the record, because I think when we take a look at debating things in seriousness, particularly with respect to Bill No. 13 where you have this ability to take opposite viewpoints and actually put your thoughts on the record, because the Liberal Bill is definitely different in intent than the actions of Government when they decided to change the way the MIC board operated. We have here the ability to debate in interest. What happened up until this point in time, not a single back-bench Member of the Tory Caucus has been allowed to speak.

Then on Bill No. 4, they opened the floodgates and obviously everybody has to speak on something that they perceive here to be a massive bit of—now, having chosen to then speak on Bill No. 4, what happens? Hands over the mouth, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no one else is allowed to speak on anything else. Bills on the Order Paper that are left standing in the name of the Government are left standing in the name of Ministers, not in the name of backbenchers. When will they get a chance to speak on Bills that we are debating in the House before Private Members' Hour? I do not hear backbenchers from the Conservative Government speak.

So I am wondering, what is the intent, because now I think there is a motive. Do they not trust their own Members to speak? Only perhaps if we have a chance to poke fun because somebody on the Government side—perhaps in passing, like we sometimes do and you ask yourself, what is the weather like outside? It is warm. You go outside and there is snow on the ground. How come it is warm? Well, it is 30 degrees warmer than the day before, but it is still cold, there is still snow on the ground. We tend to look at things like that. We say things in passing and in that passage

of the moment, and I can see it over the coffee table, somebody said something, wow, I have a chance on Bill No. 4 to basically just absolutely railroad the Liberals, and consequently this is what was attempted to be done.

Well, I take no exception to the fact that when you can do something like that this is a public forum, this is a place where you debate and sometimes in Private Members' Hour, and also not only in Private Members' Hour but also at other times, we have people throwing barbs across, insults across, heckling, doing things to try and raise the temperature in here a little bit and in doing so having fun. Sometimes these comments come across and not only are they intended to raise the temperature, they are also caused to create amusement.

When we put that on the record I ask myself is that what we mean when the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) said: debated something in seriousness. I think there is a difference between the heckling, there is a difference between the trying to distract somebody while they are speaking, and the actual putting down of comments on the record.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is going to be a return here that there will be a tendency for some of the comments that the Tories decided to put on the record will come back to haunt them. They will come back to haunt them, not because necessarily they did not have the ability to do what they did, but rather in the method and the way in which they did it. That I find not only reprehensible, I find that repugnant for this Chamber. In this Chamber we must take, as the Minister of Natural Resources said, we shall debate things in seriousness and therefore we should address the real issues.

I have also heard from time to time that we should not be abusing House time, even with respect to Private Members' Hour. If you are not supposed to be debating in Private Members' Hour, why is it here listed in the Chamber? Are the Tories telling me that if they had a majority Government that there would no longer be any Private Members' Hour? Would there be no opportunity for backbenchers to come and put their resolutions forward? Would there be no way for them to put Bills forward? I mean, what are they trying to say?

Coming back to Bill No. 13 on the advice of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), I believe that we do need to come back very closely to put down on the record the aspect that when you have, as we have here in this province, the beginning to out picture the global village, not so much in closeness and in communication but rather in the numbers of people living side by side. We do not start building barriers of fences, barriers of mistrust, by putting yourself above others or by deciding that you are going to legislate how different groups shall react to each other. We have a chance to make a model for the future.

This is what I would have wanted to see being put on the record by that group of people opposite, by the Government opposite. I would have liked to see it be put on the record not only by the Members in whose

name the Bill is standing, which is the Minister's, but also on the record to the intent and to the principle of the Bill by the Government backbenchers.

I think I see them frustrated when even today some of the most entertaining side comments were made by backbenchers on the Government side because that is all they have been left to do. I would like to see them at least, if the Ministers do not wish to stand up and debate, then let them at least stand up and debate and put the Tory philosophy on the record with respect to Bill No. 13.

I feel we have the opportunity here because we are in this province developing a multicultural reality, we are creating a completely Canadian experience, but we still have a long way to go. There happens to be de facto discrimination.

There are cultural barriers, and I cite just one example, our calendar. Our calendar tends to follow a certain Judeo-Christian set of holy days which is not even in sympathy with the—there are two calendars, the Julian and the—(interjection)—Gregorian calendar, yes. Here we have two calendars not quite in context, but we still have the Sikh community, we have the people from Vietnam, we have people from China, all with different holy days, and because of our structures simply on seven days a week, Sunday is essentially the day legislated by past practice, this simple fact causes an inability on the part of certain groups to follow their holy days. I simply—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member's time has expired.

The Honourable Member for St. Vital has two minutes remaining.

**Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite the harassment from certain Members of this House, I want to congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the job you have been doing the last couple of days. We are real proud to see that you are doing such a good job.

I just wanted to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that two minutes is not very much to go into too much detail, but I was chastised by the Government because I was extolling some pride in my constituency, the best constituency certainly in Manitoba, and that is St. Vital.

Unfortunately St. Vital has not been known, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for its multicultural aspects. It is very high predominantly in people of origins of Anglo-Saxons and French origin. That has been since I was born there some few years ago and it stems right up to the present time.

As a matter of fact I was very proud to address some 600 seniors last week and I could only spot one visible minority amongst all those people. I am sure there were others but it was not self-evident in spotting them. Unfortunately I could not even talk to that gentleman, because the gentleman was completely deaf. We did have some sign language and made a few notes back and forth.

\* (1740)

I am proud of St. Vital in the fact that the very famous Folklorama Folk Arts Council, the last three presidents, their families have lived on my street. I am really proud of that and if indeed you would exaggerate a little bit and call River Road an extension of Victoria Crescent, which it really is. We have seen John Karasevich who was my next door neighbour, we have seen David Langtry from Victoria Crescent, and now we see Joe Yuen from River Road. I am really proud that these people, even though they are not amongst the real ethnic community, have taken the leadership and shown Manitoba what they can do in the ethnic community.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** I wonder if I might have leave to speak and allow this Bill to stand in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave? By leave, the Bill will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I want to do in my presentation today is not speak so much to Bill No. 13, although I believe it is an important Bill and the content of that Bill is worthy of debate in this House.

I want to speak to the motion that is actually before the House under the heading of Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act, and that is a motion that was moved by my House Leader, by the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), which reads quite simply that the question be now put.

The reason that motion was presented to the House was one of frustration on the part of Opposition Members when it comes to some of the tactics. I do not think it goes beyond that because I do not believe the Government Members had really strategized around what they are doing. It is a tactical response rather than a strategic response of Government Members with respect to the business of Private Members during Private Members' Hour.

I believe this debate is in many ways a microcosm of what is happening in this Legislature on a day-to-day basis, and in fact is an example of some of the problems that we are confronted with in this new situation, which is a minority Government situation. For that reason, if it indeed is such an example and a microcosm of the overall activities of the Legislature we may be able to take some lessons from the way in which this Bill has proceeded through the House, or has not proceeded through the House as the case may be.

The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) put forward the motion that is in reality calling for the debate to be held although it does allow for debate to be taken up under that motion, out of frustration. Frustration with stonewalling on the part of Government Members when they would take Bills under their name, stand the Bills, and then not speak to the Bills day after day after day after day, thereby precluding the Bill from ever coming to a vote, precluding the Bill from being spoken to in many instances without leave, and I think

in many respects thwarting what this minority Government would be able to accomplish if there was a bit more co-operation on everybody's part in this Chamber. I say everybody's part, because I think we are all responsible in one way or another for making this legislative body work. We are responsible in one way or another for making this minority Government work.

I believe that the minority Government, in a lot of ways, has worked to the advantage of Manitobans. I think that the tax breaks that are included in the budget are as a result of a minority Government being in place, and strong representation that came from the Opposition that allowed for the Government to provide for those tax breaks with some sense that they would pass this House and it would not be a vote defeating or a Government defeating vote when it came to a vote.

I think there are some other things that have happened as a result of minority Government. We have not seen a return to this sort of ravaging of the province that we saw under the 1977 to 1981 Conservative administration. There are many Members of this Cabinet who were Members of the Cabinet then, and who have not in any way changed their right-wing philosophy or changed their reactionary approach, but they are being kept in bay not by a strong Premier (Mr. Filmon), because that is obviously not the case when we have a Premier that vacillates from day to day and flip-flops on so many important issues, they are being kept in bay, because they are in a minority Government situation.

Quite frankly I fear for what would happen to northern Manitoba. I fear what would happen to low-income and moderate and poor Manitobans. I fear for what would happen to the progressive legislation that had been put in place, if the Conservative Government were to win a majority. I think all they are awaiting is the return to a majority status. I do not believe it will happen, but that is what they are awaiting so that they can begin to implement that radical right-wing agenda that flows just beneath the surface; that thin veneer of civility and co-operation and moderation that they have masked themselves in in order to survive in a minority Government situation.

There are times when it does come out, it erupts. That right-wing radical hidden agenda is not so hidden at different times in this House and outside of this House. One of the times where it appears is during Private Members' Hour when we see them rejecting out of hand any sort of progressive legislation or progressive Private Members' resolutions, or progressive policies that are being suggested as a part of Private Members' Hour, through their delaying tactics, through their blockading of the debate, through their denying of votes on those particular issues.

I think that they feel that they have to be in control somehow and they can be most in control in a negative sense by making certain that some things do not happen in this House, because of the nature of Private Members' Hour. I think we should be looking at ways of increasing the power of all Members of this House with respect to Private Members' Hour. I think that the Government feels that the passage of a Private Members' Bill or a

Private Members' resolution is a reflection upon them, and that it does indeed denote that they are not as powerful as they would like to think they are. For that reason they will use all sorts of legislative tactics to ensure that we do not make progress in Private Members' Hour.

If the Oppositions put forward a Bill or puts forward a motion that obviously commands the respect of the House, and would under any other circumstance command the support of the House, what does the Government do? Do they support it? Do they say this is how to make minority Government work better? Do they speak on it? Do they provide their input on it and then call for the vote? No, they delay it until the next Session. They can come forward and put it forward as a Government Bill.

What we know is that they are not opposed to what was contained in the Bill. They are not opposed to the policy that was contained in the Bill. They are not opposed to the programs that were anticipated by the Bill, but they are opposed to the fact that Bill was brought forward by someone other than a Government Member. I think that is short-sighted and I think that creates a lot of the animosity. I think that creates a lot of the frustration that exhibits itself in so many other ways in this House.

I would suggest to the Government that if they want to make minority Government work even better, and I should think that we should all have that objective and goal in mind, because that is what the people of this province have told us they want, a minority Government, they should take a different look at what happens in Private Members' Hour and how they can make it a more productive part of the work of this Legislature.

Now I also want to comment on some of the things that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said and some of the things other Government Members have been saying with respect to their frustration about moving their legislation and their agenda through this House. The suggestion is that they are having trouble governing because the Opposition is thwarting them and abusing the minority Government situation.

\* (1750)

I would suggest that is totally inaccurate and probably one of the farthest things from the truth, with respect to the actual situation at hand. The Government is having trouble governing, because they do not know how to govern well in a minority Government situation. Pretty soon they are going to go to the people and ask for a majority Government, not because they believe it is better for the people of this province, because it is not and we have proven that, but because they do not want to learn how to use a minority Government, which the people of this province had said they want, to the best advantage of the people of this province. They do not want to take the time to learn. They do not want to listen to the people. They do not want to implement the people's will. All they want to do is suggest that because of the Opposition they cannot govern and for that reason they want a majority.

The fact is that the problems we are having in this House with getting the agenda through on the part of the Government are because that agenda is not clearly focused. They do not really know what they want to do, because they mismanage the time of this House, because they do not have in place an effective House Leader who negotiates well with the other House Leaders in order to ensure that business flows in an efficient way through this House. I can tell you from experience as House Leader, in both Opposition and in Government for a number of years, that there is only one way to make this House work well and that is through co-operation that comes from negotiation, which comes from give-and-take, which comes from trying to work in a fashion together that acknowledges and respects each other's aspirations, goals and objectives, because we are all Honourable Members of this House.

I think their general response, and the reason that this question had to be put in the first instance in Private Members' Hour, betrays the fact that they do not know how to negotiate. They only want to bully. They only want to force. They only want to manipulate. They only want to use the Rules to their advantage and not to the advantage of the people who have sent us here to speak out on their behalf and to work for them.

The fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the other reason that the Government is having trouble governing is that they cannot bring forward a clear, concise agenda, which speaks to their vision, because they have no real vision of what they want to accomplish over their term in office. That has been something that is sorely lacking. It has been a reactive Government, not a pro-active Government. It has been a Government that responds to crises rather than try to manage opportunities to avoid crises.

It is a Government that goes out and tries to beat up on the most vulnerable in our society instead of trying to sit down and work with them and share some of the power that they have been granted on a temporary basis by the people of this province in a way that will provide for stronger groups and organizations that can then help them be a better Government. It is a Government that has turned its back on the people who have elected it and it is a Government that if it were to decide now that it wanted to be more co-operative and manage the affairs in a more equitable way instead of trying to bully their way through the House, they would be able to accomplish much more in a much shorter period of time.

We as legislators would be able to accomplish much more in a much shorter period of time with much less time and energy and effort on our part for the constituents that send us here.

Quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they suggest that the problem is with Estimates. There are only 240 Estimates hours and we are over 60 percent through them right now, so no matter how we break down the Estimates process itself, until we come to the concurrence motion, there is a limit that they used in its entirety when they were in Opposition and which was far exceeded in years past when there was no limit and we had Estimates in this House go on for well over

300 hours, sometimes approaching 350 hours in any given Session. Yet there was not a complaint that the Opposition was frustrating the House at that time, even although they had 100 more hours in many instances of Estimates time.

They suggest that there is a problem with emergency debates, but the last emergency debate that we brought forward in this House the Government agreed to. The Government agreed to it. They said, yes, they thought it was an important issue and they have agreed to other emergency debates. They voted for the goods and services tax emergency debate. So the fact is they cannot say that it is us that are forcing emergency debates on them, because they are voting for them and agreeing with them and speaking during the debate and taking up some of the time in a legitimate fashion, I might add, because we do want to hear from them on these important issues.

They say that speaking to the number of Bills is creating a problem. The fact is that the amount of time that we spend debating legislation is a fact really of the number of Bills, of the relevance of those Bills, of the controversial nature of those Bills, of the importance of those Bills, and the quality of the drafting. Certainly we would rather spend more time debating a Bill that is so badly drafted that it needs a number of amendments in the first instance, and then have to come back in another Session for debate all over again, because of the incompetence of the Government in the first instance for debate again. That is going to take more time than if they brought forward quality legislation.

Certainly, controversial or important Bills are going to take up more time. When they bring forward 87 Bills in one Session they cannot expect the legislation to go through quickly, because we need time to debate those Bills. That is what we are elected to do, that is what we are paid to do, in part, and that is what we are going to do. So it cannot be the Bills that are the problem.

They, therefore, say that it is Question Period that is a problem. Well, the Question Period is a set period of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is going to be the same amount of time every day. It may be extended by some points of order, but those points of order are usually in response to the elevation of the issues by rhetoric on both sides. The Government has to take some responsibility for that.

The Question Period problem now is not the amount of time, because it is established at 40 minutes, it is the length of time of the answers on the part of the Government, meaning that, whereas, before we would get three or four questions as an Opposition Party we are now only getting two questions as an Opposition Party.

**An Honourable Member:** Remember the length of our preambles when we were in Opposition?

**Mr. Cowan:** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) talks about the length of his preambles when he was in Opposition. I, for one, did

not argue about the length of their preambles when they were in Opposition. I said they should take as long in their preambles as they wished, and we should take as long on our answers as we wished, given that in that context the business of the House was able to flow and it was. We did not have that sort of problem.

It is not Estimates time, that is governed by a set limit of 240 hours, we are 60 percent through. It is not the emergency debates, the Government is supporting the emergency debates. It is not the speaking to the Bills, it is the Government that controls that agenda. It is not the Question Period—I wonder if I might have leave of a minute or two just to conclude my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

**Mr. Cowan:** I am speaking to the question that is before us. I think it is important to have those two minutes to sum up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I hope to make a suggestion.

The suggestion is that we should take a step back and reflect upon the workings of the House, not trying to cast blame or point fingers at each other, but to determine how it is we can make this minority Government work better, a minority Government which was determined by the people of this province, a minority Government which they told us they want to see work, a minority Government which has provided benefits already to the people of this province, and a minority Government that can provide more benefits if we, as legislators, can put aside some of the bare partisanship that motivate us so often. I am as guilty as any of that, and I would have to change my approach as much, if not more, than others in this particular Chamber.

I think it is an important challenge that the people have thrust upon us. We should at least attempt to respond to it so that we do not have to put motions forward that the question be put on Bills like this, so that we do work better together and provide for a better legislative body for the people of Manitoba, who expect that from us and deserve that from us.

### **BILL NO. 17—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Bill No. 17, The Employment Standards Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi), standing

in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on several occasions when this Bill does come up on the Order Paper it seems to be referred that I am holding up this particular Bill, and in fact that is not the case. I did want to comment on this Bill. I would not deny leave. In fact, if the Government were willing to see this particular Bill go into committee I would have been more than happy to stand to speak on the Bill.

The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), in the past, has commented that I have held up this Bill. My intent has not been to hold up this Bill. If there is a will from the third Party in this Chamber to negotiate this Bill going into committee then they should start the negotiations. I suggest that it do go into a committee.

The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) keeps on referring to, where do I stand. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think if we look at this particular Bill—and what shocks me most about it is the fact that this is the type of legislation that the New Democratic Party should have been proposing when they were in Government. Of the last 20 years they have been in Government for 15 years. Now, when they are in Opposition they are bringing forward Bills, after Bills, after Bills; Bills that they would have put into legislation had they been given the opportunity.

It is not just this Bill. You can look at the landlord and tenant legislation. They claimed, today, that they had that legislation, that they were ready to introduce it and so forth, but like this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they had it on the back burner, or they supposedly had it somewhere—I do not even think it was on the back burner. You could go on through other Bills. You can talk about their consumer's legislation, Bills 21 and 22, we see them all suddenly now appearing on the Order Paper.

I have to ask myself the question: where were these Members while they were in Government? Was the Cabinet closing them out? Were they not listening to some of their Members?—

\* (1800)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Order. When this matter is again before the House the Honourable Member will have 12 minutes remaining.

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